

The Nigerian Scam

By Richard Lowe

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Richard Lowe
articles@internet-tips.net

Internet Tips And Secrets <http://www.internet-tips.net>

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Author: Richard Lowe, Jr.

Contact Author: <mailto:articles@internet-tips.net>

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The Nigerian Scam letters - I'm sure you've received them in your mail and your inbox. This scam has been running for decades, and by now I would think that most people in the United States have received it or heard about it in one form or another.

Often an official-looking letter arrives in the mail. It is postmarked from Nigerian, has a hand-written address and the letter appears to be hand typed. It begs for help and offers a handsome return for your time. And I do mean a handsome return - typically it offers over a million dollars for the simple favor of using your bank account to transfer some money.

Don't even think about responding - this is a scam of the worst sort. There are people who have lost their entire life savings because they called the phone number and let their greed kick in and left their brains at home.

Sometimes this scam arrives in your email - an example email is included below (note this is a scam - do not try and respond to it).

LADY MARYAM ABACHA ABACHA COURT GIDADO ROAD KANO-NIGERIA
THE PRESIDENT/CEO

Dear Sir,

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

I am Lady Maryam Abacha, wife of late General Sani Abacha, Ex-military Head of states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria who died on 8th June 1998 of heart problems. I contacted you because of my need to deal with persons whom my family and I have had no previous personal relationships. Since the death of my husband, my family had been subjected to all sorts of harassment's and intimidation with lots of negative report emanating from the government and the press about my husband. The present government has also ensured that our bank accounts are frozen and all assets seized. It is in view of this that I seek your cooperation and assistance in the transfer of the sum of US\$30,000,000.00 (Thirty Million United States Dollars only) being the very last of my family fund in my possession and control. An earlier attempt in the physical movement of the sum of US\$47,000,000.00 was to avail as the money was confiscated and my International passport impounded at the Muritala Mohammed International Airport, Lagos in August 1998. The Federal Government has seized all our properties and frozen all our accounts both local and International, but my only hope now is the available US\$30,000,000.00 which I carefully packed and deposited with a security company as photographic materials where my brother-in-law is working as a General manager when my husband died. If you are willing to assist us in receiving this money on our behalf, please contact my brother-in-law Alhaji Buba Abacha immediately on the following Telephone Number DELETED or EMAIL-DELETED@TOPROTECTYOU.COM to discuss the details and negotiate your reward, which I can assure you, will be very substantial .Please, ensure to keep this proposal very secret and confidential. We await your immediate response. Maa Salaam. Sincerely, LADY MARYAM ABACHA.

Wondering why I have deleted the email address and phone number. Because, believe it or not, people call these numbers and send email to these accounts and lose their money - fast.

What happens? A nice guy or gal picks up the phone at the other end and starts pulling you into the scam. At first they need a thousand dollars, perhaps, for postage or some small official fee. They are fast talkers who do this all of the time - and of you do give in and give them the money you don't have a chance. You are hooked and you are hooked bad.

They depend upon greed and prey on the weak. You think, "wow, I can get a million dollars", and "well, it's a risk but I'm only going to risk that first thousand". Foolish person.

Once you've given them your thousand (the amount varies) they start to reel you in. They will call to tell you they need another \$10,000, perhaps, for bribes to customs officials. You'll pay because you've already paid a thousand, and because it sounds like the money is just about to be transferred into your bank account.

So you'll pay. Then you'll call and you'll have to give them another amount, bigger this time, and deliver it in person, perhaps. You'll do it - you've already spent a lot of money and you don't want to lose it. You'll deliver the money and then be given a story - only to get another call.

This time you will be very suspicious, and you might be told they need to "wash" all of the money. You want to see, they'll meet you and indeed, they will have a handful of black money. They'll use some solvent and like magic the money is clean.

They will explain that the money was hidden and got "dirty" and now they need perhaps \$50,000 to clean it. Some people have paid as much as half a million dollars at this point. The stories are sometimes different, sometimes the same, but you'll pay. Because now the greed is mixed with fear and a little more greed - you've actually had the money in your hands now.

How long does this go on? Until you won't or can't pay anymore. Then you just get thrown away.

People disappear, calls aren't return, and if you do get hold of someone they deny knowing you or give you some excuse.

Report it to someone? Who? The FBI? Sure, they know all about this scam. Yes, they will take your data and add it to their database - but the scam is not operated on United States soil and there is no one to catch - at least no one who can be found. There is also little or no evidence - it's very difficult to catch this kind of thief.

So what do you do?

Use your brain.

Don't under any conditions give money to scammers. How do you spot a scam? Simple. The offer is too good to be true. It's that simple. Get a million for doing nothing? Come on. Doesn't happen (unless you win the lottery). Don't even respond. Just delete the emails or throw away the letters.

Be smart.

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Richard Lowe Jr. is the webmaster of Internet Tips And Secrets. This website includes over 1,000 free articles to improve your internet profits, enjoyment and knowledge.

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Claudia Arevalo-Lowe is the webmistress of Internet Tips And Secrets and Surviving Asthma. Visit her site at <http://survivingasthma.com>

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