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21 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**
22 **CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

23 JOSEPH GATT,

24 Plaintiff,

25 vs.

26 GEORGE GASCÓN,
27 LOS ANGELES COUNTY,
28 ANGELA BRUNSON,
DENOS AMARANTOS, THE
CITY OF LOS ANGELES, AND
DOES 1-10,

Defendants.

Case No. _____

COMPLAINT FOR:

**1. 42 U.S.C. § 1983 – Violation of
Fourth and Fourteenth
Amendments; and**

**2. 42 U.S.C. § 1983 – Monell
Liability: Policy, Practice or
Custom**

Plaintiff Joseph Gatt (“Gatt”), for his complaint against Defendants Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascón (“Gascón”), Los Angeles County (“LA County”), Los Angeles County Deputy District Attorney Angela Brunson (“Brunson”),

1 Los Angeles Police Department (“LAPD”) Detective Denos Amarantos (“Amarantos”)
2 and the City of Los Angeles (“Los Angeles,” and collectively with LA County, Gascón,
3 Brunson, Amarantos and Does 1-10, “Defendants”), allege as follows:

4 **INTRODUCTION**

5 1. This lawsuit arises from the shocking and intentional destruction of Joseph
6 Gatt’s acting career and personal reputation by Los Angeles County law enforcement
7 personnel that resulted from a thoroughly botched criminal investigation, entirely
8 lacking any probable cause, led by an obviously conflicted Deputy District Attorney
9 (“DDA”) who sought to destroy Gatt based on nothing more than bias and personal
10 animosity.

11 2. Defendants, using threats, intimidation and coercion, and with no cause,
12 let alone probable cause, subjected Gatt—a successful actor with numerous film and
13 television series credits, including *Game of Thrones* and *Banshee*, among many
14 others—to an utterly baseless arrest, unlawful detention, unlawful search and seizure of
15 property, and malicious prosecution in which Gatt was alleged to have electronically
16 communicated with a minor in a sexually explicit manner. Defendants’ conduct was
17 purportedly based solely on the uncorroborated word of a then-16-year-old, admittedly
18 obsessed fan of Gatt—who will be referred to throughout this Complaint as “Jane Doe”
19 to preserve her privacy because she was a minor at the time and is not a party to this
20 action—whom Gatt did not know and has never actually met, and whom Defendants
21 did not even bother to interview or even remotely assess for credibility until almost one
22 year *after* Defendants arrested Gatt, charged him with baseless crimes, and publicly
23 branded him as a serial pedophile.

24 3. Even worse, Gatt was arrested and prosecuted based solely on
25 unauthenticated pictures of social media conversations displayed on an unidentified
26 phone screen that, on their face, were highly suspicious and facially untrustworthy.
27 Indeed, even a cursory review of these photographs of an unidentified phone revealed
28 that the supposed conversations were obviously fake, as they were replete with

1 inconsistencies and conflicting statements that often made no sense whatsoever in
2 context. Despite the clearly untrustworthy nature of these pictures, Defendants made
3 no attempt whatsoever to obtain and review a forensic image of the actual phone on
4 which these supposed conversations allegedly took place, or to otherwise review any of
5 Jane Doe’s electronic or online data, in an attempt to confirm or refute her story before
6 maliciously and recklessly weaponizing her patently false allegations to destroy Gatt’s
7 reputation and career.

8 4. In other words, Defendants prosecuted Gatt for an electronic crime with
9 utter disregard for the vast amount of electronic evidence that was readily available to
10 them and which would have definitively shown that the electronic communications on
11 which the prosecution was based were entirely fabricated. Instead, DDA Brunson—
12 who Gatt later learned already knew him at the time and held personal biases and
13 animosity toward him—simply ignored the glaring red flags that would have caused
14 any reasonable person to recognize the complete absence of probable cause, and
15 proceeded to have Gatt arrested, prosecuted and publicly branded as a pedophile, all
16 without one iota of the electronic evidence needed to prosecute Gatt. Indeed, while
17 Defendants spent hours searching Gatt’s computers and electronic devices in
18 conjunction with his unlawful arrest, they found nothing incriminating whatsoever, took
19 no digital image of his computer, and instead during their search seized an unremarkable
20 purple blanket available at any number of retail outlets and a rifle that Gatt had
21 previously purchased and registered at the direction of, and with assistance from, an
22 LAPD officer.

23 5. The result of this conduct was as devastating as it was foreseeable, given
24 that Gatt is a celebrity whose earnings capacity is almost entirely dependent on
25 maintaining positive public perception. After Defendants released a press statement
26 publicly branding Gatt as a serial pedophile, more than 200 different media outlets
27 picked up the story and reported on the utterly false allegations. Gatt was immediately
28 cancelled and what had previously been a burgeoning acting career was destroyed.

1 Gatt’s agent and PR representatives dropped him immediately, he was fired from two
2 different movies in which he had already been cast, and he was also recast in a third
3 movie in which he had been hired to play the lead role. Moreover, at least two other
4 movies he had already filmed almost totally cut his scenes or reshot them with different
5 actors, and he was not invited to attend the premieres. Gatt immediately stopped
6 receiving any further role offers or audition opportunities, and instead received
7 numerous death threats and was stalked and chased by a Daily Mail reporter.

8 6. Undeterred, Defendants then compounded the damage to Gatt by
9 continually and unreasonably delaying any continued investigation for more than a year,
10 all while Gatt was silenced by order of the criminal court—entered as a condition of
11 Gatt’s bail at DDA Brunson’s explicit request—that prohibited Gatt from making any
12 public comments via social media to defend himself. Throughout this time, Defendants
13 repeatedly failed and declined to produce to Gatt key discovery materials that
14 exonerated Gatt.

15 7. This stonewalling continued until Gatt learned, through a private
16 investigator he hired, that DDA Brunson—continuing her personal vendetta against
17 Gatt—had attempted to suborn perjury in an effort to have Gatt’s bail revoked. A mere
18 six days after these facts were revealed, Gatt learned that DDA Brunson had quit her
19 job with the LA County District Attorney’s Office (“LA DA”). Only after DDA
20 Brunson resigned, and after Gatt hired a private forensic investigator, Jeff Fischbach, to
21 conduct his own investigation, did Defendants finally provide all of the electronic data
22 they had seized and/or obtained through search warrants, including forensic images of
23 both Gatt’s and Jane Doe’s phones that the LA DA admitted it had not reviewed. Not
24 surprisingly, this evidence revealed that Jane Doe had entirely manufactured both her
25 allegations and the photographed conversations on which the criminal charges were
26 based.

27 8. Mr. Fischbach immediately sought to present his findings in open court to
28 exonerate Gatt, but Defendants refused to allow him to do so and voluntarily dismissed

1 the utterly frivolous criminal charges on February 9, 2024. Even then, the LA DA
2 threatened Gatt and Mr. Fischbach with jail if they sought to make their findings public
3 or if they spoke publicly about the LA DA or DDA Brunson specifically. In other
4 words, Defendant LA County explicitly threatened to further punish Gatt if he made
5 any attempt to salvage his personal reputation and the career prospects that LA County
6 itself had destroyed by charging him with crimes and publicly branding him a serial
7 pedophile without any evidence or probable cause. In stark contrast to their public
8 announcement of the baseless arrest, Defendants issued no press release upon the
9 dismissal of the charges. Not surprisingly, while approximately 200 media outlets
10 reported on Gatt's arrest, only one covered the dismissal of charges against him.

11 9. Gatt therefore files this action to recover the more than \$40 million in
12 damages that he has suffered as a result of Defendants' violations of his constitutional
13 rights.

14 **PARTIES**

15 10. Plaintiff Joseph Gatt is an individual residing in Los Angeles County,
16 California.

17 11. Defendant Los Angeles County is a public entity established and
18 maintained by the laws and Constitution of the State of California, and owns, operates,
19 manages, and controls the LA DA, and employs and/or is responsible for Defendants
20 George Gascón and Angela Brunson.

21 12. Defendant George Gascón is an individual residing in Los Angeles
22 County, California.

23 13. Defendant Angela Brunson is an individual residing in Riverside County,
24 California.

25 14. Defendant Denos Amarantos is an individual residing in Los Angeles
26 County, California.

27 15. The City of Los Angeles is a public entity established and maintained by
28 the laws and Constitution of the State of California, and owns, operates, manages or

1 controls the LAPD, and employs and/or is responsible for Defendant Denos Amarantos,
2 who was simultaneously acting as an agent of the LA DA and thus Defendant LA
3 County.

4 16. Defendants Does 1-10 are entities or individuals who, upon information
5 and belief, are otherwise subject to the jurisdiction of this Court. The specific identities
6 of Does 1-10 are unknown to Gatt at this time, but Gatt is informed and believes, and
7 thereon alleges, that each of the Does is responsible in some manner for the acts alleged
8 in this Complaint. Gatt will seek leave to amend this Complaint to insert the true names
9 and capacities of each Doe when the same are ascertained.

