

Puppy Love by Xanthe



Story Notes:

I'm not making the slightest claim to originality here. The central conceit in this story is a tribute to the fabulous **Issums Bunny** which I read a few months back and loved. I'm also a fan of **The Definition of Home** by [triskellion](#). And then there are all those lovely SGA fics where Rodney and/or John get turned into cats... so this is my attempt at the genre. Wonderful piccy above courtesy of the ever fantastic Bluespirit ;-).

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Gibbs was in the head when he heard the commotion outside. He finished up quickly, zipped up, and was about to run for the door when his cell phone rang.

"Gibbs! Gibbs!" Abby's voice, sounding worried. "I just got in the elevator to come up and see you, and I found Tony's clothes in there. Oh, Gibbs! He could be anywhere!"

"Abby..."

"Supposing he got out? Supposing he's wandered into the parking garage? Supposing he gets knocked down?"

"Abby!"

"Supposing someone kidnaps him and takes him home with them? Supposing someone takes him to the police, and he gets locked up...?"

"ABBY!"

There was a sudden silence. Gibbs took a deep breath.

"It's okay, Abby – I think I know where he is." Gibbs opened the men's room door, and strode along the hallway and into the squad room.

"What could possibly have happened to scare him in the *elevator*?" Abby wailed into his ear as he walked. "I mean, in the elevator of all places! What scary thing can have happened to him in there, Gibbs? Oh poor baby! Poor poor baby!"

"Who said he was scared?" Gibbs muttered grimly, as he walked into the squad room to find the entire place in disarray. Papers were scattered everywhere, a couple of chairs had been knocked over, and there, in the centre of the room, between all four of their desks, was a plump little golden retriever puppy, about two months old. He had soft, golden fur, big brown eyes, a little black button of a nose, and the most angelic expression that ever existed on a dog. In fact, he gave every appearance of being the cutest puppy in the entire world.

As Gibbs knew all too well, appearances can be deceptive.

The puppy was sitting on McGee's expensive new leather jacket, chewing happily on one of the sleeves. Gibbs winced.

"It's okay, Abby," he said quietly into his cell phone. "I've found him – and trust me, he's not remotely scared. Although he sure as hell will be when I get hold of him," he muttered darkly.

"Gibbs!" Abby scolded. "You know that doesn't help!"

"Yeah...but it makes me feel better! Abby – take his clothes back to your lab. I'll bring him down as soon as I catch him."

He stuffed his phone back in his pocket and bit back a laugh as he watched McGee crouch down and approach the puppy cautiously, one hand outstretched.

"There, there, Tony..." McGee crooned softly. "Good boy. Good pup! You don't want to eat that do you? That nasty old leather jacket can't taste good! You'd much rather eat *these*, wouldn't you?"

He offered a handful of dog biscuits with his other hand. The puppy stopped chewing for a moment, and glanced at the biscuits with a look of utter derision. Then he returned to chewing on the jacket, one eye still fixed cautiously on McGee as he did so.

"Okay...not the biscuits...how about this instead?"

McGee crouch-walked over to Ziva's desk and grabbed her orange watch cap, then offered that to the puppy. The puppy sniffed at it curiously for a moment, watching McGee warily out of the corner of his eye. McGee inched forward slowly.

"Good boy...good pup...good Tony..."

Gibbs sighed and rolled his eyes, waiting for the inevitable to happen. McGee was almost within touching distance, and the puppy seemed torn between grabbing the watch cap and continuing to chew on the jacket...but Gibbs knew Tony far too well.

A second later, McGee lunged. He managed to get one hand on the puppy's nose, but he was too slow. Tony was ready and waiting for the move, and he danced out of the way, the sleeve of the leather jacket still in his mouth. McGee went sprawling face first onto the floor, while Tony began doing a little victory dance up and down the squad room, dragging the leather jacket behind him, his tail wagging furiously and his haunches positively quivering with happiness.

He was so busy celebrating his triumph that he careened straight into Gibbs's legs. It was an easy matter for Gibbs to scoop him up into his arms. The jacket came too, dangling from Tony's jaws, covered in doggy saliva.

"Drop," Gibbs said fiercely.

Tony gazed up at him from happy but stubborn brown eyes, still hanging onto his prize. Gibbs raised an eyebrow. Tony's expression changed into one of mournful begging. Gibbs glared at him. Tony made a sad little whining sound in the back of his throat. Gibbs rolled his eyes and tapped Tony's nose firmly.

"I said *drop*."

