

UNITED WISDOM

Meeting Through an App: The Person Behind the Profile

Relationships and Intimacy

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Epigraph

> *“I want to see you”.*

Kuno in E. M. Forster’s *The Machine Stops*, Part I, a brief opening fragment of his reply to his mother, Vashti. His wish belongs to a fictional character; it does not oblige another person to meet. Context.

What this article is about

Lena notices Oleg’s profile in a dating app. Both mention walks, books, and quiet weekends. After several messages, she feels they suit each other. Oleg then explains: a walk means a whole day in the mountains, while a quiet weekend includes friends. Lena imagined a short route and an evening together. Neither necessarily deceived anyone. The same words held different ways of living that had not yet been discussed.

This hypothetical scene concerns two adults. The article considers moving from selected information to communication in which the other person can clarify meaning, change an answer, or refuse. A profile may give a reason to begin a conversation, but it does not confirm someone’s entire personality or compatibility. We describe no particular app’s functions, do not promise safety, and propose no character assessment from a profile. Historical fiction and philosophy retain their limits; the small voluntary practice is the editors’ proposal.

I. A profile begins acquaintance rather than completing it

A profile is a selected presentation. Someone shows photographs, states interests, and names an intention. Even an honest description has limits: it cannot contain every circumstance, meaning, and exception. Missing information cannot automatically be treated as deliberately concealed. Lena knows Oleg wrote about walks. She does not yet know which walks he means or how much this interest defines his present life.

An impression can be useful. It helps someone notice a person among many and choose a first question. Usefulness does not make it complete knowledge. If Lena feels attraction, that is her response to what was presented. It does not yet mean Oleg shares her expectations or will behave in a particular way. Between an attractive beginning and a confirmed shared agreement, mutual clarification remains to be done.

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Three layers can be distinguished: what was actually shown, what we inferred, and what the person confirmed in conversation. Oleg says he loves books. Lena assumes he enjoys discussing them. Conversation reveals he prefers reading silently and rarely discussing plots. The first description has not become false. The second, broader assumption changed after previously seeming part of the description itself.

This boundary also applies to unpleasant impressions. A short message does not prove coldness; no photograph with friends does not establish loneliness; an unusual interest cannot justify diagnosis. Someone can recognise that a format does not suit them or that information is insufficient to continue. That decision needs no disclosure of another's true nature. Personal readiness to communicate and a final assessment of someone's personality concern different subjects and require different grounds.

Lena can retain her first impression as an invitation to learn more. She need neither abandon attraction nor immediately certify it. It is enough to recognise that a shared interest is currently indicated by words. Further conversation may show whether these hold common content. Different content would be new knowledge, not necessarily exposure of deception or proof that profiles should never be trusted.

The person need not fill every gap beforehand either. Detail has costs: personal information may involve others, past experiences, or circumstances irrelevant to first acquaintance. The right to leave some life unshown remains. At the same time, a significant agreement needs appropriate clarity. Someone can withhold a full biography while honestly naming their present purpose for communicating when that question becomes shared.

II. Matching words do not yet mean matching conditions

Lena and Oleg discuss a quiet weekend. Rather than asking whether they are sufficiently alike, they can clarify one ordinary example. What does such a day look like now? Would they want it together or separately? The answer need not meet expectations. Its purpose is to make a word distinguishable. A shared label becomes a reason for conversation rather than ready proof of identical rhythms.

Clarification differs from an examination for correctness. Lena can prefer an evening without company without demanding that Oleg admit his version is wrong. He can name the importance of friends without proving her preference boring. A possible agreement's subject becomes visible: one future day and its arrangement. A specific difference need not immediately establish complete incompatibility, although each retains the right to end acquaintance.

Even similar answers create no promise. Oleg also enjoys a short route but is busy next Saturday. Interest in walking, willingness to discuss meeting, and agreement to a particular

time are separate messages. If Lena merges them automatically, refusing Saturday seems a betrayal of their initial similarity. Separation preserves accuracy: a common subject exists, an event has not been chosen, and one answer does not establish the reason for refusal.

