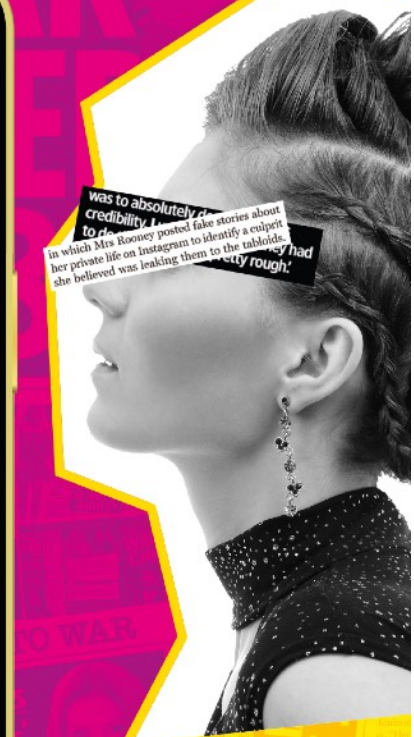
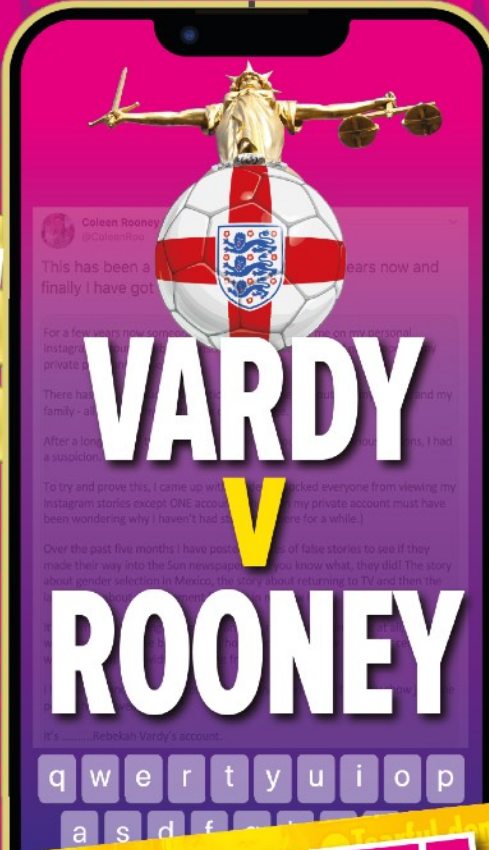
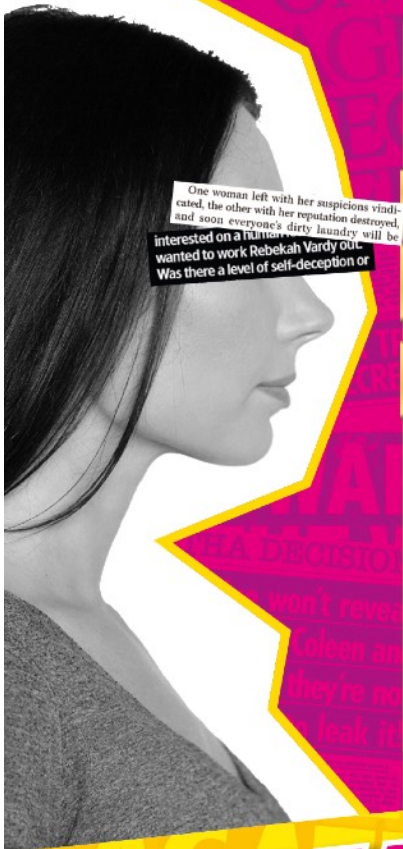


ALTRINCHAM GARRICK PLAYHOUSE - AUDITION INFORMATION:

SCOUSETRAP! THE TRIAL OF THE DECADE...



THE WAGATHA CHRISTIE TRIAL

A biting funny play based on the court transcript of the WAGS at war trial
Adapted by **Liv Hennessy**



Monday 2 – Saturday 7 June
Evenings at 7:30pm

altrincham garrick playhouse

Box Office: 0161-928 1677
www.altrinchamgarrick.co.uk

This amateur production of 'Vardy v Rooney: The Wagatha Christie Trial' is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

Thank you for expressing your interest in auditioning for “**VARDY V ROONEY: THE WAGATHA CHRISTIE TRIAL**”. This production will be part of our Spring/ Summer 2025 Season at Altrincham Garrick Playhouse.

The Audition Date for this production is
The Rehearsal Start Date for this production is
The Production Dates for this production are

Tuesday 11th March
Sunday 27th April
Monday 2nd -
Saturday 7th June

Rehearsals

Rehearsals will be every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 7.30pm - 10pm, and every Sunday from 2pm - 5.30pm.