Tony gave an audible sigh and allowed the jacket to drop from his jaws and onto the floor, where McGee pounced on it and began examining the damage.

"I swear, Tony, that if you've ruined another one of my jackets I WILL buy a kennel and chain you up in it!" McGee fumed.

Gibbs tucked the puppy under one arm, strode over to his desk, opened the top drawer, and pulled out a collar and leash. He put Tony on the desk, and Tony immediately started nosing at his crotch which was now at perfect sniffing height.

"Not now, Tony," Gibbs said reprovingly. Tony looked up at him happily, his tail wagging again, an expression of total joy in his brown eyes. Gibbs fastened the collar around his neck, attached the leash to it, and then picked Tony up and put him down on the floor. "The elevator. With me. Now. You are going to calm down, and then you're going to get back to work," Gibbs told him firmly. "Playtime over. Heel."

He tugged on the lead, and Tony gave a little huffing sigh and followed on behind as Gibbs led him over to the elevator. The door opened and they got inside. Gibbs was glad they were the only two in there. The door closed, and he slammed his hand on the emergency switch to bring it to a halt. Then he glared down at Tony.

Tony stared up at him and then, as if sensing his mood, he sat down, uncertainly, next to Gibbs's boot. He looked up with solemn eyes, clearly hoping that this show of contrition would satisfy Gibbs. Gibbs just glared at him some more. Tony lay down, put his nose on his front paws, and gazed up at Gibbs mournfully. Gibbs continued to glare at him. Finally, Tony gave a sad little whine and rolled over onto his back to show Gibbs his tummy, in a gesture of total surrender.

"That's better," Gibbs growled. Tony's tail wagged immediately, and he rolled over onto his front again, found one of Gibbs's shoelaces, and began tugging on it with his teeth. Gibbs rolled his eyes. "The cute might work with Abby, but it doesn't work with me, DiNozzo," he said firmly.

Tony's tail stopped wagging, and he gave a little sigh. He rested his nose on his front paws again and lay there, looking as if his entire world had just come to a tragic end.

"Good boy," Gibbs said approvingly.

A second later, the cute little golden retriever puppy transformed, before his eyes, into a large, six-foot-something man. A large, six-foot-something, *naked* man, with a collar around his neck and a leash hanging from it. He lay there for a moment, his nose next to Gibbs's boot, and then looked up pathetically.

"Oh shit. McGee's gonna kill me," he muttered.

Gibbs grinned. "Oh yeah – he is," he agreed cheerfully. He flipped the switch to get the elevator started again and punched the button for Abby's lab. Then he held out a hand to help Tony up. Tony got to his feet with a sigh. "What was it this time?" Gibbs asked. Tony flushed.

"Uh..." he began, gazing at his feet.

"Something got you excited, judging by the way you were running around the squad room

with your tail wagging," Gibbs said.

"Uhhh," Tony flushed. He was spared having to answer that question by the elevator reaching its destination, and the doors opening...to reveal Director Vance, standing there, with, of all people, SecNav.

All four men stared at each other. Tony took a couple of steps sideways to at least partially hide his naked body behind Gibbs. SecNav blinked.

"You know, I'm *sure* there's a good explanation for this," he said.

Gibbs took a deep breath, pulled himself up to his full height, and grabbed Tony's leash.

"Well *obviously* there's a good explanation," he said firmly. "Clearly, Agent DiNozzo and I have just been undercover in an S&M club, and he's my...uh..." He waved his hand in the air, wondering what the hell the right word was.

"Submissive," Tony hissed miserably from behind him. "I'm his...yeah...undercover. S&M," he muttered weakly.

Vance grimaced, and then pasted a big smile on his face and turned to SecNav. "Lot of problems lately with marines running drugs out of these S&M clubs," he said smoothly. "Gibbs and DiNozzo are my best undercover operatives. Know I can trust them to really...blend in."

Gibbs gave a curt nod, and then strode purposefully out of the elevator, his hand still firmly wrapped in Tony's leash. Vance ushered a bewildered SecNav into the elevator with that fixed smile still plastered on his face, then shot a vicious glare in Gibbs's direction as the elevator doors closed behind them.

"We were undercover in an S&M club?" Tony wailed mournfully when they reached the safety of Abby's lab. "You couldn't come up with anything better than that?"

"To explain why you were naked with me in an elevator with a collar around your neck and a leash hanging from it?" Gibbs demanded incredulously. "I thought I did pretty damn well in the circumstances."

Tony pouted. Abby ran over to him and enveloped him in a warm hug.