Change can be acknowledged without requiring uncertainty about everything. Someone can say they currently seek a particular kind of communication and later revise that intention. Yet revision needs a new message where the other person relies on an earlier clear agreement. The distinction between changing an answer and leaving someone acting on a now-inaccurate understanding matters. It concerns specific participation rather than a duty to disclose every inner reason.

Some differences offer no suitable compromise. One person wants romantic acquaintance; the other wants only friendly conversation. This can be recognised without proving the other purpose less worthy. If purposes do not overlap, further communication may be unwanted. Clarification need not end in agreement. Sometimes its useful result is that people stop expecting what neither promised to provide.

Shared words remain part of acquaintance after clarification. Every adjective need not be checked, and correspondence need not become evidence collection. It is enough to revisit information on which the next step actually rests. Choosing a subject needs some grounds; arranging a meeting needs others. A question’s size follows the decision’s size. Acquaintance can thereby retain live conversation without requiring complete knowledge where it is unavailable.

III. A person can answer differently from their image

Lena has imagined Oleg as an attentive conversational partner who always finds suitable words. In messages he responds awkwardly and asks her to explain a question. This may disappoint her. But the disappointment arises between an actual answer and Lena’s expectation, not necessarily between an action and Oleg’s promise. Without a promise, noticing her own addition to the profile can precede accusing him of breaking an imagined role.

At the beginning of Part I of *The Machine Stops*, Kuno talks with his mother through a technical image. Mediation does not exhaust meeting for him; Vashti judges that contact’s sufficiency differently. This is a fictional conflict within an imagined world, not research on current apps. It helps pose an editorial question: which representation have we accepted as the entire person, and is there room for their own answer?

The story does not prove that meeting in person is always better or obligatory. In the selected scene, Kuno later demands a visit before continuing conversation. We do not adopt this ultimatum as a practice for acquaintance. Lena and Oleg may prefer correspondence, another

convenient format, or stopping. Contact's completeness is not measured by progress towards one correct form. Any further format should remain an available choice for both adults.

An image can also obstruct pleasant surprises. Oleg does not share Lena's favourite genre but attentively asks what matters to her about it. Common interests prove not to be the only way to converse. Yet one successful answer does not certify complete compatibility either. Specific participation can be appreciated while acquaintance continues. A person exceeds both an unsuccessful and a successful episode, and the current agreement retains a limited size.

The right to a different answer includes describing oneself in one's own words. Oleg may explain that he used to enjoy hiking but now rarely leaves the city. Lena may ask about a discrepancy with the profile if it affects her decision. Yet the question should not demand proof of every circumstance. A particular detail's currency can be discussed without turning the person into an investigation's subject or secretly testing truthfulness.

Equal participation does not promise a pleasant outcome. Lena may discover that Oleg's present rhythm does not suit her. He may prefer other communication. Encountering an actual person thereby does not become a method's failure. The article offers no method that guarantees intimacy. It distinguishes continuing on the basis of emerging answers from stopping without having to preserve an initial image simply because hope and time were invested in it.

IV. A question has limits, and an answer is not complete access

Clarifying an interest does not confer a right to personal history. Lena asks why Oleg no longer goes to the mountains. He says he does not currently want to discuss the reason. Choosing a short walk needs his present willingness. The undisclosed reason can remain unknown. Refusing to tell it neither proves deception nor requires Lena to continue acquaintance if these limits do not suit her.

Another question concerns information essential to a shared task. If both discuss meeting at a particular time, attendance and known limitations matter. Oleg need not explain a private reason for being busy, but a concrete answer about timing is harder to avoid if Lena must plan. The reason's privacy differs from participation's clarity. One requires no exhaustive account; the other should not be replaced by a promise someone does not intend to fulfil.

Correspondence also has a scope. Receiving a message does not make Lena the owner of a story to retell to acquaintances or publish. If she wants to discuss her own difficulty, she can first consider which identifiable details are needed. There is no universal confidentiality arrangement for every circumstance here. The distinction remains between a message to one person and availability for another action with new participants and consequences.

