

[Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / A Viral Job Ad & The Elephant In The Room

You're listening to a Mamma Mia podcast.

Mamma Mia acknowledges the traditional owners of the land we have recorded this podcast on, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation.

We pay our respects to their elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Mamma Mia Out Loud!

Hello and welcome to Mamma Mia Out Loud.

It's what women are talking about on Wednesday the 8th of March.

I'm Holly Wainwright.

I'm Jessie Stevens.

I'm Emma Gillespie, filling in for Mia.

I am the host of True Crime Conversations and the producer of this podcast.

On today's show, it's International Women's Day.

And the national broadcaster says its female reporters are under attack.

It's International Women's Day.

And we're all united in lolls about a viral job ad that sounds a lot like a wife.

And it's International Women's Day.

And the internet is divided about the woman who dared to say her husband used to be hot.

Is it International Women's Day?

I think it is today.

Yes, today.

But first, Emma Gillespie.

In case you missed it, Bindi Irwin has just shared her struggle with endometriosis.

Bindi, along with at least 11% of Australian women, has been suffering from intense endo-related pain for the past decade.

A doctor told me it was simply something you'd deal with as a woman, she said.

And I gave up entirely trying to function through the pain.

Hard relate.

To cut a long story short, they basically found 37 lesions.

Some very deep and difficult to remove ones.

She woke up from surgery and the doctor said to her,

How did you live with this much pain?

Ignored for years and downplayed.

Thank you to Bindi for sharing.

We know it's so important to talk about these things to get information about endo out there so more women can seek help.

And of course, if you need more information, head to endometriosis Australia.

We will put a link in the show notes.

The fact that what I wore on Monday attracted obnoxious commentary on Twitter failed disgusting personal abuse that I wouldn't and couldn't repeat here.

It was upsetting that it then ended up online on some news sites where the photos and the abuse were republished made me angry.

On this International Women's Day, angry on behalf of myself and also on behalf of other women, young women,

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who see those stories and see someone like me being violently abused day after day for whatever reason bullies can find.

I worry it might make you think that no progress has been made and that it's not worth it to be a woman in the public arena.

The ABC released a statement yesterday calling out the bad behavior of a couple of other media outlets

because apparently, even though it is International Women's Day, as previously mentioned, we still need to explain why criticizing a woman for what she wears is actually not appropriate. News Corp and the Daily Mail are being accused of amplifying social media abuse by publishing articles

that included Twitter criticism of an outfit worn by news breakfast host and all-round legend and icon Lisa Miller.

So some of this statement from the ABC read,

the ABC regularly receives queries concerning abusive comments being made on social media about presenters and journalists, particularly female ones.

Under the guise of concern, these stories are republishing abuse.

NewsCorporationsnews.com.au sent these questions at 6.42am today.

Urgent. Very urgent.

Shortly before publishing a story at 9am.

Some of those questions from this statement I'll just read to you.

I just wanted to check in to see how Lisa was doing and to see if she or the ABC wanted to comment on the behavior of the trolls online for a story.

If so, can you please provide a statement regarding how Lisa is doing, what ABC's reaction is towards people making these inappropriate comments online,

how the ABC plans to take action, if any, against those making inappropriate comments, and what the ABC will do to ensure comments like this are regulated or prevented in the future.

The statement continued, Daily Mail Australia has also published a very similar story.

The ABC is not going to dignify any vile comments being made about a presenter's clothes by responding to them.

If Daily Mail Australia and News.com.au were genuine in their concern about such behavior, they wouldn't amplify it by republishing the comments they describe as vile and sickening.

Giving anonymous social media bullies publicity on a national platform is participating in perpetuating antisocial behavior

and the very serious issue of online abuse of women.

Especially on the eve of International Women's Day, we ask for a more responsible approach to reporting on these issues.

Now the news director at the ABC, Justin Stevens, he weighed in and said the relentless and vile bullying Lisa Miller is subjected to on social media,

particularly Twitter is unacceptable, she is an outstanding broadcaster and journalist and does an incredible job.

Media outlets that amplify this disgusting anonymous trolling need to take a good hard look at themselves and their standards.

Hol, is this something that we would ever do on mamamaya.com.au?