"Tony! I was so worried about you! I found your clothes in the elevator! What happened? Did you get scared? Poor baby!"

"Uh – kind of naked here, Abs," Tony pointed out.

Gibbs grinned – Tony was getting pretty used to the whole being naked in front of his team thing, but even so, naked hugging was probably outside his comfort zone.

"Sorry!" Abby pulled back and pointed at his clothes, which were folded neatly on a nearby chair.

"Oh thank god!" Tony reached for his boxers and began dressing quickly.

"Uh...guys?"

Gibbs turned to see Abby's new lab assistant lurking in the doorway, looking utterly mystified as he watched Tony get dressed. Abby had been snowed under of late, and Vance had insisted on getting her some temporary help. She had been furious about it right up until Dan had been introduced to her – when she'd suddenly changed her mind and decided he could stay. Gibbs suspected this change of heart might have had something to do with the fact that Dan had long black hair, a face as pale as snow, and seventeen piercings in his right ear alone. He was also prone to wearing black leather pants and tight black tee shirts bearing such phrases as: "Live to Die" and "Drink My Blood".

"It's okay, Dan!" Abby said happily. "It's just that Tony turns into this cute golden retriever puppy whenever he gets excited or scared. That's all. That's why he's naked."

Dan gazed at her. "Oh. Right," he said, nodding cheerfully as if he hadn't just heard something utterly bizarre.

"Abby!" Tony hissed. "I thought we agreed that only the team and Vance had to know about this, so why the hell are you telling Dracula Dan over there?"

"Oh." Abby looked surprised. "I guess it's just that I think of him as team now, Tony. He's fitted in so well."

"How does he turn back again?" Dan asked, looking intrigued.

"When he calms down, or stops being scared, he just changes back. Except the five nights a month around the full moon when he spends all night in puppy form," Abby told him cheerfully.

"Cool!" Dan said.

Tony reached sullenly for his shoes. "Believe me, it sounds like much more fun than it is," he said darkly.

"How did it happen?" Dan asked. "I'm thinking gypsy curse."

"Kind of." Abby nodded. "There was this little old lady, and Tony had to interrogate her, and..."

"He was mean to her so she put a curse on him?" Dan suggested.

"No, actually, I was really nice to her," Tony growled. "I'm never mean to little old ladies, Dracula boy."

"He *was* really nice to her, so she did this to thank him. She said it was a gift," Abby explained. "A gift that would reveal his true inner self, and give him his heart's desire."

"The thing is, usually with unwanted gifts you can just take them back to the store and get a

refund," Tony muttered. "But not this one. Oh no! This one I'm stuck with for a year until it wears off."

"Could be worse, DiNozzo," Gibbs grinned.

"And how is that, Gibbs? Pray do enlighten me as to what could be worse than being turned into a *puppy* every time I get scared or excited, and then turning back into a naked, fully grown man in front of people – sometimes in crowded shopping malls – or, wait, in front of *SecNav*?" Tony's voice held a note of hysteria to it.

"Your true inner self could have been a rat, DiNozzo," Gibbs pointed out.

"Gibbs is right, Tony!" Abby told him. "Instead, your true inner self is this really cute little puppy. I just want to snuggle you whenever you're in puppy form."

"Yeah – see - that's just what every guy wants to hear. His inner self is a cute puppy." Tony gave a mournful sigh.

So what got you scared this time?" Abby asked.

Tony buttoned up his shirt, seemingly oblivious to the fact that he was still wearing the collar and leash. "Wasn't scared," he muttered.

"You were excited then?" Abby grinned. "In the elevator? What on earth got you excited in the elevator, Tony?"

Tony flushed again and pretended to be doing up his belt.

"Tony?" she asked again, in a more menacing tone this time.

"Oh okay! I was coming down here to ask you something, and I just got outside the door and heard you telling Jimmy that it was Dan's birthday today, and that he should go out and buy a whole box of jelly donuts to celebrate," Tony snapped.

"You got excited about jelly donuts?" Abby asked. "You're weird, Tony."

"Well, you said to get the ones with sprinkles!" Tony protested, flushing to the tips of his ears. "I admit I was excited. Who wouldn't be? I thought I'd just get straight back in the elevator and go tell everyone about it and next thing I knew..." He shrugged. "Puppy. In the elevator. When the doors opened, I got carried away and started running around the squad room. McGee's leather jacket was hanging on the back of his chair, and I just couldn't resist. You have *no idea* how good that jacket smells when you have a nose that's really built for smelling stuff."

