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APR 29 2019

LISA A. HENDERSON
SAN JUAN COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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8 **IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF WASHINGTON**
9 **IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN JUAN**

10 JANIS PEDERIS BRIEDIS, JIL LISA
11 PETERSON-BRIEDIS, and SAMBODHA,
12 INC., a Washington corporation,
13 Plaintiffs,

No. 19-2-05077-28

FIRST AMENDED COMPLAINT

14 v.

15 [REDACTED] BE
16 SCOFIELD, Defendant.

17
18 Plaintiffs Janis Pederis Briedis, Jil Lisa Peterson-Briedis, and Sambodha, Inc.,
19 allege as follows:

20 **I. PARTIES**

- 21 1. Plaintiffs Janis Briedis and Jil Peterson-Briedis are individuals, married to each
22 other, residing in Orcas Island, San Juan County, Washington. They bring this
23 action in response to the false and defamatory article, "Aarvindha Himdara and the
24 Mysterious Orcas Island Death of Carla Jean Shaffer" ("the Article"), that
25 Defendant authored regarding Plaintiffs and published on the Internet, which
26 damages Plaintiffs' reputations, places them in a false light, unreasonably intrudes
27 upon their seclusion, and otherwise causes them injury. A true and accurate copy
28 of the Article is attached hereto as Exhibit A.
- 29 2. Plaintiff Sambodha, Inc., is a corporation owned and operated by Plaintiff Janis
30 Briedis with its principal place of business in Orcas Island, San Juan County,
31 Washington. It brings this action in response to the Article authored by Defendant
regarding Plaintiffs and published on the Internet which damages Plaintiff

FIRST AMENDED COMPLAINT, 1 of 9.

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BLD

1 Sambodha, Inc.'s reputation in its industry, places it in a false light, and otherwise
2 causes it injury.

- 3 3. Defendant [REDACTED] Be Scofield, is an individual, who
4 authored and published the Article on the Internet with the explicit and malicious
5 intent to harm Plaintiffs. The Article was published on a website operated by
6 Defendant, and is located at the following URL: <https://gurumag.com/aaravindhahimadra-and-the-mysterious-orcas-island-death-of-carla-jean-shaffer/>.

8 II. JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 9 4. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction under Rev. Code Wash. § 2.08.010.
10 5. This Court has personal jurisdiction because, upon information and belief,
11 Defendant allegedly, personally researched the Article in Washington State and
12 because the Article has been read by individuals throughout San Juan County and
13 the State of Washington and because the harm caused by the Article was directed at
14 Plaintiffs and because the Article in fact causes harm to Plaintiffs.
15 6. Venue is proper in this Court under Rev. Code Wash. § 4.12.020 and/or CR
16 82(a)(3).

17 III. FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

- 18 7. On or about January 24, 2018, Defendant Scofield published the Article with the
19 malicious intent of harming Plaintiffs.
20 8. The Article maliciously and falsely accuses Plaintiff Janis Briedis of, among other
21 things, being a cult leader, sexual predator, and murderer, and engaging in abusive
22 and criminal behavior, and other acts of moral turpitude.
23 9. The Article also maliciously and falsely accuses Plaintiff Jil Peterson-Briedis and
24 Plaintiff Sambodha, Inc. of being somehow involved in or complicit with those
25 criminal acts and other immoral behavior.
26 10. The Article purports to be the result of an inadvertent investigation by Defendant of
27 incidents occurring on or around the years 2005 and 2006 related to horrific injuries
28 to and the untimely death of an Orcas Island resident named Carla Jean Shaffer.
29 Despite the incidents being officially investigated by law enforcement and declared
30 self-inflicted/suicide, Defendant inappropriately and misleadingly characterizes Ms.
31 Shaffer's death as "unsolved."