We do ask that all those auditioning are able to make every rehearsal. We do, of course, understand that sometimes you may have other commitments and special occasions during the rehearsal process, and we therefore ask that you inform us of any dates you are not available in advance (at the audition) and we will try and make this work. If you have a date that you're unable to rehearse within ten days of the opening night (2nd June) we may have to ask you to withdraw from the production.

You may not be called to every rehearsal, and the Director will produce a rehearsal schedule as far in advance as possible, but we do still ask that those successful in being cast in the production remain flexible, as rehearsal schedules can often change during the process.

VARDY V ROONEY: THE WAGATHA CHRISTIE TRIAL

Adapted by Liz Hennessey
Directed by Dan Ellis

2nd - 7th June 2025
Altrincham Garrick Playhouse

A story stranger than fiction that blurs the boundaries of tabloid scoop, court case and soap opera, ***The Wagatha Christie Trial*** explores privacy and celebrity in modern Britain.

On 9 October 2019, Coleen Rooney publicly accused Rebekah Vardy of selling stories about her to The Sun. The four words "It's..... Rebekah Vardy's account" sent shockwaves across British and global press. Nobody could have expected the social media scandal to grow so large.

On 10 May 2022, the "Wagatha Christie" trial commenced. Over seven days, the libel court case saw Vardy and Rooney remark on each other's lives, with much of it documented heavily in the press.

Only a handful of people witnessed what happened behind the closed doors of this footballers' wives drama and now you can too in this hilarious (and slightly tacky) court room comedy!

You'll be on the edge of your seat as you relive the high-profile case, filled with drama,

intrigue, and scandal.

Vardy V Rooney: The Wagatha Christie Trial was first performed at the Wyndham's Theatre in the West End in 2022 before a UK and Ireland tour.

Characters

The majority of the script is drawn directly from the court documents, using verbatim transcripts of what was said under oath and presentations of evidence. Rooney, Vardy, and both prosecutors will have a lot of lines to learn word perfect and need to be able to deliver at a rapid-fire rate during certain points of the play. Pundit 1 and 2 also are large parts and are present throughout the action

The play will require actors who can deliver deadpan comedy well at breakneck speed, without crossing the line of parody (again noting the court scenes are taken directly from quotes of what was said).

Vardy V Rooney contains strong language and actors must be comfortable delivering and being on stage with them.

Act 1 focusses on Vardy in the box, Act 2 focusses on Rooney in the box. Truly a game of two halves.

Rebekah Vardy – Female, Playing age: Mid 30s- early 40s

Softly spoken, originally from Norwich. She is suing Coleen for defamation based on Instagram posts and believes she has enough evidence to prove she is innocent of the claims made by Rooney's Instagram post. Well PR trained on first viewing through years of experience, but at times easily confused by the details (or should that be she doesn't recall them...?) presented to her, from her own evidence. She is resilient, gives mostly short concise answers and ultimately wants to clear her name. Act 1 is focused on Vardy on the stand.

Coleen Rooney - Female, Playing age: Mid 30s - early 40s

Scouser, and social media investigative. Rooney is the accused in the court case so endures a lot of questioning based on her sleuthing skills and private life, having to defend if what she is presenting is evidence or just personal belief. She has to have a sense of vulnerability regarding family matters being presented in the public eye over the past 2 decades. Act 2 is focussed on Rooney in the stand though she has a sizeable amount to do in act 1 also.

The Pundits:

There are a double act of pundits who observe proceedings and give traditional football commentary throughout. Both interject through the trial, playing narrator roles, and becoming smaller characters that interact with the leads in flashbacks or scene that happen away from the courtroom. They add a large amount of humour and become names figures that featured heavily over the course of proceedings. Both pundits need to be versatile in their acting to differentiate between named roles, need to be comfortable talking directly to the audience and understanding the tongue in cheek characters they are.

Pundit 1 (Jeff) – Male, 18+

Also plays Jamie Vardy & Wayne Rooney (footballers and Husbands of Rebekah and Coleen)

Pundit 2 (Jem) – Female 18+

Also plays Harpreet Robertson (FA Senior Member of Staff) & Caroline Watt (Vardy's Agent)

Hugh Tomlinson QC – Male, Playing age: 60s

Legal representative of Vardy. Leeds born, with many high-profile victorious celebrity cases already under his belt. A relentless eye for detail and ability to cause confusion, hone in on uncertainty, and change tact at a moment's notice.

David Sherborne – Male, Playing age: 50+

Representative of Rooney. Charming, confident and dare we say it, slightly smarmy? Cross examines Vardy for 3 days straight using tactics that borderline on showboating, sometimes to the annoyance of Mrs Justice Steyn. Delivers killer blows and also changes tact at a moment's notice.

