

The Escape Artist

A bdsm Fantasy by Peter Mann © 2008, 9,10

After my company was sold, I was financially secure. So I decided to retire very early, and enjoy my hobby. My hobby was Magic. I had always enjoyed performing at parties, and now I decided I would indulge my passion, and try to be a professional magician. I didn't need the money, so if I didn't get any bookings, that would be ok. I invested in professional equipment, and hired a lady assistant. The professional equipment made complex tricks easy to perform. I videotaped my routine, and sent the tapes off to booking agents. I got no bookings at all. "I had nothing new" I was frequently told. I realized the problem. All the professional equipment was already known to the established magicians, so the tricks were not new.

The same problem had been encountered by Houdini, and he found a unique performing routine by specializing in escape tricks. I read all the books I could get on Houdini. I found that he was a skilled locksmith, and escaped by using hidden picks. Some of his tricks were however unexplained, and I had difficulty understanding how he had escaped. I studied locksmithing. I realized that most handcuffs had very simple locks. Some had complicated locks however. Then I looked for handcuffs to practice on. But I was not going to simply buy modern handcuffs, I had to find handcuffs that no other magician had. I set aside my store-bought conjuring equipment, and started visiting second-hand stores and antique malls, looking for old handcuffs. They were very hard to find. I looked on the internet, and found that I could buy them on ebay. I was rich, from the sale of my company, so I was able to outbid people, and always got what I wanted. I collected all the handcuffs that had more difficult locks. I studied the locks, and was always able to devise a way to pick them, usually with a simple piece of wire. Some cuffs did need more specialized picks. Some cuffs were also designed so that it was hard to operate the key whilst wearing the cuffs. I practiced and practiced, collecting more handcuffs all the time. I got to be known as an avid collector, and pretty soon people were emailing me privately, offering me unusual antique handcuffs, since they knew I would pay a high price and would not haggle.

I eventually realized that I rally enjoyed handling handcuffs. They had an almost erotic quality that I had never appreciated until I held them. As part of my internet contacts, I found that there was a large underground culture of people who felt the same, and enjoyed bondage as an enhancement to sexual

pleasure. It was like a lightbulb suddenly went on in my head. I was the same as these people! I attended club meetings, and met other people into bondage. As with any group, there were people I liked and people I didn't like. But I developed a few good friends who I respected and who enjoyed handcuffs as fetish objects. I performed my escape tricks at the club meetings, and enjoyed the attention I got. I had forgotten my plan to be a professional magician. I was happy as an amateur, with my new friends.

One evening, I was approached by a lady dressed in black. She introduced herself as "Mrs Winston". That name rang a bell somewhere. But I could not remember where I had heard the name.

"I see you are a serious artist, Mr Mann. You know handcuffs very well. I can see that. You have developed the same escape skills as my late husband used to have".

Now I knew where I had heard the name. Harry Winston had been a famous escape artist about twenty years ago, but had retired from performing without explanation, at the height of his success.

But Harry must be in his sixties by now. I was surprised to see that his wife was much younger, maybe thirty at the most.

"Do I have the honour of addressing the wife of Harry Winston?" I asked.

"His widow. And I'm his second wife. Harry's first wife passed away 16 years ago, and Harry passed away last month" she replied.

"I am so sorry. I never met him, but since I became interested in handcuffs, I have read about him so much. He was one of the greatest!"

"Yes, he was" she replied. "and he spent his last years attempting to become the very greatest. He ultimately failed, I'm afraid".

"I'm sorry to hear that. Perhaps if he had not died so young, he might have succeeded" I said

"It's possible. But I doubt it personally. He spent the last twenty years of his life attempting this one great, very great magical escape trick. After the first few years, his first wife realized he would not succeed. But she had promised

to help him, and had promised not to let him give up his attempts. So she cared for him, as he had requested. It suited her, in a way, to take care of his affairs, since she was much better at managing his money than he was. When she eventually became ill, she insisted that I promise to fulfill what he had requested, and she had started. I readily agreed. So I carried on, taking care of Harry. This went on for the last five years of his life, as he continued to work on his great escape trick. I kept my promise. He died last month, but without solving his great puzzle. He never solved it! Not even after over twenty years of trying!"

