

Romance Scam Survivor

the whole sordid story

by **Jan Marshall**

Romance Scam Survivor: the whole sordid story
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What follows is my story, as I experienced it.

You will likely notice poor grammar and typographical errors and ask, why didn't she correct them?

Because this is my story, and I want to tell it as it was for me.

So the emails, messages and correspondence between me, the scammer, the authorities and those I went to for help have not been edited. They are present without having been cleaned up or sanitised, just as life is, unedited.

I was scammed.

And this is my story.

Jan Marshall

<http://romancescam survivor.org>

Prologue

Wednesday, 24th October 2012:

Boarding the plane my
love.... I love you sooo
much and thanks for
everything.

That's a bit dismissive, I had thought. But I persuaded myself that he must have meant for the help I had given in Dubai, and that I would soon hear from him in England, as he had promised.

Now, four days later, I had finally and quietly to myself, realised.

I had been scammed.

That was the end, and I had been completely, totally and resoundingly SCAMMED. I was never going to get my \$250,000 plus back!

I had felt good that day. It was warmer, so I had worn my bright fuchsia jacket. I looked and felt good, and thought I was doing well at work. But underneath I was going into shock.

Stop feeling.

Don't feel anything. Detach from all that.

Keep the front up and get through the day.

I called Mum. She was disbelieving and, unsurprisingly, shocked. There was no way she could understand. It was not understandable.

“How could I have given away all my money to someone I had never even met?” ALL my money! And more. I wouldn't even tell her how much.

My first response was to email to him. I'd been writing many times a day so that was normal. Was he reading them now? I

didn't know. Perhaps he would want to know what reactions I was having, to see if he needed to protect himself in some way? Anyway, I needed to write.

Before I sent it, I wrote the subject as "Back to you..."

I have realised today that you are not going to return my money are you. That "thank you for everything" was a last dismissive good bye.

You would leave the woman you love with not enough money to buy food. That's how short of funds I am right now and you knew it would come to this.

I wouldn't let you go without but you would let me. I guess that's my fault though, for choosing love over money.

I'm in shock of course, haven't yet allowed myself to feel. The loss of your love will be the most painful, because I know, even if you scammed and manipulated me, that you loved me too. I know that, because I felt your heart with mine. And you confirmed it in your last message.

Part of me hopes you will just turn up on my doorstep, surprise me, make it all alright, and we can be together the way we'd promised each other, forever. Deluding myself again...

Was any of what happened true, or was it all a manipulation? I certainly believed it, you made it so believable. I guess I will never know.

Who are you, are you real? I still believe you are. More fool me.

If I have it wrong, please get in touch. If I have it right, please get in touch.

Otherwise I guess I draw my own conclusions, broken heart and all.

I am your woman, always, all ways. Now we have to wait another lifetime to complete this bonding, promised to each other for lifetimes past.

I know in your eyes all of this must sound pitiful, you are

probably laughing at me, at how easy I was to manipulate, but I know my love was honest and true, full and generous, and sexy, and I stand strong with that.

With an open invitation – turn up on my doorstep some time...

Back to you... I love you sooo much. Thank you for everything.

Then I went to check my finances. They were appalling. Already two of my accounts were overdrawn, and I only had \$200 cash to draw on.

I had \$2700 in bills due before my next pay of \$3500 came in, and another \$3200 due in the week after that, including my rent and mortgage payment. I had no idea how I would afford food during that time. I calculated I might be able to pay some bills on Amex, but that might come back with a sting with the next statement if I was unable to pay it all then. I could delay one or two, and maybe pay later.

I emailed him again, desperately calling this one “Bills.”

Just in panic reviewing my bills due over the next few days - \$3500 worth that I cannot pay because you have my money. That I believed honestly you would be paying me back by now.

Is there any way you could send some to me – cash in a card if you don't want me to know where it has come from.

Eamon please.

That's after I have spent my next pay cheque on rent for my place here, and does not include food and living expenses. My accounts are already \$200 overdrawn, so perhaps \$4000.