10 17. Defendants are, and at all material times have been, the agents and servants
11 of, and acted in concert with, one another with respect to the acts and conduct herein
12 alleged, and are responsible for and liable to Gatt for the damages arising out of such
13 conduct.

14 **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

15 18. This Court has jurisdiction over the lawsuit under 28 U.S.C. § 1331
16 because this lawsuit arises under the Constitution, laws or treaties of the United States.

17 19. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendants because they are all
18 residents of the State of California, and because all Defendants committed tortious and
19 other unlawful misconduct specifically against Gatt while in the State of California.

20 20. Venue is proper in this district under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(1) because
21 Defendants are residents of the District and because all Defendants are residents of the
22 State in which this district is located.

23 21. Venue is also proper in this district under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(2) because
24 a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to this claim occurred in this
25 district. Specifically, all of Defendants' conduct alleged in this Complaint occurred in
26 this District, specifically including the investigation, arrest, search, seizure and
27 detention of Gatt, and the criminal proceedings that are the subject of this action were
28 filed in Los Angeles County, which is located in this District.

1 22. Venue is also proper in this district under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(3) because,
2 even if this District were not proper under § 1391(b)(1) or (b)(2), all Defendants are
3 subject to the Court’s personal jurisdiction in this District.

4 **FACTUAL BACKGROUND**

5 **I. Gatt’s Background**

6 23. Gatt was born and raised in London, and moved to Los Angeles in 2005 to
7 pursue an acting career. Before being targeted by Defendants, Gatt was a successful
8 actor with numerous film and television series credits, including *Game of Thrones*,
9 *Banshee*, *Thor*, *Star Trek Into Darkness*, *Dumbo*, *NCIS: New Orleans*, *Z Nation*, *True*
10 *Detective*, *The 100*, *Teen Wolf*, and many others. Gatt is also well known for his voice
11 and motion capture performances in video games, most notably *God of War* and *Star*
12 *Wars: The Old Republic*.

13 24. Gatt was also a particularly well-known member of the high-performance
14 sports car community in the Los Angeles area, as Gatt owned and raced a Ford Shelby
15 GT 500 and, as a known celebrity, was sponsored by numerous entities including
16 WRTeknica, a motorsports tuning shop that Gatt frequently utilized.

17 **II. The Baseless Criminal Complaint Against Gatt**

18 25. The criminal complaint against Gatt, which was signed by Detective
19 Amarantos and DDA Brunson under LA District Attorney George Gascón’s name,
20 alleged that Gatt electronically communicated with a minor in a sexually explicit
21 manner. These charges originate entirely from the unverified story of Jane Doe, a then-
22 16-year-old whom Gatt did not know and has never actually met, and whom Defendants
23 did not even bother to interview or even remotely assess for credibility until almost one
24 year after arresting Gatt and prosecuting him.

25 26. More specifically, in October 2020, the boyfriend of one of Jane Doe’s
26 sisters sought to surprise Jane Doe—who was a big fan of Gatt—by contacting Gatt
27 through the application “Cameo” to purchase a short video in which Gatt wished Jane
28 Doe a happy 16th birthday. Shortly thereafter, Jane Doe, who lived in the State of

1 Washington, reached out to Gatt via the social media application Instagram to thank
2 him for the “Cameo” video. In the 2-3 months following that Cameo message, Jane
3 Doe contacted Gatt on a few occasions via Instagram, and Gatt—whose earning
4 capacity is tied, at least in part, to various measures of his social media engagement—
5 responded in a manner that was wholly appropriate and consistent with typical
6 celebrity-fan exchanges. Those communications were completely innocuous, and LA
7 County does not allege that they constitute any crime.

8 27. Unbeknownst to Gatt, throughout this time Jane Doe was an admittedly
9 obsessed fan who was already using a naked picture of Gatt—a still image from his
10 appearance on the television show *Banshee* that Jane Doe herself had apparently sought
11 out and downloaded from the internet—as her phone’s lock screen even *before* Gatt had
12 ever had any interaction with her. Gatt also learned much later that Jane Doe had
13 professed that she had sexual dreams involving Gatt, and had also apparently
14 downloaded from the internet pictures of Gatt from his appearance on the television
15 show *Z Nation* and photoshopped a fake tattoo of her own name onto Gatt’s right bicep.

16 28. Without Gatt’s knowledge, and apparently using software readily available
17 on the internet for the specific purpose of creating fake social media conversations to
18 trick and impress friends, Jane Doe thereafter wholly manufactured fake conversations
19 between herself and Gatt via the social media platform Snapchat that were sexual in
20 nature and pure fantasy.

21 **A. The Facially Untrustworthy Evidence of the Alleged Snapchat**
22 **Conversations**

23 29. One of Jane Doe’s older siblings apparently found these fake Snapchat
24 conversations and, on or about April 7, 2021, reported them to the Kent County,
25 Washington Police Department (“Kent County PD”) via email. In doing so, Jane Doe’s
26 sister did not present Kent County PD with Jane Doe’s phone or any electronic data
27 downloaded from her phone, and instead simply used her own phone to take pictures of
28 Jane Doe’s phone screen where the fake messages were displayed. Jane Doe’s sister

1 then uploaded those photos to Google Drive and provided a link to that folder in her
2 email to Kent County PD. The photos on the Google Drive are obviously a picture of
3 one phone taken from a different phone, precluding the examination of any metadata
4 that could prove or disprove the authenticity of the alleged Snapchat conversations.

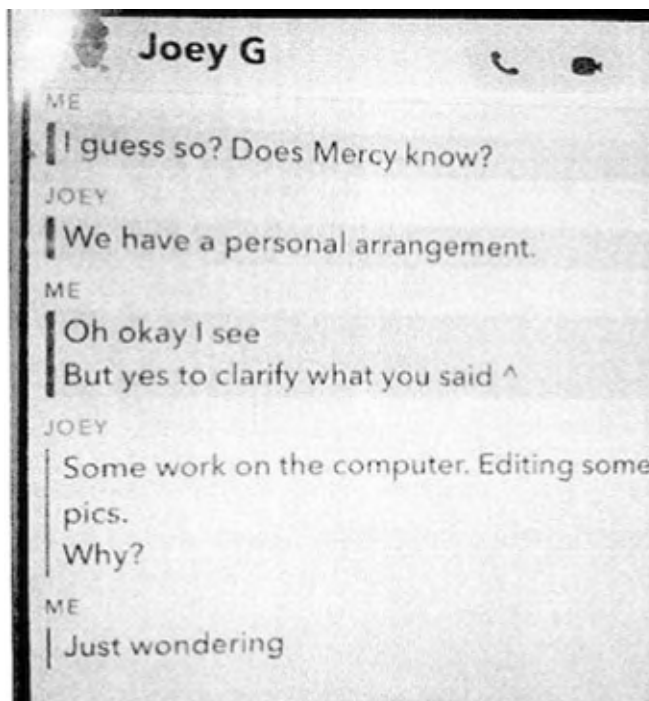
5 30. The pictures provided to Kent County PD also included two photographs
6 of men with no clothes, no face shown and no exposed genitalia. Gatt is not the man
7 depicted in these photos, and because Jane Doe’s sister only uploaded pictures taken of
8 a different phone’s screen—and not the actual images from Jane Doe’s phone—
9 Defendants could not, based on those photos alone, authenticate the photographs,
10 identify the man or men pictured therein or verify the images’ source, and thus law
11 enforcement could not have, based on those photos alone, confirmed whether Gatt was
12 actually the person depicted in either photo.

13 31. Other than the Snapchat conversations that Jane Doe had faked, the only
14 alleged tie to Gatt was the fact that one of the photographs depicted an unidentified and
15 faceless man lying on top of a plain purple blanket—one readily available for purchase
16 by anyone at any time on Amazon or at numerous other stores—that looked similar to
17 a purple blanket that could be seen in the background of pictures Gatt had previously
18 publicly posted of himself on his social media platforms.