Actually no, because we have a policy here not to do what we call backlash stories, which are stories

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where you go and you find,
you know, there'll be a couple of mean Twitter comments about somebody and you go, oh, that's a story.
But I don't want to take too much moral high ground here.
We can take moral high ground as mamamaya that we literally don't do Twitter backlash stories.
But this is a very common form of online reporting and it used to also be when I worked in magazines,
I've certainly worked in places that do this reporting too, where you go, we can't say that you are, let's say, putting on weight.
Dressed inappropriately.
Dressed inappropriately, you know, maybe should have rethought that hair color before you went to the hairdressers.
We can't say that because that would be mean.
But if other people are saying it, then it's a story and we can go under attack for choice of hair color.
How do you feel about that choice of hair color?
That's what this is, right?
Yeah.
And it feels PASAG, but it's a way of being able to report on a story without you appearing to be doing the attacking.
Yeah.
It's not a story in particular, but a lot of female journalists are under constant attack on Twitter.
And given that, I think that we should really reconsider this just blanket rule that journals have to be there, should be there, that that's a place for them.
Because these stats are American, but I think 69% of journalists are on Twitter, right?
And about 10% of the population.
So it's not a social media platform that represents the average person.
But journalists are intensely paranoid about not being on Twitter because that's where the conversations happen.
And that's where all the interesting discourse happens and that's where breaking news happens.
But it's also the place where female journalists get bullied relentlessly.
You know, when Alisa Mills says they're stepping back from Twitter, that's another story.
It's like, guys, these people are awful and let's stop elevating the trolls to a place where they're part of the conversation.
Yeah. And it's a cowardly thing to send someone.
And I know he to people that have firsthand got this kind of email.
Like everyone says you're not coping.
The whole industry hates you. Comment.
Yeah, exactly.
We just want to make sure that you're doing okay.
Yeah.
Comments.
Because everyone actually hates me.
In half an hour.
In half an hour, exactly.

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At 6.42 in the morning.

And it is the equivalent of being in high school and someone coming up to you and going, so everyone's bitching about you.

How are you feeling?

It's the cruelest thing that you can do and to publish it as though it is some sort of news report.

And what's really annoying about digital media is that now this has come out.

You can go and find the articles and they've all been edited.

That's not what they looked like at 9am yesterday morning.

Yeah, because it's worth making the point that this statement from the ABC is very unusual.

Yeah.

This must be an issue that's been building for the ABC to actually issue a statement.

Oh, that was my first thought reading it, that we don't often hear discourse like this from the national broadcaster themselves in such a heavy handed way to call this out.

That's what I loved about it, is that it was such a statement.

I also think that reading it, I went, I don't reckon this has been in the works for six months.

I reckon the ABC got fed up.

You could see that someone was going, I've actually had enough.

It is International Women's Day tomorrow.

And I've seen this with abuse, but also like a screenshot of a comment section where everyone's just spewing hate.

And what it does is it validates that as some sort of news story, which it isn't.

And it also encourages journalists, commentators, media types to do it to each other because then that becomes a story as well.

And it has currency.

I do want to understand those, I suppose, the difference between, you know, us sitting around this table today and talking about this and essentially bringing attention to those vile comments in this yucky story,

which, you know, maybe Lisa Miller would prefer that it goes away altogether.

And we'll wait into other backlashes if two influences are going each other or, you know, the ongoing ADHD wars that everyone has something to say.

That's true.

We have things to say about that.

So what's, I guess, I think that that's a good call out because one of the things that we do.

I'm not taking moral high ground here because Mama Mia is part of the media and we are all part of the media, right?

So it's not like we're on the outside critiquing the media.

We are inside.

We're players in it.

But what we do do at Mama Mia and we genuinely do do this day in, day out is we think hard about that stuff.

So the example is great about the ADHD argument between two high profile women.

We will discuss that and we will go, is this a backlash, a petty story that if we wait into, you know, we're just elevating people to a point where it's going to get somebody hurt?

No, I don't mean physically.

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I mean, you know, and also we're just adding unhelpful noise to a discourse.

Or is this what women are talking about and it needs some context and explanation and different viewpoints on it in a helpful way?

