

Mum & Sam

Sarah Kuttner

S. Fischer Verlag

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288 Pages



"My mother is dead and that is just the beginning"

A daughter stands in the apartment of her suddenly deceased mother. The mother is gone, and so are all her savings. What remains are haunting questions: Why is the apartment so in disarray and the mailbox overflowing? And how is it even possible to lose your own mother to a marriage swindler?

Sarah Kuttner tells the story of a woman who was looking for love and met a love scammer. Who fell in love and chose to turn a blind eye. Who left nothing behind except a seemingly endless chat with the con man. Above all, however, it is the story of a daughter who is left behind to pick up the pieces, with a void where her mother once was.

So the daughter reads the messages that weren't meant for her, reads things about herself that she never wanted to know. And yet, very slowly, the void is filled with a closeness that was impossible for the two of them during their lifetime.

A very personal novel about the feeling of guilt, the pain of being left behind, and the uncomfortable intimacy of the legacies we inherit.



Sarah Kuttner's first novel *Damaged Copy* was published in 2009 and spent weeks on the bestseller list. Kuttner writes about serious, existential issues, directly and honestly, a mix of empathy and flippancy which made her a popular TV personality in her shows "Sarah Kuttner – Die Show" (VIVA) and "Kuttner." (MTV). Her columns for *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Musikexpress* were published by Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag. The success of her first novel was followed by the novels *Growing Pains* (2011), *180° Sea* (2015) and *Kurt* (2019). Sarah Kuttner lives in Berlin.

Sample Translation: Alexandra Rösch
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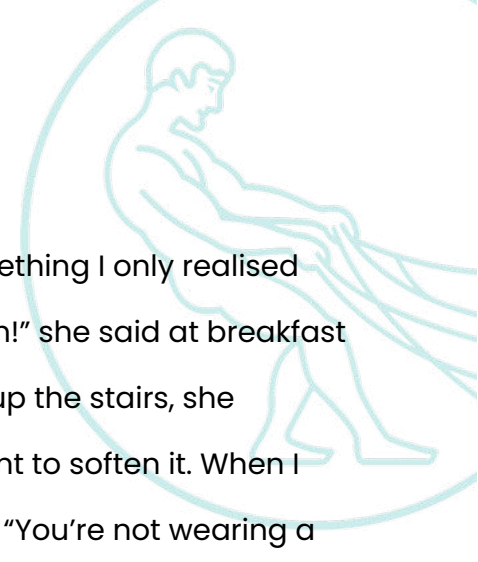
January

In the floorboards of the small flat in the old building, just in front of the bedroom, there's a cut-out hole the size of a person. Not just any person. My mother.

The crime-scene cleaner had told me on the phone that besides scrubbing down the floor, part of the boards would have to be sawn out because bodily fluids had seeped into the wood. A carpenter would be called in. Apparently he hadn't bothered to bring new boards.

So I'm staring into a mother-sized hole filled with dusty rubble. Are these the original floorboards? I look around. They could well be. Which means this dust hasn't seen daylight for more than a hundred years. And I'm the first person it sets eyes on after its Sleeping Beauty slumber. Well, after the carpenter. Hello, mate. Tell me your stories. Who's lived here? What did you witness? And how did my mother spend her last days?

She had huge blue eyes, dimples, and a soft, beautifully shaped mouth with a bottom lip people would now queue for at their local facial filler dealer. A few freckles, which as far as I know never bothered her. I get them in summer too. I don't mind them either. Mum was short and for much of her life a bit round. She collected figurines of women with similar bodies. Jade, soapstone, wood, all smooth and velvety. I wonder if I should take one with me so she can go on living at mine.



That she didn't actually love her own round, soft body was something I only realised when she tried to protect mine. "Two pieces of toast are enough!" she said at breakfast when I was eleven or twelve. Another time, walking behind me up the stairs, she laughed, "You're starting to get a fat bum." The laugh was meant to soften it. When I first tried on clothes at H&M, she told me in the changing room: "You're not wearing a vest under that jumper? That'll make you smell." And then: "Black always makes you look thinner."

To this day I feel best in black. But that hardly matters now. My mother is dead. And this is only the beginning.