"Oh man – you chewed up McGee's jacket again?" Abby patted Tony's arm sympathetically. "He's so gonna kill you, DiNozzo."

"I just can't stop myself," Tony sighed. "You don't know what it's like being a puppy, Abs. Everything is SO incredibly exciting, and everything smells so good, and... I just wanna run around and do really stupid ass things."

"That gypsy lady really wasn't wrong about your inner self," Abby mused.

"Yeah – sounds just like his regular self," Gibbs grinned. Tony glared at him. "And if McGee gives you a hard time, I'll remind him that he was prepared to sacrifice Ziva's orange watch cap to get you away from the jacket. Somehow, I don't think he'll want me telling Ziva about that."

Tony's face creased into a big grin. "You'd do that? Thank you, Boss!"

"So – how does it work? When you're a dog, do you remember that you're also human?" Dan asked.

"Yeah – kind of – but it's all a bit fuzzy." Tony shrugged. "The puppy side just takes over."

"Do you understand what people are saying to you?"

"Oh yeah – he understands." Gibbs grinned again, and Tony made a face at him.

"Well, I do understand if I really concentrate. A lot of the time it just sounds like 'Tony - blah, blah, blah; Tony - blah, blah, blah, bad dog; Tony - blah, blah, blah, give it back! Tony - blah, blah, blah...' You get the picture." Tony shrugged.

"And the change happens whenever he gets really excited?" Dan looked to Abby for confirmation.

Abby nodded. "Yeah...or..."

"DiNozzo!" Vance's voice bellowed from the doorway. "I swear that if you ever turn into a puppy again while SecNav is in the building, I'll grab you by the scruff of your neck, drag you off to the nearest vet, and damn well get you fixed."

"...scared," Abby finished, just as Tony's clothes sank to the floor, and a small golden retriever puppy emerged from under them to hide anxiously behind Gibbs, his tail between his legs, his entire body shaking pathetically.

Vance strode into the room, took one look at Tony's clothes and the shivering puppy, and sighed. "Oh God, not again."

"Well, if you're gonna go around making threats like that, what do you expect?" Gibbs told him impatiently. "He'll never change back while you're glowering at him like that, Leon. Just go back upstairs and leave me to handle it."

Vance glared at the room in general, and then turned on his heel and left the room. Tony gave a plaintive little whine, and stared up at Gibbs from big, brown, puppy-dog eyes.

"Oh poor thing – he's terrified." Dan crouched down beside the puppy and held out his hand. Tony growled and snapped at his fingers. Dan took a startled step back.

"He really doesn't like men petting him when he's in puppy form," Abby told him. "Girls are

okay - he shows off ridiculously for girls - but men get their fingers bitten."

Gibbs bent down, scooped up the shaking puppy, tucked him under his jacket, and stroked his ears gently.

"Well, except Gibbs obviously," Abby explained. "He seems to view Gibbs as his master, and he's the only one who can really control him when he's in pup form." She frowned. "Or human form come to that," she added. "Puppy Tony is really just human Tony – only cuter."

Tony peeped out at her from under Gibbs's jacket and gave an accusatory little whine.

"Sorry, Tony. You're quite cute in human form too," Abby grinned.

Gibbs stroked Tony's soft, golden head gently, and the puppy's shivering began to subside. He snuggled against Gibbs's hand and licked it lazily. Gibbs held him in the crook of his arm, soothing him repeatedly with his fingers. The puppy's eyes zoned out in sheer bliss, and his eyelids began to droop lazily. His tail gave a little half wag, and then he was fast asleep.

"I still don't get the bit about his heart's desire," Dan said. "How does being a puppy fulfil Tony's heart's desire?"

"Well, clearly it's not safe for Tony to live on his own at the moment," Abby said cheerfully. "So Gibbs has taken him in. Also – those five nights a month when he's a pup? He gets to sleep in...uh, I mean, *on*, Gibbs's bed."

"And that's his heart's desire?" Dan glanced at the sleeping puppy, snuggled up happily in Gibbs's arms. Gibbs stroked the puppy's silky ears, and Tony gave a little snore and sighed happily in his sleep.

"Apparently," Gibbs replied, with a nonchalant shrug.

At that moment, the puppy disappeared, and Gibbs found himself with an armful of naked Tony DiNozzo. He dropped him unceremoniously to the floor.

"Not again!" Tony sighed, reaching for his clothes once more.

"Your heart's desire is to sleep in Gibbs's bed?" Dan asked, as Tony pulled on his boxers and pants.