Because sometimes that's a really hard call to make.

And I wouldn't ever be bold enough to say that I think we get it right 100% of the time.

I think every media organization, including the ABC and every other is always evolving because social media and the way that this works is always evolving and moving really quickly.

So we said a few years ago, we don't do what we call backlash stories.

But when a Lisa Miller or a Lisa Elza, whoever puts their hand up and says, hey, this is bullshit, we'll decide, well, then they've put it in the discourse, we can talk about it.

The ABC have put this in the discourse.

I just saw Lisa Miller talking about it on ABC News Breakfast.

So we make thoughtful editorial choices.

Every media organization has to make editorial choices.

You're not always going to get them right.

But there's no question that just amplifying Twitter trolls has become a type of story in itself that is just bad for women.

How do we undo the fact, though, that within breaking news in inverted commerce circles, and I'm sure there's an expectation that lots of media outlets that those journalists are on Twitter, how do you undo that or separate that whole?

This part of Twitter is disgusting and horrific and vile, but that part of Twitter is important for the news cycle.

ABC has come out and said they don't need or want their journalists on Twitter anymore, which I think was a really important kind of flag in the ground.

And in that way, I think Twitter has to become more and more irrelevant.

There are ways to exist on Twitter without engaging in that.

So I have a profile.

It's not really attached to my name and I can just look at things and I never ever tweet or get involved because I don't want to see it.

But on the point about amplifying stories like this, I think the difference is also commentary.

If you're willing to go, hey, this is f'd up and call it out, then you're providing some kind of helpful framework by which to look at these stories.

My issue with how the Daily Mail and news.com often cover it is this both sidesism that's sort of like some say she's an ugly bitch.

And others say she's not that ugly that they think that they're portraying themselves as really neutral folks.

And there's been some interesting statements from the safety commission saying that the number one rule for any of this.

And I know that the word troll can be quite confusing because sometimes it is someone with a real face.

Sometimes it's a journalist.

It is the tone of utter hatred that reeks from these comments that I think I would call trolling.

But they've said the worst thing you can do when anyone is experiencing that onslaught of hate is put any spotlight on it.

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So what you do Daily Mail when you say everyone reckons that Lisa Miller looked like shit in this dress is you give everyone who a little bit had that thought a place to go and share it. And it just gets worse and worse and women will tell you that. As long as you know that's exactly what you're doing. And then the reason that you write this story is because then it goes on Facebook and it goes on your website and you know it's going to get incredible engagement. You're going to get 3000 comments of people going I also thought she looked like shit. Which is a really good reason why people do it. It's an attention economy. Unfortunately, people love to bitch about what women are wearing on TV and the way they talk and how their heads are distracting me. I can't concentrate on what she's saying because of her friends. Like people love to think that. But as you say, Jesse, maybe just think that a little bit and get on with your life. Yeah. This International Women's Day, I want to tell you the response over that rubbish yesterday actually gives me a bit of hope. We are making progress. We are going to make more progress and there are so many awesome women who we can all look up to. So let's celebrate them today. As mentioned, it's International Women's Day and I have a little rant coming on. Yes. A little rant. It's a bit of a loopy one this, so bear with me. Every now and then, a viral story will blow up around an unreasonable job ad. You're just like, whoa, that doesn't sound like a job of one person. Often it's for domestic help and often it's in America where people are very direct about such things. That happened this week when an art world family in inverted commas, that's what they're described as in this job ad from New York City, posted a job ad for an executive assistant that seemed like A, the job of very many people, and B, very kind of at home, intimate. They wanted an executive assistant who had the ability to juggle family travel bookings, schedule appointments, manage dogs and look after the couple's four-year-old child. According to the job posting, the ideal candidate must be dedicated to a simple goal, make life easier for the couple in every way possible. Now, this job ad was spotted by a writer called Emily Colucci. She posted it to her art blog under the title I Found It, the worst art job listing ever created. I'm going to read out a few more things from this job ad and then I'm going to make an unpopular point. So, as discussed, manage your travel booking and itineraries. Flag and arrange any international travel visa, health or other requirements for travel when

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necessary.

Manage the family travel.

