

UNSEALED

I Loved the Torture Video

Epstein's emails reveal a man who treated cruelty as entertainment, negotiation tactic, and sexual threat — in his own words

Unsealed Research Team

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On April 24, 2009, at 3:36 PM, Jeffrey Epstein sent an email from his jeevacation@gmail.com account. No subject line. Two sentences:

■ *“where are you? are you ok, I loved the torture video”¹*

The recipient’s name is redacted. They replied the next morning from China: “I am in china I will be in the US 2nd week of may.”² Epstein wrote back: “Hope to see you.”

That’s the whole exchange. Casual. Breezy. The kind of thing you’d text a friend about a Netflix documentary.

Except this wasn’t Netflix. And 93 minutes before Epstein typed those words, his inbox tells us exactly what “torture video” he was talking about.

The Video

At 9:28 AM that same morning, Jeffrey Cohen — a business associate — emailed Andrew Farkas with a link to an ABC News story. Subject line: **“UAE Torture.”**³

■ *“Better stay out of the UAE for a while. This was reportedly related to a soured business transaction...”*

The story was about Sheikh Issa bin Zayed al-Nahyan, a half-brother of the president of the United Arab Emirates. A video had surfaced showing Issa torturing an Afghan grain dealer named Mohammed Shah Poor — running him over with an SUV, beating him with a wooden plank with a nail in it, setting him on fire, stuffing sand in his mouth. The tape ran for nearly an hour.

It was international news. ABC ran it. The State Department commented. Human rights organizations called for prosecution.

At 2:03 PM, Andrew Farkas — a real estate mogul and frequent Epstein associate — forwarded the story to Epstein’s inbox with two words: **“Uh oh.”**³

Ninety-three minutes later, Epstein wrote to someone else: *“I loved the torture video.”*

He loved it.

A Vocabulary, Not an Aberration

If that email existed in isolation, you could dismiss it. Dark humor. Sarcasm. A reference to something else entirely.

But the word “torture” runs through Epstein’s correspondence like a thread — and the contexts get worse.

“Do you want me to try to do her.. or just torture her”

On September 8, 2011, Epstein emailed Tancredi Marchiolo, an Italian businessman who regularly sent women into his orbit:⁴

■ ***Epstein:*** “what would you like me to do with your friend?”

Marchiolo: “Hit on her!”

Epstein: “do you want me to try to do her.. or just torture her”

Read that again. Those are the two options. “Do her” — or “torture her.” This is a man asking for instructions on how to treat a woman who has been sent to him.

Two days later, Marchiolo reported back:⁵

■ ***“She wrote me on blackberry messenger that you are very nice and clever and sent a smiley face. She has excellent oral skills.”***

Epstein replied: “understood, thanks.”

Then Marchiolo sent the woman a message of his own: *“I wrote her that she is generally unpolite and not thankful (just like that). She should be more thankful in life...enjoy!”*

A woman was sent to a convicted sex offender. He asked whether to seduce or torture her. Two days later, she’s being told to be more *grateful*.

“Please don’t torture me”

On August 9, 2010, a woman named Nadia wrote Epstein what reads like a breakup letter from inside a cage:⁶

■ ***“please don’t torture me by calling to talk. You hurt me too much and I love you too much to be a decent ‘friend’. I will always stand up for you in press or in court and defend you if you need it, but I can’t spend time with you, call to chat or be a part of your life anymore.”***

She had planned her life around him. She was devastated. And she was still financially dependent — asking about her apartment, her car, her visa status.

Epstein’s response:

■ ***“I will try not to torture you. I just wired 20k dollars. last week. car? apt? balle? sex? , sorry.whoops”***

He listed what he'd purchased for her the way you'd read back a restaurant order. Car, apartment, ballet, sex — sorry, whoops. The “try not to torture you” isn't comfort. It's a punchline. He thought it was funny.

“First step = to torture”

By October 2015, Epstein was using the word as a financial verb. In an email to his longtime financial advisor Richard Kahn:⁷

■ *“priority is finding the 20m with joslin. first step = to torture”*

Twenty million dollars. First step: torture. Not a metaphor for cruelty here — a negotiation tactic. Epstein's vocabulary for getting what he wanted from people was the same whether the currency was money or flesh.

The People Around the Word

What's revealing isn't just how Epstein used the word. It's who was in the room — or the inbox — when he did.

Andrew Farkas forwarded the UAE torture video to Epstein with a chummy “Uh oh” and appeared on every one of Epstein's “People to See” lists from 2010 through 2019.⁸ He co-invested with Epstein in a Greylock deal led by Reid Hoffman. His private plane ferried Larry Summers' stranded staff from St. Thomas. A Deutsche Bank banker testified that Epstein introduced him to Farkas as a “priority prospect.”⁹

Tancredi Marchiolo emailed Epstein photos of models, shared investment tips with him, traveled with the Prince of Bahrain, and — as the emails show — sent women to Epstein with instructions.¹⁰ He showed up at an English wedding “with 2 blondes” and told Epstein about it.

Ghislaine Maxwell used the word casually too — “Sorry to torture you on this,” she wrote Epstein in June 2011, debating whether to do something or do nothing.¹¹ For this circle, “torture” was ambient language.

Even **Kathy Ruemmler** — President Obama's former White House Counsel, who was by then Epstein's personal lawyer — used it. “Magnani cancelled my appointment so no torture today,” she wrote in September 2015, before updating Epstein on an IRS validation project.¹² Hers was innocent — a dental appointment. But she was writing it to a man for whom the word had other meanings entirely.

What a Word Tells You

There's an artist named Andres Serrano — famous for *Piss Christ* — who was close enough to Epstein to tour his townhouse, send him art books, and ask him to arrange a meeting with the Pope.¹³ In October 2016, Serrano told Epstein he'd just returned from Ireland, where he had a show called "Torture."

Epstein replied: "Great photos."

He was comfortable with the word. Comfortable when it described a viral video of a man being run over by an SUV. Comfortable when it described what he might do to a woman sent to him by an associate. Comfortable when a desperate ex-girlfriend begged him to stop using it as a weapon. Comfortable when it described a negotiation strategy for extracting \$20 million.

Most people flinch at the word. Epstein reached for it.

That tells you something the flight logs and the financial records can't. Not who he knew, or where he went, or how much he spent. But what kind of man he was — in his own words, in real time, when he thought no one was watching.

He loved the torture video.

He told us so himself.

Sources & Documents

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3. **EFTA02441931** — UAE Torture email chain: Cohen  Farkas  Epstein, Apr 24, 2009. [View](#) 
4. **EFTA01855193** — Epstein to Marchiolo: "do you want me to try to do her.. or just torture her," Sep 9, 2011. [View](#) 
5. **EFTA01775045** — Full Marchiolo thread: "She has excellent oral skills," Sep 8–11, 2011. [View](#) 
6. **EFTA00894779** — Nadia to Epstein: "please don't torture me," Aug 9, 2010. [View](#) 
7. **EFTA02481722** — Epstein to Richard Kahn: "first step = to torture," Oct 29, 2015. [View](#) 
8. **EFTA02723383** — "People To See" list: Farkas alongside Gates, Summers, Leon Black, Sep 2014. [View](#) 
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10. **EFTA01775045** — Marchiolo correspondence with Epstein, 2010–2016. [View](#) 
11. **EFTA02000106** — Maxwell to Epstein: "Sorry to torture you on this," Jun 15, 2011. [View](#) 

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