So here I stand in her empty flat. It smells musty, but the smell is not the one that met the locksmith and the police five weeks ago when they forced the door. Now it's just a whiff of needs-airing and of my new friend, the rubble. A faint trace of woodwork. Not the stench of someone dead here.

It feels as if I've been here for hours. I look at the giant Gründerzeit hallway mirror, the one I used as a child to check if my bum really was getting big and if I really had a potato nose, as Mum had once said. I see her bed, where I spent two weeks when my first depression flooded me, and the tiny balcony where she fed me toast so I'd eat something during that awful time.

The sink is crammed with coffee mugs. Mum loved coffee. A therapist once advised her to take a fresh cup each time, to never re-use one, as a sign of self-respect. Even if she never went in for proper therapy, and even if the "cup therapist" mostly rambled about chakras and auras, and even if she dumped him in the end because she was convinced he'd fallen for her, that anecdote stuck with me. Because it made sense. You go, girl.

In the kitchen I spot the painting of ships. As a kid I thought they looked like wedge-heeled sandals. Every time I saw it as an adult I secretly thought, I want that one day, when Mum's gone. Because of that childhood memory. Now I could just take it



off the wall, but the feeling's gone. The second-to-last time I saw it, Mum was sitting right beneath it while I offloaded some over-emotional rant at her. First she looked overwhelmed, then she seemed to just zone out. Which made me even angrier. "How many times do I have to apologise?" she snapped, and I was hurt. The last time I saw the wedge-heel ships was Boxing Day a year ago. I sat at the table while Mum brewed coffee and tried to balance all the pots and roasting tins you need for a goose in her tiny kitchen, stacking them like Tetris blocks. I'd brought my ukulele, wanting things to feel easy, cheerful, affectionate. Wanting to show her I was trying to like her. To let her be. "Got a favourite song?" I asked, eager to add that I knew some from her time. "Hmm," she said, balancing two mugs on three stacked pans inside the roasting tin, wobbling dangerously on the chopping board. What could go wrong? "Oh, can you do I Wanna Know What Love Is? I love that." And since I can basically bash out any song on the ukulele if I've got the chords, I tried. It sounded wrong, I couldn't find the right pitch, and the verse is boring and hard to sing. I went too high on the chorus, panicked, stopped. "Sorry. I'll learn it properly and send you a video." "Oh yes!" she beamed, almost tender, while the coffee bubbled. I never sent it. Because two months later a new man walked into Mum's life and wrecked everything. Including her. She really did want to know what love is. And he showed her.

My husband barges into me from behind. "I emptied the post box! It was crammed full. Maybe that'll tell us when she last did anything." Clearly I've not made it far into the flat. I froze right at the door, chatting with rubble and memories. It can't have been hours, because my husband was just behind me before he had the idea about the post. "Brilliant idea!" I say, and admire him. Our genes! His and mine. We've watched true-crime docs for years and sat through endless interrogations, we don't flinch at crime-scene photos, and sometimes, out walking the dog in Brandenburg's backwoods, we wonder what it'd be like to find a corpse. We'll probably never get closer to that fantasy than here. My husband found my dead mother, that's what we say. It's

not really a lie, because he would have found her if the neighbour hadn't called the police two weeks earlier, after seeing Mum's light on day and night for at least five days. And the smell, eventually.

Even though her biggest fear was to die alone and not be found for ages, that's exactly what happened. Sounds tragic, but really it's just natural. The internet says less than half of people die in hospital. A third die at home. And half of Germans want to die where they lived. Which is probably based on the romantic idea of the whole family gathered tearfully round the bed, swearing eternal love, holding cold hands, reminiscing about the best moments, maybe throwing in a deathbed confession or unearthing some family secret. That's what "dying at home" is supposed to mean. What it doesn't mean is keeling over in your hallway, face first, at sixty-eight, and lying there for two weeks while the cat prowls the flat, drinks from the loo and old coffee mugs, then vomits everywhere. Nobody wishes for that. Still, it happens more often than you think. Which is sad, but makes sense. People usually die where they spend most of their time. And if you've got no partner, no flatmate, no close social circle, you won't be found straight away. You might not even be missed.