It's not much to ask after all the money you have from me...

Did I expect him to do this? Part of me wanted there to be some caring for me from him. I've not emailed him again.

How did I get myself here? I was warned. Strongly warned about these exact types of scams by several good girlfriends and numerous family. So, I had no excuse.

How could I have given away all of my money, including all of my superannuation, to him?

How could I have taken an additional \$25,000 credit card debt, to give the money to him?

It's hard to explain how. It needs the full story to make sense.

Part 1: The Scam Diary

My Whole Sordid Story

The Start

I was ready. After twenty years of being an independent and lone woman, I was ready. I'd seen it was possible. My landlady in Brisbane had done it, found a nice man, gone travelling to Europe for three months, then settled down to reshape the garden in his new home on the Gold Coast together. And then retired at sixty-five. Age was no barrier.

I'd tried one of those "attract your soul mate" eBook courses last year, but wasn't ready then. I only reached day sixteen of thirty.

There had been a big change and I was ready. I had left Brisbane and moved to Melbourne. I found a good job, a nice house, and it had all gone very smoothly, not one problem. I had returned to my teenage stomping ground. Family was nearby, and pleased to have me back.

Couldn't I also have someone to share my life with? Of course, I could. I deserved it. At age fifty-nine it still wasn't too late. All other areas of my life had been going so well, this would go well, I told myself.

Last year I had gotten a cat, a lovely ragdoll kitten I called Cookie. Having Cookie to look after every day opened up my loving nature, my heart. I loved Cookie and knew I could love someone, given the chance. I was ready for love.

I'd looked at 'Plenty of Fish' (PoF) once before, years ago, so went back there. No money to exchange. I had one good photo to use, the same one I have on Facebook and LinkedIn. A nice laughing face, with pearls.

The first decision, a pseudonym. I was new to this big city, I would use that. Jannew2melb. Yes, that was me.

I was a fifty-nine-year-old Leo, non-smoker, with 'A Few Extra Pounds' body type, looking for a long-term relationship. Before I had even completed my profile, there were people wanting to chat to me. I ignored them. I wasn't ready. Chatting was a bit too immediate.

I got some help from a friend. "Tell them what you admire in a man," she said, "they like that."

I finally settled on:

I left Melbourne many years ago, and now I'm back, and want to explore and experience all that's wonderful about Victoria. It feels like a new phase in my life.

I like social cycling, and a weekend away, walking, cycling, enjoying good food. I'm looking for good company to do this with and a partner to share my life with. I'm keen to be fit and healthy, and get into a good routine to support this.

I'm interested in property investment, to build my retirement income, and would love to build or renovate a home here.

I'd also like to get back into some creative activity, painting or drawing. I also enjoy wandering around a good art exhibition.

I admire a man who has a good intellect, clear ideas, and can carry a good discussion about what's important in life. I think a friendship grows from shared values - mine are left of centre. I'm also content with silence, when that's appropriate.

I'm attracted to someone who has a strong sense of who they are, have a positive attitude to life and the challenges it brings. Someone who wants an equal partner in life, and can allow me to be myself. As well as being interested in the financial markets, they would be well read, socially and spiritually aware, and may belong to some group with a cause or topic that they are passionate about.

I'm not a social butterfly, more a home body, but love to be tempted to go out for movies, theatre, or a good restaurant. When home I'm a TV watcher, mostly ABC or SBS, and I love Radio National in the morning and afternoon. I'm not much for watching sports, except for Tour de France and the Olympics. I have a cat, a ragdoll, on whom I lavish my love and affection, and I am happy with who I am and where I am in life.

I know there could be more. I'd love a partner, companion, lover to share my life with, perhaps find a project to work on

together. Will that be you...?

Within a day there was a contact from a good-looking man, from Burlington, Canada. I was surprised to be contacted from someone so far away. I wrote back, asking did he know I was over here in Australia? He replied that it was no problem, he would be willing to relocate for the right woman.