Access to a device, correspondence with others, or private documents need not be demanded for confidence in intentions. Such checking expands the subject far beyond initial acquaintance. We propose no methods of establishing someone's identity and do not promise that omitting a check is safe. Someone can recognise insufficient grounds for their next step and refuse it without acquiring a right to investigate everything that might relieve their anxiety.

Information about third parties also has boundaries. An account of former relationships may explain Oleg's experience, but other people's messages and names do not become obligatory parts of acquaintance. Lena can learn what he wants now without a detailed report on another person. Interest in the past does not erase the participation of those absent from the conversation. Personal experience and disclosure of another's history do not fully coincide, even within one message.

An answer's limits can be stated directly. Discussing one shared interest is enough for now; this reason stays private; I have not agreed to meet. Such messages do not guarantee a respectful response. They make the subject visible so further choice need not rely on assumed permanent permission. Each can accept the offered scope, propose another, or stop. A first conversation creates no duty to expand access.

V. Naming intimacy does not replace acquaintance

After several evenings, Lena feels she has known Oleg for a long time. They discussed much, and the conversation was warm. This experience matters and need not be devalued. Yet familiarity differs from knowing how someone will act under other conditions. Frequent correspondence does not show participation's whole range. Present conversational intimacy can be acknowledged with future uncertainty retained rather than treated as an anxious defect requiring urgent removal.

In Letter III to Lucilius, Seneca asks whether calling someone a friend corresponds to trust. His Stoic sequence places consideration of the person before accepted friendship, after which he requires open trust. This is historical philosophy, not research on acquaintance. We retain the question of sequence without adopting obligatory complete disclosure after one decision or deriving an assessment of someone's safety from the letter.

Lena's sequence can be smaller. She knows Oleg attentively discussed a book and named a time limit. This supports expecting a certain conversation without certifying financial reliability, privacy, or support in another subject. Trust has an object. Known things can be relied on without automatically extending to unknown ones. This distinction needs neither an overall personality score nor suspicion of a hidden defect in everything.

No advance promise can ensure every doubt disappears. Even lengthy acquaintance does not make another person transparent. A limited next step can be chosen with uncertainty

remaining or declined. Here, a choice’s reasonableness is not measured by absent anxiety. It depends on actual grounds, accepted conditions, and what remains unknown. The article does not replace personal choice with a ready measure of permissible risk.

A warm conversation creates no debt to continue. Oleg can thank Lena without wanting romance. Lena can feel disappointment without gaining a right to demand contact as a reward for attention. Her invested time was real participation. It did not purchase his future consent. A mismatch can be named and communication ended without concluding that earlier kindness must have been false or served a concealed intention.

A relationship’s name may emerge later with particular content. Friendly correspondence, romantic acquaintance, and an explicitly accepted joint agreement have different scopes. They need not develop along one ladder. Sometimes the first is enough; sometimes another appears; sometimes communication ends. Intimacy is more accurate where a name corresponds to known actions and current answers rather than assigning duties before people agree to undertake them.

VI. A further format does not prove serious intentions

Lena proposes continuing differently. Oleg prefers correspondence for now. She can decide whether that limit suits her, but refusing a format does not establish absent seriousness. Various reasons are possible and unknown to this article. Readiness and its scope can be clarified. Someone need not remove every suspicion through a personal demonstration if they decline an action chosen by another as a sign of a proper attitude.

Moving to a further format needs a separate answer. Convenience for one person does not make a new method available to both. Resources, circumstances, and preferences can differ. No current platform instructions or rules for arranging a meeting are offered here. We discuss a decision still unmade. Stated willingness to converse retains meaning without consenting to every proposed channel, time, and degree of disclosure.

More direct contact does not automatically confirm a whole personality either. One conversation provides new observations and leaves much unknown. Oleg may speak more easily than he writes; Lena may prefer time to think. These differences concern the present format rather than proving true character. What became clearer and what remains a question can be noticed. Technical proximity should not become a philosophical guarantee of authenticity or safety.

A proposal differs from pressure through refusal without assigned punishment. If Oleg does not want to continue, another channel should not be used to reach him for a final explanation. His answer already concerns future contact. Lena can seek support for disappointment

without demanding it from the person who refused. Respecting a stop does not depend on receiving a reason the other party finds sufficiently persuasive.