Mrs Justice Steyn – Female, Playing age: 50+

High Court Judge who oversees the proceedings and delivers the final verdict. Admittedly, this is a smaller role with some interjections and final monologue, however Steyn will be on stage throughout and will react accordingly. Based on this, the actor will not be called to all the rehearsals.

What to Prepare

Audition pieces will be available from 6.30pm on the Audition Evening, but we have also included them at the back of this pack for preparation. The page numbers from the script are listed below:

Rebekah Vardy

Page 10: “[Oh my god] have you seen... to page 11: ”No its absolutely not a joke” to page 12: “I’m fuming I didn’t give it to you earlier”

Hugh Tomlinson QC

Page 60: “What did you tell her to say to The Sun?” to Page 62: “you have done all that kind of thing, haven’t you?”

David Sherborne

Page 29: “...1251...” to Page 31: “...That’s correct isn’t it?”

Coleen Rooney

Page 51: “... They have done it for years...” to Page 53: “...do you know what, just block”

Pundits 1&2.

Using the same audition pages for pundit roles and additional separate named individuals.

BOTH - Page 2: “Bold play there from Rooney...” to Page 4: “...to the beautiful game, just like you”

Pundit 1 also P41 as Wayne Rooney: “And you go on to say that...” to “Which I was completely unaware of”

Pundit 2 also P17: Mrs Robertson Statement

Mrs Justice Steyn

Page 69 - 70: The verdict monologue

The Audition Evening

Auditionees will need to sign in and complete a contact sheet in the Theatre Bar at Altrincham Garrick Playhouse from 6.30pm on Tuesday 11th March. We will then see each auditionee in the Annexe in front of the audition panel from about 7pm.

There will be Garrick personnel to show you around and help you through the process. Please be aware that these audition evenings often include quite a bit of waiting around and can be long, but we will try to move as quickly as we can.

The audition panel will consist of the Director and members of the Altrincham Garrick's Artistic and Casting Team (ACT).

We are a diverse theatre and we welcome auditionees of all ages (above the age of 18) and all genders, ethnicities, sexualities, disabilities and races, to enrich the work of the production.

What Next?

If you've read all the information in this pack, and wish to audition, then please email casting@altrinchamgarrick.co.uk stating "**VARDY V ROONEY**" in the subject heading and detailing your name and contact number. By emailing, you will have registered for an audition on Tuesday 11th March.

We'd like to wish you the very best of luck, and we look forward to welcoming you, or seeing you again! Thank you for taking the time and interest to prepare for this audition and Break-A-Leg!

Best wishes,

Joseph Meighan (Artistic Director/ Artistic and Casting Team)

Carole Carr (Artistic and Casting Team)

Mike Shaw (Artistic and Casting Team)

Fiona Primrose (Artistic and Casting Team)

Gemma Sales (Artistic and Casting Team)

It's [.....] Rebekah Vardy's account.

(**COLEEN** *freezes and we're with PUNDIT 1 & PUNDIT 2.*)

PUNDIT 1. Bold play there from Rooney in October 2019.

PUNDIT 2. Bold is the word, Jeff, because that social media post has landed her here today – at the High Court in London on 20th May 2022 – over *three years later*.

PUNDIT 1. That's right. And we're with you, court-side, about to kick off one of the most highly anticipated libel cases of all time.

PUNDIT 2. It's definitely been a lengthy preparation period for both teams, hasn't it Jeff, but they made it. This is Rebekah Vardy versus Coleen Rooney, in their own words.

PUNDIT 1. Yep, every word you hear in this court is *exactly* what was recorded across seven days of court transcripts.

PUNDIT 2. Well, not *every* word. We weren't in court, obviously.

PUNDIT 1. No, we weren't. And, as we all know, it took seven days to lay out the evidence, and then two months for the Judge to deliver her verdict –

PUNDIT 2. And we haven't got time for that.

PUNDIT 1. No. But you're here in *our* theatre of dreams. So what you're about to see is 90-minutes of match highlights. Plus a bit of injury time.

PUNDIT 2. Don't worry, we'll step in when it all gets a bit technical.

PUNDIT 1. That's right, because libel's played a bit differently in the UK, isn't it Jem?

VARDY V ROONEY: THE WAGATHA CHRISTIE TRIAL**3**

PUNDIT 2. You're bang on, Jeff. Here, in a British court, the burden of proof rests on the publisher. And in this match, that's Coleen Rooney and her social media post.

PUNDIT 1. So whether she likes it or not, she's going to have to go on the attack?

PUNDIT 2. Absolutely. Coleen Rooney has to *prove* that Rebekah Vardy was leaking stories about her, or she loses the case.