Provide support to the family during both domestic and international travel, making necessary changes, etc.

Make restaurant reservations and RSVP to events.

Coordinate and confirm personal appointments.

Prepare family for anything they might need to do ahead of time.

Submit and process all paperwork related to these appointments and reschedule as necessary.

Service the central point of communication to household staff.

That gives you a good insight into the level this family operating at.

We have a household of staff.

We do, including chefs, nannies, landscapers, dog walkers, housekeeping, etc.

Coordinate or cleaning repairs and guest stays.

Manage the dog systems.

I love that.

Do you have dog systems?

I actually know exactly what they mean.

They mean potty breaks, food, daycare, dog warders, better appointments.

Sort out the dry cleaning.

Do dropping off and picking up.

Sort out the deliveries that are coming into the house.

Deliver gifts to friends and other people.

Keep private family documents up to date and organized like passports, birth certificates, drivers licenses, etc.

And manage online subscriptions and IT needs.

And pack for travel and organize closet systems.

Now, yes, that job looks ridiculous.

But here's my point.

Almost every single woman I know does that job for her entire family.

On top of the job that she also gets paid to do.

And this reminds me of an iconic feminist essay because it's International Women's Day from 1971, which is the year I was born.

So that's a very, very long time ago, right?

And this essay was called I Want a Wife.

It's by a writer called Judy Brady.

And here's just a couple of lines.

I know I've been talking a long time, but it's worth it.

I'm enjoying it very much.

I want a wife to keep track of the children's doctor and dentist appointments and to keep track of mine too.

I want a wife to make sure my children eat properly and are kept clean.

I want a wife who will take care of the details of my social life when my wife and I are invited out by friends.

I want a wife who will take care of the babysitting arrangements.

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I want a wife to go along when our family takes a vacation so that someone can continue to care for me and my children when I need a rest and a change of scene.

And if by chance I find another person more suitable as a wife than the wife I already have, I want the liberty to replace my present wife with another one.

Now that essay is iconic and it's very stark reading today because it goes on and it's really interesting.

She's basically saying all the things I do for my husband, I would love someone to do for me so that I could go out and live my dreams.

Just a reminder, that's from 1971.

1971.

Okay.

I would say that this fancy New York art family want a wife.

They probably want an army of wives.

They're outsourcing women's work and when you write down that job, it looks ridiculous.

Jesse, am I right?

You're right.

And if we are honest with ourselves and we do some soul searching, if we could outsource anything, would we not outsource the mental load of all of those things?

I'm looking at my dog's, I don't know, some tick cream or something, pills?

She's got to take every month.

It's in my diary.

I never do it.

But that's part of the dog system.

That's part of the dog systems.

If I could outsource that, it would be brilliant.

There were some really telling comments about this.

So one of them said that all the tasks on this were really belittling.

And I thought, it's an interesting use of word that you would think it's belittling.

Because who do you think normally does all this?

It's got to be the wife, right?

Like that's who would normally do it.

I see one point, one point that's being made in the criticism of this.

And a citizen art job.

Yep.

In the listing, if I'm going, all right, I have graduated with a masters in art.

And then I go and I look for a job saying masters in journalism and writing.

Because it did actually say that this job requires a degree, Jesse.

Yes.

Then it's like, well, this is so fine.

You need a personal assistant or an executive assistant or whatever.

Totally valid job.

The people saying that that's not a valid job and that in fact it's a hilariously unrealistic laundry list of requirements is wrong.

And in fact, paid really well.

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Like it's paid 65 to 95 K.

That's USD.

So that would be minimum about \$100,000.

Big gap between 65 and 95.

Well, I guess it's how qualified you are.

If you've worked in dog systems for five to 10 years, does that put you at the upper end of that band?

I think it would.

You'd want to put that on the resume, I think.

Or perhaps if you've not applied for an international visa before you're closer to the 65.

Exactly.

So I think when I was looking at that, I thought this isn't an unrealistic job and the idea that some jobs are belittling or degrading and others aren't.

I mean, the reality is how many jobs are there in the bloody art world?

But I can understand getting all of those qualifications and then being like, I'd like you to come and be a wife that that would irritate you.

This list of roles, responsibilities, first of all makes me want to cry.

