

Smashing two fingers together, soft and slippery. Tostig despised the thin film covering his fingers he could never avoid. As much as they scheduled the prisoners to clean, and he oversaw them, the grease was everywhere. He hated it. He hated them. He hated Rikers Island.

Visitation. An exercise in futility. Tostig slumped his armored frame in the corner as he saw the grease try to reach out behind the glass. As much as they cried and explained and screamed through the phone to anyone who would listen past the deceptively translucent barrier it always left the crier imprisoned. The grease picked up the phones and it talked and talked and talked. Tostig smiled as he lounged, he had heard all of it before. Every day was the same symphony with the same movements. It all ended the same way.

“Cmon baby, this is it. Here is the address”

“NOBODY asked you to do that, you piece of shit!” *Slamming the phone*

“Of course I didn’t! How could you even ask that!..... Fuck! Tell them then!”

Sobbing “I’m... I am so sorry.... Please tell my dad it was just a mistake! He can’t leave me here... they can’t leave me here... can’t he cover bail?”

“Yeah in 4 weeks.... Sounds good. See you then”

“Do I look afraid?”

“**Then show him**”

That was odd, one convict showed up to the window and nobody came to pick up the phone across from him. Tostig relaxed, it only made his job easier. He was a pathetic young man, with no markings, clearly new to the system by the way he longingly gazed beyond the glass where nobody waited for him. Eventually he clutched his hands tightly, looking down while he waited. Tostig rolled his eyes before he considered the time of day.

A prison like this only held the most violent, the thickest grease. New arrivals always had to learn a simple lesson, with the sort of crimes that sent you here, nobody endured a visit unless they could steal an advantage from the imprisoned. Tostig had seen this disintegration of ego occur a thousand times since being assigned to visitation. An idiot like this would not last long.

After some time, a mere 20 minutes before visitation hours ended, a visitor finally arrived. She might have been beautiful in another time or place, or in a different outfit that didn't advertise her profession, but sitting across from the new prisoner through the glass, she was merely pretty. He really must be new, Tostig concluded, if he hasn't had his breakup visit yet. Before she could even put her purse down, the prisoner picked up the phone.

"It didn't go through babe, it just didn't go through."

"But that's not what the lawyer said before! Can't you have him try again?"

"No, he said it's over...." The prisoner looked down at the greasy table in front of him. "He said it would be--"

"Don't say it, I can't hear it again, it can't be real"

Here we go Tostig thought, waterworks time, it will lubricate the breakup.

"The lawyer said I could be out in 10 years with good behavior, maybe even sooner if I work hard in here. That's my new job, to get out of here."

Tostig rolled his eyes, that's what they all said, and with a charge like the one this prisoner must have to be here, he should triple that estimate.

"10 years??? Girlfriend till I am 28... I don't know..."

"Hold on, it's my new job to get out of here as soon as I can, but you have a new job too. I don't want you to wait as my girlfriend till I am 28, I want you to be my wife. Will you marry me?"

The girl squealed, which was as clear a response as any. Tostig let out an audible "Pff". As the shift bell rang, and the old guard shuffled back to the locker room to change, he shook his head. His thoughts of disapproval were immediately forgotten as he grabbed the doorknob and felt that it was completely clean. No grease.