Mum had no partner, no flatmate (unless you count the tomcat, and he couldn't work a phone), and no regular social contacts. What she did have was depression. Now and then, like most people with shaky mental health, but especially in late autumn she liked to shut herself away. Not call her friends for weeks. Nestle into her tiny two-room castle. So how was anyone supposed to know this silence was different? If I weren't married, I could just as easily lie dead in my flat for weeks. People would assume that I was busy, that wanted my peace. Which is why dying alone isn't so unusual. It can happen to any of us.

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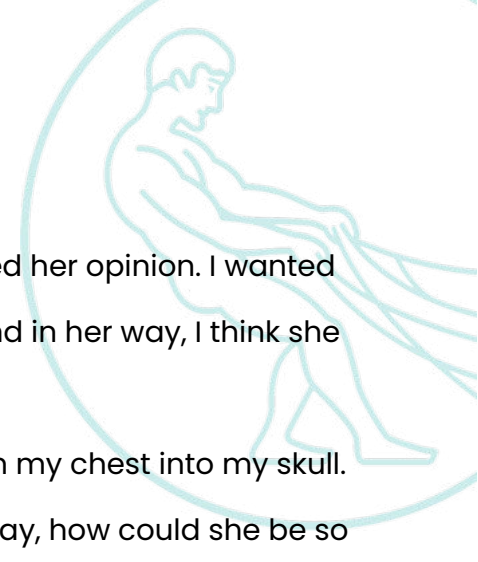


"I'll put it like this," says my aunt, when I ask if this mysterious bloke in my mother's phone makes her happy. "She's very happy. Me, less so." She talks in riddles while the sickly angel's trumpet plant shivers in the early summer breeze behind her, and I'm getting impatient but also more on edge. At this point I'm not yet thinking of full-blown disaster. More like, Mum's shagging some married guy. "What's that supposed to mean? Should I be worried?" I sit up straight in my high-backed chair. I can see my tough aunt wrestling with herself. "I swore I wouldn't tell you," she presses out through thinner and thinner lips. Ouch. That lands. Not the most urgent point here, but still: she swore not to tell me? I try not to get swept away by that detail and focus on her. I can see she's about to crack. It's swelling inside her; she dreads the moment but also longs for the relief afterwards. "You don't have to tell me, I don't want to put you in a tricky spot with her," I say, without meaning a word of it. I want to know. Now.

Turns out the new man isn't just any man. He's an actor. A fairly famous one. Mum's new boyfriend is Sam Heughan. Born in Scotland, lives in LA, four million followers on Instagram, and a year younger than me. And now, apparently, my new dad.

What my aunt tells me is deeply alarming: Mum's been a big fan of the fantasy series *Outlander* for ages, the one about a married woman who somehow travels through time and meets Jamie, played by Sam Heughan. Seven seasons. Mum's seen them all. Several times. Then she fell for Jamie, messaged Sam Heughan on some fake Facebook profile, and he replied.

Mum couldn't believe her luck, and boom, here I am on the balcony, eyes wide with disbelief. "Our beautiful eyes," she always called them. Never mine. Always our. Because I didn't earn them alone, did I? They belong to her too. She made them. Once, after I tried a short haircut that did nothing for me because I've got a mountain of hair and



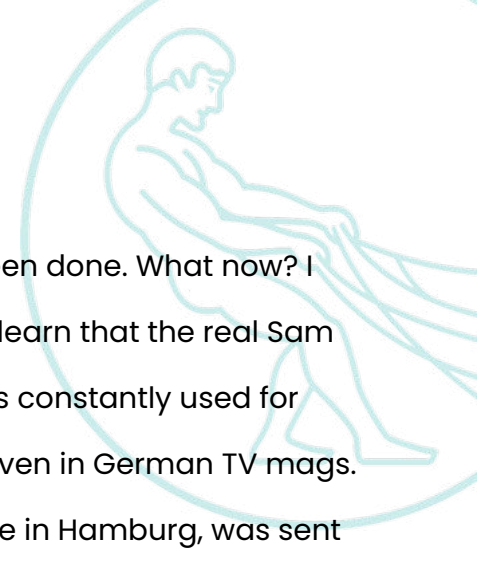
my head looked more Lego figure than Natalie Imbruglia, I asked her opinion. I wanted kind words, hoped she'd see my insecurity and reassure me. And in her way, I think she did. "Well, nothing can spoil our beautiful eyes," she said.

