


Watch: Martin Henderson's message to fans after impostor fleeces woman of \$375k

 nzherald.co.nz/nz/watch-martin-hendersons-message-to-fans-after-impostor-fleeces-woman-of-375k/FMTRAAZNXBBU3AOFHIZ5P43D44

Kirsty Wynn

[Home](#) / [New Zealand](#)



By [Kirsty Wynn](#)

Reporter · NZ Herald ·

21 Feb, 2025 05:00 AM4 mins to read

Martin Henderson warns fans after woman scammed of \$375k

Loaded: 0.00%

1 of 1.0:02

NOW PLAYING • Martin Henderson warns fans after woman scammed of \$375k

Actor Martin Henderson takes a break from filming to warn Kiwis about romance scams using his name. Video / Martin Henderson

- **Kiwi actor Martin Henderson has issued a heartfelt message to the victim of a romance scam using his name and image.**
- **The American woman lost \$375,000 to someone pretending to be him.**
- **Henderson took a break from filming hit TV series *My Life is Murder* to video a personal warning about the elaborate scams.**

Hollywood star Martin Henderson has spoken out over what he says was a “sad and horrific” romance scam which saw a woman lose \$375,000.

American woman “Lea” devoted two years to a fake relationship with someone she thought was Henderson, taking out bank loans and maxing out credit cards.

Lea had believed she was in a long-term romantic relationship with the Kiwi actor after receiving a message on a fan page.

The 47-year-old moved to Auckland last December to be with the man she thought was Henderson, and start a family with him, only to find the relationship was a scam.

Advertise with NZME.

Advertise with NZME.

This week, Henderson told the *Herald* he was upset to hear the woman had been tricked and said she wasn't the first.



A woman who lost thousands of dollars to an online scam believed she was in a relationship with New Zealand actor Martin Henderson (inset). Photo / Sylvie Whinray

“A friend read the article in the paper out to me and I thought it was a joke and then I was dumbfounded, and then so sad,” Henderson said.

“It’s awful to have your name and likeness associated with something that has caused such harm to someone.”

Henderson, in Auckland filming season 5 of the hit TV series *My Life is Murder*, said his heart went out to Lea and he wanted her to cease all contact with the scammer.

Advertise with NZME.

“It’s not a nice feeling to know someone has used your face and image and goodwill with fans and manipulated that relationship for something so sinister,” Henderson said.

Discover more

- ['Misled by lies': Divorcee loses \\$580k in romance scam.....](#)
- [Catfishing and AI sex chatbot scams hit one-third of ...](#)
- ['I opened my heart': Woman moves to NZ, loses \\$375k ...](#)
- [Actor Martin Henderson joins Matakana cyclists in protest ...](#)

“You know you are in the public eye and there are ramifications that you have to consider and you have to be okay with that but I never thought someone else could be wronged or harmed because of it.”

The scammer first contacted Lea through a fan page for the Netflix drama series *Virgin River*, which Henderson stars in.

Believing she was writing to Henderson, Lea shared personal messages over WeChat and Telegram.

Over the two-year internet romance, Lea transferred money from bank loans and credit cards to the scammer who said cash was needed for private jets, flights, laptops and bitcoin.

TELL US YOUR STORY

Lea only realised it was a scam when a friend sent her [a Herald article](#) about the former *Shortland Street* star.

“I thought ‘what is Martin doing in New Zealand in Matakana on a bike rally when he told me he was lying in a hospital bed in Johannesburg after a mild heart attack’,” she said.

Even after the fraud was exposed the scammer insisted he was Henderson and asked for more money. When that didn’t work he changed tack.

Lea said: “I then received an email from a Noah Thompson, who claimed to be a private investigator working for Martin Henderson. He said Martin had asked him to help me recover some of the money I had lost.”

Henderson said he had not employed a private investigator and the new email was another layer of the scam.

This week, Henderson took aim at scammers and issued a fresh warning to fans.

“I’m hoping this story can help get the message out there that I don’t message people. I don’t have another account,” Henderson said.



