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

by Liv Hennessy

|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

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*Vardy V Rooney: The Wagatha Christie Trial* was commissioned and originally produced by Eleanor Lloyd Productions and Eilene Davidson Productions. The production was first performed at the Wyndham's Theatre in the West End from 15 November 2022 for seven performances only, followed by a transfer to the Ambassadors Theatre in the West End from 6 April 2023 before a UK and Ireland tour. The casts were as follows:

#### **Wyndham's Theatre Cast (in order of appearance)**

**COLEEN ROONEY** ..... Laura Dos Santos  
**PUNDIT 1 (JEFF)/JAMIE VARDY/WAYNE ROONEY** Nathan McMullen  
**PUNDIT 2 (JEM)/HARPREET ROBERTSON/CAROLINE WATT** .....  
..... Sharan Phull  
**REBEKAH VARDY** ..... Lucy May Barker  
**HUGH TOMLINSON QC** ..... Jonnie Broadbent  
**DAVID SHERBORNE** ..... Tom Turner  
**MRS JUSTICE STEYN** ..... Charlotte Randle

#### **Ambassadors Theatre Cast (in order of appearance)**

**COLEEN ROONEY** ..... Laura Dos Santos  
**PUNDIT 1 (JEFF)/JAMIE VARDY/WAYNE ROONEY** Nathan McMullen  
**PUNDIT 2 (JEM)/HARPREET ROBERTSON/CAROLINE WATT** .....  
..... Halema Hussain  
**REBEKAH VARDY** ..... Lucy May Barker  
**HUGH TOMLINSON QC** ..... Jonnie Broadbent  
**DAVID SHERBORNE** ..... Tom Turner  
**MRS JUSTICE STEYN** ..... Verna Vyas  
**UNDERSTUDIES** ..... Ceili O'Connor, Tom Sullivan

#### **CREATIVE TEAM**

**ADAPTOR** ..... Liv Hennessy  
**DIRECTOR** ..... Lisa Spirling  
**SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER** ..... Polly Sullivan  
**LIGHTING DESIGNER (WYNDHAM'S THEATRE)** ..... Ben Bull  
**LIGHTING DESIGNER (AMBASSADORS THEATRE)** . . . Johanna Town  
**COMPOSER AND SOUND DESIGNER** ..... Richard Hammarton  
**CASTING DIRECTOR** ..... Naomi Downham  
**COSTUME SUPERVISOR** ..... Hugo Aguirre  
**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR** ..... Lizzie Manwaring  
**DRAMATURG** ..... Sarah Dickenson  
**MOVEMENT CONSULTANT** ..... Mateus Daniel

## CHARACTERS

**COLEEN ROONEY**

**PUNDIT 1** – called **JEFF** – also **JAMIE VARDY/WAYNE ROONEY**

**PUNDIT 2** – called **JEM** – also **HARPREET ROBERTSON/CAROLINE WATT**

**REBEKAH VARDY**

**HUGH TOMLINSON QC**

**DAVID SHERBORNE**

**MRS JUSTICE STEYN**

## AUTHOR'S NOTES

### Notes on the text

“...” signifies a break in the verbatim text, NOT a pause.

“[...]” signifies a spoken “dot dot dot”.

“–” signifies an interruption, by a character’s own thoughts or by each other.

Text in [brackets] is for clarity, and should be spoken as part of the text.

*Vardy v Rooney: The Wagatha Christie Trial* was commissioned by Eleanor Lloyd Productions and Eilene Davidson Productions.

**ELEANOR LLOYD  
PRODUCTIONS**



**EILENE DAVIDSON  
PRODUCTIONS**



## 1.

*(Lights up on a court room.)*

*(We're with **COLEEN ROONEY** – holding a notepad and pen.)*

**COLEEN.** For a few years now, someone who I trusted to follow me on my personal Instagram account has been consistently informing *The Sun* newspaper of my private posts and stories. There has been so much information given to them about me, my friends and my family – all without my permission or knowledge.

After a long time of trying to figure out who it could be, for various reasons, I had a suspicion. To try and prove this, I came up with an idea. I blocked everyone from viewing my Instagram stories except ONE account. (Those on my private account must have been wondering why I haven't had stories on there for a while.)

Over the past five months, I have posted a series of false stories to see if they made their way into *The Sun* newspaper. And you know what, they did! The story about gender selection in Mexico, the story about returning to TV and then the latest story about the basement flooding in my new house.

It's been tough keeping it to myself and not making any comment at all, especially when the stories have been leaked, however I had to. Now I know for certain which account/individual it's come from.

I have saved and screenshotted all the original stories which clearly show just one person has viewed them.

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 ninety minutes of match highlights.