Now those beautiful eyes are bulging, and I feel heat rising from my chest into my skull. This is really bad. My aunt tells me she told Mum off straight away, how could she be so daft as to fall for this? Everyone knows it's organised crime from Ghana or Nigeria. She begged her not to send him money. Mum swore of course not, she wasn't born yesterday. Just that one time, when he suddenly needed 200 euros, but he'd paid it straight back. Every cell in me screams. "Shit!" I blurt. "Fuckfuckfuck!" And: "How bloody stupid can she be?" My aunt answers without pause: "She sent him a photo of her ID card so she'd have access to his account. In case she needed cash in LA. Or Hamburg, where he's thinking of buying them a house." She's even been sent a matching credit card, though she doesn't know what to do with it. Probably just some loyalty scheme, she says.

My scalp burns. Everyone knows what can be done with a floating ID card. Don't they? "Oh my God," I whisper, "She has to cancel it immediately! And the credit card too!" Who knows whose account it really is? What if it's in her name? He could run up millions in debt while Mum's at home trying to get the perfect selfie of her beautiful eyes for Sam.

My aunt's relief turns to panic. She can see I'm reacting far more strongly than she expected. Because I smell real danger. Someone could steal Mum's bloody identity and do God knows what with it.

And I realise I don't know enough about credit cards and joint accounts and scams and debt. If the card already had debts on it, surely Mum would know? Don't banks send monthly statements? Wouldn't they flag it fast? My aunt doesn't know, and we both assume Mum, who never earned much, wouldn't risk the money she inherited. It's her pension. And she loves money. Shopping makes her happy. She wouldn't gamble



that. So I try to calm down and assume no real damage has been done. What now? I grab my phone and start frantically googling. Within seconds I learn that the real Sam Heughan has a massive problem with these scams. His name is constantly used for this kind of fraud. Articles everywhere, mostly in English, some even in German TV mags. A Dutch woman left her husband for him, was promised a house in Hamburg, was sent personalised selfies. My aunt shows me one Mum forwarded. Exactly what I'd pictured: a grainy screenshot of the actor from some interview, holding a piece of paper with Mum's name "handwritten" on it, asking if she'd finally believe him, that his love was real. And by handwritten I mean the font Freestyle Script. And the paper itself? A digital white rectangle. The whole thing screams Photoshop. To me. To Mum it screams: I love you. My brain races. I could make the exact same picture in minutes, only with the note: Please believe your daughter, I'm not real! Well, my husband could. That should convince her.

"He even sent a video!" says my aunt, scrolling through her WhatsApp chat with Mum. She clearly needed to confide in someone.

"Hi!" says Sam Heughan. A bit choppy, but impressively with his real voice, calling Mum by her first name again. "Please trust me, it is me, Samy!" It's short. And not terrible. At least not for a sixty-eight-year-old who loves Cary Grant and Spencer Tracy films and doesn't know how AI works. Looks real enough. Shit. We could remake it with new words, sure, but that'd take more effort.

"So. What do we do now?" I ask. And before she can answer, I barrel on: "I want to ring her straight away. Send her all these articles! I'll translate the English ones with Google! Oh God, what if she kills herself?" That's what I actually said that summer. Because it seemed a real risk: if Mum finds out she's fallen for a love scammer and that the man she thought she was chatting with was just some stranger with a headset in West Africa, it could smash both her heart and her pride. What does it do to someone who finally feels real love after decades, as she told my aunt, only to find it's all a lie? Can