He had four nice photos on his profile, one in a suit, looking respectably grey, one at the wheel of a yacht, and two casual photos. He had a dimple in his chin, a bit like the one Cadel Evans the cyclist has.

What was striking about his profile was that it was prolific. He had written a lot, which most men do not do, but of course women like, and I certainly did. A couple of things I remember were that he liked to eat ice cream, and he liked sunsets. He was about ten years younger than me. There was something inconsistent about the age on his profile too.

Within a short time he was suggesting we continue connecting via email, as it was cumbersome to write on PoF. I agreed, not knowing that this was a usual scammer's ploy. Luckily it now means I have a good record of what happened.

I emailed him, Sunday, 12th August:

Hi Aemon, (name spelled incorrectly at this stage)

I am ok to keep emailing back and forth, I certainly think writing is a good way to start getting to know each other.

I certainly admire your persistence in writing back to me.

This is new to me and I am a little wary of your motives and the logistics could be an issue. It's a bit more of a trust issue, in my mind, than if you were local (why this is so is perhaps something I should question).

Let's see how it pans out.....

A couple of things... You have on your profile that you are interested in 'dating', but you are saying to me that you are looking for the longer term.?

Also, POF would be saying you are 60 if it is reading your birthdate as 1952... Which by the way is closer to my birth year, 1953.... Meaning I am a little older than you. It's not an issue for me if it's not for you?

I have just moved from Brisbane to Melbourne, so I know what it's like to move a bit, though it's not the same as country to country. It took me 4 days to drive down, staying

with various friends and family along the way, and to give my cat Cookie a rest from the car. Settling nicely into Melbourne now though, and I'm 3 weeks into a new job. I also was in the US and Canada earlier in the year. I went to attend a work conference in Las Vegas, took some extra time with a US based cousin touring the grand canyon, then was up in Vancouver Island visiting relatives I had not met before. They are also originally English, as are my parents, though only my mother is now alive. I was actually conceived in England, and my parents then immigrated to Australia, and I was born here.

What sort of project are you on in Canada?

Tell me more about yourself...

Jan

He replied, Tuesday, 14th August:

Greetings to you I truly appreciate you taking your time to write back to me and letting me have your personal email address, it felt good to read your response.

Here's a little more about me.

I am a civil Engineer, I am into building and constructions, I handle my job in contracts because I am self employed. I'm renovating and building new offices for a company here My daughter is 15 years, she lives with me in my base, Manchester England. She isn't with me now, she's home. I got married 16 years ago and it lasted for just 10 years. My divorce was quite difficult because I loved her so much and never saw it coming, it cost me alot, my concentration and so on.

I have not felt the love of woman for long now, and I really miss it, to be sincere, I'm quite scared, but just want to be bold. As the saying goes, no risk, no reward. Age is not an issue for me because you aren't much older than me, I am 50 years old.

Does it bother you?

I am a man who believe so much in love and fun. I am a one man to one woman relationship type, and when I love, I love real hard, I listen to my partner , respect her points of views and understand a lot.

I'd like us to have a good communication based on honesty and see where it leads,

I'm sure it will get somewhere good.

Keep well

Eamon....

So far so good. He sounds interesting, open, willing to communicate honestly and shares about himself in a very engaging way. Even his name is exotic, Eamon Dubhlainn. Emails went back and forward.

I replied, Tuesday, 14th August:

Hi Eamon,
thanks for sharing with me about yourself. I was touched. A little about me in return.

I don't have any children and I have never been married. In fact I have been without a partner for many years. When I was younger this was distressing, but for a good few years now I have been comfortable with being on my own.

I am an Organisational Change Manager, working on large IT implementation projects. I worked in Queensland in govt departments for 6 years, until the state government changed in March and the policies of employing contractors changed. I took this as a hint it was time to move back to Melbourne - more work down here.

Most of my family is here, except for my Mother, who is in an aged care facility in northern NSW. I am in the process of moving her down too, to a facility nearby. She has a degenerative motor neurone disease, and her health is declining. Another reason to be closer to family. I have been her primary support.