PUNDIT 1. Ahhh, but let's not forget, if Coleen can't win this case on the truth defence – which I'm pretty sure she will –

PUNDIT 2. Let's see about that –

PUNDIT 1. – then she *can* win by arguing that posting it was in the public interest.

PUNDIT 2. But, Jeff, surely there's a difference between what's in the public interest, and what interests the public.

PUNDIT 1. Jem, this is probably a good time to say – we're not legal experts.

PUNDIT 2. No.

PUNDIT 1. And we should also add – for broadcast reasons – how we, the pundits, perceive the events of this trial might not necessarily be accepted by Coleen Rooney or Rebekah Vardy.

PUNDIT 2. Because it's not always a beautiful game. There's friendships, betrayal, marriages on the brink –

PUNDIT 1. Villains, ghosts, wigs –

PUNDIT 2. And two women who happen to be married to footballers.

(The PUNDITS touch earpieces.)

VARDY V ROONEY: THE WAGATHA CHRISTIE TRIAL

PUNDIT 1. And – yep – we’ve just been told we’re seconds away from kick off.

PUNDIT 2. The stadiums filled, the warm-up is complete –

PUNDIT 1. In the words of Norwich City’s major shareholder, Delia Smith – “let’s be having ya” –

PUNDIT 2. Where are ya, come oooooon.

(The court takes shape around them. We’re on the Judge and the barristers, all completely frozen. PUNDIT 2 moves towards MR TOMLINSON.)

In the attacking midfield, we’ve got Rebekah Vardy, with her barrister Mr Tomlinson.

(PUNDIT 1 moves towards MR SHERBORNE.)

PUNDIT 1. And playing in defence, we have Coleen Rooney, and her barrister Mr Sherborne.

PUNDIT 2. But, most importantly, the referee for tonight’s title clash – our judge, Mrs Justice Steyn.

PUNDIT 1. Before we start, Jem, we should mention.... we might be subbing in for some other key players when needed.

PUNDIT 2. But for now, we are your pundits.

PUNDIT 1. Humble observers to the beautiful game. Just like you.

(The PUNDITS retreat.)

(STEYN blows a whistle and the game begins.)

TOMLINSON. My Lady, with the court’s permission, I’ll call Mrs Vardy.

VARDY V ROONEY: THE WAGATHA CHRISTIE TRIAL

SHERBORNE. Mr H is her estranged husband... they were separated because of marital difficulties... and Mr G is a well-known footballer. Without giving too much information away... there were pictures of [Mrs F] on a beach, dancing around... wearing relatively little clothing... let's read together what you said to Caroline Watt -

REBEKAH. "[Oh my god] have you seen how badly Mrs F is behaving".

SHERBORNE. ... And she says -

CAROLINE. "I haven't seen it, I'll look -"

SHERBORNE. And you say -

REBEKAH. "Leak the story about her shagging Mr G behind Mr H's back".

CAROLINE. "I tried before but *The Sun* already knew about it. And couldn't prove it as usual".

SHERBORNE. To which you respond -

REBEKAH. "Ugh" -

SHERBORNE. ... What you say is "Ugh", you're annoyed that you can't leak it, aren't you?

REBEKAH. It's more like an ugh, not an uh...

SHERBORNE. You're annoyed, aren't you? ...

REBEKAH. No... I was actually just joking about that one.

SHERBORNE. You were just joking?

REBEKAH. Yes, I was.

SHERBORNE. ... You [use] the word leak, don't you?

REBEKAH. I did use the word leak but that's not what I meant.

SHERBORNE. ... Oh I see. You don't know what the word leak means then?

REBEKAH. Well, there are two meanings, but that's not what I meant by the word 'leak'.

SHERBORNE. ... You say this is a joke... is that your evidence to the court?

REBEKAH. Ms Watt and myself have been friends for a very long time. Our WhatsApps were sometimes outrageous, sometimes totally inappropriate... and yes, they don't read very well. But there's always explanations for them.

SHERBORNE. ... Let's turn to the next example. Danny Drinkwater... page 1855 ... he was a professional footballer, yes?

REBEKAH. Yes, that's correct.

SHERBORNE. You message Caroline Watt again, you initiate a message at eight fifty-nine in the evening of 8th April of 2019. And this is what you say -

REBEKAH. "Story [...]" -

SHERBORNE. - We have that convention of the "[...]" when you are about to announce something -

REBEKAH. "[...] Danny Drinkwater arrested".

SHERBORNE. And she asks you -

CAROLINE. "For what".

REBEKAH. "Crashed his car drunk with two girls in it... both in hospital, one with broken ribs" -

SHERBORNE. And then you say -

REBEKAH. "I want paying for this"

SHERBORNE. Is this another joke?