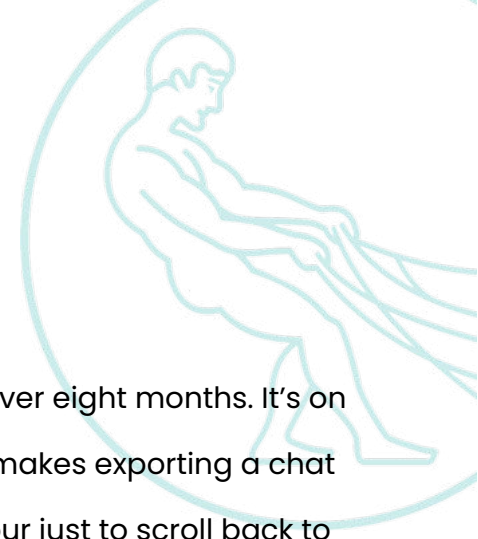
she take that? Or will it destroy her? How fast do we have to act? How carefully, with her, with him?

On my cool aunt's face I now see three things at once. She realises the situation is more dangerous than she thought. She'd made Mum promise not to send a penny, and she believed her. Plus Mum doesn't have easy access to the money she inherited. She's locked it in some life insurance or fixed term deposit account, whatever. To stop herself spending it. That kind of woman doesn't get fleeced easily. And even if she did, there's no ready cash. Unless the card is being charged. And the ID, that bit freaks her out the most. From here she's out of her depth, I can tell. Alongside justified panic there's shame and grief in her face. It breaks her loyal heart to have betrayed my mother. To the evil daughter. Mum would betray all my secrets in a heartbeat. I'm furious, seeing how much pain it causes my aunt to save Mum's arse by pulling me in. But she also knows she's clueless about Photoshop, AI, credit cards. She senses it's all bullshit, but not how far that bullshit can reach. And she's relieved too. Because now I'm on the case. The terrier in me finally useful.

For now, though, she only asks me to forward her the articles I've found about Sam-Heughan scams. She wants to show them to Mum herself, try to talk her round, without me involved. "Okay," I say. I'd come with hardly any feelings at all. We'd just been chatting about the angel's trumpet plant, and now suddenly I'm the stepdaughter of Sam Heughan.

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The chat between Mum and her new man is a mess and runs over eight months. It's on Signal, that messenger app that bangs on about security and makes exporting a chat near impossible. I cannot read it on her phone, it took me an hour just to scroll back to March. I have already renounced the inheritance, but I still want to know when money moved, how it moved and whether there is any debt. I want the chat for that as well. It looks like a goldmine of evidence for a crime the actual police are not interested in. The child detective will take the case. So I start. Right at the beginning.

I already know the end. Mum wrote to her lover for the last time on 3 November. If she died twenty days later, why did she not write again? Her last words to him are nothing special, no sign of a row. Quite the opposite. In the reply field on her phone there is text half typed. A single letter. An L. She was about to reply to his last message and it began with L. She never sent the L or what was meant to follow it. Why not? For him the conversation breaks off just as abruptly. She wrote on 3 November. Three days later he writes, "Babe? Why have you stopped answering?"

He does not seem wildly worried. He can smell it, I reckon, because he only gets in touch again six weeks later. By phone. I am skimming the chat, searching key words, months flickering past, when suddenly Mum's phone rings in my hands. Sam Roland Heughan is calling on Signal. Like in a film I drop the phone as if it were hot. Do not touch a single button. I clamp my hands over my ears while it rings and buzzes. My heart hammers into my scalp.

Maybe this is too much. Maybe I am out of my depth. I suddenly cannot imagine reading this chat, wading that deep into my mother's life. That close to this stranger. He has probably seen activity in the chat, seen I am online. Can he locate the phone? If yes, what does that mean for me? For my safety? Does he have access to the camera? To the microphone? Fuck.

The phone stops ringing and I switch it off at once. I hope that is enough to stop any tracking. I do not really know. My husband comes in, gives me a look and says, "Call it a day. Read more tomorrow. You have had enough." He is right. It has been a long one, so I end it, only to dream of Sam.

My aunt rings and asks if we are allowed to swear at him in the chat. Tell him he killed my mother. Curse him. She asks me to translate her curse and send it. I love the idea, but I am scared too. Since Mum's phone rang last night I have been on edge. I am also afraid whoever is on the other end could simply delete the chat. Then I will never find out how it all happened. So I calm my hoof-pawing aunt and say, "Best idea ever, we will curse him into the ground, but first I have to secure this chat. And find out how dangerous he actually is." My aunt thinks that is sensible. I will have to take both the PC and Mum's phone back to her flat; they are officially not mine. I need to move fast to secure the chat, so I take the PC to a friend who knows computers and will try to pull the chat onto a USB stick.