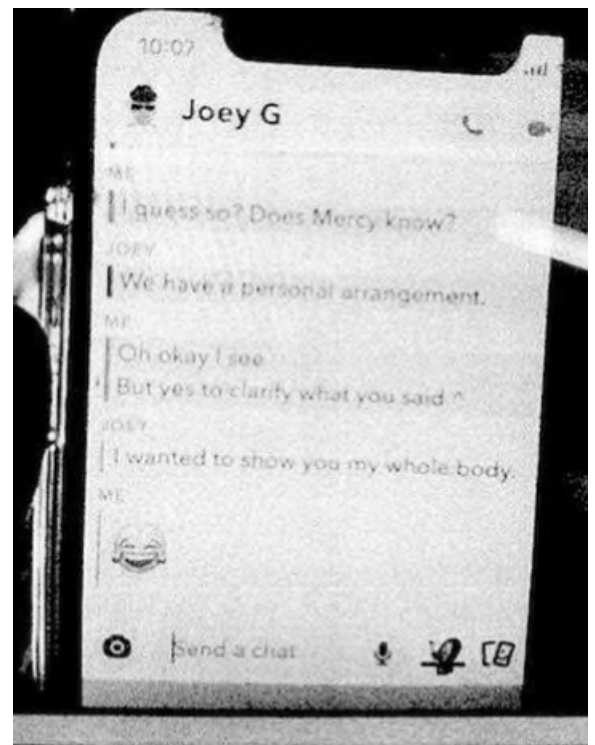
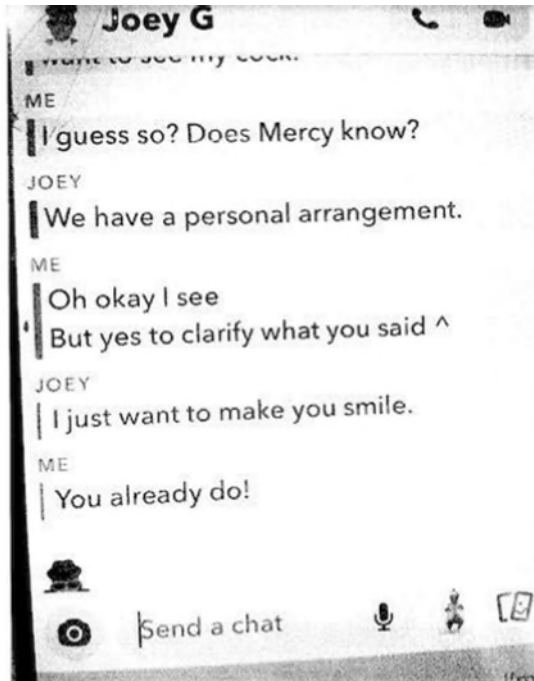
19 32. Importantly, even a cursory review of the pictures that Jane Doe’s sister
20 provided to the Kent County PD reveals that the conversations are highly suspicious on
21 their face. Many of the pictures include snippets of the same conversation thread, yet
22 in each different picture this same prompt is immediately followed by radically different
23 responses, as if Jane Doe tried numerous times to find the most believable ones. Once
24 again, numerous different software applications are readily available on the internet and
25 are designed specifically for this purpose.

26 33. For example, at least 18 pictures relate to the same alleged conversation
27 where Gatt supposedly told Jane Doe that he and his partner of 14 years, Mercy Malick,
28 had a “personal arrangement” that permitted Gatt to pursue other relationships. That

1 conversation never happened; Jane Doe created it out of thin air. Each of these 18
2 pictures includes all or some portion of this same alleged interaction where Gatt
3 supposedly said “We have a personal arrangement” and Jane Doe responded to say “Oh
4 okay I see. But yes to clarify what you said ^.” Despite this, all 18 pictures then display
5 entirely different alleged responses to that same prompt that conflict with one another
6 and often do not make any sense in context. Examples include:



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34. Seven more of the screenshots relate to a different supposed thread—one that, again, never actually happened—where Gatt allegedly wished Jane Doe “Happy new year!” and Jane Doe responded to say “Thank you! Happy new year to you and mercy!” Once again, each of these different screenshots contains one or both of these

1 statements, yet the responses and replies from there inexplicably and dramatically
2 differ, contradict each other, and often make no sense in context. Examples include:



35. Even a cursory review of these screenshots reveals unreconcilable conflicts that simply would not exist if the conversations were legitimate and had actually

1 occurred. Despite this, and as explained further below, nobody with either the Kent
2 County PD or Defendants bothered at the time to review or forensically examine Jane
3 Doe’s phone to verify whether these conversations were legitimate and actually took
4 place, or were instead simply fantasies concocted by an admittedly obsessed fan trying
5 to trick or impress her friends, before recklessly destroying Gatt’s career.

6 **B. Kent County PD Investigates Jane Doe’s Allegations**

7 36. On April 8, 2021, just one day after Jane Doe’s sister sent her email
8 containing the Google Drive link to Kent County PD, a Kent County PD officer
9 responded to the email seeking to set up an interview with Jane Doe. Perhaps now
10 realizing that the conversations had been faked, that same day Jane Doe’s sister
11 immediately declined to cooperate and told the Kent County PD “[a]t this time no
12 further assistance is needed.” The Kent County PD officer explicitly noted in his case
13 report that he “did not find probable cause of a crime regarding the messages.”

14 37. Approximately one month after the initial report, Kent County detectives
15 ultimately decided to again attempt to interview Jane Doe. This time, Jane Doe’s
16 brother-in-law presented Jane Doe for an interview on or about May 5, 2021.

17 38. In that interview, Jane Doe confirmed that she was a fan of and had a crush
18 on Gatt. Also during that interview, and perhaps in an attempt to cover up the fraudulent
19 nature of the photographs that her sister previously had provided to law enforcement,
20 Jane Doe falsely accused Gatt of engaging in electronic communications with her that
21 were sexually explicit in nature.

22 39. Because the alleged crime was conducted solely by electronic means—
23 there were no alleged in-person meetings—the truth or falsity of Jane Doe’s accusations
24 easily could have been determined by an examination of her cell phone and computer
25 records. However, the Kent County PD inexplicably failed to take even this
26 rudimentary step in its investigation.

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1 **C. Kent County PD Refers its Incomplete Investigation to Defendants**

2 40. Before completing its investigation, and after learning that Gatt did not
3 reside in Washington, Kent County PD referred the matter to the LA DA and the LAPD
4 in December 2021, approximately eight months after the initial report was made in
5 Washington. LA County DDA Angela Brunson took over the investigation in
6 collaboration with LAPD Detective Denos Amarantos, who was employed by the City
7 of Los Angeles and was simultaneously acting as an agent of the LA DA and thus
8 Defendant LA County.

9 41. In a clear violation of the State Bar of California’s ethical rules and LA
10 DA policies and procedures—the former of which prohibits prosecutors from
11 proceeding with charges that the prosecutor knows are not supported by probable cause
12 and from failing to timely disclose exculpatory evidence or evidence that casts
13 significant doubt on the accuracy of witness testimony, and LA DA policies and
14 procedures explicitly prohibit law enforcement officers from “permit[ting] personal
15 feelings, prejudices, political beliefs, aspirations, animosities or friendships to influence
16 [] decisions”—DDA Brunson began working on the case despite knowing Gatt and
17 having personal bias and animosity toward him, which Gatt did not learn of until much
18 later.

19 42. DDA Brunson’s transparent, yet undisclosed, conflicts of interest are
20 clearly reflected in her malicious, reckless, and/or negligent actions upon taking over
21 the Gatt investigation. Even though it was abundantly clear that Kent County PD’s
22 investigation was incomplete because it had not included the review of any electronic
23 or online data for this allegedly electronic crime, nor had Kent County PD attempted to
24 corroborate Jane Doe’s statements or authenticate the pictures they were provided,
25 Defendants undertook no investigation of their own and instead relied entirely on the
26 incomplete record that had been developed by Kent County PD to that point in a clear
27 violation of LA DA policies and procedures.

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1 43. LA DA policies specific to alleged sex crimes provide that the alleged
2 victim “shall be interviewed before filing,” and further require the deputy to assess the
3 alleged victim’s credibility and determine whether any corroborative evidence exists to
4 support the allegations. Completely disregarding these policies, DDA Brunson failed
5 even to interview Jane Doe—a witness who had admitted to Kent County PD that she
6 was a fan of and had a crush on Gatt—to judge her credibility before arresting Gatt or
7 charging him with a crime, and Defendants further failed to make any attempt to review
8 any electronic or online data that might corroborate or refute her allegations. These
9 failures are even more egregious in light of the glaring inconsistencies in the pictures
10 of the fake Snapchat conversations that formed the entire basis of the investigation and
11 that Defendants utterly and recklessly ignored. Moreover, approximately two weeks
12 *after* the arrest, Defendants received the return of a search warrant issued to Apple for
13 Jane Doe’s iCloud data, which included notes in which Jane Doe stated that she kept
14 having dreams about Gatt that were flirtatious and sexual. Despite this, Defendants still
15 declined to interview Jane Doe and did not produce this data to Gatt until July 2022.

16 44. Incredibly, even though they were investigating an alleged electronic
17 crime involving alleged conversations occurring online through social media,
18 Defendants apparently either did not even bother to obtain and review a forensic image
19 of the contents of Jane Doe’s phone or, even worse, actually received such a forensic
20 image from Kent County law enforcement yet declined to review that image—or any
21 other electronic or online data—to see whether it corroborated or refuted Jane Doe’s
22 otherwise unverified story.

23 45. On or about March 24, 2022, Detective Amarantos issued his first report
24 on the investigation, which conceded that Defendants *did not* interview Jane Doe or any
25 other witnesses, and further indicated that, in clear disregard of the clearly incomplete
26 nature of the Kent County PD investigation to date, Defendants were instead proceeding
27 entirely on the sparse and demonstratively untrustworthy information previously
28 collected by the same Kent County law enforcement personnel who themselves had

1 declined to prosecute Gatt. Defendants used that facially untrustworthy information as
2 the basis for a criminal complaint against Gatt, which was signed by Detective
3 Amarantos and DDA Brunson, on behalf of Defendant Gascón on or about April 1,
4 2022. Detective Amarantos also signed a search warrant affidavit for Gatt’s residence
5 that same day.