I was puzzled and intrigued. "What was this great magical puzzle? Was it one of Houdini's unexplained escapes? Some complex lock? I am very good with locks"

"No. He knew the secrets of all Houdini's tricks, and the secrets of all locks! He devised a new escape challenge, much more difficult than any ever before attempted. One that seemed impossible that anyone could ever do it! And that was what attracted Harry! He wanted to succeed at a really magical escape! Something truly impossible! An escape that would require genuine magic! My husband was convinced that real magic existed, and could be found, if one tried hard enough and long enough. He devoted the last twenty years of his life to that belief. He instructed his first wife, that she must not allow him to give up. She faithfully did that. And when she died, I took over her support of Harry."

"I am intrigued! May I ask what the challenge was? Could you explain to me what he was trying to do?" I asked.

"I could. But on one condition. You must agree to continue the same challenge! You must agree to continue his attempt to find a true magic!"

"Certainly I will...." I said "but of course you must understand....".

"No!" she interrupted me. "I don't want to hear your reservations. Only a yes or no answer! And I will then decide if you are the right person! If I decide that you are, then I will explain the details of the challenge to you, and will assist you in trying to complete it. If I select you, I will draw up a contract which I will require you to sign. There will also be several conditions! You must accept them all!"

“Certainly. I understand. Commercial rights must be protected....” I said

She smiled. “Yes.... that sort of thing.”

She stood up. “But for now, I will say goodnight. It was a pleasure talking to you, Mr Mann, and I enjoyed your stage performance greatly. I will be in touch with you if I wish to proceed further with this private matter. Goodnight, Mr Mann!”

That night I could hardly sleep. “The greatest magical escape trick of all time”! I was obsessed with what she had said. An escape artist challenge so difficult that Harry Winston could not solve it in 20 years! Maybe I would solve the puzzle that had baffled Harry Winston! I would be famous!

The next day she phoned me. “Are you interested in what we talked about yesterday, Mr Mann?” she asked.

“Yes, Mrs Winston, I am. Let me know how you would like me to proceed” I answered.

“I would like you to come and see me tomorrow. Come to my house” She gave me the address. I knew the area. It was an area of older brownstone warehouses, large stone buildings that had been converted into expensive private houses. They were highly sought after, but rarely came on the market. “I ask that you tell no one about this. Tell no one where you are going. Take a bus, not a taxi. This is a matter that required the utmost secrecy. You will understand why, later. Will you do this?”

“Yes, certainly I will. I’ll see you at 10am” I said.

I arrived just before 10am. I took the bus as instructed. No one knew where I was going.

The building had a large steel door. I pressed the bell, and waited. She opened the door. She was wearing a black dress still. “Come in Mr Mann”

The building was huge. Large parts seemed empty. We took the elevator up to the fourth floor. The floor had been converted into a modern apartment, expensively furnished.

“Please sit down, Mr Mann. May I offer you a drink”

"It's rather early..." I said.

"Yes it is. But this is a very special day. And you will need something to brace you! I am having a scotch! Will you join me?"

"Yes....thank you. I have the feeling that this will be a special day, too" I said.

It was expensive scotch, in expensive glasses.

We looked through scrapbooks of Harry Winston's career. He was very famous, back then.

"Forgive me, but you look so young, to be Harry's widow" I said at last.

"I am actually Harry's second wife" she said. I was much younger than Harry. We married five years ago, when he was 55 and I was 25".

"Now. I need you to sign this agreement. It simply says that you agree to work on Harry's challenge, in the way that he defined it, until you find a solution".

"I can't promise to work at it continuously..." I said.