Martin Henderson takes a break from filming season 5 of hit show My Life is Murder. Photo / Matt Klitscher

“These scammers are very clever and mean and play on people’s emotions by getting their hooks in.”

He said at one stage it felt like “a fulltime job” warning people not to be fooled by scammers.

“I have spent hours going through messages with people who say they have been scammed or wondering if something was true,” he said.

“I feel a responsibility to let people know the lengths these scammers go to.”

Last year, through an official Instagram page, Henderson warned fans not to engage with anyone claiming to be him.

Lea saw the messages but was too far invested and was assured by the scammer the warnings were for others, not her.

Henderson said he was working with IT specialists to clean up fake accounts on social media but said “they keep coming”.

He was concerned that advances in AI and more realistic deep fakes would leave even more people vulnerable to scams.

“We are just at the beginning of what AI can do - both good and bad.”

Kirsty Wynn is an Auckland-based journalist with more than 20 years of experience in New Zealand newsrooms. She has covered everything from crime and social issues to the property market and consumer affairs.

[Sign up to The Daily H](#), a free newsletter curated by our editors and delivered straight to your inbox every weekday.

Latest from New Zealand

[New Zealand](#)

[Monitoring of Chinese fleet continues, Cook Islands in spotlight | NZ Herald News Update](#)

[Crime](#)

[‘Exposes your true instincts’: Judge slams child abuser for ‘appalling lack of empathy’](#)

[23 Feb 08:55 AM](#)

[Opinion](#)

[NZ Herald comments: The stories open for discussion today](#)

[23 Feb 08:17 AM](#)

[A taste of NZ luxury at 40,000ft](#)

[sponsored](#)

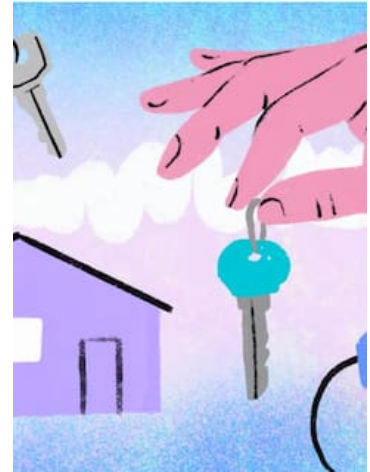
[Advertise with NZME.](#)

[Entertainment](#)



[Guy Pearce claims he was ‘targeted’ by Kevin Spacey.](#)

[Business](#)



Why buying a mortgagee sale property can be a risky gamble

World



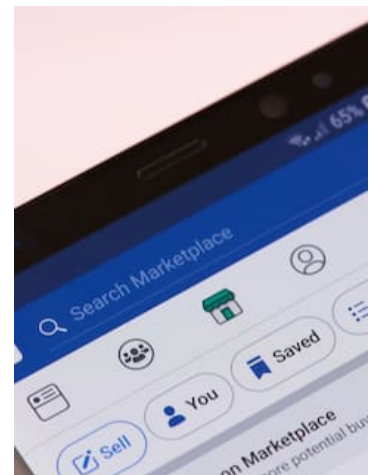
Major update after mum storms school, threatens to slit daughter's bully's throat

Lifestyle



'4pm until the cops arrive': Man, 87, goes viral for party invitation

New Zealand



'Pure heartlessness': Man laundered \$44k, from 22 victims, for scammers based in Kenya

Paid promoted content

Latest from New Zealand



Monitoring of Chinese fleet continues, Cook Islands in spotlight | NZ Herald News Update

NZ and Australia troops continue to monitor Chinese fleet. Cook Islands/New Zealand relationship in spotlight. 'Dramatic' police operation in Christchurch. Video / NZ Herald



'Exposes your true instincts': Judge slams child abuser for 'appalling lack of empathy'

23 Feb 08:55 AM



NZ Herald comments: The stories open for discussion today.

23 Feb 08:17 AM



Arrest in Birkenhead stabbing case

23 Feb 07:50 AM



Paid promoted content