6 46. Defendants did not identify or acknowledge any of the above blatant
7 inconsistencies or contradictions when seeking and obtaining the warrants that led to
8 Gatt’s arrest and the search and seizure of his residence. In doing so, Defendants
9 recklessly ignored the lack of any probable cause and failed to conduct any meaningful
10 investigation into this unreliable and untrustworthy evidence.

11 47. Thus, while Gatt’s arrest, search, seizure and detention were all
12 purportedly based on a warrant, on information and belief, Defendants obtained those
13 warrants based on misrepresentations and/or omissions material to any purported
14 finding of probable cause, including, without limitation:

- 15 • Intentionally and maliciously relying on, and/or acting with
16 reckless disregard for the truth of, the fabricated nature of the
17 supposed Snapchat conversations that formed the entire basis for
18 Defendants’ investigation;
- 19 • Acting with knowledge that the pictures of these supposed
20 Snapchat conversations were not reliable, credible or trustworthy
21 on their face, and ignoring glaring red flags about the reliability of
22 this evidence in the form of facial inconsistencies and statements
23 that made no sense in context;
- 24 • Refusing to obtain and/or refusing to review once obtained critical
25 electronic data underlying the supposed electronic
26 communications that would have proved the fabricated nature of
27 the alleged Snapchat conversations;
- 28 • Refusing to themselves interview Jane Doe—an admittedly
obsessed fan—to assess her credibility or attempt to verify her
allegations; and
- Intentionally concealing the bias and personal animosity that DDA
Brunson held towards Gatt to obscure that bias and animosity and

1 the lack of any true investigation before obtaining warrants despite
2 the lack of any probable cause.

3 48. Defendants knew or should have known that the pictures and other
4 information they utilized were unreliable, not credible and untrustworthy and could not
5 serve as a basis for a finding of probable cause.

6 49. Defendants thus engaged in judicial deception by obtaining the warrants
7 on the basis of material misrepresentations and omissions that they knew or should have
8 known were false, and these misrepresentations and omissions were made intentionally
9 as a result of personal bias or animosity or, alternatively, with reckless disregard for the
10 truth. Based on the totality of the circumstances, no reasonably prudent person could
11 have concluded that probable cause existed based on the information provided.

12 **D. Gatt is Arrested and Subjected to Search and Seizure**

13 50. On April 6, 2022, less than two weeks after issuing their first report on the
14 investigation—and, again, having not interviewed a single witness or reviewed a single
15 byte of electronic data despite the entirely electronic nature of the supposed crime—
16 Defendants arrested Gatt and searched his residence without any actual probable cause
17 whatsoever.

18 51. Despite the unlawful nature of Defendants' conduct, Gatt did everything
19 in his power to cooperate with Defendants to demonstrate his innocence. During the
20 search of his home, he voluntarily unlocked his iPhone for law enforcement personnel
21 and provided passwords to his computer so that they could immediately examine those
22 items during their search. Gatt's partner Malick even provided Defendants with
23 passwords to all of her own personal electronic devices to assist in the search.

24 52. A team of more than 20 law enforcement officers—specifically including
25 DDA Brunson, who notably took a personal role in conducting the raid, likely as a result
26 of her personal bias and animosity toward Gatt—remained at Gatt's residence executing
27 the search warrant and examining Gatt's and Malick's computers and personal
28 electronic devices for several hours. In all that time, they found no evidence whatsoever

1 that Gatt had engaged in any improper communications with Jane Doe, and found no
2 evidence whatsoever of the alleged Snapchat communications supposedly captured in
3 the unauthenticated photographs of Jane Doe’s phone screen.

4 53. Defendants did not even bother to seize Gatt’s computer or attempt to take
5 a digital image of the contents of that computer, even though they were purportedly
6 investigating an electronic crime—a fact that resulted in an argument between DDA
7 Brunson and other law enforcement personnel. Defendants only seized Gatt’s cell
8 phone, along with a plain purple blanket that supposedly appeared in images Jane Doe
9 alleged Gatt had sent her, a green Star Wars helmet seen in other social media posts
10 Gatt had made, and Gatt’s legally purchased and registered Daniel Defense 5.56mm
11 rifle.

12 54. Notably, Gatt purchased the rifle at issue in 2016 at the urging of an LAPD
13 officer who told Gatt to purchase it before the State of California banned further
14 purchases. The LAPD officer accompanied Gatt to purchase the rifle, assisted him in
15 properly registering it, and helped him select an appropriate safe to store it in his home.
16 For Defendants to then turn around and charge Gatt with possession of the same rifle
17 that an LAPD officer assisted him in purchasing and registering is the height of
18 hypocrisy and speaks volumes of the personal animosity behind the charges against
19 Gatt.

20 **E. Defendants Impose and Weaponize Bail Conditions on Gatt**

21 55. Although Gatt was released on bail after his arrest, one of the principal
22 conditions that DDA Brunson insisted upon for his eligibility for bail was that he was
23 prohibited from making public statements via social media, and the criminal court
24 ultimately ordered Gatt to refrain from using social media for anything other than
25 “work” purposes. As a working actor who relies heavily on public interaction to
26 maintain popularity and thus eligibility for future roles, this prohibition was essentially
27 a career death sentence, particularly after Defendants sought to weaponize the bail
28 condition to further damage Gatt’s reputation and career.

1 56. Approximately one week after Gatt’s arrest, and having still not
2 interviewed a single witness or even bothering to collect or review critical electronic
3 data that could have immediately demonstrated the fabrication of the alleged Snapchat
4 conversations at issue, Defendants issued a public statement “seeking to identify any
5 additional victims” of Gatt, describing Gatt’s alleged engagement in “online sexually
6 explicit communication with a minor across state lines,” and setting up a tip hotline. In
7 other words, based solely on the allegations of a single, admittedly obsessed 16-year-
8 old fan whom they had never bothered to interview to that point, along with facially
9 untrustworthy photographs of alleged Snapchat conversations with that fan that they
10 made no effort to verify against the actual electronic or online data relating to these
11 alleged conversations, Defendants recklessly and publicly branded Gatt to the public as
12 a serial pedophile. Even more egregiously, they did so even though they had already
13 spent hours searching through Gatt’s personal phone and computer and had found no
14 evidence whatsoever of any improper communications with Jane Doe or any other
15 minor.

16 57. The results of this press statement were, foreseeably, dramatic and
17 devastating to Gatt’s career. Within 48 hours, more than 120 different media outlets
18 picked up the story and reported on the utterly false allegations, and another 50 media
19 outlets carried stories by the end of the first week. All told, more than 200 different
20 media outlets reported on this story while the frivolous charges remained pending.
21 Gatt’s agent and PR representatives dropped him as a client without even bothering to
22 speak to him or hear his side of the story. Gatt was fired from two different movies in
23 which he had already been cast, and was also recast in a third movie in which he had
24 been hired to play the lead role. Moreover, at least two other movies he had already
25 filmed almost totally cut his scenes or reshot them with different actors, and he was not
26 invited to attend the premieres. Gatt immediately stopped receiving any further role
27 offers or audition opportunities. Gatt also received numerous death threats and was
28 stalked and chased by a Daily Mail reporter. Even though Gatt reported the stalking

1 and car chase to LAPD, LAPD refused to take any action. Not surprisingly, because
2 Defendants had insisted on a court order silencing Gatt as a condition of bail, Gatt was
3 entirely unable to defend himself or even attempt to establish his innocence in an
4 attempt to minimize the damage done.

5 58. With Gatt's career now in shambles based on nothing more than facially
6 untrustworthy pictures of a phone screen and the unverified word of an obsessed fan,
7 Defendants unreasonably delayed any continued investigation for more than a year
8 while simultaneously precluding Gatt from publicly defending himself. During that
9 time, DDA Brunson took the first steps that eventually exposed her personal vendetta
10 against Gatt by suborning perjury in an attempt to get Gatt's bail revoked for violation
11 of the prohibition on making public statements via social media.

12 59. More specifically, DDA Brunson learned that Colin McCarty, an employee
13 at WRTeknica who knew both DDA Brunson and Gatt, had published an Instagram
14 Story that Gatt, while trying to maintain professional relationships with his former
15 sponsor WRTeknica, had responded to with the single word "Yup." Within hours of
16 this occurring, DDA Brunson filed a motion to revoke Gatt's bail, and attached a picture
17 of a phone reflecting Gatt's comment. After the criminal court ordered DDA Brunson
18 to present her witness at a subsequent hearing, DDA Brunson filed a declaration signed
19 by McCarty identifying Gatt's social media post and claiming that McCarty had
20 reported it to authorities after learning of Gatt's bail conditions "through news posts,"
21 even though no media outlets had ever reported on these restrictions.