- 1 11. Throughout the Article, Defendant utilizes a litany of hearsay from various sources,
2 many of whom are unidentified, and fragmented quotes to accuse Plaintiffs of
3 causing Ms. Shaffer's violent injuries and ultimate death. Defendant fails to
4 mention that Plaintiffs Janis Briedis and Jil Peterson-Briedis were visiting Europe
5 at the time of Ms. Shaffer's self-inflicted attack.
- 6 12. Through inference and intentional verbal maneuvering throughout the Article,
7 Defendant characterizes Plaintiffs as a "cult" and falsely accuses them of physically
8 injuring, sexually assaulting, and eventually murdering Ms. Shaffer.
- 9 13. The Article also includes seven (7) photographs of Plaintiff Janis Briedis, which are
10 used without his consent.
- 11 14. Plaintiffs are well respected, kind, non-violent, productive and positive members of
12 society who have dedicated their careers to helping others live happier and more
13 mindful lives.
- 14 15. The Article is abusive, harassing, derogatory, and defamatory, and was published
15 with the specific intent to ruin Plaintiffs' personal and professional reputations and
16 otherwise injure Plaintiffs.
- 17 16. As a result of Defendant's actions in authoring and publishing the Article, Plaintiffs
18 have been irreparably harmed and continue to be harmed.

19 IV. CAUSES OF ACTION

20 **Count I: Defamation – Libel and Libel Per Se**

- 21 17. Plaintiffs repeat and reallege each and every allegation contained above and below
22 as though fully set forth herein.
- 23 18. Defendant intentionally and maliciously authored and published the Article
24 regarding Plaintiffs, which among other things falsely accuses them of criminal
25 activity and other acts of moral turpitude.
- 26 19. Defendant authored and published the Article without privilege or authorization.
- 27 20. The Article is false and defamatory because it does not describe real events that
28 actually occurred. Plaintiffs are not engaged in cult activity, nor do they participate
29 in abusive or criminal behavior. They were not responsible for and were in no way
30 involved with the injuries and ultimately death of Carla Jean Shaffer.
- 31

- 1 21. The Article constitutes libel per se as it exposes Plaintiffs to hatred, contempt,
2 ridicule or obloquy, deprives them of the benefit of public confidence or social
3 intercourse, and injures them in their business, trade, and profession.
- 4 22. Upon information and believe, Defendant acted with actual malice in authoring and
5 publishing the Article because the statements made, and impressions created by the
6 Article are false and Defendant acted with reckless disregard as to their falsity.
7 Upon information and belief, the Article was specifically published for the purpose
8 of damaging Plaintiffs' reputation and injuring them in their trade, business and
9 profession.
- 10 23. Upon information and belief, the Article was read by residents of San Juan County
11 and the State of Washington.
- 12 24. As a direct and proximate result of the Article's publication, Plaintiffs have
13 suffered significant reputational harm, shame, mortification and injury to their
14 feelings, and they have sustained special and general damages, which damages
15 shall be fully proven at the time of trial, including, but not limited to, loss of capital
16 and revenue, lost productivity, mitigation and other expenses, and loss of intangible
17 assets.
- 18 25. Plaintiffs request a permanent injunction halting the continued dissemination of the
19 Article, and further ordering Defendant to remove the Article from the Internet and
20 request Google, Bing, Yahoo! and other search engine providers to remove the
21 Article from their respective search results. Without a permanent injunction
22 judgment of this Court, the Article will continue to cause great and irreparable
23 injury to Plaintiffs. Plaintiffs have no adequate remedy at law for injuries that they
24 are currently suffering and are likely to suffer as a result of the Article and the false
25 and defamatory statements contained therein.

26 **Count II: False Light Invasion of Privacy**

- 27 26. Plaintiffs repeat and reallege each and every allegation contained above and below
28 as though fully set forth herein.
- 29 27. Defendant authored and published the Article that has placed Plaintiffs in a false
30 light, including but not limited to falsely accusing them of assault, murder and
31 other acts of moral turpitude.

