

Serial romance fraudster jailed after ‘web of lies’ saw women loses thousands of pounds

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A serial fraudster who stole thousands of pounds in romance scams has been jailed for almost three years.

Ben Millin, from Yeovil, fabricated stories of dying relatives, frozen bank accounts, job interviews and severe health conditions to scam women out of money.

Four women were defrauded out of an estimated £30,000-40,000, with a large amount of the money being used to fund his gambling habits.

‘Web of lies’

The 32-year-old met Fiona in July 2021 and told her early on in their relationship several heartbreaking stories about his family. He also claimed he had money issues because of a dispute with an ex-partner regarding a house they were selling, who he claimed had become pregnant after being unfaithful.

He therefore asked for her to help him pay bills, travel expenses and more, promising each time to pay her back.

The lies came to a head in April 2022, when he promised Fiona to take her to Spain for a holiday. He changed the destination to London – falsely claiming a heart condition would prevent him from flying. He had her pack for this trip to London and wait at home, while he went to a job interview

in Bristol early, before he would return and they set off for London. At that point she did not know she would never hear from him again.

That evening Fiona was worried when she could not get hold of Millin after the interview and called hospitals and the police to report him missing.

However, Millin's appointment that day was not a job interview. It was in front of a court, as he was jailed for fraud by false representation against an ex-partner. It was only when Fiona saw the sentencing in the news that she realised she too was a victim, and the true extent of Ben's lies and deceit completely shook her world.

Further victims

Millin was released from prison in December 2022 and within six months began communicating with Charlotte via Instagram. Their relationship grew and he told Charlotte he was earning £40,000 a year as a self-employed sales consultant.

Over the next seven months he lied to Charlotte about financial issues and told her he had booked a holiday to Costa Rica for them both after winning £30,000 on a scratch card.

Whenever Charlotte sought some of the money back, Millin would make up stories of health issues for him and family members to win her sympathy.

In total he stole approximately £20,000 from Charlotte – money she had largely inherited from her father after he died a few years earlier.

The police investigation found that between June and October 2023 Millin had spent on average £5,500 a month on an online gambling site. He also had taken credit cards out in Charlotte's name, and their landlady, Sophie, who lived with the couple for several months and thought she could trust Millin – until she realised what he had done days after she left to go travelling. Sophie said her home now is a 'painful reminder' of what Ben did and the stress he caused her and Charlotte.

Millin was first arrested in March 2024, but a fortnight earlier he met Chloe, from Bournemouth, through an online dating site. This time he falsely claimed to be a psychologist for the Great Britain and Northern Ireland Olympic team, and that he was renovating a recently purchased farmhouse near Dorchester.

During their three-month relationship, he lied to Chloe by telling her he booked holidays to London, Ibiza and Lille.

DC Claire Morgan, officer in the case, said: "Ben Millin preyed on the goodwill of his victims by spinning a web of lies. He tricked them into being sympathetic towards him.

"All the time he was using the money to fund his gambling habits, with seemingly little guilt given how he repeated the fraud against multiple victims."

Police investigation

Millin was charged with four counts of committing fraud by false representation in June 2025. Last month he pleaded guilty at Taunton Crown Court, sitting at North Somerset Courthouse, and was sentenced on Thursday 31 July.

Millin, of Roping Road, was jailed for 34 months and handed restraining orders preventing him contacting any of the four victims. He was also handed a five-year serious crime prevention order.

Impact on victims

<https://media.aspolice.net/uploads/production/20250812161133/Millin-Social-Media-Edit.mp4>

Fiona, from Exeter, has been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder because of what Millin did and continues to see a therapist regularly. She said she struggled to forgive herself for what happened, contemplated suicide several times, and for a long time was unable to speak his name.

Fiona, in her victim statement prepared ahead of the sentencing hearing, said: "I find it difficult to fully express the profound and lasting impact that Ben's actions have had on my life and mental health. Not only did he defraud me of every penny I had, but the way he did so, has caused immeasurable damage to my well-being.

"Ben is a predator. He targets vulnerable women, exploiting their insecurities and empathy for his own benefit. He is, in my opinion, a complete danger to society, especially women.

"He told countless lies to make himself appear vulnerable and in need of support. A younger sister named Isabella who died of cancer (who never existed), a grandfather whose death supposedly caused his father's severe depression, a brother's suicide attempt, a critically ill mother who had been in an induced coma due to Covid-related pneumonia, and an ex-fiancée who had cheated on him and left him in financial trouble.

"He even claimed to be a victim of fraud to excuse problems with his bank accounts.

"Perhaps most outrageous was his claim that he suffered from a hereditary heart condition requiring a pacemaker, with regular 'consultations' in Bristol. These appointments were actually court appearances for a previous conviction.

"The day I truly understood who Ben was, the worst day of my life, came when he vanished.

"Believing he had a job interview, I searched desperately, calling hospitals in Exeter and Bristol, fearing his fake heart condition had worsened. I even filed a missing person report with the police.

"Then, through a friend, I learned he had been sent back to prison for his previous conviction.

"The harsh reality hit me: he had defrauded me and had never intended to repay any money.

"He was nothing like the man he pretended to be. Ben invaded every part of my life"

Charlotte, from Crewkerne, said it was not until she heard Ben had been charged and remanded that she felt truly safe. She told him personal issues about past relationships and family illnesses, which he 'weaponised' against her.

Charlotte said: "I was a chess piece in a game that I didn't know I was playing.