22 **F. DDA Brunson's Personal Animosity and Bias Toward Gatt is**
23 **Revealed**

24 60. Given the highly suspicious nature of McCarty's declaration, Gatt retained
25 a private investigator who interviewed McCarty. From that interview, Gatt learned for
26 the first time that DDA Brunson was in a romantic relationship with Justin Bordonaro,
27 who worked with McCarty at WRTeknica—the tuning shop that Gatt frequently used
28 and that had served as Gatt's primary sponsor before his arrest. McCarty also revealed

1 in this interview that DDA Brunson was, like Gatt himself, an active member of the
2 high-performance sports car community and frequent attendee at events held at
3 WRTeknica. In other words, DDA Brunson had a previously undisclosed personal
4 connection to Gatt that preceded the beginning of her involvement in the investigation.

5 61. During the interview with Gatt's private investigator, McCarty candidly
6 admitted that, despite the claims DDA Brunson made in the previously filed motion to
7 revoke Gatt's bail, McCarty had never told LA County that he had found out about
8 Gatt's bail conditions through news reports. McCarty further confirmed that he was
9 friends with DDA Brunson and that he had likely learned of the bail conditions either
10 from DDA Brunson herself or from Bordonaro, DDA Brunson's boyfriend and
11 McCarty's co-worker. McCarty further stated that he was not the one who had reached
12 out to LA County; rather, he had shown the direct message to Bordonaro, and DDA
13 Brunson had reached out to him about it a short time later. McCarty also admitted that
14 DDA Brunson had drafted his declaration, which contained statements she knew to be
15 false about how McCarty had learned of Gatt's bail conditions and what had happened
16 once McCarty saw Gatt's Instagram post.

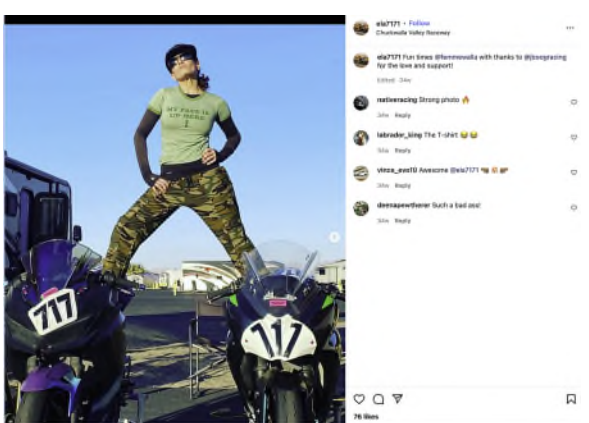
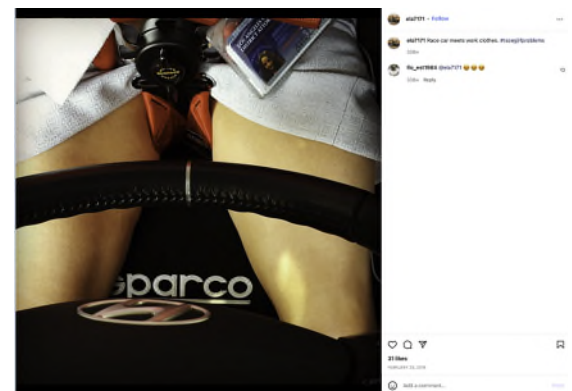
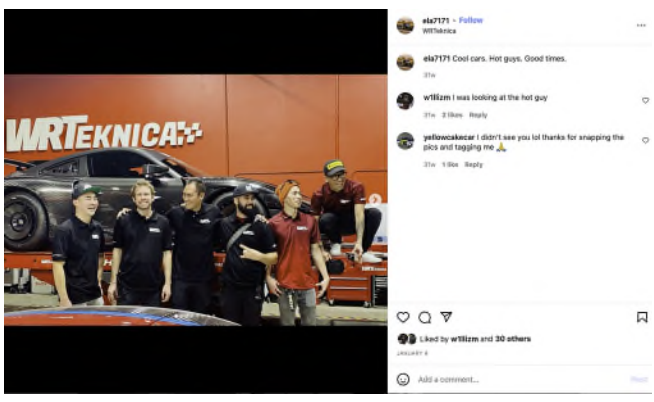
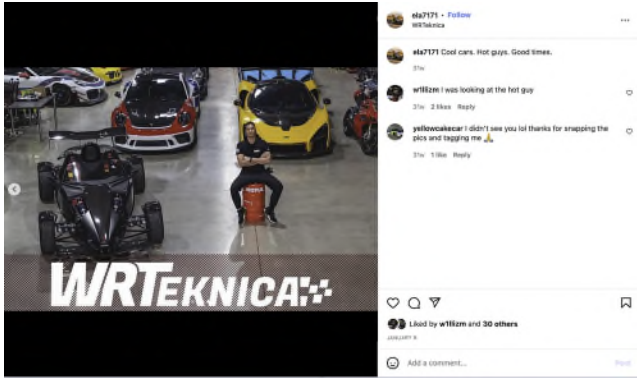
17 62. DDA Brunson thus had personal and undisclosed connections not only to
18 a key witness she presented to the Court, but also to Gatt himself, the target of her
19 ongoing criminal investigation, all in violation of numerous LA DA policies and
20 procedures that prohibit, among other things:

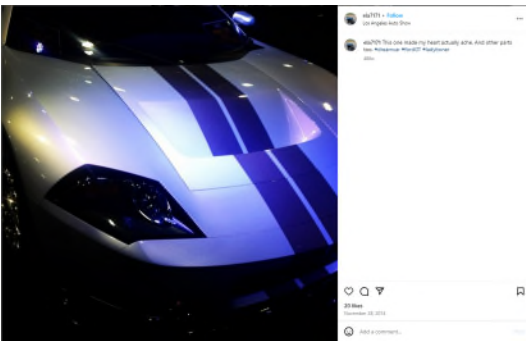
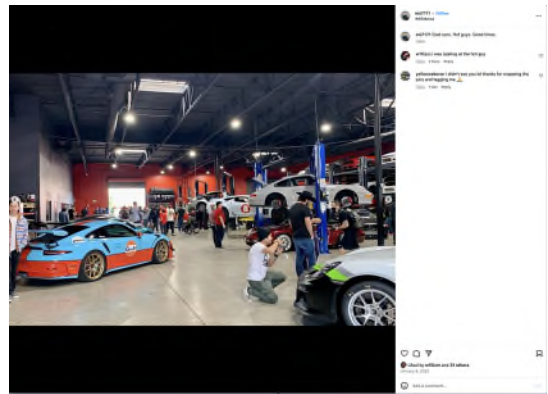
- 21 • Establishing or maintaining personal or financial relationships
22 with a known witness while a case is being investigated or
23 prosecuted;
- 24 • Developing or maintaining personal, business and/or financial
25 relationships with any individual known or that reasonably should
26 be known to be under criminal investigation; and
- 27 • Failing to disclose personal relationships which the employee
28 knows or reasonably should know could create a conflict of
interest or other violation of LA DA policies.

1 63. As Gatt later learned, DDA Brunson apparently knew Gatt long before she
2 took over this investigation and frequently attended events where he was also in
3 attendance, yet did not disclose these facts to Gatt, his criminal defense lawyers, or the
4 Court. Indeed, DDA Brunson frequently made public social media posts supporting
5 WRTeknica and the high-performance sports car community generally. From those
6 posts, Gatt learned that DDA Brunson, who races a Hyundai, was seeking sponsorships
7 for her race car, that she was jealous of others like Gatt who had obtained sponsorships,
8 and that Brunson’s “dream car” was a Ford GT similar to the Ford Shelby GT 500 that
9 Gatt owned. Brunson’s fascination with Gatt and his car is apparent from her social
10 media posts, one of which even has Gatt in the background and was taken at a
11 WRTeknica event that occurred approximately one month after DDA Brunson took
12 over the investigation, but before Gatt was charged and arrested.