"Of course. You can start and stop as you wish. You may stop work anytime you wish. But you must agree to accept the challenge, exactly as Harry defined it, until you find the solution, no matter how long it takes. Sign there, please."

"I guess that's ok...I can take any break I wish, as long as I want, and then continue working on the challenge when I feel like it?"

"Yes, Mr Mann, you can stop your efforts any time, for as long as you wish to, and take them up again anytime you wish. You can work on the challenge as long as you wish. As long as it takes. There is no limit on how long." she smiled.

That seemed fine. I signed the paper.

"Now, what is the challenge exactly...." Suddenly I felt very tired. The room was swimming.

Mrs Winston stood up. "It's a sleeping draught, Mr Mann. It's harmless. Now you have signed the contract, I need you to sleep for an hour, whilst I get you ready for the challenge" she said.

She suddenly seemed a long way away, and the room was getting very dark. I slept.

I woke up. I was sitting in a chair. I tried to move, but could not. I realized that straps were around my wrists and upper arms. My legs and body were also strapped into the chair. I realized I strap was around my forehead, holding my head hard back. I realized I was naked. I shouted in alarm.

Mrs Winston walked around in front of me. "Don't be alarmed, Mr Mann. You are in no danger. I have stripped you and carefully searched you to make sure you have no hidden keys or files. I have strapped you into the chair, but you only have to stay there for a few hours. So just relax". She pushed something into my mouth. It was chocolate. I swallowed it. "One more piece, to be sure" she said, and pushed another piece into my mouth. "That's a laxative chocolate, Mr Mann. It will take effect in about an hour. Now, drink as much water as you can, please." She held a plastic water jug to my mouth. I drank as much as I could. "There is a bucket under your chair, so go ahead and clean out your bowels. You won't be able to stop it, once the laxative chocolate takes effect. I'll be back in a few hours. I expect you'd rather be private, for this!"

She went out of the room. I was left strapped into my chair. It was made of steel tubes, strong and welded. It was on wheels, I realized. I pulled at the straps. I could not move an inch. I forced myself to remain calm. If this was a stage trick, I could get out, because I would have some means of undoing the buckles. But this was no trick! This was real! I was helpless!

After 45 mins, the chocolate started to work. I was uncontrollably purged. It was mainly the water that came through me. But I was so humiliated!

At last, she came back. "All done? Good. That was to wash you out, to ensure that you had no escape tools hidden in your stomach! You are going to have to attempt your next escape trick with no means of escape, nothing except your bare hands!"

She held a glass to my mouth. "Drink, please". It smelled it. It was scotch. I refused to drink. "It's only whisky, with that sleeping draught again" she said. "Drink it! Or I'll force feed it to you!"

I knew she meant it. I had no choice. I drank. I quickly fell asleep again.

I woke again. This time, I was lying on a warm stone surface. I sat up. I felt a chain drag down on my neck. I was naked, on a concrete bench, in a small stone walled room. A thick steel collar was around my neck, with a heavy steel padlock. A heavy steel chain ran from the collar, up to a ring set in the wall above the bench. There was a small barred window high up on the wall alongside the bench. The opposite wall had a steel door. The door was closed. I got up, and walked towards the door. The chain pulled me up short. I could not reach the door. There was a peephole in the door, face high, about 1 inch in diameter. It appeared to be closed, although I could not get close enough to be sure. I shouted towards the door. My voice echoed from the bare walls of the empty cell. There was no reply.

I turned back and inspected my cell. It was completely bare. No loose objects of any kind. And I was completely naked, except for my steel collar and chain. I looked back at the steel door. It was smooth grey steel. There was no keyhole. The locks or bolts and hinges were on the outside of the door, where I could not even touch them even if I could reach the door. Even if I had the key, I could not get out! I noticed that there was one hatch in the steel door, near the floor, about 6" square. It was closed with a thick steel plate.