**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?

**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.)*

**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.

*(REBEKAH VARDY takes the stand. She puts her hand on something and takes a sharp intake of breath, and -.)*

*(The PUNDITS gather.)*

**PUNDIT 2.** Here, the court does simply say that Rebekah Vardy is ‘sworn in’.

**PUNDIT 1.** We’re not allowed to know if this was on a holy book, or an atheist reading –

**PUNDIT 2.** But the sentiment is the same. Rebekah Vardy has to tell the truth.

*(The PUNDITS retreat.)*

**TOMLINSON.** First of all, can you give the court your full name.

**REBEKAH.** Yes, it is Rebekah Vardy.

**TOMLINSON.** ... You should have a trial bundle which consists of bundles A to F ... I try to remember to say to all witnesses and then forget – you have got quite a soft voice. The most important person in the court is the Judge... so it is important that the Judge hears rather than the rest of us.

**REBEKAH.** OK.

*(MR TOMLINSON sits. MR SHERBORNE stands.)*

**SHERBORNE.** Mrs Vardy, let’s see if we can start by agreeing on a few things. You would agree, wouldn’t you... to secretly pass on somebody else’s information that they didn’t want shared with the outside world is wrong, isn’t it?

**REBEKAH.** Yes, my Lady...

**SHERBORNE.** You’d hate to be called a leak, wouldn’t you?

**REBEKAH.** I have been called a leak. It's not nice...

**SHERBORNE.** Mrs Vardy... would you say you respect people's privacy?

**REBEKAH.** Yes, I do.

**SHERBORNE.** Let's test that. ... I'm going to take you to an... article that we [have] in Bundle D. ... This is an interview you gave to Jane Atkinson, who is a journalist... at *The News of the World*... in March 2004... about having had sex with Peter Andre... do you know roughly what the circulation was of the News of the World in 2004?

**REBEKAH.** No, I don't.

**SHERBORNE.** Let me help you. It was probably about four million people... the highest circulating newspaper at that time... the article which has a picture of you – that is you, isn't it? – on the left hand side?

**REBEKAH.** That is, yeah.

**SHERBORNE.** And then you have Mr Andre on the right-hand side, entitled: "Peter's hung like a small chipolata, shaved, slobbery, lasts five minutes then falls asleep... Stunning Rebekah Nicholson reckons she has the perfect title for pop poser Peter Andre's performance with her in bed: I've got a chipolata, get me out of here". Your words, Mrs Vardy?

**REBEKAH.** Yes, my Lady. Can I give a bit of history on that one please?

**SHERBORNE.** I'll give you the opportunity to say what I expect you're going to say, Mrs Vardy, but perhaps we can just deal with whether these are your words.

**REBEKAH.** ... They are the words I'm reading, yes.

**SHERBORNE.** ... Let me ask you this, Mrs Vardy, do you think it was respectful of Mr Andre's right not to share this information with the world?

**REBEKAH.** My Lady, I was forced into a situation by my ex-husband to do this story. This is something I deeply regret and something that is very much part of my past. It's not nice to read, and I have dealt with this and understand why this is being used, because to me this is mud-slinging and I was always threatened with mud-slinging by Mrs Rooney's team.

**SHERBORNE.** Did you ask Mr Andre's permission first?

**REBEKAH.** Again, I was forced into doing something that I didn't want to do.

**SHERBORNE.** That's not an answer to the question, Mrs Vardy. Did you or did you not ask Mr Andre's permission first?

**REBEKAH.** Of course not.

**SHERBORNE.** ... To be fair to you, I should ask, did you feel particularly strongly about the size of his manhood that it should be made public?

**REBEKAH.** Again, it was something I was forced to say.

**SHERBORNE.** Turning to... D1 at page 1822 ...the WhatsApp exchanges [where] you authorised or approved the provision of information to the press by Ms Watt. This is an exchange between you and Caroline Watt, is that right? ... You are Bex and she is Caroline, obviously.

**REBEKAH.** I am.

**SHERBORNE.** We know this is about someone called Riyad Mahrez, because he's named in your WhatsApp exchange... just so we are clear, [Mahrez] was a colleague of your husband Jamie at Leicester City football club, wasn't he?

**REBEKAH.** He was at the time, yes.

**SHERBORNE.** Let's see what you say –

**REBEKAH.** “Mahrez not turned up to training again... Lads are fuming” –

**SHERBORNE.** ...to which Caroline replies –

(*The PUNDITS gather.*)

**PUNDIT 2.** I think now is a good time to explain – there’s actually somebody not on the field today who really should be. Caroline Watt.

**PUNDIT 1.** Rebekah’s former friend and agent, crucially missing from everyone’s starting eleven. Sadly, Caroline Watt withdrew her statement and refused to come to court.