The move has gone really well. I found a lovely house, not far from my brother, and I had a job organized down here before I left Brisbane, and had several weeks to unpack and settle in before I started work.

Coming down to Melbourne feels like coming home somehow. I haven't lived here since I was 17 yo. It also feels like its time to find a special someone who can complete me, who I can share my life with, and that this will happen now. I have a lot of love to give, but I am also scared. I know I don't have a lot of baggage in other areas of my life, but I don't know what might come up in a relationship. I just have to trust that life experience will be enough.... I want a partner in the true sense of the word - someone to do things together with, to share projects, plans goals with.

I'm a sensual person, and I want to be able to touch and

feel.... And be close.

I'm saying things i haven't said before, perhaps not even admitted to myself....

Enough for now, it's getting late.

Looking forward to hearing more from you,

Stay safe

Jan

And he replied, Thursday, 16th August:

Hi,

It was really nice receiving your email, I hope you slept well and had sweet dreams. thanks for sharing with me so much about you, was really really nice to receive your email. I'm happy to know that you are ready to share your life with someone, that means you are ready.

I've never done this before and I'm thinking of what to share, for you to get to know more about me, so I thought I'd write out some of my likes and dislikes, not implying that you have to be this way but it will give you an idea about the man you are communicating with.

Interests: I tend to have a variety of interests, such as the following: I enjoy the outdoors. I love spending time by the water (lakes and oceans) as the water grounds me and provides me with inner peace. I too enjoy a nice sunset especially by the water (romantic). I enjoy cooking, walking, swimming, anything with outdoors involvement and playing like a kid when am with my partner. A swing is always lots of fun especially if someone is pushing you. I have a playful spirit. I enjoy quality time spent with my daughter. I enjoy a good movie, all types of music, reading, some sports, different types of foods. I am open to trying new things. The bottom line is I am active and have a tremendous amount of energy to expend.

Passions: I have a few passions in my life and I would have to say that I am passionate about being a good father, about my career, about developing relationships (in general), and I really look forward to being passionate and having a passionate intimate relationship someday. I tend to be passionate about all things that are attached to the heart, my heart. Generally, this is my love and passion for humanity and for those that will come into my love life.

Likes: I like many things as I am open minded and flexible

person. Generally, I like everything providing that there is no dislikes of mine infringing on the likes. Some of my favorite food (restaurants) consist of Chinese, Mexican, Italian with Jamaican sauce and rice being my favorite. I love red licorice and my favorite flowers are carnations. I do enjoy traveling and thanks to my job. I would like to see castles close up some day and stay in a beautiful hotel close to the sea. I am thinking about a holiday over at the Caribbean. Not sure where I would like to go for now...

Dislikes: There is not a whole lot that I dislike, however; the things that I do dislike seem to be based on values and character, allow me to explain. There are certain things that I have no interest in, however; these are the things that I clearly dislike or choose not to tolerate are: disrespect, unfaithfulness, dishonesty, lying, cheating, mean spitefulness, being judgmental, callousness, harsh words, hurtful acts, untrustworthy people, displaced anger, unfairness, injustice, selfishness, being inconsiderate, blaming, not taking responsibility, self-centeredness, rigidity and anything else that can cause damage or be damaging to another human being.

Relationships: Give 100%, if this can not be given, then you are not that true friend, lover or husband/wife. Be true to yourself, and your love ones. Honesty, communication, and understanding along with patience will make the difference. This is just my opinion mind you. Sharing, is more than finance, material assets, more importantly, it is the sharing of yourself, time, and love. Giving always more to the other, and they will give back. It is a forever revolving door of giving...

Let me see, what else can I share about me? I have a strong work ethic and I never give anything less than my absolute best. Oh, one more thing . . . in case you hadn't figured it out already, I am a hopeless romantic. I love the little things about a relationship -- holding hands and doing nothing, picking flowers in a field for the table for dinner, watching a butterfly go by as you're walking! I know, it probably sounds silly but it's me.