REBEKAH. ... No, it's absolutely not a joke.

SHERBORNE. ... So you meant it when you said "I want paying for this".

VARDY V ROONEY: THE WAGATHA CHRISTIE TRIAL

REBEKAH. No, I meant in the context that – ... I'm deeply affected by drink driving, my ex-husband killed two people during our marriage and it was something that I felt was outrageous, and at the time I didn't care whether the information came out or not. It was something that rightly should – someone should have to... they were going to get away with it.

SHERBORNE. ... Oh, I see... And then [Caroline] says –

CAROLINE. "... News are already on it... someone leaked it from the police station" –

REBEKAH. "Fuck somebody already tipped it"

SHERBORNE. ... You're angry. You're not angry because this story about someone who's done something awful is out, because it's coming out anyway. What you are angry about is that you're not going to get your money.

REBEKAH. No, that's not true...

SHERBORNE. You're angry, aren't you?

REBEKAH. No.

SHERBORNE. ... Let's just see what you say eight seconds later –

REBEKAH. "I'm fuming I didn't give it you earlier" ...

SHERBORNE. And Caroline Watt knows why you're fuming doesn't she, because she says –

CAROLINE. "Me too that would have been a fortune" ...

REBEKAH. That's correct, but with laughing faces... that was Caroline's sense of humour –

SHERBORNE. ... I see, so it's another joke is it? ... Can you turn, please, to page 273. Do you see that is your witness statement... and this is your signature here, isn't it?

REBEKAH. That's correct, yes.

MRS ROBERTSON. “I recall a photograph which was published in the press with Becky and most of the other Wags of the England team during the 2018 World Cup lined up outside a restaurant they had attended. [I recall being told that] Becky had not asked some of the older ladies present at the hotel to attend the dinner she had arranged... I remember several ladies in the family hotel, players, sisters and mothers, who were upset they had not been invited to the dinner but the photograph set-up seemed to explain why, as a Wag shot was the objective of the night’.

REBEKAH. No that’s not true. There was a group WhatsApp chat... and everyone just wanted it to be just the girls.

SHERBORNE. It’s a photograph of young attractive women, let’s be honest, Mrs Vardy, so no one who was old was going to be asked, were they?

REBEKAH. That’s not how it went at all, no.

SHERBORNE. ... Let’s look at what was happening behind the scenes... you see, we have the conversation between you and Ms Watt on page 1827 ... you say this –

REBEKAH. “We may walk to restaurant from hotel now so might be a good pic of us walking down. It’s about ten to fifteen minutes away”.

CAROLINE. “OK, hopefully he catches you all. Don’t forget to take a group shot at the table”

REBEKAH. ... “Yeah will do but someone will put it online before they can use it”.

SHERBORNE. ... And then –

REBEKAH. “Fuck I made everyone go outside for a pic and the pap was there... [It] looks like I’ve tipped him off now”.

SHERBORNE. ... 1251 ... [This is one of Coleen's] fake posts... the gender selection post... on Mrs Rooney's private instagram stories, [she] puts up -

COLEEN. "Lets go and see what this gender selection is all about".

SHERBORNE. Can you see? If you look down bottom left you'll see. Seen by one ...that's the @beckyvardy account?

REBEKAH. That's correct, yes.

SHERBORNE. [Then, published in *The Sun* some time later] ... 'Coleen Rooney is so desperate for her fifth baby to be a girl that she has looked into controversial gender selection treatment' ... Now we know, don't we, that [Mrs Rooney] going for gender selection... was fake?

REBEKAH. Yes.

SHERBORNE. But the paper doesn't know that... and neither does the source for it. True?

REBEKAH. Yes that's correct, although I don't recall seeing the image.

SHERBORNE. Let's look at this. Page 1854 ... 8 April, same day as the post, you message Ms Watt -

REBEKAH. "Coleen's Instagram wonder if they are going for baby 5".

SHERBORNE. And Caroline, who is ever on the case -

CAROLINE. "I already saw it. I can't believe she's posted it" -

REBEKAH. 'I know... maybe she's just put it to see if anyone gives it to the media' -

CAROLINE. 'I think that might be the case... attention seeking either way'.

SHERBORNE. Now, you see, [you have seen] the gender selection post.

REBEKAH. No. I recall a different image.

SHERBORNE. ... The reason you can't say that you saw this [is] because once you do, you are the only person who could have been responsible for that article, true or false?

REBEKAH. No, that's not true, my Lady...