Until then I dig through my mother's folders again. Even if her estate is none of my business now, I still have to organise the funeral, so I am after anything useful. She had already arranged a woodland burial while she was alive. Plot, urn, name plate, all paid in advance. My aunt had those papers at home, so I could access them early on. Now I check her insurances. I skim dental and health and find a funeral benefit plan. An insurance that covers your own burial so your family does not carry the cost. A decent touch, I think. She did think of me sometimes. It is only a small sum, fifteen hundred euros, about half of what the funeral will cost, but the move is nice. I write to the insurer and send the death certificate and all the bits to trigger payment. Then I find a life insurance policy.

Even though everything is filed chronologically, the paperwork stresses me. I am not good with bureaucracy. My brain refuses long texts. I need several runs and never quite manage it. I see trigger words that scare me, and instead of focusing and reading

slowly, I give up and panic. I do not panic now, but I still need help. I do not understand insurance policies. Least of all life insurance. What I have learned so far is that the beneficiary clause is not part of the renounced estate, so someone in my family, probably my aunt, may be the beneficiary.

So I ring her. That is our deal. She does not have to do anything, but I can ask questions any time. I ask one: "Mum has a life insurance. Do you know anything about it?"

"Yes, but she cancelled it. For the tummy tuck."

Come again?

"Sorry, what? What tummy tuck?"

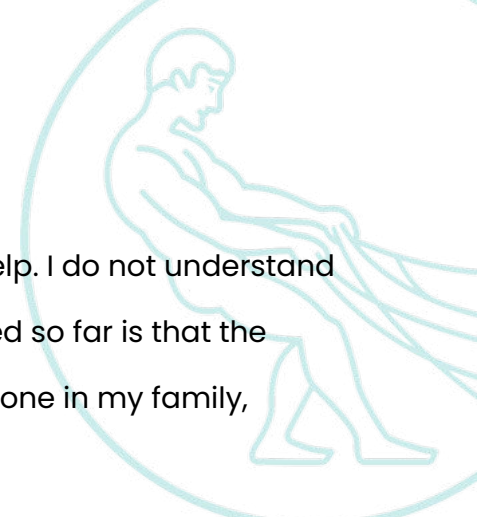
Mate. A tummy tuck is major. As far as I know they slice you from right to left across the lower belly, remove a flap of skin, then sew it back up. We are talking a scar at least fifty centimetres long. When did my mother decide that was a good idea?

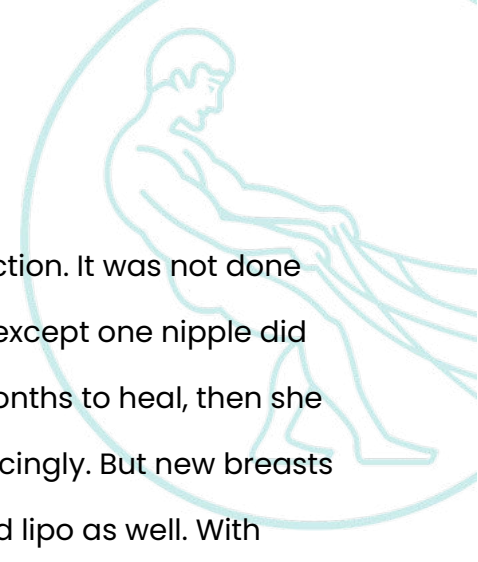
"Yes, I was not allowed to tell you. She cancelled it in spring to get her belly done."

Wow. That is a lot to take in Did it kill her? At sixty-eight a tummy tuck sounds even dafter than the rest of what she did to look more attractive. What if it healed badly? Those huge wounds often take ages and rarely behave. What if she caught an infection, or a blood clot travelled and blocked her heart? And the irony of cancelling your life insurance for something that might have killed you.