Secondly, you're absolutely right, hold that this is just all of the things that typically one person in the family is holding up anyway.

And yes, that is the wife, usually.

And this is the whole point of Annabel Crabbs 2014 book, The Wife Drought.

100%.

There's this common joke amongst women who say, I need a wife, you know, who are overwhelmed with all of their things that they need a wife.

The idea that you can rest assured that someone in your life on the home front is doing the domestic heavy lifting.

But there's no getting around the fact that that's an advantage, mostly benefiting men.

But my question then is how do we get around that?

How do you get around the worry work?

Because the men in our lives might say to us things like, well, you didn't ask me to do it.

And if you just asked me or I did that last week, but the premise in The Wife Drought also argues that men should be given more flexibility to spend time with the family too and that there's this sort of restriction on the modern workplace that maybe needs to be de-gendered so that there's room for men to be the wife. The thing is, it's complicated because if you have the traditional wife, right, which we spoke about on the show a few weeks ago and we talked about the Trad Wife trend.

And I also saw a viral TikTok recently that was like one of those if you want a rich husband things and it was like, you're going to have to accept that basically your job is being their support person and that is your job.

Again, there's nothing wrong with that if that's your choice.

But increasingly, because women get to choose these things and also because of

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economic need, two people in a traditional family have jobs that require a lot of them outside the home and all the other shit that needs doing still needs doing. But if you pay someone else to do it, you will be mocked and judged for it because obviously that can be problematic because it often comes with a big privilege gap and there are a lot of people who are getting exploited and not paid well in those situations.

This job, as you say, Jesse seems quite well rewarded.

And there's no question about that.

There's something uncomfortable often about the dynamic of paying people to do shit that you don't want to do.

But that is the judgment in there.

It's like that you don't want to do it, that there's some kind of moral superiority in being the person who does your job, your paid job and all this shit.

And then you can be like, well, morally pure and a brilliant wife and mother or father or whatever.

It's just another you can't win.

Somebody has to do all the jobs on this list.

And you can't be a high-flying art family and be doing all of this.

And I wondered, reading it, when I was looking at a lot of the commentary,

I know this is a very particular pocket of New York elite, progressive people.

But is this the death of the assistant?

Because I saw people describing some of these jobs and tasks as abuse and exploitative.

And I was like, well, it's not really.

Well, why can't we just own that this is an executive assistant role, that this is someone's personal assistant role?

I think that speaks to the lack of value that we see in what those roles.

Women's work, which are traditionally women's work.

But even the people who do those jobs, the executive assistants, the way that maybe some people see the status of that kind of a job in the hierarchy of seniority of jobs that you could have, those jobs are the hardest, most random assortment of tasks that all sorts of hours.

It's not a nine to five thing to be an executive assistant.

And I'm sure we probably have out louders who work as executive assistants.

You're doing anything and everything.

It reminds you how highly skilled it is.

And so a lot of my response to this, and then when I saw how far it went and obviously a lot of the negative commentary, I just thought, all right, it was a job I'd probably posted in the wrong place.

That's the crime I see here.

Don't apply.

Like what I love about this job is that really outlined what you'd be doing.

It was very specific.

There's not a single thing that you'd show up and they'd say, can you pick up

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the dog poo and you'd go not on the job description.

It was within dog systems.

I think apart from my issue about the women's work, the other issue here is that this is a way into the art world it is, right?

So very often with highfalutin jobs and careers that are hard to get into, industries that are hard to get into acting, it is the way in.

You know, they want an art graduate to do this job because then you do it and you do an amazing job.

You've made all these connections.

All the people who that art family are coming into contact with and you're talking to on that's opportunity for you.

Same with, I mean, Hollywood assistants very often end up with really good jobs because you go in there, you prove that you're trustworthy, discreet, you prove that you can do everything, the connections you're making, the people that you're talking to on the phone when you're dropping off the gifts and all that stuff.

And that's sucky, right?

Because that is very much clicky, connections, exclusive.

Who's going to get those opportunities?

Do you know what I mean?

So I can see why people are mad about that.