SHERBORNE. ... Let's move on to the next [fake post] ... the flooded basement story. Page 752 ... Mrs Rooney wanted to put up one last fake post to confirm her suspicions. And so on 2nd October everyone bar your account was blocked, and she put this up... it's a bottle of wine, and it says -

COLEEN. 'Needed after today [...] flood in the basement of our new house [...] when it all seems to be going so well'.

SHERBORNE. ... *The Sun* [then] publish an article, don't they? ... 'Coleen Rooney has weathered plenty of storms during her eleven year marriage, but the latest one wasn't to do with husband Wayne. I can reveal last week's horrendous weather has wreaked havoc at the Rooney's £20 million family home, flooding their basement' ... Did you or did you not recall seeing [Mrs Rooney's post], Mrs Vardy?

REBEKAH. No, I don't recall seeing this.

SHERBORNE. You don't recall?

REBEKAH. No.

SHERBORNE. ... You said you don't remember seeing it. Can I take you to page 462? ... It is a response to Mrs Rooney's solicitors. They had asked a number of questions. Can you see?

REBEKAH. ... Yes.

SHERBORNE. ... And this is your answer... ‘Mrs Vardy recalls seeing the flooded basement story’.

REBEKAH. ... A lot of things were – there was a lot of abuse during that time.

SHERBORNE. ... Mrs Vardy, I have to suggest to you that you are now trying to distance yourself from having seen that flooded basement post, aren’t you?

REBEKAH. No.

SHERBORNE. And like the gender selection article and the car crash article, it was based on the information that you and Ms Watt passed through to *The Sun* and what you, and only you or Ms Watt, had seen on Mrs Rooney’s private Instagram account. That’s correct, isn’t it?

REBEKAH. No, that’s not correct.

STEYN. ... Would you like a break, Mrs Vardy?

REBEKAH. ... [Pause]

STEYN. Do you feel okay to continue?

REBEKAH. ... Yes.

SHERBORNE. ... The next thing that happens of course, is that Mrs Rooney puts up the post that is the subject of this action... that comes on 9th October... The ‘reveal’ post.

COLEEN. “For a few years now, someone who I trusted to follow me on my personal Instagram account” –

REBEKAH. Yes.

SHERBORNE. Can I take you to page 779 ... this is Caroline to you –

CAROLINE. ... “Message her now and ask what the fuck this is”.

SHERBORNE. And then you say –

TOMLINSON. ... First of all, I'd like to ask you about Instagram. Am I right in thinking you have a private Instagram account? ... Is that 'wazzaroon08'?

WAYNE. Yes, that is correct.

TOMLINSON. ... And you're a follower of your wife's private Instagram account?

WAYNE. That is correct.

TOMLINSON. ... You say in your witness statement that you recall that your wife was frustrated by posts and stories on her private Instagram being leaked to *The Sun*?

WAYNE. That is correct.

TOMLINSON. And you go on to say that you didn't want to get involved?

WAYNE. That is correct.

TOMLINSON. What do you mean by that, Mr Rooney?

WAYNE. ... I'm not big on social media and I didn't want to get involved. I think my wife is an independent woman who does her own thing.

TOMLINSON. So if she's saying to you there's something which is disturbing her... don't you want to help her?

WAYNE. Yeah, and I believe I helped my wife. We have four children we look after. Social media, for me, is the least of them worries.... I think there was information which my wife said had been leaked. There was information which was fake, which was out there in the public, and that is something we - myself, my wife have had to deal with since we were sixteen years of age... as I explain, my wife was dealing with it in her own way which I was completely unaware of.

TOMLINSON. ... So through the time your wife was doing this she never mentioned anything to you, is that your evidence?

TOMLINSON. ... Your complaints, Mrs Rooney, appear to be directed at the way that *The Sun* treats the stories rather than the nature of the information. ... *The Sun* Newspaper, Mrs Rooney, has treated you very badly over the years, hasn't it?

COLEEN. ... Yes, we've had our share of not nice stories.

TOMLINSON. And 2019 was a particularly bad year, wasn't it? ... There's day after day, sometimes two or three a day, of articles about you and your husband, with people who are claiming to have inside knowledge talking about what you think and what he thinks and what's going on in your life?

COLEEN. ... They have done it for years. 2019 doesn't stand out as any different to any other year.

TOMLINSON. ... Isn't your real complaint about... the way that *The Sun* has treated you?

COLEEN. No... This case is that someone was leaking my private information to *The Sun* newspaper. ... The matter is that my private information that I put up on my Instagram was getting given to someone else.

TOMLINSON. ... Some of [your three hundred followers] are obviously your old friends. Some of them, forgive me for using this term, it's slightly derogatory sometimes... some of them are WAGS?

