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## [Woman Loses \\$4K to Scammer Posing as Friend on Facebook](#)

by [Terrence O'Brien](#) ([RSS feed](#)) — Sep 4th 2009 at 12:42PM

Jayne Scherrman, of Cape Girardeau, Missouri, was the unfortunate victim of a [scam](#) that turned her compassion and trust into a \$4,000 profit, the AP reports. A still unknown crook hacked the Facebook account of Jayne's friend Grace Parry and began to send Jayne messages, purporting to be Grace and claiming that she and her husband had been detained in London and were in need of money.

Jayne figured if the couple could reach her only by Facebook, then they were in dire straits, indeed, and quickly wired \$600 as per the scammer's instructions. As is common in these kinds of schemes, subsequent messages were sent requesting additional funds. In this case, the huckster blamed the exchange rate when explaining the discrepancy between the funds needed and the amount initially requested.

All in all, Jayne eventually sent \$4,000 via Western Union to the impostor before realizing that she had fallen victim to a scam. On August 26th, she alerted the authorities.

We've seen [this tactic before](#) and there are keys to avoiding a snakey scammers:

- First and foremost, never wire any money without speaking directly (on the phone, not via e-mail or Facebook) to any friend who requests your help financially.
- If you believe there is a plausible reason this friend cannot reach you by phone, don't be afraid to ask them to confirm their identity. Ask questions that only they would be able to answer. Don't ask about birthdays or hometowns, facts that could be readily ascertainable online, but instead about where the two of you first met, first boyfriends, or [high school mascots](#).
- If you know or suspect a friend's account has been hacked, try to alert that person directly. Then, warn all of your mutual friends, and finally contact the site's administrators regarding your suspicions. Both your friend and shared pals will be thankful.

Follow these basic guidelines, resist your immediate urge to blindly offer help, and you'll avoid falling victim to the widespread [419 scams](#) that have taken a more personal twist when crooks ditched their Nigerian princess roots. [From: [AP/AOLNews](#)]