I took a step towards the barred window. I was pulled up short by my chain. The barred window was close to the arched stone roof of the cell, well above my reach, even if I was not on the chain. I looked up at it. Some light was coming down through the bars. It was not sunlight, it was an electric light far up and outside the bars. It was enough to dimly light the cell. In the far corner, there was a hole in the stone floor, close to the walls. It was about 4" in diameter, and ringed with steel set into the stone. It was dark, and I couldn't see anything, but faintly I heard the sound of water, far below. Just above the hole, was a stone basin set in the wall. It was full of cool water. I could just reach the corner, at the full extension of my chain. I knelt and drank, gratefully. I quickly emptied the basin. There was a tiny hole in the wall above the basin, that was obviously to allow water to flow in, but no water flowed.

I realized the stone floor was not cold to my bare feet. In fact it was slightly warm. I tested the walls. They also were slightly warm. I went to the stone bench. That too was warm. Clearly there were some kind of electric heater set into the concrete.

I heard footsteps outside the cell. It was a lady's step. I stood and faced the door. I saw a movement at the peephole. Then I heard bolts and padlocks being opened. The heavy steel door swung open. Ms Winston came into view. She stopped just inside my cell, just beyond my reach, and looked at me.

"Please kneel when I enter, Mr Mann!" I obeyed. She smiled. "That's good. Remember to kneel when I am present. Its my personal rule! If you forget, I can make your life much more uncomfortable that it already is! Welcome to your new home. As you agreed, you will work on a solution to the escape problem that Harry Winston devised. The challenge Harry invented, was to escape from this cell, with nothing but his bare hands! This was the escape challenge that Harry Winston devised! And he made his first wife promise to give him the ultimate test, to leave him naked, chained to the wall, until he managed to find a way to escape!"

"Unfortunately for him, he never did manage to escape. He spent over 26 years chained in this cell, locked in the same steel collar as you now wear! He had made conditions in the cell intentionally spartan and uncomfortable, and knew that his wife had promised not to release him, to ensure that he genuinely would try hard to escape, and would not just give up"

" Now he's gone, and you have agreed to continue his work! You may take all the time you need. You are a fairly young man, so you should be able to work at the problem for at least forty years!"

" And in case you are wondering how I married Harry: his first wife chose me, because I was the right type! Harry was chained, and didn't have much say!"

"The padlock on your collar is a German security type.. It's the one that Harry specified. Its totally impossible to pick, even if you had any tools. Which you don't!"

"Good night, Mr Mann. Good luck with your efforts to escape!"

She stepped back through the door. The heavy steel door slammed shut. I heard bolts sliding home, then the sound of padlocks being locked. The light suddenly went out. I was left in darkness.

I sat still on the bench, in the darkness, naked. The collar and chain pulled down on my neck. The heavy chain clinked softly as I lay down. I felt the padlock, and the smooth thick steel of the collar with my fingers. It was locked snugly around my bare neck!

I was chained! For the rest of my life!.

It was completely silent, and completely dark. There was nothing I could do until Ms Winston turned my light back on. I was totally exhausted. The bench was hard, but the concrete was warm. The horror of my situation overwhelmed me. It was obviously impossible to escape from this cell! Not without some lock picks, and some extension tool to let me reach the locks! Even with those, it would be extremely difficult, since I could not see where the bolts and padlocks were, or even what type they were. It was hopeless! I obviously could not get out! And neither could Harry Winston! In his insane quest for true magic, he had spent the last twenty years of his life locked up naked in this cell, trying to find an escape from a cell that he had designed to be totally impossible to escape from! He had intentionally devised a restraint that could not possibly be escaped from, and then given himself no way out unless he could find an escape! He had convinced both his first and second wives to test him! And now his second mad wife had tricked me into continuing his insane endeavor!

I had a rock-hard erection. This was erotic, as well as being horrific! I must find some way to escape! I could not spend the rest of my life in this cell! My mind went around and around, trying to think of a way out. I could not think of any way! That made my erection even harder. I fell asleep at last.