COLEEN. Wives and girlfriends of fellow football players –

TOMLINSON. ... And some of [these WAGS] will have PRs, I mean, not just Rebekah Vardy some of them will have agents or PRs who will have access to their Instagram accounts. You have had, for many years, a relationship with Mr Stretford's [PR] company and also with [Rachel Monk at] Monk PR. Is that right?

COLEEN. Yes that's correct... what happened, at the beginning was, obviously my husband was playing football professionally. I was papped going to school

when I was sixteen-years-old. There was interest from that photograph and a lot of work offers came in. I was at school at the time... so obviously, the first person they would go to was Wayne's agent [Paul Stretford] ... So since that day onwards, he has just always managed stuff for me that has come in... but we – me and Rebekah have totally different ways of working. Obviously, Rebekah was friendly with Caroline Watt, that's totally different to my relationship with people who I work with.

TOMLINSON. ... Paragraph sixteen of your witness statement –

COLEEN. "... Broadly speaking I only accept [follow] requests from people who are close to me, and people I trust... even if one of the followers of the private Instagram account is a business account... it will likely be because I have a connection to the owner of that business".

TOMLINSON. ... Obviously people who have business Instagram accounts will have employees, or some of them will have employees who will operate their accounts?

COLEEN. Most of the time, yes, but these are independent businesses Puro Juice is one girl who makes juice, Kelly, from her home... "kathryndesignerkids" ... I've known Kathryn for years, she's the owner of a kids clothes shop... it's one person involved in that. Rise Fitness is my brother's account. All the businesses have got a connection to me...

TOMLINSON. Some of them, as I've said before, are WAGS –

COLEEN. Wives and girlfriends of –

TOMLINSON. Yes, it's a very disrespectful term.

COLEEN. No, it's not very disrespectful, it's just a word that I don't use.

TOMLINSON. ... As I've said... some of these people will have PRs... who have access to their Instagram accounts? ... In relation to your public account, I think your brother controls that, doesn't he?

COLEEN. Yes.

TOMLINSON. ... So my point is a simple one, Mrs Rooney... you can't be sure that someone else is not responsible? [But] in this case your suspicions have focused on Mrs Vardy?

COLEEN. ... In this case, I believe that account was the one that was responsible... I've been in the public eye for twenty years. I've been around this. I've become quite savvy to the way people work and journalists work.

TOMLINSON. ... But if someone else had access to her account... The right thing to do was... to warn her that this was going on? ... why didn't you pick up the phone? ... Why didn't you get in touch with her at that stage?

COLEEN. I've never picked up the phone to Rebekah Vardy... the only time I've spoken to her is on the day of the post. That's the only time I've spoken to her on the phone.

TOMLINSON. Yes -

COLEEN. But on that blocking - ... I thought, do you know what, just block.

TOMLINSON. ... Mrs Vardy's message to you [after being unfollowed] -

REBEKAH. "Hi my love... hope you are all OK? I saw you had unfollowed me and I wasn't following you anymore on Instagram... just wanted to ask if I had done something or offended you in anyway? Literally only just noticed the other day".

TOMLINSON. What did you tell her to say to *The Sun*?

COLEEN. I said say you can't get hold of me or just say nothing at all...

TOMLINSON. You *wanted* the story to run?

COLEEN. ... Well... she said they were going to run it because they had a screenshot anyway.

TOMLINSON. ... This was really a serious and concerted operation, wasn't it, Mrs Rooney?

COLEEN. No... it's been made out a lot bigger than what it actually is.

TOMLINSON. ... So then... you have the idea of putting up a fake post saying your basement has been flooded.

COLEEN. ... Yes.

TOMLINSON. ... And then the flooded basement article was published [in *The Sun*] ... And it was at that stage you decided to put up the [reveal] post, is that right?

COLEEN. ... Oh, it was the next day, yes.

TOMLINSON. ... I mean you were obviously monitoring *The Sun*, because you saw it as soon as it came up on the – even before it was in the paper in the morning, you were checking online?

COLEEN. Yes... I do Google news and I put my name in and click news.

TOMLINSON. ... You said in your witness statement that you started writing this in... pen and paper?

COLEEN. Yes... I always have a notebook, I jot down a lot of things. I'm known to have a notebook and a piece of paper and a diary.

TOMLINSON. ... But you wrote it like a whodunnit, you know, with the... It's [.....] Rebekah Vardy's account. It was done to grab attention, wasn't it?

COLEEN. I use dots a lot... so it was just the way I wrote it, it come natural to me.

TOMLINSON. ... And very shortly afterward [you publish the reveal post], [Mrs Vardy] messaged you on WhatsApp, didn't she? ... and she says -

REBEKAH. "WTF is this?"

TOMLINSON. And you say -

COLEEN. "You know what this is".