I trust that you are having a good week. I would love to hear from you and if there is anything else you would love to know or share about likes, dislikes, passions, and interests, do not hold back, am glad we are having this conversation, it will help in bring us closer.

Your in my thoughts,
Eamon

Are these things any woman would respond to? I certainly did!

- He's passionate – yes!
- He's a romantic – yes!
- He's articulate about what he wants – yes!

And he says he has not done it before, so it seems real. He emphasises openness and honesty. That's what I want too. I was already getting hooked.

My reply, Thursday, 16th August:

Hi Eamon,

what a lot of information you have provided. So wonderful to read it all. I am so honored by the time and effort you have put into all this. And that you have been able to be so clear about things.

I'm not going to manage to provide as much about me back in one go, as it's a bit late. There's a weekend coming up, so I will be able to have a good go then and take the time to respond as I would like. I have a friend from Brisbane staying tomorrow (Friday) night, but she is going back early on Saturday so I should have plenty of time then.

Suffice to say that there is nothing in what you have written that jars with me. Quite to the contrary, I am thrilled by it all. It's not all the same as for me of course, that would be boring anyway, but there is enough in what you have said that has a form of echo with me, that I will respond to when I have some more time to find the right words. I wish to honor you in the same way that you have honored me (sorry the spell checker keeps americanizing....)

Time for bed now, and I will dream of butterflies, water, sunsets, swings, and holding hands...

Jan

And then the final tug on the hook, 18th August:

Hi there, thanks for your very informative email. [I didn't give much information so this comment seems a little strange, but I let it go...]

I have enjoyed my time responding to your life with mine, your thoughts, wants, needs, dreams and more. I don't know you other than a small amount of correspondence. I will say my heart tells me you are one very special woman. Whatever will be between you and I, please know you have

a friend for life regardless of the miles between us. I feel very blessed that you responded to my email, that I will cherish forever. In our walks of life, it is not often you come across another who still has morals, family values, respect and continues to follow their dreams.

I want you to know that I will not be communicating with any other woman on the dating site for now, because I want to concentrate on getting to know you, I cannot communicate with more than one woman at the same time, please don't get me wrong, I am not trying to impose it on you that we must have something, I just want to have my attention on you and see where it leads us...

I want us to continue this communication, because there is much to know about each other, though we are far apart, but if we keep communicating good, we will be close to each other in our hearts...

I am offering you the flower of my heart as a friend. It's always growing and searching for perfection, always reaching for the sparkling rays of the sun but only if you can give it the care and nourishment it needs to thrive, give it your light and I pray it blooms forever.

I will be leaving for England 10pm today, I have been here for 7 weeks now, I rounded up my job here in the morning, please don't let that scare you ok

I don't know if you have a yahoo account, so that we can chat through the im, it is a fast means of communication, we can instant message ourselves ,ask questions about each other and get instant answers, if you don't have one ,I will appreciate if you will be able to sign up for one, it is free and easy...

I wish you a wonderfully blessed day ahead...

Warm thoughts Eamon

I had checked out other profiles on PoF, and expressed some interest in meeting at least two local men. Both declined, one saying he was too busy, the other was already in a relationship. I was surprised that Eamon was saying his attention was now exclusively on me, as we didn't know each other well yet, but it was flattering to be thought a person of interest. When a man says he can only focus on one woman, any woman would like that. It's a bit contrary to the 'men cannot commit' myth and that they want to always play the field.

I didn't feel ready to take my PoF profile down though. Looking back, I see that I had focused on, *'I just want to have*

my attention on you and see where it leads us...' rather than any of the inconsistencies in this email.

I had looked for him on the internet, and found nothing. This was a surprise. Self-employed people would normally promote their skills and capability online.

All I found were references to the Irish/Gaelic translation.

Thanks for reading this book sample.

To continue to read, purchase the book from your favourite book store, available for shipping from 13 February 2018.

Eg, [Amazon](#)