"You have a problem with that, vampire boy?" Tony snapped, picking his shirt up off the floor.

Gibbs grinned and put a soothing hand on Tony's shoulder. Human Tony relaxed as immediately and unconditionally as puppy Tony. Tony moved his head and licked Gibbs's hand, and then he flushed. "Sorry. Habit," he muttered.

Gibbs squeezed his shoulder affectionately, and Tony made a happy little sound in the back of his throat.

"Hey guys! I'm back! I see you've begun the party already!" a cheerful voice said behind

them, and Jimmy walked into the lab bearing a big white box. He put it down on the table and opened it with a flourish to reveal two dozen donuts nestled enticingly inside.

"Oh man!" Tony peered at them over Abby's shoulder. "You got the pink iced ones! I love the pink iced ones!" Tony gave a little dance of pure glee and promptly turned back into a puppy again.

Seconds later, he'd knocked the box to the floor and was running around Abby's lab with a pink iced donut in his mouth. Gibbs leaned back against the wall and watched the mayhem that ensued as Abby, Jimmy and Dan chased after him. Tony's tail was wagging happily, and his entire body was convulsing with excitement as he ran amok through the lab. Abby made a lunge for him, but he was too fast for her. He escaped and went to hide behind the mass spectrometer, out of the reach of human hands, gazing out at them triumphantly as he chewed on his victory donut.

Gibbs went over there and gazed down on Tony fiercely. Tony swallowed down half the donut with a big gulp, and looked up at him, daring him to make a grab for the rest of it. Gibbs wasn't going to even try and play this game – he knew exactly how it ended.

Instead, he moved his foot to capture Tony's lead where it was trailing on the floor. Tony glanced at the trapped lead, and then up at Gibbs, and then at the remains of the donut, a calculating expression in his eyes as he tried to figure out if he could finish up the donut before Gibbs pulled him out by the lead. Gibbs crouched down in front of him. Tony took a fast bite of the donut and began chewing quickly.

"You know...I was thinking of getting a basket," Gibbs said conversationally. "A dog basket. To keep in the kitchen. Pup like you shouldn't be allowed on the bed."

Tony stopped chewing and cocked his ears pathetically. He made a little whining sound.

"Oh yes I would," Gibbs told him. Tony dropped what was left of the donut and nudged it mournfully with his nose in Gibbs's direction. Gibbs grinned and stood up. "Out you come, bad pup," he ordered.

Tony emerged from behind the mass spectrometer, a chagrined expression on his face. He sat down in front of Gibbs, and then put up one front paw and patted pleadingly on Gibbs's pants.

"Wow – you're good at this, Agent Gibbs," Dan said approvingly. "You should take him to dog training classes!"

Tony turned to glare at him with a look of pure hatred. Seconds later, he was human again.

"Third time lucky," he sighed, as he reached for his clothes once more. He got dressed quickly and then turned to go.

"Hey, Tony, don't you want a donut?" Abby asked, holding up one of the pink ones, the grin on her face stretching from ear to ear. Tony glowered at her.

"Ha, ha, but I don't think I'll risk it again, thank you," he said sourly, heading off in the

direction of the elevator. Gibbs followed and got in beside him.

"Dog training classes," Tony muttered angrily. "What the hell would the undead know about it anyhow?" He unbuckled the collar from around his neck and then handed it stiffly to Gibbs. "Here. Thanks," he muttered gracelessly.

Gibbs put an affectionate hand on the back of his head and began stroking. His hair wasn't as soft as his puppy fur, but the stroking seemed to have the same effect. Tony relaxed under his finger tips and made a happy little snuffling sound.

"It's just one of those days," Gibbs said soothingly.

"You threatened to make me sleep in a dog basket!" Tony accused, turning to gaze at him mournfully. Gibbs thought that his green human eyes were just as irresistible as his brown, puppy dog ones.

"Aw – but that would only be for five nights of the month," Gibbs teased. "All the other nights you could spend in bed with me – same as always." Tony's eyes narrowed. Gibbs grinned. "Okay, no dog basket," he said, relenting.

"Promise?"

"Promise." Gibbs pulled him over and kissed his nose. "Hey – I know the naked stuff is embarrassing, but you got your heart's desire, didn't you?"

Tony sighed, and wrapped his arms happily around Gibbs's body. "Yeah," he muttered, snuffling wetly at Gibbs's jawline and then moving in for a kiss. "Yeah. I did. Woof."

The End

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