But my main reaction to it was just that thing of like a family that has two really busy people in it, even if you take away all the snoodiness of having the household staff and all the rest of it, is the snoodiness of going, well, why aren't this family looking after themselves?

It's like because the woman would be doing all that.

As I say, nearly every woman I know does all that shit, books the holidays, make sure that everyone's passports are fine, make sure the vet and the dentist and the... somebody has to do it, people.

When I interned for free at a television network once way back in the day and I was cleaning barbecues in my silk shirt, I tell you what, it would have been a lot less stressful if I knew that I was getting paid between 65 and 95,000.

Yeah, I think to call it the worst job when you think about some of the jobs people do in the US for below minimum wage,

I think that probably shows you that people are a little bit out of touch.

If you want to make out loud part of your routine five days a week, we release segments on Tuesdays and Thursdays just for Mamma Mia subscribers.

To get full access, follow the link in the show notes, and a big thank you to all our current subscribers.

On Valentine's Day of this year, February 14, a woman named Molly Gunn pressed publish on a blog post titled My Husband Used to Be So Hot.

Molly reminisces on the night she met her husband Tom at 23 years old

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and she writes,

We're nearing the territory when we've been together for as long as life before each other.

That makes me happy sad because as we've grown together, we've changed.

Sometimes I look at Tom and wish he was the Tom I met,
the handsome DJ with curly hair, witticisms and ripped jeans.
She shares her favourite photo of him and says he looks so fit
as us Guilford girls used to say.

Now she says they have three kids, a mortgage, a lot of baggage,
and they don't look the same, they don't act the same.

We don't spoon each other for hours in bed like we once did,
she writes, and we're lucky to hug each other in the mornings.

We don't make each other laugh like we did.

Sometimes we talk about divorce,
sometimes we talk about what else is out there,
sometimes we get on and have a great time.

She says,

I look at this grown up 45 year old man with his furrowed brow,
a habit of talking with food in his mouth,
an unfortunate green gold gillet and a cap grimace
that hides his now coarse salt and pepper hair and I think,
who are you?

Oh my God, I love it Molly.

She wonders sometimes,
and this is something I've heard a lot of long term couples say,
if they met each other now, would she fancy him?

And ageism she concludes is not only about growing into yourself
and accepting that, but also about embracing the changes
of those who age around you.

So this was published on her blog,
I think she's got 100,000 followers on Instagram
and that audience knows her very well.

I think her blog is called The Selfish Mother,
she's very candid.

Problem was that it got republished by The Times,
which was not her audience,
and there came the backlash.

Many wrote that the story was depressing and brutal
and basically suggested that she'd taken advantage of her husband
by even writing it.

As a result, there was then a bunch of body shaming
where the internet decided to tell Molly,
as we always get to this place,
well, you're not that hot either.

So here's my question.

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And I saw some people going, and he's okay.
Yeah, actually, I think he's fine for a dad.
And I was like, oh Jesus.
Holly, does Molly have a point?
Because you've had a gorgeous partner for one million years.
Who used to be even more gorgeous.
Yes.
Did you relate to any of this?
Yes, of course I did.
Molly's story is brilliant.
Pay dirt, Molly.
Well done.
Good on you.
Because she spoke the unspoken, right?
Which is what many writers want to do
when they're writing.
The problem is she spoke the unspoken through her husband
under the bus at the same time.
But he would have been in on it.
It's fine.
I'm sure he's fine.
I make jokes about Brent.
If you came to our live show,
you would have seen Brent compared on the big screen
to Gwyneth Paltrow's husband, Brad.
And I took the piss out of him in his outdoor wear,
which is all he ever wears in his terrible shoes.
And he's in on that joke.
I don't do it without him knowing.
But it was also very funny.
Well, I hope so.
But she spoke a truth.
And actually, when you read the piece, as you've pointed out,
it's not all about how ugly a husband is.
It's about we've changed so much over 20 years.
Who are we now?
Where are we now?
And it's just so true.
So what do you think about the headline though?
Because a lot of people are saying the headlines click bait.
What often happens with bloggers is that they write something
really nuanced and then a headline is stuck on it
that actually doesn't represent what they said.
In this case, that is what she said.

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I think that the problem is with the word hot because I don't think she is meaning that to be synonymous with attractive.