I knew about the last cosmetic tweak two years ago. She had her lips tattooed to look permanently red. In the photo she sent round her mouth was massively swollen, reflecting light like a glass ball. It looked like someone had morphed an influencer's face with an ordinary woman. Her eyes asked, "I look pretty, yes?" and her lips said, "Discount code in the info box, darlings."

Right, so the life insurance has gone. I find a folder called 'Health' and flip through it. I want to know who did the tummy tuck, whether there were check-ups, complications, anything that could explain her death.

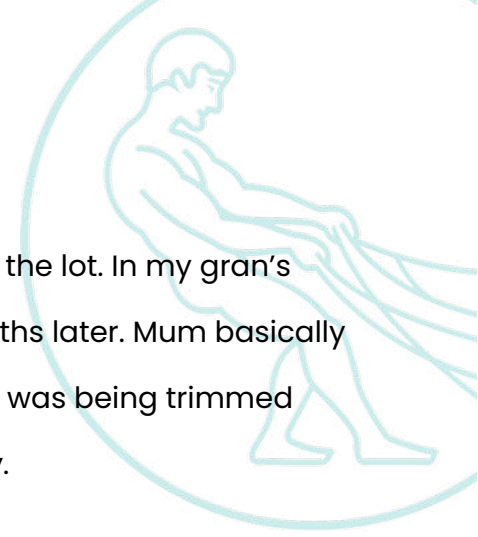




Mum had her first cosmetic operation at sixteen. A breast reduction. It was not done well, so decades later she had it redone. That result was good, except one nipple did not take, went black and fell off. A known but rare risk. It took months to heal, then she had a medical tattoo that faked the missing nipple very convincingly. But new breasts rarely fix the real itch behind wanting to be beautiful, so she had lipo as well. With smaller breasts her belly suddenly looked bigger and that had to be corrected. It is like that vicious circle with make-up. In theory you stop at the neck. If the shade does not match, you blend down so the line is softer. If you wear a low neckline you keep blending onto the chest and so on. There is no end. The solution is either no make-up at all so everything looks natural, or make-up so good you cannot see the join. That was not my mother. She was impatient and very impulse-driven. If you are chronically unhappy you are always hunting the next little dopamine hit. I know it from myself. Happiness looks so close on the other side that you ignore the risks on the way. You grab at it and you do not learn. So she will have gone to the surgeon who could offer her the earliest slot and was the cheapest. Classic non-criteria. What could possibly go wrong? Training is training, right? A good doctor would explain that very small new breasts might not suit the rest of her body and she might hate them later. Or he did explain it and she did not listen. Did not believe him. In the end Mum's new breasts were indeed too small for her taste. So the belly had to follow. She blended her make-up slowly downwards.

Now the belly had been done again, only this time not a bit of poking and sucking but full-on cutting. My hunch about her method of selecting a surgeon is borne out as I scan the Health folder. She wrote to three different surgeons. She told them about a big weight loss, sagging skin, that she looked like a shrivelled peach. Could the doctor fix it soon? She is almost flirting. One of the three could. So last March she had an apron of fat removed. She would not tell Sam. She would only say it was a "women's operation", nothing major, she did not need the kit any more. Another lie. My gran really did have a "women's operation" right before she died. Also called a "total". It is a major procedure

where they remove all the reproductive organs. Uterus, ovaries, the lot. In my gran's case the cancer had settled there. Even so, she died a few months later. Mum basically borrowed Gran's operation so she would not have to admit she was being trimmed thinner for her new boyfriend. He would not have cared anyway.



The Health folder shows no complications and it puts me in a foul mood. Alongside the flirty emails to cosmetic surgeons I find invoices for thread lifts and fat-dissolving injections. It is as ugly as it is sad and it leaves my soul feeling polluted. I put the folder back in its place in my little probate room. I still cannot stop. I am driven by a mix of detective itch and overwhelm, because a lot is unfolding in a few days. I am already in the middle. How much worse can it get? Since it will be a few days before I get Mum's PC back, I pick up her phone again, even though the fear of being so close to the scammer, maybe even tracked, is sitting on my neck. I am impatient and impulsive too. I am my mother's daughter and I stick my hand straight into the mess. It will be fine.

