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EXCLUSIVE
by KELLY STRANGE

**A PRISON officer who
fell in love with an
inmate in jail has told
how the affair
destroyed her life.**

Melissa Ellis, 29, started a relationship with convicted robber James Rahmanivas when she was working as a guard at HMP Maidstone.

But she was caught when fellow officers recognised her handwriting on racy letters in the lag's cell.

Melissa was sacked but carried on her relationship, believing they could start a new life together.

For three years she visited him twice a week – only to be **DUMPED** shortly after he was freed.

She says: "I made a huge mistake. It has cost me everything – my career, my family and friends and my sanity. I would do anything to turn back the clock."

"I have been judged over and over again and I want to explain what really happened. I hope people can understand."

Melissa was working at a petrol station when she spotted an advert in a newspaper inviting people to train as prison guards.

She applied and was accepted for the course in June 2008.

Melissa says: "I believed people could be reformed and stop offending with the right care. I couldn't wait to make a difference."

Melissa quickly earned a reputation with inmates as being fair.

State of utter shock

She says: "I was always polite and they treated me with respect. I enjoyed going to work every day."

But in January 2009 she caught her long-term partner cheating – finding another woman in her bed.

Melissa was stunned when her man then told **HER** to leave.

She says: "I lost it completely. I went into a state of utter shock."

Her GP signed her off work for a month and prescribed anti-depressants.

She returned to work early but things had changed.

"Before, I was very confident at work. Now I felt insecure and vulnerable. I wasn't able to cope with prisoners in the same way."

Lags had always commented on her appearance – but now she found the remarks flattering. She reported it to bosses but one prisoner was coming on strong.

Latvian national James Rahmanivas, 26, had already served six years for robbery. He claimed he turned to crime to feed his family.

She says: "I believed he was an example of how well the system worked. He seemed reformed."

"He'd tell me I had beautiful eyes and ask how I could look so pretty in my uniform. It seemed harmless but I reported it anyway to be on the safe side."

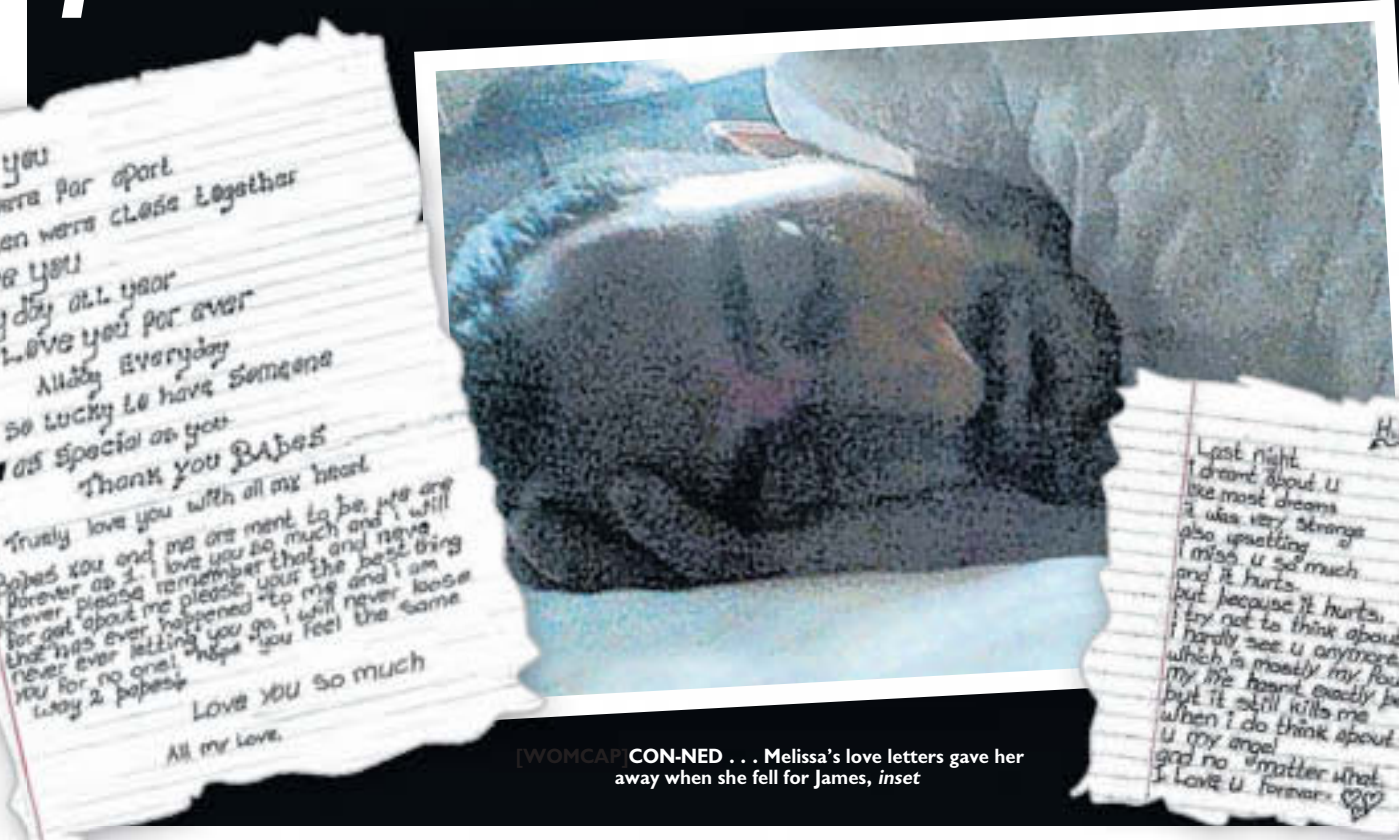
Melissa claims she even asked bosses to transfer Rahmanivas.

