

Particular Talents

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Particular Talents

by [greywash](#)

Summary

"Always best to be prepared, Bunter," Lord Peter beamed, with a familiar and terrifying glint in his eye.

Notes

For **Zaganthi**: a very happy Yuletide and a merry New Year to you; I very much hope you enjoy this.

This story contains restraints (as in, ropes, handcuffs, et cetera), but not really applied in a sexual or fetish-related context, which makes it difficult to tag. I do, however, feel as though I should mention it ahead of time: men-tying-each-other-up up ahead!!

A very big thank you to **[redacted]** for hand-holding and beta. ♥

"Bunter!"

Bunter looked up; his lordship's voice had a certain carrying quality, though he rarely chose to demonstrate that particular talent within the flat—at least, not to that extent.

"I say, Bunter!"

The sound had not yet faded away before Bunter was on his way towards the library—no, not the library; the bedroom. Bunter frowned to himself and hurried along.

"My lord?" Bunter nudged the door open.

"Bit of a sticky situation I seem to have landed myself in." Lord Peter smiled at him rather sheepishly, lifting his wrists. "Don't suppose you could lend me a hand."

"Ah," Bunter said, then stepped over to disentangle the rope from around Lord Peter's forearms.

"There was a fascinating article in this morning's *Times*," Lord Peter explained. "That bit on how that gang of jewel thieves in Manchester was all trained up on nautical knots and ranch-hand cattle roping."

"Yes, my lord." Bunter had read the article in question and found it both intriguing and informative, then set it aside for his lordship's attention. He hadn't expected Lord Peter to take an interest in the subject to quite this extent, but Bunter didn't precisely object; in the days and weeks immediately following the business with the Attenbury emeralds, Lord Peter had been first ecstatic, then strangely secretive, and recently, worryingly lethargic. Bunter had been very near to summoning assistance in the form of the Dowager Duchess, but it would very likely be unnecessary, if his lordship had acquired an interest in knotwork.

"Seemed like a rather clever idea, I thought," Lord Peter said. "But it doesn't seem to be the sort of hobby one can indulge in *on one's own*, if you take my meaning."

"Perfectly, my lord." Bunter tugged at a particularly tricky loop of rope that had caught on Lord Peter's left cufflink, biting back a sigh.

"I don't suppose you'd let me tie you up?" Lord Peter asked, without sounding terribly keen on the idea.

"No, my lord," Bunter said, with regret.

"Just for practice, and all that," Lord Peter clarified.

"Of course, my lord," Bunter said. "However."

"Lest I should ever find myself running afoul of jewel thieves in Manchester."

Bunter coughed delicately. "While I would be, of course, perfectly amenable to the idea for my own part, as I have some past experience with extricating myself from restraints, I suspect that I may be a more advanced subject than your lordship desires at this point in time."

"Aha, the penny drops." As Bunter untangled the last loop, Lord Peter smiled up at him. "War experience, I'd imagine?"

"Just as you say, my lord." Bunter wound the rope into a tidy coil. Good, fine stuff; at least it wouldn't chafe, if his lordship continued with the exercise.

"Yes, I see." Lord Peter appeared to be mulling this over, so Bunter tucked the rope discreetly back into the drawer with the rest of his lordship's burgeoning collection of tools for detective work: a pocket torch that looked like a matchbox, an exceptionally powerful monocle, and a compass in a rather clumsy setting that Bunter had been subtly encouraging his lordship to replace, then bowed himself out to go make a start on dinner.

Lord Peter found Bunter again three-quarters of an hour later, in the kitchen, ironing one of his lordship's shirts. "You know, Bunter."

"Yes, my lord?" Bunter pressed out a small but unfortunate crease, positioned just above the elbow.

"It occurs to me that I've been approaching the problem from the wrong starting place," Lord Peter said.

"My lord?" Bunter turned the shirt over.

"Well, really, statistically speaking..." Lord Peter leaned against the edge of the work surface. "Perhaps I ought to focus my efforts on the other end of the procedure."

Bunter looked up. "I'm not entirely certain I follow you, my lord."

"I don't suppose you'd be willing to tie *me* up," Lord Peter said, with a bright smile. "I suspect that part of my difficulty this morning was that it's rather difficult, as it turns out, to effectively restrain one's self, what?"

"I would imagine so, my lord," Bunter said, privately thinking that Lord Peter had done a very effective job of restraining himself—possibly a great deal more effective a job than he'd intended.

"So you could tie me up," Lord Peter said encouragingly. "And then I could try to free myself. Just in case I ever find myself entangled with a gang of jewel thieves in Manchester."

"I do endeavor to give satisfaction, my lord," Bunter said, somewhat dubiously. He was considering whether tying up his employer could legitimately be considered to be a part of his job description; he suspected not.

"Not to mention that then if I can't get myself free in a reasonable period of time," Lord Peter said, "you'd be to hand to cut the bonds and so on."

Bunter did have to admit that this was a significant advantage; he dreaded the consequences, should his lordship attempt to pursue his peculiar new hobby in less well-supervised environs. He had a brief but colorful vision of Lord Peter tying his wrists to the railing of the staircase in the Bellona Club and being unable to extricate himself, and shuddered. "If your lordship would desire me to do so," Bunter said, "I would certainly be willing to make an attempt."

"Well, excellent!" Lord Peter rubbed his hands together. "What's the *modus operandi*, then? Bedroom? Sitting room? Library?"

"The library, I believe, would be the ideal location," Bunter decided.

"Then let us repair to the library," Lord Peter said. "I shall retrieve the rope."

Bunter tied Lord Peter up in the library.

"I say, Bunter," Lord Peter said, pleased, tugging at his wrists. "This is *very* good."

"I endeavor to give satisfaction, my lord," said Bunter.

An hour and a half later, Bunter untied Lord Peter in the library, as the Dowager Duchess was on the telephone.

"I almost had it, Bunter," Lord Peter said, vexed. "I'm certain that loop around the right one was coming loose."

"Indeed, my lord," said Bunter.

Lord Peter was an excellent commanding officer, a gentleman of distinction, and a first-rate mind, but as the summer slipped by, it also became clear that he was not, in any way, destined for a career of nimble and daring escapes. Bunter had bound Lord Peter's wrists in a variety of manners; the only one from which Lord Peter successfully managed to free himself was the slip knot.

"Bunter," Lord Peter said, as Bunter sliced the rope, at long last too frayed and worn to slip free easily, just above the crumpled line of his lordship's right cuff.

"Yes, my lord?"

"I'm dreadful at this, aren't I?"

Bunter cleared his throat. "It does not appear to be one of your lordship's particular talents, no."

Lord Peter sighed, and the rope came free. He shook out his wrists. "Well," he said. "I suppose if I'm every captured by a gang of rope-wielding jewel thieves in Manchester, I'll just have to rely on you to rescue me, what?"

"That might be for the best, my lord," Bunter agreed, and pushed himself up straight.

"But perhaps," Lord Peter said, "I ought to look into handcuffs."

"My lord?" Bunter said, alarmed.

"It's an entirely different skill set, you know," Lord Peter explained. "Escaping from handcuffs."

"I imagine so, my lord," Bunter conceded.

"I wonder if Inspector Parker would be willing to loan me a pair," Lord Peter said. "And you can take charge of the key."

"I'm not certain," Bunter began, but Lord Peter waved his delicate protest away half-formed.

"Always best to be prepared, Bunter," Lord Peter beamed, with a familiar and terrifying glint in his eye. "Ring Parker up, would you?"

"Very good, my lord," said Bunter.

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