

RELEASED: Wednesday 26 July, 2017

Australian Story – Monday 31 July, 8pm on ABC and ABC iview

Playing With Fire

Bill Shorten ripped me a new one. Senator Sam Dastyari

You can't just think that you live in a business without consequences. Opposition Leader Bill Shorten

Labor Senator Sam Dastyari speaks exclusively to **Australian Story** to confront head-on the political donations scandal that cost him his seat on the Opposition frontbench last year.

Senator Dastyari was a rising star in the corridors of Parliament House, and on social media, until it was revealed he'd allowed a business with links to the Chinese government to pay a travel bill for his office.

When a day later it was revealed that he had contradicted ALP policy on the South China Sea, at a press conference he had given alongside a major Chinese donor, his career imploded.

The outcome of that press conference was because of my own actions and my own mistake and I resigned to take responsibility and pay the price. Senator Sam Dastyari

This *Australian Story* features interviews with Sam Dastyari, his family and politicians on all sides.

It traces the colourful 34-year-old's life from his arrival in Australia as a four-year-old, after fleeing the religious regime in Iran with his sister and parents – and returns with him to Iran to visit the home he grew up in.

The gifted student joined the ALP at just 16, wheeling and dealing his way through the Party and enjoying a meteoric rise to the Shadow Ministry.

In this *Australian Story*, Sam Dastyari answers the lingering questions about his conduct.

"I wasn't just part of the (fundraising) arms race. I was one of the weapon suppliers in this arms race," he says.

The question is, having been a party man since the age of 16, can Sam Dastyari be trusted to change his ways?