I think she's talking about the sexiness, butterflies, meeting a stranger in those early stages.

Yes.

But also because of the way that we are socialized and what we've been indoctrinated with, even when you're old, and I'm just going to say the word old, I know there'll be out louders who are like, you're not old and these people aren't old.

Even when you're old,

I have been socialized to believe that old is not hot.

Young is hot.

Old is not hot, right?

So sometimes you catch glimpse of yourself or your partner or your friend or somebody you haven't seen for a while and you're like, fuck, like...

We're old.

We're old. I'm old.

My partner, he has aged.

We've been together for 18 years nearly and he has aged and so have I and we are not hot.

I think honestly...

What was refreshing about this is that we hear a lot about old not being hot in terms of women, but men are often left out of that conversation or rugged, salt and pepper, yum, better with age, George Clooney.

There's a sort of space carved out for older men to be more sexy than they used to be,

but I do think that this headline,

I think she knew what she was doing.

Attention Economy, there's content all around you, whatever stands out, whatever's clickiest.

So I do think that it was an intentionally clicky headline, but what I did think reading this was, this woman should open her relationship up.

Like maybe this is a conversation

that you get to at a certain stage in long-term monogamy where you wonder if you should have sex with other people.

So there was an interesting divide among people who read it, right?

Because young people, people who haven't been

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in long-term relationships looked at it and went,
okay, what's wrong with you guys?
You need to break up.
That's exactly what I imagine people would think
to have been in long-term relationships.
And I thought, why are they still together?
See, I don't think that.
People in long-term relationships, especially women,
generally read it and went, yeah,
they didn't seem to have the reaction
which is these people should break up.
And because also when you've been in a relationship
for a really long time, one of the things you learn the most
is the peaks and troughs, right?
And also there will be times over a 20-year relationship
when you are your best self in inverted commas.
You're looking after yourself.
And when I say that, I don't mean it as code
for like your skinny or whatever,
but I mean, you know, you're feeling great about yourself.
Maybe you've got a great haircut.
Maybe you're exercising and it's making you feel good.
Maybe you're really happy in your job, whatever.
Like I look at pictures of Brent and I over the years
and there'll be someone I'm like, babe, look at you here.
You look fabulous.
And I don't mean, I don't know, it's just a good time.
And then there'll be other times, other seasons in your relationship
when you're both just a bit bloody-slubby.
I did think initially like, oh, maybe they shouldn't be together.
But when I thought about it, I walked away thinking,
no, I understand that there are those peaks and troughs
and that you probably have a lot of love there
and you're choosing to be together and you want to be together.
But why should you have to accept this kind of like mediocre
melancholy all throughout?
I would think spice it up.
Like what are you going to do about it?
Well, I think what was quite subversive and cool about this article
was that men, I'm sure we've all seen this to some extent.
And you know, it happens with women too,
but there are a fair few men that blow up their long-term relationships
and find whether it's someone younger
or find someone new and have this kind of second wind, right?

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Because they're feeling what Molly's feeling longer than last time.
They're feeling what Molly's feeling and they go,
you know what, what will make me feel like my young self again
is somebody like my partner when I first met her.

It happens a lot.

It happens a lot and it is being played out before our eyes,
but no one talks about it.

And men don't necessarily say it like this.

I think if a man wrote an article that said my wife used to be hot,
I think also he would have faced a lot of backlash.

True.

But that's implicitly being said by certain actions
and what we see play out all the time.

But when women talk about any element of marital misery,
we beat them with a stick.

Like we do not like it.

It's sort of like you should be so lucky to have a man
who still sits beside you on the couch.

I mean, this is part of feminism, right?

Was the idea that women would begin to articulate
some of the dissatisfaction or not even,
just a feeling that a lot of people have.

And it's unpopular.

We're humans and we fail those things.

And I think that even if you were to go back and, you know,
read a bunch of novels and this is something explored
by a lot of men throughout time.

And this is a woman who went, I'm going to dare say,
and I think this would actually come as a shock to a lot of men,
which is we feel exactly the same.

You think we look old?

I think you look old as fuck.

Exactly.

At least I'm using serums.

Yeah, exactly.

