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## THE LANGUAGE OF ROMANCE CRIMES

*Interactions of Love, Money,  
and Threat*

Elisabeth Carter



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# The Language of Romance Crimes

## Interactions of Love, Money, and Threat

Elements in Forensic Linguistics

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**Abstract:** Exploring the interplay of love, money, and threat in romance fraud, this Element reveals how language is used to persuade, manipulate, and threaten without causing alarm. It provides the first empirical examination of criminal interactions-in-action that exposes and tracks the grooming process and manipulation techniques from first contact with the fraudster to the transition between romance and finance, and requests for money and intimate images, before morphing into explicit threats and acts of sextortion. Through the use of a range of interactional methodologies and real romance fraud messages, a new type of criminality in the form of 'romance fraud enabled sextortion' is revealed. The insights contained in this Element have clear implications for future directions of academic exploration and practitioner efforts to protect the public. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

**Keywords:** romance fraud, sextortion, interaction, coercion, forensic linguistics

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