Threats or coercion change the sequence. Another contact should not be arranged to test reactions; sensitive information need not be revealed to reassure someone; honesty need not be proved through access to private life. Safe available support and a decision appropriate to the circumstances matter more. The article establishes no diagnosis, local procedures, or universal action plan. This boundary excludes a dangerous experiment from an ordinary voluntary attempt rather than promising to determine a situation from correspondence.

If both accept another format, agreement can stay limited. Today one question will be discussed; afterwards each will decide whether to continue. This does not devalue interest. It preserves learning without recognising intimacy beforehand. A small step can be enough in itself. It need not prove that acquaintance will lead to a relationship or that every further limit will eventually disappear.

VII. Clarification revises a representation rather than rewriting a person

Oleg changes his profile: walks used to occupy more of his life. Lena notices and can ask whether this affects their plan. That is a suitable subject. Yet an update does not prove that the old version deliberately deceived. Two descriptions and a current answer are known. A discrepancy’s significance for one’s decision can be assessed without filling the unknown with an accusation of permanent dishonesty.

An accepted agreement can also be genuinely unmet. Oleg promised to say whether Saturday suited him but did not answer. This action can be named separately from the profile. Lena may plan without unconfirmed participation and state her limit if communication continues. There is no need to decide whether silence comes from the app, character, or a hidden event. A practical effect is known although its cause may remain unknown and an answer need not arrive.

Repair helps where it changes the next step. If intentions were understood differently, they can be clarified now and actions based on the former mistaken assumption stopped. Explaining past confusion creates no new consent. Lena can accept that Oleg did not mean to mislead her while declining continuation. Good intentions, acknowledgment of error, and her present choice have separate content that should not be merged automatically.

Revision works both ways. Lena initially wanted a meeting and later decides she is unready. She can state a new answer without proving the decision’s final correctness. Explicitly accepted joint duties need appropriate clarity about effects. Yet neither correspondence nor

another’s expectations removes the need for present consent. Clarification can be brief without becoming a report of every inner change as long as its subject is understood.

Not every error requires continuation for repair. Someone can end acquaintance without wanting another conversation. The other retains feelings without automatically acquiring a right to pursue an explanation to a personally satisfying conclusion. Incomplete understanding can be acknowledged. Some questions will stay unanswered. That unpleasant uncertainty does not justify crossing a stated limit or making refusal prove that the entire earlier history was pretence.

Acquaintance can withstand a small correction if both are willing. Its subject then changes: identical weekends were assumed; two versions are now visible, and one shared episode can be chosen. People need not be corrected to their original images. Differences can be agreed around, retained, or found incompatible. Real conversation helps through the possibility of a new answer rather than necessarily restoring the first pleasant impression and making it infallible.

VIII. Learning retains the unknown and freedom of choice

Lena and Oleg choose a short walk another day. This is one hypothetical result. They could retain correspondence, abandon romantic intention, or end acquaintance. No source establishes an outcome. What matters is that their plan rests on current answers rather than matching profile words alone. One person could clarify himself; the other could choose on clarified content while retaining a right to another result.

Profiles neither disappear nor become useless afterwards. They remain convenient initial representations, available for updating and limited consideration. Our sense of their completeness changes. Interest can be noticed without assigning compatibility; intention learned without treating it as agreement to a specific step; a private story heard without acquiring power over it. Each transition needs its own grounds rather than one comprehensive decision to believe everything.

Real communication need not be opposed to technology. Correspondence can be meaningful while personal contact provides insufficient clarity. The question concerns the possibility of answering and being heard on a known subject. This is an editorial criterion for conversation, not a tested scale of channel quality. We establish no format for everyone. People can consider their limits without declaring another method inferior intimacy or insufficient human participation.

Remaining unknowns can be carried without obligatory invention. Lena does not know Oleg’s life under every circumstance. A chosen conversation needs no complete knowledge. Another decision may exceed current grounds. This distinction avoids demanding impossible

transparency while imposing no duty to trust without personally sufficient content. Each retains the right to refuse a step whose scope they are currently unready to accept.