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Hello love

I am here

March 4, 13:16

There you go, it works 😊

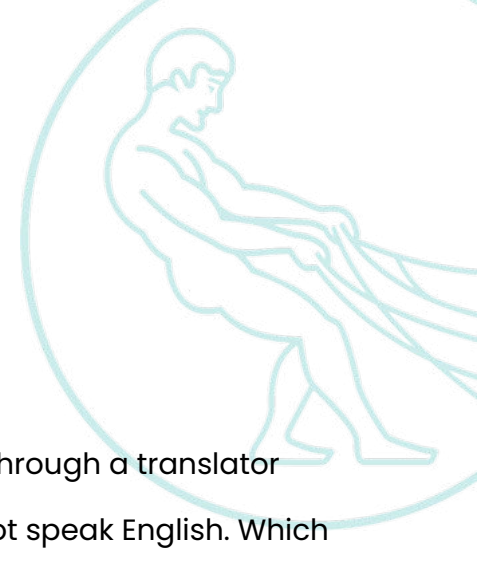
I am glad the installation worked.

Took long enough 😊

March 4, 13:24

Okay, same.

March 4, 13:24



The chat between my mother and Sam is in English. She ran it through a translator back and forth, because like many women her age she does not speak English. Which means every one of those thousands of messages was written in German, shoved through the programme and only then sent. Same with his replies. What a mad effort. And although these first lines are boring, they do not look like the first they ever exchanged. How did they first make contact?. Where did the two of them agree to move to Signal? When and where did they swap numbers before they had this first “private” chat? My mother knows neither Signal nor Telegram nor any of those apps. She knows Facebook. So I log into her account using the password note. I change the password and have a look round. She was a silent user. No posts. Profile photo is her tomcat. Her Facebook messages read like those of a stalker. In the last forty-nine weeks she had contact with twenty-one different Facebook users. Those contacts came from her commenting on various fake Sam Heughan pages. And when you do that, Sam writes back. Because he is very down to earth. He is not just one down-to-earth superstar but at least twenty-one, because almost all the chats have either his photo or his name on the profile. None of her Facebook chats are with friends, acquaintances or family. Some are one word and she does not answer. Some are short exchanges that fizzle out. And then there is the one that started everything. The “real Sam” walks on stage.

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Hello fan, How are you, I hope you are having a great day, I want to thank you for your love and support for me and my career, from where do you support me fan?

February 2, 00:37

"From where do you support me fan?" Seriously. How is it not already obvious that no Hollywood star wrote that. Not to Mum. She answers cheerfully.

Here in Germany there is hardly any information about you and your work. That annoys me a lot. That is why I support you on all your pages. Have a lovely day.

February 22, 09:56

That sounds great, you are really a best fan of mine I thank you for loving the Outlander film I appreciate you and all over there very much and I hope you will never stop watching my activities what do you really think of me?

February 23, 09:54

you will probably always be measured against Outlander. that must be hard. that is not easy to beat in that genre

February 23, 14:55



That sounds so sweet thank you for the compliment 🥰

I really appreciate you you seem so good

and I think you are an honest person

I love making friends and I love talking

to important people.

February 23, 15:47



February 23, 16:23

I like your way my love you must be a

nice person I will like to know about

you what do you like about me? 😊

February 23, 18:55

Mate. "I will like to know about you what do you like about me?" It could not be more obvious that this is not Sam Heughan and that English is not his first language. But Mum does not notice. She is flattered, giddy, and a fan. She tells him how much she admires his work, shows she knows almost everything about Outlander, and within a few lines lets herself be lulled by this stranger. He waffles that he loves the way she speaks to him, that she makes him happy, that he already misses her. A day later he sends kiss emojis. Mum replies with cats with heart eyes. They wish each other good night and good morning like lovers. Then he asks if they could talk somewhere a bit more private. On Telegram, for instance. Or Signal. And then Mum does something right and wrong at once. She writes that his invite to a private Telegram chat is nice but odd. Because all the other fake Sams have told her several times they do not chat on Telegram. She tells



him that, then gives him her number anyway, with “Let us see what comes of it.” I already know what will. She’s still at the start.