Ms Winston came back the next morning. Each morning Ms Winston would turn on my light and inspect me through the peephole before opening the cell door. I had to get on my knees, as close to the door as my chain would allow, so she could see my collar and chain were secure. Only then would she open my cell door, and throw me a few pieces of dry bread and fruit. I was always hungry. I was just fed once each day. She was always careful to stay well back from my chain. Water flowed into my water basin twice each day, operated by some times, at about lights-on and about lights-out. I realized the hole in the

floor was my toilet, and gradually got used to using it. I was provided a toothbrush every evening, which I had to use and immediately hand back. I was not allowed to keep anything in my cell. Once each week, Ms Winston would handcuff me, then would shave my head and beard as I knelt.

Mostly Ms Winston would not speak to me. But as the days passed, occasionally she would say a few words. I asked her why I was fed so little. She answered that it was to encourage me to try hard to escape. She said that I was intentionally kept hungry and uncomfortable. She said that Harry Winston had set all these rules out, in writing, in great detail, and had made his wife swear to follow them exactly. She said that Harry had started to beg for release after two weeks in the cell, pleading and begging, saying that he had changed his mind, but his wife had faithfully obeyed his instructions, and had not let him out. Harry had explicitly written in his instructions to her that he was not to be let out, not under any circumstances, not even if he begged and pleaded and claimed he had changed his mind. She said that when he tried begging, his wife brought his written instructions, held them in front of him so he could see his own instructions, then she had locked his cell door and turned out his light for the rest of the week as a punishment.

With his usual thoroughness, Harry had explicitly explained and stated in writing that he wanted strict discipline, and punishments for any bad behaviour. His wife found these instructions surprisingly easy to fulfil. She found that she enjoyed having Harry locked up, and having him begging. She had full control of all his finances, and managed them much better without his interference, so lived very well, just as she pleased, whilst he was locked in his cell. In short, it suited her very well, to keep him locked up,

One morning after lights-on, Ms Winston did not leave after throwing me my food. She stood in the cell door, watching me eat hungrily. Then she spoke.

“I have an offer to make to you, Mr Mann. Harry specified that his first wife, and then later myself, manage his financial affairs, whilst he was locked up here. He obviously could not manage them himself, since he was allowed no newspapers, and no contact with the outside world, by his own written instructions. In the same way, if you wish, I will manage your financial affairs, whilst you are in your cell. I advise you to accept, since otherwise your investments will likely lose money heavily, as the world outside changes. You will be kept just like Harry was, with no contact with the outside world. You

will not be allowed newspapers or any visitors or contact with the outside world either.”

“So what do you choose?” she asked.

I didn't reply.

“Very well” she said. She stepped back through the door.

“NO! Please.....don't go! Let me think!” I begged. She moved back. “Well? Speak up! Or I will leave. This is the only offer I will make! And I'll turn out your light for the week, as a punishment for wasting my time, if you decline it!”

I was desperate! Unless something changed, I would never get out of this cell! Even though I did not trust her, at least it would be a change! Maybe I would be allowed out to sign some forms! That might give me a chance to escape! Locked on this chain, I had no chance!

“Yes, Mrs Winston! I'd like you to manage my financial affairs! Thank you for offering!” I said as humbly and meekly as I could, kneeling, on my chain. But inside, I was trying to think of a way to get out!

She laughed, looking down at me. “Very well, Peter! I think I may call you Peter now! I am pleased you are being sensible! You will have realized by now, of course, that I am a sadist? Harry's first wife selected me because of my nature. I enjoy keeping a man chained!”

“I will let you know when I have made the arrangements for you”.

She stepped back and closed and bolted my cell door. The lights went out!

The bitch! She was going to leave me in the dark all day! Outside the cell, I heard her laugh. Then I heard her high heels clicking off down the corridor. She was a real sadist!

She left me in the dark for two days. Two days later, she opened the cell door. Mrs Winston handcuffed me immediately after opening my cell.

She held a legal paper in front of my face. “Sign this” she said.

“May I read it first?” I asked politely.