And I think this can sometimes be a liberating thing
in a relationship where if you both sit down and go,
how great was it when we met
and we couldn't keep our hands off each other and blah, blah, blah.

And sometimes I miss that.

And now there's a different love
and it's made way for something so beautiful.

But you're allowed to both mourn past versions of yourself
that aren't coming back.

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You are very wise, except the only thing about aren't coming back is that in the same way as peaks and troughs, I'm sure that you have various levels of your relationship. You know how some days you fancy your partner a lot and other days you're like, go away. Can't explain that. It's that, but stretched out over years, right? So, you know, I'm sure that Molly and her husband do like each other and still find each other attractive on some levels. Of course they do. But what she's articulating is that he isn't the person that she met and she isn't the person that they met and they're not that hot young couple anymore. And sometimes it's like, ugh, it's fine because you're so right, Jesse. If we don't speak these things, we've got the most unrealistic expectations on relationships. And the real time to throw the relationship out is when it's unhealthy and it's making you miserable. And sometimes you might feel that way for a couple of days, a couple of weeks, but it's not really how you feel. You've got a record for us before we go in. I do. I have a bit of a different recommendation today and it's actually a challenge. I want to challenge out louders to do something. So Lucy Smith is a triple J presenter, music journalist, awesome, awesome, incredible person. Go follow her on Instagram. She posted something last night that I want to read to you. She said, You know your friend who's always been a bit sus? Call him out. The one that just popped into your head as soon as I said that. The one who's a good mate, but you tell a girl to think twice before going there. The one that's a legend to work with, but is a real suspect at the function. The one that you know is problematic, but you just stay out of it. The one that you need to keep an eye on once he's had a few beers. The one that you wouldn't want to leave your girlfriend alone in a room with that friend. Call him out and don't just wait until the next time. We're tired of talking about your friend in our group chats,

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warning each other and doing the work
because you don't want to have the conversation.
A moment of awkwardness could save someone years of pain.
And if you can't have that conversation,
please assess why you would maintain that friendship.
Oh, Lucy.
So I read this and had absolute goosebumps.
I want out louders to think of a man in their life,
your boyfriend, your brother, your dad, your partner, your mate,
your colleague, not necessarily who is this baddie,
but someone you can send this to
and ask them to think about if there's someone they can send it to.
I'm not suggesting that out louders have bad dudes in their lives,
but maybe you know a guy that knows a guy.
I have a question.
Yep.
What do you mean?
Like, as in, I totally understand this entire thing.
I can picture four guys immediately.
Yeah.
But what are we asking the man to do?
Go up to that person and say, hey, you're a dick.
How does the call out work?
What does the call out look like?
Message him and be like, hey, I was...
It's International Woman's Day.
I was thinking about that party last weekend
and what you said to my friend.
It's something specific.
Or, hey, I don't know if you realise,
but when you drink, you get very handsy
and that makes all the girls in the group uncomfortable.
Love it.
Start a conversation because women are fucking sick
and tired of hoping that you will start the conversation.
So I'm asking you out louders,
find a guy that will start a conversation with another guy.
That's my record.
Wow, exciting.
Okay, that is all we have time for.
This episode is produced by Emma Gillespie,
who's also co-hosting.
Thank you, Em, doing double duty.
With Audio Production by Leah Porges

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and Assistant Production from Susanna Macon.
And if you are looking for something more,
we made an awesome International Women's Day video.
It's on the Mamma Mia Instagram.
You can check that out via the link in the show notes.
And yesterday, we shared an exclusive video
just for our subscribers,
all about Harry, Charles, Coronation,
everything that we've learnt since Spare was released,
the eviction from Frogmore Cottage.
Holly, Jesse, me and Discuss, go and watch that.
We filmed the whole recording
and it's in a different studio and it looks really cool.
And go and watch it, subscribers.
And a few out louders have said they would love to watch it.
So let us know what you think.
Like if that's something that adds to your listener experience.
Because it's a very different experience
than some people put on YouTube or whatever.
Let us know. Let us know in the out louders.
Shout out to any Mamma Mia subscribers listening.
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subscribing to Mamma Mia is the very best way to do it.
There's a link in the episode description.