TOMLINSON. And she says she's got no idea... and she makes it clear to you that it wasn't her, doesn't she?

COLEEN. Yes she says she has no interest in what's going on in my life, which I believe is totally untrue.

TOMLINSON. [Then] ... This is a post by you... on your private Instagram.

COLEEN. ... "Don't play games with a girl who can play better".

TOMLINSON. ... You were absolutely determined you were going to out her, weren't you? ... On the 9th October, you were going to reveal to the world that Rebekah Vardy was the villain?

COLEEN. No not the villain. She was the person who was passing... personal information to the press. Whether it be Rebekah Vardy or Kelly who makes the juices, I would out them anyway.

TOMLINSON. ... And meanwhile you had a massive reaction on social media, yes?

COLEEN. Yes, there was.

TOMLINSON. ... People were posting all kinds of photos and memes...talking about 'Wagatha Christie' ... 361. Someone's photoshopped your face and Mrs Vardy's face on to something from Scooby Doo? Unmasking a villain... these images were saved on your phone?

COLEEN. Yes.

TOMLINSON. ... And on page 364 there is, someone has put your face on to the cover of an Agatha Christie book.

COLEEN. Yes.

TOMLINSON. You saved that?

COLEEN. Yes.

TOMLINSON. You were delighted by the reaction that you received, weren't you?

COLEEN. No, I wasn't. I have never craved press attention in my life.

TOMLINSON. Mrs Rooney, this isn't a criticism, but you've used your fame for commercial purposes, you've had columns, you have been on television, you've made Netflix documentaries, you have done all that kind of thing, haven't you?

COLEEN. Yes, I have been fortunate that I have had... things have come my way but I've took the opportunities and used them. I wanted to continue on at school... but the pressure became quite big at a young age. And I was getting opportunities, which is why Paul Stretford... he took things on. And I felt like that was something that I could then control, in a way... I think I've done alright and obviously I haven't worked for a while because I've had children, I just wanted to be a mum. But I've never dwelled in the public eye. I have never asked for it. I was threw into it and I've worked with it.

TOMLINSON. ... It must have been obvious to you that putting this up was going to lead to Mrs Vardy being abused, wasn't it?

COLEEN. No that wasn't my intention at all. Not at all. I would not ever – it's not in my nature to cause abuse or trolling in any way at all.

*(Barristers leave. Only **REBEKAH, COLEEN** and **CAROLINE** remain.)*

There was nobody actually in court. There were no filled stadiums. No moonboots, no costumes. Maybe Coleen was in the car when she found out. Maybe she was at home. Maybe Rebekah saw the buzz of a message from her lawyer, and her heart raced. Maybe Caroline switched her phone off. Maybe she hid herself away. But wherever they were, without fanfare, our Judge published her verdict...

*(**COLEEN, REBEKAH** and **CAROLINE** sit separately.)*

(Their phones buzz with the Judge's verdict.)

*(As they read, we're on **STEYN**.)*

STEYN. This judgement is given following a seven-day trial of this libel claim which is brought by the claimant, Ms Rebekah Vardy, against the defendant, Ms Coleen Rooney.

... It was evident that Ms Vardy found the process of giving evidence stressful and, at times, distressing. I bear in mind when assessing her evidence the degree of stress she was naturally feeling, given the high profile nature of the trial, the abuse that she has suffered since the reveal post was published, and the length of time she was in the witness box.

... I find that it is, unfortunately, necessary to treat Mrs Vardy's evidence with very considerable caution. There were many occasions when her evidence was manifestly inconsistent with the contemporaneous documentary evidence... Mrs Vardy was generally unwilling to make factual concessions, however implausible her evidence.

... I have found that Mrs Vardy was party to the disclosure to *The Sun* of the Marriage, Birthday,

Halloween, Pyjamas, Car Crash, Gender Selection, Babysitting and Flooded Basement Posts... It is likely that Ms Watt undertook the direct act [of passing information] on to a journalist at *The Sun*. In my view, Mrs Vardy knew of and condoned this behaviour, actively... directing Ms Watt to the private Instagram account [and] sending her screenshots of Mrs Rooney's posts.

I will express my decision in respect of the public interest defence very briefly... although Mrs Rooney's interest was essentially personal, on balance, I accept that the reveal post was on a matter of public interest... I accept that Mrs Rooney believed, having given several warnings on her private Instagram account, as well as a public warning, that it was in the public interest to publish the reveal post.

... For the reasons I have given, the claim is dismissed.

*(**COLEEN** and **REBEKAH** look up from their phones – both with a hint of a smile.)*

(Sunglasses on, they leave the stage.)

*(But we're left with **CAROLINE**. Alone, before –)*

(Blackout.)