“No, there is no need for you to read it. Just sign it. I will hold it for you. You can sign it with your handcuffs on! Harry was able to, so you can too! Or shall I get the tawse?”

“Please, Ma'am, I have to read it first” I said meekly.

“You prison scum! How dare you contradict me!” she screamed.

She slapped me hard across my face.

I tried to stand up.

“Get back on your knees! Put your nose back to the wall! Keep it there!” I obeyed.

She took the tawse from her belt. I had often seen it hanging there. It was heavy polished leather, about ¼” thick, with a slot cut in the end, a two-tailed Scottish tawse. The slot increased the sting!

I knelt, my nose pressed against the wall, my bare ass exposed for the tawse.

“Get your ass up higher, and get hands up from your buttocks!” she ordered.

I obeyed immediately.

I heard her take a step, and the strap cracked, hard, across my bare buttocks.

It was pure agony!

I had not realized a tawse felt like that! The tawse was unbearable! My ass burned white hot, then slowly cooled. Before the sting could cease, she struck me again, hard, in exactly the same place.

This time I yelled in agony. I could not stop myself. I could not bear the tawse!

“Please, Ma'am! Please! No more!!!! Not the tawse!!!!!! Please!!!!!! I'll sign! I'll sign!!!” I screamed, sobbing.

She stepped back. “You wimp! So you can't take the tawse, can you? Very well! If you sign, I'll let you off the rest of the strapping! I was going to give you six!

You really are a wimp! I have never seen a man buckle after only two strokes from the tawse before! It usually takes three!"

She pushed a pen into my fingers, and held the paper on the clipboard beside my cuffed hands. With difficulty, I was able to sign.

She took the pen back and inspected my signature. She was satisfied. She unlocked my handcuffs, and left the cell. I heard the cell door slam and the bolts being slid into place and padlocked. The lights went out. I sobbed. She was a pure sadist! And I was her helpless prisoner!

I felt my way to my bench in the darkness, and lay down on my stomach. I felt my buttocks with my fingers. They were still burning where the tawse had struck. I could feel the skin was raised, in a single weal across my buttocks, where both strokes had hit. She had intentionally put both strokes on the same place, to maximize the pain! The sadistic bitch! I hated her! If I could only get off this chain, I would use the strap on her! I'd enjoy doing that very much! I had an immediate erection at the thought, and had to turn onto my side. As I moved, my ass started burning again! I hated the tawse!

I lay still in the darkness, and my ass slowly started to cool down. I felt the skin again. The weals were still raised, even more now. I probably had a vivid weal across my ass. It would probably take a week to heal. Every time I moved, the burning started again. But it was getting less intense now.

I wondered what I had signed. I sighed. There was nothing else I could have done. I could not bear the tawse. I realized I would have to sign anything she asked me to!

I head nothing more about the paper I had signed. Ms Winston never explained what it was for, or said anything more about it. A week later, she brought another paper for me to sign. This time I signed it immediately. She did not explain what it was for, and did not offer to let me read it.

The next week, she brought ten blank checks for me to sign. I signed them immediately. She laughed when I had signed the last one. "You pathetic wimp! You deserve to be chained! If you were a man, you would have refused to sign! And then I would have had the pleasure of strapping you! With the tawse! You disgust me, you wimp! I despise men who can't take a good strapping! I'm pleased you are locked up! It's the best thing for a wimp like you!"

She went to the cell door. She looked back at me and laughed. I think that maybe now you understand your situation! You are locked up, there is no release! Maybe you will seriously try to get off your chain, now? I want you to try! You will find that you can't! But keep trying, I will enjoy thinking of you, trying desperately to get off your chain, whilst the years slowly pass! Its amusing to know you will still be chained here, just as you are now, in twenty years! And in thirty years! And in forty years too!"

She laughed and closed and locked my cell door.

The light went off.

It was quiet.

Total darkness.

Just my breathing.

And the sound of the chain, when I moved.

End