**PUNDIT 2.** She didn’t *refuse*, Jeff. She was excused, on medical grounds.

**PUNDIT 1.** Now, you may or may not recall, that some of Rebekah’s messages mysteriously vanished.

**PUNDIT 2.** That was actually due to a technical error during download.

**PUNDIT 1.** And then Caroline’s phone famously ended up in the North Sea...

**PUNDIT 2.** She has a weakness in her hand.

**PUNDIT 1.** So that basically means that we don’t have any WhatsApp media files – voicenotes, pictures, videos – across the period of interest, i.e. when Coleen was uploading fake posts. It means this court is missing *crucial* evidence.

**PUNDIT 2.** Look, these things happen in a game like this.

**PUNDIT 1.** But we’ve got *some* messages. Because Coleen’s legal team did a little bit of magic down the opposition wing – he requested Rebekah’s WhatsApp messages from months *before* the period of Coleen’s posts. A tactic she wasn’t expecting.

**PUNDIT 2.** I mean, nobody comes out well from that, do they? Your private messages being read out to a public audience. It's everyone's worst nightmare.

**PUNDIT 1.** I mean, if mine were to be... but, back to court, the lads were fuming.

*(The PUNDITS retreat.)*

**REBEKAH.** "Mahrez not turned up to training again... Lads are fuming"–

**SHERBORNE.** ...to which Caroline replies –

*(A pause... and PUNDIT 2 becomes CAROLINE.)*

**CAROLINE.** "Really? Why don't you tell Rob Dorsett?"

**SHERBORNE.** ... [He's] the Sky Sports reporter... and you say –

**REBEKAH.** "Just don't want it coming back on me".

**CAROLINE.** "I can tell someone"

**REBEKAH.** "Yeah do it"

**CAROLINE.** "Okay" ...

**SHERBORNE.** ... You didn't want it coming back on you? ... You see, once you knew that Ms Watt would do the dirty for you, you were happy for the information to be leaked, weren't you?

**REBEKAH.** ... As it reads there, it doesn't read well, but it was because it would reflect badly if there was any gossip that had directly come from me.

**SHERBORNE.** ... Can we turn to the next example... page 1831 ... The next example refers to someone called 'Mrs F' in order to protect her identity... to give this context, Mrs F is a well known celebrity, right?

**REBEKAH.** That's correct, yes,

**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”.

**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.

**SHERBORNE.** And you know the consequences of getting it wrong, don't you, of saying something that's not true in there?

**REBEKAH.** Well, something that might not be right, yes.

**SHERBORNE.** Something that might not be right? What do you mean by that?

**REBEKAH.** Well, it's just... I'm just elaborating on what you were saying.

**SHERBORNE.** You read this statement very carefully, didn't you? Because if it said something you didn't know to be true, you know the consequences, don't you?

**REBEKAH.** Yes.

*(The PUNDITS gather.)*

**PUNDIT 1.** He's lined her up – and once he's through on goal...

*(The PUNDITS retreat.)*

**SHERBORNE.** ... [This is] on page 266 [of] your witness statement.

**REBEKAH.** ... “I have sometimes been caught up in the heat of the moment during conversations with Caroline where I have talked about leaks and payment... but these conversations were *never* serious and Caroline would have understood that. I have *never* been paid for private information about anyone apart from myself or my family”.

**SHERBORNE.** Mrs Vardy, do you still stand by that evidence? ... Yes or no please, Mrs Vardy.

**REBEKAH.** Yes, apart from the Danny Drinkwater one.

**SHERBORNE.** Oh I see, so there is an exception... what this shows, Mrs Vardy, is you are prepared to lie under oath, aren't you?

(*The PUNDITS gather.*)

**PUNDIT 1.** Back of the net.

**PUNDIT 2.** OK, fine. But it's still early days. And to be clear, Rebekah isn't on trial over Danny Drinkwater or Peter Andre. She's here because of Coleen.

**PUNDIT 1.** Yeah, we should probably get to that. The moment when Coleen and Rebekah come face to face. It's England versus Wales.

**PUNDIT 2.** Quite literally. This is the Euros 2016 football match, when Jamie Vardy and Wayne Rooney both played in Roy Hodgson's England squad. Vardy even got the equaliser.

**PUNDIT 1.** But Rebekah was busy too. She got a column in *The Sun* during the Euros.

(*The PUNDITS retreat.*)

**SHERBORNE.** ... Can we turn to page 2273. 12 June 2016. And this is the Euro diary, it's your column in *The Sun*?

**REBEKAH.** Yes that's right.

**SHERBORNE.** Ms Watt has arranged for you to have a column [during the tournament] ... she has done well, hasn't she?

**REBEKAH.** I suppose you could call it that. I don't know.

**SHERBORNE.** This is you getting a chance to promote yourself?

**REBEKAH.** No, this is an opportunity for me to be able to earn my own money, and I never wanted to rely on my husband. I wanted to earn my own money and there was opportunities that arose and both Jamie and I discussed it, and there was no problem with doing that.

**SHERBORNE.** ... [In your column], we have a photograph... 'Rebekah Vardy, left. Coleen Rooney, right', and [you've written] –