She says: "Other prisoners noticed I wasn't myself and he started sticking up for me. He put himself at risk to protect me and I couldn't help feeling flattered."

Rahmanivas said he missed Melissa on her days off and during a cell check one day, he swept a stray hair from her face. She says: "I was shocked but felt a tingle of

ROBBER STOLE HER HEART... AND £5,000

I was scammed by lag I fell in love with as a rookie prison warden



[WOMAN] CON-NED . . . Melissa's love letters gave her away when she fell for James, inset

**'He swept
stray hair from my
face in cell check'**

beyond snapped hugs and kisses in his cell. She says: "We spent a lot of time talking. We really opened up to each other. I was in love."

She wrote him anonymous letters – which he pinned to his cell wall. Soon it was no secret he had a girlfriend. Fellow officers had their suspicions too. In October 2009

Later that day Melissa got a call from Rahmanivas's **MOTHER**.

She says: "He asked her to contact me because he was worried. To know he cared so much made me feel better."

He started calling from prison. She says: "I knew they'd know about the calls but I needed to speak to him so much I didn't care. I hated us being apart."

In May 2010, the probe into her letters ended and Melissa – forced to admit the truth –

was dismissed. She says: "In a sense I felt relief that we could be open about our love."

"I hadn't seen him for eight months. It was driving me crazy."

Rahmanivas was moved to another prison and Melissa visited twice a week for three years, remaining faithful to him.

In the summer of 2013, Rahmanivas was deported. He begged Melissa to meet him at the airport in Latvia. "I couldn't wait to hold him in public for the first time. It was finally happening."

Four days later she flew home – and the calls dried up.

Melissa told herself he was "making up for lost time with friends and family" and would return to the UK soon. The hard-up

had invested so much in this man. I told myself he was just adjusting to life on the outside."

That night they consummated their love for the first time, but again Melissa was disappointed.

She says: "It wasn't the romantic dream I'd had. We were staying at his aunt's on the living room floor. All I could think about was getting caught."

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former guard even sent him cash for a visa application.

"I'd go without food to send what he needed. I had come so far I couldn't give up. I'd given up everything for this man."

She went to Latvia three more times but each time he was more distant. She says: "I begged for the truth but he said he still felt



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Lonely? How about dating a millionaire..

EXCLUSIVE by
YVONNE BOLOURI

FANCY bagging a romantic multi-millionaire to whisk you off your feet?

There's a wealth of very eligible bachelors looking for love in America's uber-rich Silicon Valley.

But there's no need to leave Scottish soil to live the American dream.

Love concierge Amy Andersen, who runs the mega-exclusive Linx Dating agency, is casting her net towards our own bonny shores.

'Simon Cowell of dating world'

Matchmaker Amy, 36, set up her agency ten years ago in California's Silicon Valley after being stunned at the surplus of eligible men all looking for love.

She said: "I'd meet all these guys searching for 'the one' and they'd say 'Amy where are all the women?'"

"They had fabulous lifestyles with no one to share them with. I'm happily married but I decided to help these guys."

Amy's services range from around £1,540 to £62,000 with well over 1,000 clients on her books.

She arranges everything, from the flowers, champagne and simple dinner dates to romantic breaks on private jets. She



RICH CLIENTS . . . Amy

said: "I'm the Simon Cowell of the dating world."

"If a guy's in bad shape I'll tell him to work out, get his hair done, his teeth bleached and invest in a fake tan."

Amy looks for ladies who are confident and sexy without trying too hard, and it's now a global quest for the best.

She said: "That's why I'm now looking at taking Linx Dating to Scotland with its castles and romance."

"Scottish ladies willing to take a trip out to sunny Silicon Valley to meet a Linx client can be very attractive to these men who love a worldly and globally-minded woman."

"I hope it's Scotland's turn now to get lucky."

AMY'S TOP TIPS

AMY has five top tips for Scots looking to find a millionaire.

Don't get drunk, don't show too much flesh and don't hog the lime-light.

But **DO** focus on the date, and remember the two-date rule not to reject your companion on sight – give him a second date before you make up your mind.

Amy said: "Men are extremely visual so don't turn up for a date wearing a baggy dress. You don't want to look like Pamela Anderson in the film Barb Wire – channel into your inner Natalie Portman instead."

Also, don't brag about how much you're worth because your date won't be in the slightest impressed.

Amy said: "Top notch millionaires are not looking to compete with women. They don't care how much you're worth financially. Instead they are asking themselves whether you would make a good wife, loving mum, best friend and lover."

Amy advises not to meet a first date after work, when you're tired and stressed.

She said: "Mentally prepare for the date. Turn your mobile phone off and never talk about past relationships, religion, politics or your latest diet."

Don't drone on and on about utter drivel. Choose your topics well.

Amy advises: "Work on developing talking points ahead of time on a variety of subjects and focus on your date, listen and observe."

"Linx women are the embodiment of grace, intellect, warmth and family values."

"They are private by nature and would never date in the work pool."

"I think down-to-earth Scottish women would make ideal love matches – and their accents are very appealing."