13 64. DDA Brunson was desperate for attention and sponsorships and sought to
14 raise her profile, as reflected by her social media postings below and her appearance on
15 podcasts discussing her work as a DDA during which she complained about her DDA
16 salary. In so doing, DDA Brunson portrayed herself in a particularly unprofessional
17 manner, including by publicly posting images which are sexual in nature and were
18 especially inappropriate given her role in prosecuting sex crimes for LA County:
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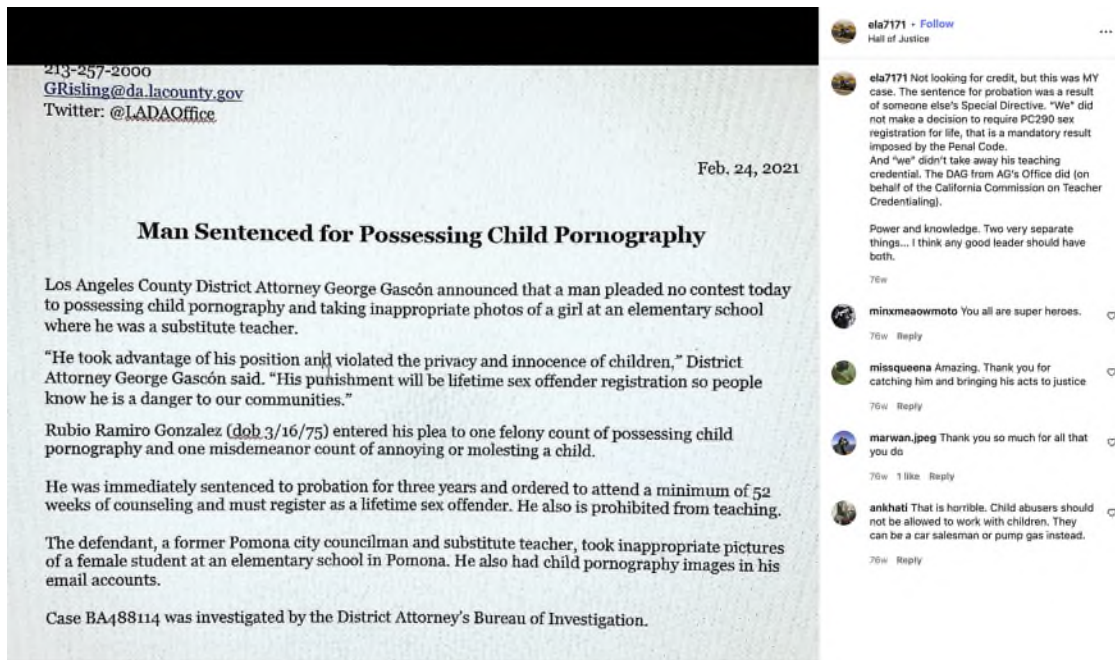


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65. Moreover, Gatt was well known in the high-performance sports car community generally, and to DDA Brunson specifically, for his liberal political beliefs, including his vocal support for the Black Lives Matter movement and for LA County District Attorney George Gascón. Like the vast majority of the high-performance sports car community, DDA Brunson espouses conservative political beliefs that are the polar opposite of Gatt’s beliefs, and she was also a vocal critic of Gascón despite working for him at the LA DA.

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66. For example, media outlets have previously reported DDA Brunson’s “exasperation” at Gascón after he issued a special directive forcing her to strike priors in the case of a parolee caught in possession of child pornography and her request that the judge deny the motion she herself had made at Gascón’s direction. DDA Brunson, who follows at least one anti-Gascón social media account, herself made social media posts about this issue, and also made public statements to the effect that she “would be surprised if there were 10” people in the LA DA who approved of Gascón’s policies.



67. Given her political beliefs and Gatt’s reputation as a liberal and a Gascón supporter in their shared community—including his connection to her boyfriend’s employer, WRTeknica——DDA Brunson clearly already held personal animosity toward Gatt at the time this matter was referred to LA County. Remarkably, however, DDA Brunson never revealed her personal connections and clear conflicts of interest to the Court, Gatt, or his criminal defense counsel.

68. A mere six days after Gatt’s private investigator interviewed McCarty (who admittedly knew DDA Brunson well and, on information and belief, told her about the interview) and uncovered evidence of DDA Brunson’s connections to McCarty and WRTeknica and personal animosity towards Gatt, Gatt learned that DDA Brunson had quit her job with the LA DA and had taken a position with the Riverside County District Attorney’s Office.

G. Gatt Hires His Own Forensic Examiner to Do Defendants’ Job

69. Only after DDA Brunson quit her job did the LA DA finally produce critical *Brady* materials that DDA Brunson had previously withheld for as many as 20 months after Gatt was arrested and Defendants publicly branded him as a serial pedophile. Indeed, Gatt ultimately had to retain his own private forensic investigator,

1 Jeff Fischbach, to ensure that Defendants conducted a proper investigation of the
2 electronic communications at the heart of this case in order to finally prove Gatt's
3 innocence. However, once DDA Brunson resigned and a new prosecutor (DDA
4 Michael Fern) took over the case, the LA DA finally provided the required *Brady*
5 materials after repeated urging from Mr. Fischbach and from Gatt's criminal defense
6 attorney.

7 70. First, on December 13, 2023, the LA DA provided portions of the
8 discovery received, and which the LA DA claimed it had not reviewed, in response to
9 search warrants issued to Instagram and Google for records relating to Gatt. Two days
10 later, on December 15, 2023, the LA DA provided additional *Brady* materials regarding
11 the returns of search warrants issued for Jane Doe's Instagram records. Finally, on
12 January 19, 2024—nearly two years after arresting Gatt and charging him with
13 electronic crimes—the LA DA produced still further *Brady* materials consisting of a
14 report detailing the results of a forensic examination of a phone that purportedly
15 belonged to Jane Doe, though the report does not indicate whether this was the specific
16 phone Jane Doe supposedly used when allegedly communicating with Gatt via
17 Snapchat, or when the LA DA first received a copy of the phone or its contents, other
18 than to note that the forensic image was originally provided to Defendants by Kent
19 County law enforcement. The LA DA never produced to Gatt a copy of the actual
20 evidence it had received from Kent County law enforcement, nor did it ever tell Gatt
21 when it had received that evidence.

22 71. The information Defendants provided between December 13, 2023 and
23 January 19, 2024—and which Defendants either already had or should have obtained
24 long before—finally provided Gatt the information he needed to clearly and
25 conclusively establish that Jane Doe had manufactured the utterly fake electronic
26 communications that formed the sole basis of Gatt's arrest and public humiliation at
27 Defendants' hands. Gatt's forensic examiner, Mr. Fischbach, thoroughly reviewed
28 these materials—which Defendants should have obtained before ever arresting or

1 charging Gatt, and certainly before recklessly branding him in public as a serial
2 pedophile—and found that the only conversations between Gatt and Jane Doe were the
3 Instagram conversations about Gatt’s Cameo video and other innocuous Instagram
4 conversations otherwise common to any celebrity-fan interaction (innocuous
5 communications that Defendants do not claim constituted a crime).

6 72. Notably, *none* of the fake Snapchat conversations featured in the
7 photographs that Defendants utilized to arrest Gatt were found on Gatt’s phone or
8 computer forensics, nor were they found on Jane Doe’s phone forensics. That said, in
9 still further evidence of Jane Doe’s obsession with Gatt and her alteration of photos and
10 other electronic data, the forensic review of Jane Doe’s phone did reveal that Jane Doe
11 had herself downloaded from the internet still shots of Gatt from his role on the
12 television series *Z Nation* that Jane Doe had apparently photoshopped to place a tattoo
13 of her name on Gatt’s right bicep.

14 73. The forensic examination of Gatt’s and Jane Doe’s phones clearly
15 established that the supposed Snapchat conversations that constituted the alleged crime
16 simply never happened, and were instead the product of the overactive imagination of
17 an obsessed fan who had herself previously and unilaterally sought out and downloaded
18 nude pictures of Gatt from his appearance on the television series *Banshee* to use as her
19 lock screen photo even before her first interaction with Gatt through social media.
20 Defendants would have known these things had they bothered to conduct even the most
21 rudimentary electronic investigation of the “facts” and “evidence” of this alleged
22 electronic crime provided to them by Kent County law enforcement (who had
23 themselves declined to prosecute Gatt) rather than blindly proceeding in a vindictive
24 and personally conflicted attempt by DDA Brunson to maliciously and recklessly
25 destroy Gatt’s career. All of this information was readily available to Defendants, yet
26 at best, Defendants declined to obtain or review it until they were repeatedly pressed
27 into doing so by Gatt’s own forensic examiner more than a year after Defendants
28 destroyed Gatt’s reputation and career or, at worst, Defendants knew of this information

1 yet proceeded to falsely charge and publicly humiliate Gatt purely out of personal
2 animosity.

3 74. After viewing the newly produced forensic evidence, Mr. Fischbach
4 prepared an 82-page PowerPoint presentation that thoroughly detailed his findings and
5 explained how Jane Doe had manufactured the forged images—something that would
6 have been obvious to Defendants months earlier had they properly investigated these
7 charges. This is particularly true given that none of the materials provided by Jane
8 Doe—who, again, Defendants did not bother to interview until nearly a year after
9 arresting Gatt and charging him with electronic crimes—contained any pictures that
10 included Gatt’s face or otherwise conclusively identified Gatt, and because the
11 screenshots of those fake conversations were replete with facial inconsistencies and
12 contradictions. Had Defendants exercised even minimal diligence and forensically
13 examined Jane Doe’s phone and/or reviewed search warrant returns for her or Gatt’s
14 Snapchat and Instagram records, Defendants would have known from the start that they
15 were dealing with an obsessed fan, that Jane Doe’s allegations were false, that she was
16 not a credible witness, and that Defendants lacked any semblance of probable cause.

17 75. Shortly after Mr. Fischbach provided this PowerPoint presentation to the
18 LA DA, he asked to present his findings in open court at a preliminary hearing in an
19 attempt to clear Gatt’s name of the baseless charges that had been recklessly and
20 maliciously asserted against him. The LA DA sought to prevent Mr. Fischbach from
21 openly testifying at all costs, first by offering to stipulate to unspecified, limited
22 testimony from Mr. Fischbach, and then by accusing Mr. Fischbach of trying to
23 “embarrass” the LA DA. Ultimately, the LA DA dismissed all charges against Gatt on
24 February 9, 2024, and further asked the Judge to bar Mr. Fischbach from taking the
25 stand to publicly present his findings regarding Defendants’ utterly deficient
26 investigation and the complete fabrication of the supposed evidence underlying the
27 frivolous charges against Gatt.