"On the evening of the 22 December 2023, my mother sent me a news article about Ben and his past conviction; my whole world changed forever and I shall never be the same again.

"I confronted Ben, who continued to lie and gaslight me. I was in shock, I could not function, nothing made sense and my whole world was turned upside down.

"Ben then told me that on the 27 December he planned to admit it all to his parents and they would pay me back and all would be okay, only for Ben to again lie and play the victim and scar me forever by faking his own death.

Charlotte continued: "I lived with someone for months, someone it appears I knew nothing about. Someone who would tidy the house, move furniture, for the reason I thought was kind, now I realise that it was for his own game.

"He'd told me he'd booked a holiday for us, and he needed my passport, but what he really was doing was completely and utterly abuse his position of trust in our relationship and violating my privacy on every count.

"The money Ben has taken from me was my inheritance money from my father.

"It was money that I was always too scared to spend, due to the meaning it had to me. To me, spending it meant losing more of father which is something I could never face hence why after over six years I had it in my bank untouched.

"I had explained to Ben how I'd wanted to buy my father a grave stone – something I still couldn't face as it felt very final – to go travelling, to buy a van and have the adventures I had always wanted and planned before my father became ill, to have the security of having a home of my own somewhere I'd feel safe and at peace finally.

"For Ben to know all of this and to still want more and more, to push and push me until I was so weak I couldn't fight back, is everything you need to know about him, the mental abuse he so easily inflicted on me is completely life-changing for me."

Charlotte added: "I feel I could never have a relationship again, which is completely out of character from the person that I was.

"The things that Ben has done will never leave me and that makes me so sad.

"Ben knew I wanted a family and all the hopes and dreams I had for life however since the damage he has inflicted on me, I have lost trust in every person I know and could meet in the future and even worse than that, the trust I have lost in myself.

"No matter how much therapy I do, or how much time passes, I will never be the same.

"I am still very vulnerable and unable to work like I did before him. My poor financial situation leaves me unable to afford to start again and find a new home, I lost my financial security in this stupid game I didn't know I was part of before it was far too late.

"I will never understand how someone can lie to you every moment of every day so easily, whilst playing a victim with poor mental health.

"He has stolen not only my money but my ability to have the future that I so desperately wanted. What he's done to me physically, mentally and financially cannot be undone."

Chloe, in her victim personal statement, said she shared with Millin intimate details about how she cared for her husband for two years after his terminal cancer diagnosis before his death.

She added: "Ben appeared to empathise, recounting his own alleged tragedies, including the loss of both his father and brother in a car accident. He used these fabricated stories to foster an emotional connection with me, gaining my trust under false pretences.

"As time progressed, Ben's behaviour became increasingly erratic and concerning.

"He would stage emotional phone calls, often lasting long periods, that gave the impression he was dealing with distressing family issues. Eventually, it became evident that there was no-one on the other end of the line.

"In one particularly disturbing incident, Ben claimed that his sister-in-law had stabbed his brother, that both were hospitalised, and that their children urgently required care. He asked me to prepare to look after the children, and we purchased food and supplies for them.

"This entire situation was later revealed to be completely fabricated.

"Ben's conduct was not only dishonest but highly manipulative and emotionally exploitative. These were not casual lies, they were deliberate fabrications centred around deeply sensitive and traumatic themes, seemingly intended to gain control and elicit sympathy. Reflecting on this, I believe he derived a sense of satisfaction from the confusion and distress he caused.

"The impact of this experience on my mental health has been profound. It has significantly eroded my ability to trust others.

"I now find myself questioning people's motives, doubting my own judgment, and experiencing persistent anxiety. In addition to the ongoing grief from the loss of my husband, this manipulation has caused further emotional harm.

"In my opinion, Ben's actions demonstrate a clear and disturbing pattern of calculated deception."

'Incredible courage'

DC Morgan said: "All the women in this case have shown incredible courage and we are grateful for them supporting these court proceedings. They are all victims and they should feel no shame about what happened to them; there is only one person who should be embarrassed.

"I've been investigating crimes for 18 years and Ben Millin is by far the most complex character I have met in regards to the deceit and lies he managed to maintain. He was a master of manipulation.

"By coming forward those women helped to protect others being targeted by him and potentially other crimes from happening.

"Sadly, I have no doubt there will be other victims of romance fraud out there who will read their powerful testimonies and they will be going through the exact same pain and trauma. Hopefully convictions like this give confidence to those people to report what has happened so we can help them."

How to stay safe from romance fraud

How to stay safe from romance fraud

Here are some tips to help prevent romance fraud:

- If you have met someone via a dating app, stay within the messaging function of the application. Don't feel pressured to hand over your mobile number and move the conversation over to SMS or a messaging platform like WhatsApp or Telegram.
- Be suspicious of any requests for money, particularly from someone you have never met in person.
- Be cautious about how much personal information you are sharing online and who you are sharing information with.
- Fraudsters can prey on victims' emotions, for example making early declarations of love or discuss the possibility of marriage soon after meeting. Then having won affection and trust will invariably have a time-critical issue that requires money.
- Speak to your family or friends to get advice and perspective. Fraudsters will subtly isolate you for their own purposes.
- Profile photos may not be genuine. Performing a reverse image search can find photos that have been taken from somewhere, or someone else.

More information around romance fraud can be found at: www.actionfraud.police.uk/a-z-of-fraud/dating-fraud

If you think you have been a victim of fraud, please report it online via [Action Fraud's website](https://www.actionfraud.police.uk), or by calling 0300 123 2040.