- 1 28. Defendant authored and published the Article without privilege or authorization.
2 29. The Article authored and published by Defendant would be highly offensive to a
3 reasonable person and continues to be highly offensive to Plaintiffs, because the
4 Article unreasonably attack Plaintiffs' conduct and character in a manner that
5 exceeds the bounds of decency.
6 30. Defendant knew that many of the statements made in and impressions created by
7 the Article are false or Defendant acted with reckless disregard as to their falsity.
8 31. The Article places Plaintiffs in a false light and was intended to and has caused
9 Plaintiffs ongoing mental anguish, suffering, and injury to their feelings.
10 32. As a direct and proximate result of the publication of the Article, Plaintiffs have
11 suffered significant reputational harm, shame, mortification and injury to their
12 feelings and sustained special and general damages, which damages shall be fully
13 proven at the time of trial, including, but not limited to, loss of capital and revenue,
14 lost productivity, mitigation and other expenses, and loss of intangible assets.
15 33. Plaintiffs request a permanent injunction halting the continued dissemination of the
16 Article described herein, and further ordering Defendant to remove the Article from
17 the Internet and request Google, Bing, Yahoo! and other search engine providers to
18 remove the Article from their respective search results. Without a permanent
19 injunction judgment of this Court, the Article will continue to cause great and
20 irreparable injury to Plaintiffs and Plaintiffs have no adequate remedy at law for
21 injuries that they are currently suffering and are likely to suffer as a result of the
22 Article.
23 **Count III: Intrusion Invasion of Privacy**
24 34. Plaintiffs repeat and reallege each and every allegation contained above and below
25 as though fully set forth herein.
26 35. Defendant intentionally intruded upon the seclusion and private affairs of Plaintiffs
27 through a course of conduct, as described above, which seriously alarms, annoys
28 and harasses Plaintiffs.
29 36. Defendant's intrusion identified the Plaintiffs and has been substantial.
30 37. Defendant's intrusion would be highly offensive to a reasonable person.
31

- 1 38. Defendant's intrusion is intended to and has caused Plaintiffs ongoing mental
2 anguish and suffering and injury to their feelings.
- 3 39. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant's conduct described herein, Plaintiffs
4 have suffered significant reputational harm, shame, mortification and injury to his
5 feelings and sustained special and general damages, which damages shall be fully
6 proven at the time of trial, including, but not limited to, loss of capital and revenue,
7 lost productivity, mitigation and other expenses, and loss of intangible assets.
- 8 40. Plaintiffs request a permanent injunction halting the continued and repeated
9 intrusions upon their seclusion described herein, and further ordering Defendant to
10 remove the Article from the Internet and request Google, Bing, Yahoo! and other
11 search engine providers to remove the Article from their respective search results.
12 Without a permanent injunction judgment of this Court, the Article will continue to
13 cause great and irreparable injury to Plaintiffs and Plaintiffs have no adequate
14 remedy at law for injuries that they are currently suffering and are likely to suffer
15 as a result of Defendant's conduct alleged herein.

16 **Count IV: Injurious Falsehood**

- 17 41. Plaintiffs repeat and reallege each and every allegation contained above and below
18 as though fully set forth herein.
- 19 42. Defendant authored and published the Article with the intent to cause harm to
20 Plaintiff Sambodha Inc.
- 21 43. Defendant authored and published the Article with actual knowledge of the falsity
22 or reckless disregard as to the falsity of the statements contained therein.
- 23 44. Defendant authored and published the Article intentionally, spitefully and with ill-
24 will towards Plaintiff Sambodha, Inc.
- 25 45. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant's conduct described herein, Plaintiff
26 Sambodha, Inc. has suffered significant reputational harm and sustained special and
27 general damages, which damages shall be fully proven at the time of trial,
28 including, but not limited to, loss of capital and revenue, lost productivity,
29 mitigation and other expenses, and loss of intangible assets.
- 30 46. Plaintiff Sambodha Inc. requests a permanent injunction halting the continued
31 dissemination of the Article, and further ordering Defendant to remove the Article

1 from the Internet and request Google, Bing, Yahoo! and other search engine
2 providers to remove the Article from their respective search results. Without a
3 permanent injunction judgment of this Court, the Article will continue to cause
4 great and irreparable injury to Plaintiff and Plaintiff has no adequate remedy at law
5 for injuries that it is currently suffering and is likely to suffer as a result of
6 Defendant's conduct alleged herein.