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1 76. Immediately following the hearing, the LA DA threatened Gatt and Mr.
2 Fischbach with jail if they sought to make their findings public or if they spoke publicly
3 about the LA DA or DDA Brunson specifically. In other words, Defendants explicitly
4 threatened to further punish Gatt if he made any attempt to salvage his personal
5 reputation and career prospects that Defendants had themselves destroyed by charging
6 Gatt with crimes and publicly branding him a serial pedophile without any evidence or
7 probable cause.

8 **G. Gatt Has Suffered Substantial Damages**

9 77. While the baseless criminal charges were ultimately dismissed, substantial
10 and irreparable damage had already been done to Gatt. As a direct result of Defendants'
11 reckless investigation and malicious prosecution, Gatt has suffered immeasurable
12 mental anguish and emotional distress that made him physically ill, and his reputation
13 has been utterly destroyed. An actor's reputation and public perception are critical
14 when studio executives cast roles in films and television series. The media coverage
15 erupting after Defendants' irresponsible public statements insinuating that Gatt was a
16 serial pedophile—with absolutely no evidence whatsoever and in reckless disregard for
17 the untrustworthy evidence provided by an admittedly obsessed fan—immediately and
18 foreseeably resulted in the public cancellation of Gatt, destroying his ability to make a
19 living, as a working actor or otherwise. In contrast to the approximately 200 media
20 outlets that reported on Gatt's arrest (which Defendants trumpeted through a press
21 release), only one media outlet covered the dismissal of charges against him (as to which
22 Defendants were utterly silent).

23 78. Gatt has not worked as an actor since his arrest, which has resulted in a
24 total loss of all income from acting in a burgeoning career that, prior to the arrest, was
25 on the precipice of exploding. Moreover, the public outcry resulting from Defendants'
26 reckless and malicious prosecution caused Gatt to be alienated by his friends and
27 colleagues in the high-performance sports car community, resulting in the loss of many
28 valuable sponsorships, including from WRTeknica, and explicit written threats of

1 violence from one of the employees of that shop. Because Gatt lost all ability to earn a
2 living as an actor, he also had to sell his prized Ford Shelby GT 500—at a fire sale price
3 because reputable auction houses were not willing to work with him—just to have
4 enough money to pay his criminal defense costs.

5 **FIRST CAUSES OF ACTION**¹

6 **42 U.S.C. § 1983 – Violation of Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments**

7 **(Against Defendants Gascón, Brunson and Amarantos)**

8 79. Gatt repeats and realleges the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 78, as if
9 fully set forth herein.

10 80. Defendants Gascón, Brunson and Amarantos, acting individually, jointly
11 and/or in conspiracy with others, subjected Gatt to an unlawful and unreasonable search
12 and seizure, unlawful seizure of a person, false arrest, false imprisonment, and
13 malicious prosecution, all without probable cause, based entirely on unsubstantiated,
14 frivolous, and entirely fake Snapchat conversations manufactured by Jane Doe, all in
15 order to destroy Gatt’s reputation and cripple his career as a result of personal bias and
16 animosity harbored by DDA Brunson.

17 81. Gatt was unlawfully detained without probable cause, and was thereafter
18 subjected to unreasonable bail conditions entered at DDA Brunson’s insistence that
19 prohibited Gatt—a celebrity whose earning capacity and career prospects are tied, at
20 least in part, to various measures of his social media engagement—from making any
21 comments on social media other than for work purposes, thus precluding Gatt from
22 being able to publicly declare his innocence or otherwise fight the reckless and frivolous
23 claims Defendants Gascón, Brunson and Amarantos made about him. Defendants
24 Gascón, Brunson and Amarantos then weaponized that bail condition by publicly
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26 ¹ In this Complaint, Gatt is only alleging federal statutory causes of action under Section 1983. Gatt
27 expressly reserves the right to amend this Complaint at a later date to add causes of action arising
28 under California state law once Gatt has had an opportunity to comply with the claim presentation
requirement set forth in the California Government Claims Act, Cal. Gov’t Code §§ 900 *et seq.* In
that regard, on or about March 27, 2024, Gatt submitted his claim notice pursuant to Section 911.2,
and that claim notice is currently pending before the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

1 humiliating Gatt and branding him a serial pedophile—while Gatt had no ability to
2 dispute these utterly false claims—and by suborning perjury regarding the
3 circumstances of one single word Gatt posted to social media in an attempt to get Gatt’s
4 bail revoked.

5 82. Defendants Gascón, Brunson and Amarantos deprived Gatt of his liberty
6 and freedom of movement as part of a series of threats, intimidation and coercion
7 designed to maximize publicity for a transparently biased arrest, search, seizure and
8 criminal prosecution. Gatt’s arrest, seizure and detention was thus unreasonable,
9 unnecessarily prolonged, and degrading and involved undue invasion of privacy. Gatt
10 did not consent to being confined. Defendants Gascón, Brunson and Amarantos also
11 deprived Gatt of his right to be secure in his person against unreasonable searches and
12 seizures, and further deprived Gatt of due process.

13 83. In service of their illicit objectives, and in addition to the unlawful search
14 and seizure, seizure of a person, false arrest and false imprisonment, Defendants
15 Gascón, Brunson and Amarantos engaged in misconduct in the investigation that led to
16 the unlawful search, seizure, arrest and detention, including:

- 17 • Intentionally and maliciously relying on, and/or showing reckless
18 disregard for the truth of, the fabricated nature of the supposed
19 Snapchat conversations that formed the entire basis for
20 Defendants’ investigation;
- 21 • Acting with knowledge that the pictures of these supposed
22 Snapchat conversations were not reliable, credible, or trustworthy
23 on their face, and ignoring glaring red flags about the reliability of
24 this evidence in the form of facial inconsistencies and statements
25 that made no sense in context;
- 26 • Declining to obtain, and refusing to review once obtained, critical
27 electronic data underlying the supposed electronic
28 communications that would have proved the fabricated nature of
the alleged Snapchat conversations;
- Refusing to interview Jane Doe—an admittedly obsessed fan—to
assess her credibility or attempt to verify her allegations; and

- Intentionally concealing the bias and personal animosity that DDA Brunson held towards Gatt to obscure that bias and animosity and the lack of any true investigation before obtaining warrants despite the lack of any probable cause.

84. While Defendants Gascón, Brunson and Amarantos purportedly acted pursuant to warrants, on information and belief, they obtained those warrants based on misrepresentations and/or omissions material to any purported finding of probable cause, and further acted unreasonably under the circumstances when executing the warrants. Defendants Gascón, Brunson and Amarantos had reason to doubt the truthfulness and reliability of this information, and knew or should have known that both Jane Doe and the information she provided were unreliable, not credible, and untrustworthy and could not serve as a basis for a finding of probable cause. Despite this, Defendants Brunson and Amarantos signed supporting certifications under penalty of perjury for the Felony Complaint For Arrest Warrant, with Defendant Brunson signing on behalf of Defendant Gascón. Defendant Amarantos also signed a supporting certification under penalty of perjury for the search warrant.

85. Defendants Gascón, Brunson and Amarantos thus engaged in judicial deception by obtaining the warrants on the basis of material misrepresentations and omissions that they knew or should have known were false, and these misrepresentations and omissions were made intentionally as a result of bias or personal animosity harbored against Gatt or, alternatively, with reckless disregard for the truth. Based on the totality of the circumstances, no reasonably prudent person could have concluded that probable cause existed based on the information provided.

86. Ignoring the unreliable, not credible, and untrustworthy source of information and the fact that Gatt's rights under the U.S. Constitution had been violated without any evidence or probable cause, Defendants Gascón, Brunson and/or Amarantos made public statements to the media about Gatt, maliciously or recklessly touting the frivolous charges brought by the LA DA. In those public statements, Defendants Gascón, Brunson and/or Amarantos claimed they were "seeking to identify

1 any additional victims” of Gatt, describing Gatt’s alleged engagement in “online
2 sexually explicit communication with a minor across state lines” and setting up a tip
3 hotline. In doing so, Defendants Gascón, Brunson and Amarantos intentionally,
4 maliciously, and/or recklessly labeled Gatt as a serial pedophile based solely on the
5 allegations of a single, 16-year-old, admittedly obsessed fan whom they had never
6 bothered to interview, and who had provided nothing but facially untrustworthy pictures
7 of a phone screen rather than actual electronic evidence of the alleged Snapchat
8 conversations, and despite the fact that Defendants Gascón, Brunson and Amarantos
9 had no knowledge or evidence whatsoever indicating that Gatt had engaged in unlawful
10 conversations with any other minor at any other time.

