

THE LEVESON INQUIRY

WITNESS STATEMENT OF JEMIMA KHAN

I, JEMIMA KHAN of WILL SAY as follows:

1. I am a writer and former partner of Hugh Grant, one of the Core Participants in this Inquiry.
2. As part of Hugh Grant's evidence to the Inquiry on Monday 21st November, he referred to an article, which was published in the Mail On Sunday in February 2007 about our relationship. The article reported that the relationship was in trouble because Hugh had been having regular, flirtatious late night telephone calls with a "plummy-voiced" female executive from Warner Brothers in America. At the time of publication Hugh complained to the paper who subsequently admitted that the story was untrue, apologised, and made a payment to a charity of Hugh's choice.
3. In his evidence to the inquiry last week, Hugh stated his belief as to the likely source of this erroneous story. In order to make this statement easier to follow, I set out below both paragraph 11 of Hugh's first witness statement and the relevant parts of the transcript of his evidence.

Paragraph 11 of Hugh Grant's witness statement

"In February 2007 the Mail on Sunday ran an article saying that my relationship with my long term girlfriend was falling apart because of my secret relationship with another woman. This was entirely untrue. Again, damages were awarded and a statement was made in open court by the paper admitting the accusation had been false. What was interesting was that the "other woman" I was supposed to be close to was reported to be a "plummy voiced" executive at Warner Brothers in America, with whom I was supposed to have late night phone chats. There was no such executive. What there was, was an assistant to an executive at a film company associated with Warner Brothers. She was English, a middle aged, happily married woman and in no way a girlfriend. But because the executive was a friend, she had also become a friend. Hollywood people get their assistants to do the dialling. They also get them to leave voice messages. Hers were entirely innocent ("Could you call XX back") but they

were plummy-voiced and sometimes jokey. And they often came late at night because LA is 8 hours behind. We know from Paul Dacre's assertions that the Mail papers have never based stories on intercepted phone messages, so the source of this story remains a great mystery.

Relevant parts of the transcript of Hugh Grant's evidence to the Inquiry

A: ...But thinking about how they could possibly come up with such a bizarre left-field story, I realised that although there was no plummy-voiced studio executive from Warner Brothers with whom I'd had any kind of relationship, flirtatious or otherwise, there was a great friend of mine in Los Angeles who runs a production company which is associated with Warner Brothers and whose assistant is a charming married middle-aged lady, English, who, as happens in Hollywood, is the person who rings you. The executive never rings you. It's always their assistant: "Hi, we have... on the phone for you." And this is what she used to do. She used to call and she used to leave messages and because she was a nice English girl in LA, sometimes when we spoke, we'd have a chat about English stuff, Marmite or whatever. So she would leave charming, jokey messages saying, "Please call this studio executive back", and she has a voice that could only be described as plummy. So I cannot for the life of me think of any conceivable source for this story in the Mail on Sunday except those voice messages on my mobile telephone.

Q. You haven't alleged that before, have you, in the public domain?

A: No, but when I was preparing this statement and going through all my old trials and tribulations with the press, I looked at that one again and thought that is weird, and then the penny dropped.

Q. I think the highest it can be put is, frankly, it's a piece of speculation on your part, isn't it, in relation to this?

A. Yes, you could -- yes, speculation, okay, but I would love to know -- I mean, I think Mr Caplan, who represents Associated, was saying earlier today that he'd like to put in a supplementary statement and -- you know, referring to the things I say today. Well, I'd love to hear what the Daily Mail's or the Sunday Mail's explanation for that article is, what that source was, if it wasn't phone hacking.

Q. Okay. I may come back to that, but I'll leave that for the time being.

(Monday 21 November, page 8-9)

Q: Fair enough. But there's no evidence that you have to your personal knowledge that the Mail was involved in this at all, is there? I'm asking you to be very careful when you answer the question. Don't share a speculation with us. Don't share an opinion. We're looking for evidence. There isn't any evidence, is there?

A: The evidence for the Daily Mail being involved in phone hacking for me would be the article we spoke about earlier, the plummy-voiced woman, and it would be Paul McMullen's answer to this question.

(Monday 21 November, page 27-28)

4. In response to Hugh Grant's evidence, Associated Newspapers put out a public statement on its website the same day, which included the following words :

"The Mail on Sunday utterly refutes Hugh Grant's claim that they got any story as a result of phone hacking.

'In fact in the case of the story Mr Grant refers to the information came from a freelance journalist who had been told by a source who was regularly speaking to Jemima Khan.'

This statement was also repeated in the issue of the Daily Mail published the next day.

5. I wish to make it clear that this explanation given by The Mail on Sunday cannot be correct since the first I heard about any "plummy-voiced" woman calling Hugh, or anything similar, was when I read it in the Mail on Sunday. I therefore could not have spoken to anyone about such matters prior to the article, because I knew nothing about it.
6. However, I have noticed that the statement still remains on the Associated Newspapers' website and no corrective statement has been provided by them. The statement has also been widely picked up and reported in the media.
7. I am keen for the suggestion that the origin of this story was me to be publicly corrected.
8. I am happy to give evidence to the Inquiry under oath on this matter if necessary.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts in this Witness Statement are true



Jemima Khan

Dated the 27 November 2011