7 **Count V: Tortious Interference**

- 8 47. Plaintiffs repeat and reallege each and every allegation contained above and below
9 as though fully set forth herein.
- 10 48. Plaintiffs have existing business relationships with customers and other persons
11 relating to their business.
- 12 49. Plaintiffs have a reasonable expectation of future professional relationships with
13 existing customers, prospective customers, employees and others with whom
14 Plaintiffs do business or with whom Plaintiffs may reasonably expect to do
15 business. This expectancy is based, in part, on the considerable time, energy and
16 resources it takes to develop the goodwill and reputation associated with Plaintiffs'
17 professional reputations.
- 18 50. Upon information and belief, Defendant was aware of Plaintiffs' existing and/or
19 prospective professional and business relationships.
- 20 51. As described herein, Defendant intentionally and/or purposefully interfered with
21 Plaintiffs' existing and prospective relationships by intentionally authoring and
22 publishing the Article.
- 23 52. Defendant communicated the Article of and concerning Plaintiffs to third persons
24 via the Internet and/or intentionally made the Article accessible to third persons on
25 the Internet without password protection.
- 26 53. Plaintiffs' damages include but are not limited to, general damages, economic
27 damages such as lost profits, online remediation related costs, and out-of-pocket
28 expenses, exemplary damages, court costs and interest.
- 29 54. Plaintiffs request a permanent injunction halting the continued dissemination of the
30 Article, and further ordering Defendant to remove the Article from the Internet and
31 request Google, Bing, Yahoo! and other search engine providers to remove the

1 Article from their respective search results. Without a permanent injunction
2 judgment of this Court, the Article will continue to cause great and irreparable
3 injury to Plaintiffs and Plaintiffs have no adequate remedy at law for injuries that
4 they are currently suffering and are likely to suffer as a result of Defendant's
5 conduct alleged herein.

6 **Count VI: Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress**

7 55. Plaintiffs repeat and reallege each and every allegation contained above and below
8 as though fully set forth herein.

9 56. In authoring and publishing the Article, Defendant acted recklessly and with the
10 intent to cause severe emotional distress to Plaintiffs.

11 57. Defendants conduct in authoring and publishing the Article was extreme and
12 outrageous and resulted in severe emotional distress to Plaintiffs, beyond mere
13 annoyance, inconvenience, and embarrassment.

14 58. As a result of Defendant's conduct, Plaintiffs have suffered damages including but
15 not limited to, general damages, economic damages such as lost profits, online
16 remediation related costs, and out-of-pocket expenses, exemplary damages, court
17 costs and interest.

18 59. Plaintiffs request a permanent injunction halting the continued dissemination of the
19 Article, and further ordering Defendant to remove the Article from the Internet and
20 request Google, Bing, Yahoo! and other search engine providers to remove the
21 Article from their respective search results. Without a permanent injunction
22 judgment of this Court, the Article will continue to cause great and irreparable
23 injury to Plaintiffs and Plaintiffs have no adequate remedy at law for injuries that
24 they are currently suffering and are likely to suffer as a result of Defendant's
25 conduct alleged herein.

26 **V. PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

27 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs demand judgment against Defendant as follows:

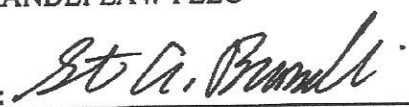
- 28 a. Issuance by this Court of an Order declaring that the Article is an unlawful invasion
29 of privacy and is false and defamatory;
- 30 b. Injunctive relief that the Defendant is:
- 31

- 1 i. prohibited from creating or publishing statements about Plaintiffs, their
- 2 family, employees, business partners, attorneys, agents, representatives,
- 3 products, goods, or services which defame, disparage, or contain libelous
- 4 statements about Plaintiffs;
- 5 ii. ordered to take all actions necessary to remove the Article from the Internet,
- 6 including but not limited to, requesting removal of the Article from the
- 7 websites where they are posted and from Internet search engines, including
- 8 Google, Yahoo!, and Bing;
- 9 iii. prohibited from further publishing, disseminating, or otherwise transferring
- 10 the Article or any portion of the Article or any communications making any
- 11 allegations regarding Plaintiffs now contained in the Article to third-
- 12 persons;
- 13 c. Actual and/or compensatory damages in an amount to be proven at trial;
- 14 d. Pre- and post-litigation interest at the maximum rate provided by law;
- 15 e. Reasonable attorney fees to the extent permitted by law including pursuant to RCW
- 16 4.84.250 et seq.;
- 17 f. Costs of this action; and
- 18 g. For any and all other relief in favor of Plaintiffs as this Court may deem just and
- 19 proper.

20 Respectfully submitted,

21 BRANDLI LAW PLLC

22
23 Dated: April 29, 2019

24 By: 
25 Stephen A. Brandli, WSBA #38201
26 Attorney for Plaintiffs