11 87. Defendants Gascón’s, Brunson’s and Amarantos’ conduct violated Gatt’s
12 rights to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures, unlawful seizures of a person,
13 false arrest, false imprisonment, and malicious prosecution under the Fourth and
14 Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution.

15 88. The conduct complained of herein was performed in Defendants Gascón’s,
16 Brunson’s and Amarantos’ capacity as investigators performing investigative functions
17 attempting to support a finding of probable cause, and further was performed in the
18 complete absence of probable cause.

19 89. Defendants Gascón’s, Brunson’s and Amarantos’ conduct violated Gatt’s
20 statutory or Constitutional rights that were clearly established at the time of Defendants
21 Gascón’s, Brunson’s and Amarantos’ conduct, and reasonably prudent persons would
22 have understood that Defendants Gascón’s, Brunson’s and Amarantos’ conduct would
23 violate Gatt’s statutory and/or constitutional rights.

24 90. Defendants Gascón, Brunson and Amarantos, acting in concert with one
25 another and with other known and unknown co-conspirators, reached an agreement
26 amongst themselves to violate Gatt’s constitutional rights and conspired by concerted
27 action to accomplish an unlawful purpose by unlawful means. In addition, these co-
28 conspirators agreed amongst themselves to protect one another from liability for these

1 violations of Gatt's rights. In furtherance of the conspiracy, each of the co-conspirators
2 committed overt acts and was otherwise a willful participant in joint activity, and each
3 co-conspirator was acting for their individual advantage in furtherance of biases and
4 personal animosity. The violations of law described herein were accomplished by
5 Defendants Gascón's, Brunson's and Amarantos' conspiracy. The misconduct
6 described herein was objectively unreasonable and was undertaken intentionally, in
7 total disregard of the truth regarding the baseless information that served as the
8 foundation of Defendants Gascón's, Brunson's and Amarantos' investigation of Gatt
9 and all subsequent acts, and with willful indifference to Gatt's Constitutional rights.

10 91. As a proximate result of Defendants Gascón's, Brunson's and Amarantos'
11 wrongful acts, Gatt has sustained, and will in the future sustain, physical and pecuniary
12 injury and other compensable injuries.

13 92. As a further proximate result of Defendants Gascón's, Brunson's and
14 Amarantos' wrongful acts, Plaintiff suffered general damages including pain and
15 suffering, mental anguish, and emotional distress.

16 93. Each and every Defendant acted recklessly and with callous disregard for
17 Gatt's Constitutional rights. The wrongful acts, and each of them, were willful,
18 oppressive, fraudulent and malicious such that Gatt is entitled to punitive and exemplary
19 damages.

20 **SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION**

21 **42 U.S.C. § 1983 – *Monell* Liability: Policy, Practice or Custom**

22 **(Against Defendant LA County and The City of Los Angeles)**

23 94. Gatt repeats and realleges the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 93, as if
24 fully set forth herein.

25 95. Defendants LA County and the City of Los Angeles promulgated and
26 maintained unconstitutional policies, practices, or customs which caused the LA DA
27 and/or LAPD employees, investigators, and consultants to unlawfully arrest, search,
28 seize, and criminally prosecute citizens for transparently biased reasons and as a result

1 of personal animosity, particularly with regard to political beliefs. The LA DA and/or
2 LAPD employees, investigators, and consultants were also authorized or permitted to
3 prepare and fabricate evidence and to subject citizens to transparently biased arrests,
4 searches, seizures, and detentions without probable cause.

5 96. Defendants LA County and the City of Los Angeles, as a matter of custom,
6 practice, and policy, repeatedly and tacitly permitted and ratified instances wherein the
7 LA DA and/or LAPD employees, investigators, and consultants deliberately deprived
8 citizens of state law and Constitutional protections against unlawful search and seizure,
9 false arrest, and unlawful detention in violation of the Fourth and Fourteenth
10 Amendments of the United States Constitution based on blatantly biased motivations as
11 a result of said citizens' celebrity and/or political beliefs.

12 97. Defendants LA County and the City of Los Angeles, as a matter of custom,
13 practice, and policy, also failed to maintain adequate and proper training for the LA DA
14 and/or LAPD employees, investigators, and consultants necessary to educate said
15 employees, investigators, and consultants as to the Constitutional rights of citizens to
16 be free from such politically motivated wrongful acts, to prevent consistent and
17 systematic denial of Constitutional rights for blatantly political motives, and to prevent
18 politically biased malicious prosecutions, unlawful searches and seizures, false arrests,
19 and unlawful detentions.

20 98. Defendants LA County and the City of Los Angeles knew or should have
21 known, based on investigation documents, arrest reports, departmental reports, claims
22 for damages, and lawsuits, that the inadequate training and supervision was likely to
23 result in a deprivation of the right of citizens to be free from unreasonable searches and
24 seizures, false arrests, unlawful detentions, and malicious prosecutions.

25 99. Defendants Gascón, Brunson and Amaranos, in their capacities as LA DA
26 and/or LAPD employees, investigators and consultants, violated Gatt's right to be free
27 from unreasonable searches and seizures, false arrests, unlawful detentions, and
28 malicious prosecutions.

1 100. Defendants LA County and the City of Los Angeles were deliberately
2 indifferent to the widespread misconduct on the part of LA DA and/or LAPD
3 employees, investigators and consultants in engaging in unlawful searches, seizures,
4 false arrests, unlawful detentions, and malicious prosecutions for transparently political
5 reasons.

6 101. Defendants LA County's and the City of Los Angeles' failure to provide
7 adequate training and supervision was the direct and foreseeable cause of the
8 deprivation of Gatt's rights to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures, false
9 arrests, unlawful detentions, and malicious prosecutions.

10 102. The abuses in question were the product of a culture of tolerance within
11 the LA DA and/or LAPD. This culture is rooted in the deliberate indifference of high-
12 ranking LA County and/or City of Los Angeles officials, including without limitation
13 Defendants Gascón, Brunson, and Amarantos and any other high-ranking official,
14 individually or acting in concert with one another, to the widespread misconduct on the
15 part of the LA DA and/or LAPD employees, investigators, and consultants in recklessly
16 engaging in unlawful arrests, searches, seizures, and criminal prosecutions.

17 103. The violation of Gatt's Constitutional rights was the result of Defendants'
18 customs, policies or practices which resulted in the targeting of persons, such as Gatt,
19 based on political ideology, all of whom were singled out for disparate treatment and
20 subjected to politically biased investigations, arrests, searches and seizures, detentions
21 and prosecutions, all without probable cause, specifically because of political
22 motivations and other biases. Despite having notice of these customs, policies and
23 practices, Defendants LA County and the City of Los Angeles and other high-ranking
24 officials of Defendants LA County and the City of Los Angeles have failed to take any
25 appropriate or remedial action to prevent the continuing misconduct by members of the
26 LA DA and/or LAPD.

27 104. During the relevant time period, the LA DA and/or LAPD employees,
28 investigators, and consultants were acting under the color of law. During the relevant

1 time period, the LA DA and/or LAPD employees, investigators, and consultants were
2 acting pursuant to Defendant LA County's and/or City of Los Angeles' policy, practice
3 or custom.

4 105. The acts of the LA DA and/or LAPD employees, investigators and
5 consultants deprived Gatt of his right to be free from unconstitutional searches and
6 seizures, false arrests, unlawful detentions, and malicious prosecutions under the Fourth
7 Amendment and the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

8 106. The conduct complained of herein was performed in the capacity as
9 investigators performing investigative functions attempting to support a finding of
10 probable cause, and further was performed in the complete absence of probable cause.

11 107. Defendants LA County's and the City of Los Angeles' conduct violated
12 Gatt's statutory and/or Constitutional rights that were clearly established at the time of
13 Defendants LA County's and the City of Los Angeles' conduct, and reasonably prudent
14 persons would have understood that Defendants LA County's and the City of Los
15 Angeles' conduct would violate Gatt's statutory and/or Constitutional rights.

16 108. As a direct and foreseeable result of Defendants LA County's and the City
17 of Los Angeles' actions, Gatt suffered economic and non-economic damages, including
18 but not limited to lost profits, lost wages, lost business opportunities, mental anguish,
19 emotional distress, humiliation and embarrassment.

20 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

21 WHEREFORE, Gatt prays for judgment against Defendants as follows:

- 22 a. Compensatory, punitive and exemplary damages in an amount to be
23 determined at trial, constituting his losses foreseeably resulting from
24 Defendants' misconduct;
- 25 b. Reasonable and necessary attorneys' fees;
- 26 c. Pre- and post-judgment interest at the maximum rate allowed by law;
- 27 d. All costs of suit; and
- 28

1 e. All such other and further relief, both general and special, at law or in
2 equity, to which Gatt may show himself to be justly entitled or as this Court
3 may deem appropriate.

4 **JURY DEMAND**

5 Gatt demands a jury trial on all issues triable by jury.

6 Dated: April 4, 2024

7 Respectfully submitted,

8 KASOWITZ BENSON TORRES LLP

9 /s/ Daniel A. Saunders

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