Learning also has value of its own. Someone can discover another meaning of a familiar word without finding a future partner. A conversation does not become wasted because it ended. Yet that value belongs to the participant’s assessment; another cannot be required to appreciate an uncomfortable experience or continue it for our understanding. Freedom of choice includes declining an offered interpretation of what has already happened between two people.

The person behind a profile appears where representation allows correction through that person’s own answer. They need not fit the entire surrounding story. Nor must we continue every offered contact. Between these limits remains room for bounded communication: notice an opening, clarify the subject, agree on a next step, and acknowledge a stop. Intimacy is possible without being promised. Participation retains dignity when people learn enough to choose different paths.

What this means in practice

For one ordinary, safe acquaintance, you can voluntarily choose one profile interest. Separate what is written from your inference. Ask a small question about its current meaning: what example is intended, what the person wants now, and whether this concerns the proposed step. Do not assess the whole personality or subject someone to a hidden test.

After the answer, identify what became known and what remains assumed. Shared interest, willingness to communicate, and agreement to a format differ. Without a further answer, leave the action unconfirmed. Another plan can be chosen without a verdict about hidden causes or waiting until uncertainty disappears.

Check the question’s scope. Is this detail needed for the shared task? Does it concern someone else? An answer on one subject does not open the entire past. Do not demand devices, private documents, or others’ messages as proof of seriousness. Insufficient grounds can mean declining your own next step.

Allow the representation to change after clarification. Conversation may continue or reveal a mismatch. An initial impression need not be rescued at any cost. An explicit refusal of further contact is accepted without another channel being used to bypass it. Disappointment can be discussed with a suitable other person without assigning support to whoever stopped.

The attempt can be skipped or ended. Under threats, coercion, or punishment for refusal, safe available support matters more than a further test conversation. This is editorial reflection, not a guarantee of safety or successful acquaintance. A small result is clarified meaning, a limited

agreement, refusal, or acknowledged uncertainty. A relationship and complete knowledge of someone are not promised.

Key quotation

> *“it is not everything”.*

Kuno, *The Machine Stops*, Part I, a brief fragment from the same scene. The reply challenges completely equating a mediator with a meeting; the fictional plot does not prove one modern format superior or confer a right to demand personal contact. Source.

Connections between traditions

Line	Shared question and essential limit
Forster’s fictional scene ↔ profile	Representation does not exhaust a person. The imagined Machine is not research on a present app.
Kuno ↔ a voluntary further format	Another contact can be desired. His later ultimatum is not adopted as practice and creates no meeting obligation.
Seneca ↔ naming intimacy	Acquaintance’s sequence matters. Complete trust’s ideal does not cancel current limits and revision.
Shared interest ↔ a specific agreement	A similar word can prompt a question. It does not yet mean identical conditions or an accepted promise.
Private matters ↔ a shared task	A reason can stay personal. A significant shared step needs its own clear answer.

Primary sources and research

1. E. M. Forster. The Machine Stops, Part I. The 1909 story is presented in *The Eternal Moment and Other Stories*, Harcourt, Brace, 1928. Version information and a continuous Part I opening were read, including Kuno and Vashti’s conversation and his later refusal to speak before a visit. Neither the whole story nor collection is claimed as read. Both brief quotations belong to Kuno, not an authorial study; international rights status remains undetermined.

2. Seneca. Moral Letters to Lucilius, Letter III, §§1–6. Richard M. Gummere translation; the selected letter was read in full, not the entire collection. Brief historical philosophical paraphrase without direct quotations. Stoic friendship’s sequence establishes neither acquaintance’s safety nor obligatory complete disclosure.

Tags

acquaintance, app, profile, person, representation, unknown, clarification, correspondence, interest, compatibility, agreement, intention, format, answer, consent, refusal, stopping, privacy, personal history, access, trust, intimacy, Seneca, Forster, The Machine Stops, Kuno, Vashti, mediation, voluntary participation, boundaries, freedom of choice, dignity

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