

JERSEY / JUDGMENT

AG v Hill [2024] JRC 144 (21 June 2024)

[2024] JRC 144

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JUDGMENT

THE DEPUTY BAILIFF: 1. Hannah Hill, you are 27 years old. You fall to be sentenced for an offence of fraud. 2. Your Victim was a 36-year-old man who was vulnerable. He was not known to you prior to him contacting you on Instagram, a social media platform, in April 2022. 3. In March of last year, you sent him a message asking him if he wanted to be your "sugar daddy." It was agreed that he would pay you money in exchange for you sending him pictures and videos of yourself. 4. It was at your suggestion that your Victim pay you money. Payments began in March and one of the first payments of £200 you claimed that you had not received when you had received it. 5. You had some reason to believe that the Victim was vulnerable as he told you that he still lived at home and that you were probably more capable and independent person than he was. You then told him various lies over a protracted period in order to persuade your Victim to part with more of his money, for example, saying that your Mother was ill with cancer, that you needed to fly to the UK to see her, and ultimately that she had died. These were all lies. Your Mother was well and is still living, indeed she has written to the Court on your behalf. 6. Over the next five months you continued to pester your Victim for increasingly large sums of money on the false assurance that you would repay him. You made various false claims including that the monies were required to pay bills, to attend your Mother's funeral in Scotland, to pay lawyers to help you sell your dead Mother's house and so on. In our judgment these were wicked lies. Your promise that you could repay your Victim was made without any belief in its truth. 7. By October, your Victim was short of money. He told you he needed to have some of the money back as he would struggle to pay his rent and he asked you if you could help him with his rent. 8. By now you knew that your Victim had told his sister what had been going on. You tried to get your Victim to lie to his own sister to the effect that you had repaid him some of the money. Your Victim replied, saying "he wasn't much of a liar" and asked you to start repaying him "little by little." 9. You promised to begin repayments in late October but you did not. You claimed to have begun making repayments which again was a lie. 10. Your Victim's sister then contacted the police. She also believed that you were due to repay her brother when your late Mother's property was sold. Then she discovered from a search on Facebook that your Mother was still alive. 11. Remarkably, even after the Victim had gone to the police you continued, in December last year, to pester him for further funds asking for him for several hundred pounds. On 6 December you asked him to delete all the messages between you

- presumably in order to cover your tracks before the police became involved. 12. You were arrested at the end of December. Your parents gave you the £9,600 to repay the Victim in January of this year. 13. You pleaded guilty at the first opportunity in the Magistrate's Court on 18 April 2024 and you will receive full credit for that plea. 14. The Crown say that while this was not a typical breach of trust case, your Victim on any view placed his trust in you and you must have known from what he told you and indeed what he did that he was credulous and vulnerable. You repeatedly lied to him in order to gain his trust and obtain money from him. 15. The offending took place over a period of some six months and the money was used to pay off debts and other personal expenses. 16. We see from the Victim's personal statement that he was affected financially and from a social and trust perspective. Your offending has made him feel isolated and he expresses the hope in his Victim personal statement that you will understand the impact that your offending has had upon him. 17. As is commonplace in cases such as this, you are a person of good character with no previous convictions and with substantial mitigation available to you. 18. You are fortunate that your parents were able to repay the money that you had obtained by your fraud and we have read the letters and messages from them and others who speak highly of you and given weight to all that has been said upon your behalf. But the Crown and your own counsel describe this as a despicable crime; we agree. It was mean, manipulative, heartless and greedy. 19. We have reduced the Crown's conclusions as they do not in our judgment sufficiently reflect the mitigation available to you and your early plea. But his offence is so serious that only a custodial sentence can be justified and the sentence is one of 10 months' imprisonment. Authorities AG v Picot 1990/074 R v Barrick [1985] 7 Cr App R(S) 142 AG v Bellas and Louis

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Prepared on 24 October 2026 · Esheria