

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 9TH
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR
OSCEOLA COUNTY, FLORIDA

GENERAL JURISDICTION DIVISION

KAILYN LOWRY,

Plaintiff,

v.

BRIANA SOTO p/k/a BRIANA DE JESUS

Defendant.

Case No.

COMPLAINT

Plaintiff Kailyn Lowry (“Lowry”), by her respective attorneys, Romano Law PLLC and Trembly Law Firm, for her complaint against Defendant Briana Soto, professionally known as Briana De Jesus (“Defendant”), alleges as follows:

NATURE OF THE CASE

1. Lowry brings this action against Defendant for defamation concerning recent untrue statements made by Defendant, about Lowry, on social media. Defendant, a long-time foe of Lowry, asserted that Lowry physically beat Christopher Lopez, the father of two of Lowry’s sons, and broke into and entered the home of Mr. Lopez’s mother. These statements were shared with Defendant’s social media followers, which exceed 1 million persons.

2. Defendant’s comments are untrue, and they were made by Defendant for the purpose of causing Lowry harm. By making these false statements, Defendant not only harmed Lowry, but she also lined her own pockets while doing so. Defendant used Lowry to gain additional media attention for herself, which included pushing articles about Lowry for which,

upon information and belief, Defendant was paid. Lowry seeks redress from this Court to right the wrongs that Defendant caused and end the drama between the two women, once and for all.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

3. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant pursuant to Fla. Stat. Ann. § 48.193(1)(a).

4. Defendant is an individual over the age of 18 who is sui juris and resides in Osceola County, Florida.

5. Upon information and belief, Defendant is domiciled in Florida and is therefore engaged in substantial activity within the state.

6. The acts giving rise to this Complaint occurred in whole or in part in Osceola County, Florida. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction as the State trial court of general jurisdiction.

7. This is an action for damages that exceed \$30,000.00 exclusive of interest, attorney's fees and costs.

8. Lowry has retained the undersigned counsel in order that her rights and interests may be protected. Lowry has become obligated to pay the undersigned a reasonable attorney's fee.

THE PARTIES

9. Lowry is a natural person and a citizen and resident of the State of Delaware.

10. Upon information and belief, Defendant is a natural person and a citizen and resident of the State of Florida.

FACTS APPLICABLE TO ALL CLAIMS FOR RELIEF

A. Background

11. Lowry is a reality television personality, New York Times best-selling author, entrepreneur, and social media influencer. As of the date of this Complaint, she has approximately 4 million followers on Instagram. Lowry is also the co-owner and co-host of two podcasts: *Coffee Convos Podcast with Kailyn Lowry and Lindsay Chrisley* as well as *Baby Mamas No Drama with Kail Lowry & Vee Rivera*.

12. *Coffee Convos Podcast with Kailyn Lowry and Lindsay Chrisley* features discussions about motherhood and family, among other things.

13. *Baby Mamas No Drama with Kail Lowry & Vee Rivera* concerns the life of Lowry and her co-host as women who co-parent with others while they run a business.

14. Defendant is a reality television personality and social media influencer. As of the date of this Complaint, she has approximately 1.1 million followers on Instagram.

B. The Bad Blood Between Lowry and Defendant

15. In or around June 2017, it was announced that Defendant would join the cast of *Teen Mom 2*, a reality television show that Lowry has starred in since 2010 (the “Series”).

16. The parties’ relationship has been fraught. In an Instagram Live broadcast, Defendant admitted that she told Lowry that the two women “were never friends; [n]ever been friends.”

17. Defendant has a history of making false public statements regarding Lowry’s family life. Defendant instructed a fan on Twitter to “shut the f-ck up ‘cause [Lowry] gets beat the f-ck up by Chris [Lopez] in front of her kids.”

18. In or around August 2018, while filming a reunion episode for the Series, Defendant’s sister physically assaulted Lowry in the heat of a verbal disagreement between Lowry and Defendant.

19. Defendant's conduct towards Lowry, including pursuing Lowry's former husband and Mr. Lopez, is so egregious that in September 2020, one social media influencer created a video titled, "Is Briana Dejesus OBSESSED With Kail Lowry?!" This video was liked approximately 1,300 times on YouTube. In this video, the influencer called Defendant's conduct toward Lowry "creepy," "pathetic," and "dusty."

The Post

20. Lowry was not included in the episode of the Series that aired on June 8, 2021.

21. The reason that Lowry did not appear in this episode has not been made available to the public.

22. On the same night the episode aired, to wit, June 8, 2021, Defendant published a series of Instagram stories and comments to her public Instagram account, stating that she knew why Lowry was omitted from the episode.

23. Throughout the posts and comments, Defendant claimed that Lowry had committed violent, physical crimes towards Mr. Lopez. Defendant also asserted that Lowry was arrested for breaking and entering into the home of Mr. Lopez's mother.

24. Specifically, on Instagram, Defendant stated, "Kail doesn't wanna [sic] film about breaking and entering into Chris Momma house and beating him for cutting his child's hair." (Herein referred to as the "Post").

25. The Post is false. Lowry did not break into and enter the home of Mr. Lopez's mother. Nor did Ms. Lowry beat Mr. Lopez.

26. Defendant then continued to interact with her wide audience of followers in a series of comments and reactions, perpetuating the false allegations contained in the Post.

27. Due to the controversial nature of these allegations, they were subsequently re-posted and reported on by several influential entertainment websites. These allegations ignited a frenzy on social media.

28. The U.S. Sun reported on the allegations in a story entitled, “NOT AUTHENTIC! Teen Mom Briana DeJesus claims Kailyn Lowry was ‘CUT’ from new episode because she ‘refused to film about arrest’.”

29. CeleBuzz.com published a story entitled, “Briana DeJesus Confirms Real Reason Why Kailyn Lowry Was Cut from ‘Teen Mom 2.’”

30. Defendant provided CeleBuzz.com “exclusive comment” for its story.

31. Upon information and belief, Defendant has a business relationship with CeleBuzz.com.

32. Upon further information and belief, Defendant and CeleBuzz.com have a “pay per click” agreement. Defendant is paid each time one of her social media followers “clicks” on an article posted by CeleBuzz.com, upon information and belief.

33. Defendant makes money off pedaling salacious content concerning Lowry, upon information and belief.

34. Defendant did not care that the Post was untrue.

Defendant’s Untrue Statements Threaten Lowry’s Ability to Earn of Living

35. An Instagram user tagged several of Lowry’s sponsors and employers in a different post referencing the Defendant’s allegations concerning Lowry.

36. On or about June 9, 2021, Defendant went “back to the drama” (Defendant’s own words) and continued to perpetuate the untrue statements contained in the Post during an Instagram Live broadcast.

37. At times, this “livestream” had as many as 10,300 live viewers. It has since been saved and reposted to other Instagram accounts.

38. On the Instagram Live broadcast, Defendant claimed that she “know[s] the real story, [she] know[s] what happened,” concerning why Lowry was not included in the June 8, 2021, episode of the Series.

39. Defendant asserted that Lowry was omitted from the episode because she “didn’t want to film about the issues that goes [*sic*] on with her and Chris” and “tryna [*sic*] clean up the bad girl act.”

40. Defendant then added that “[Lowry] did not want to film about the situation with the domestic violence, about her getting arrested, about her breaking and entering into...Chris’s mom’s house. She didn’t want to film about her hitting Chris because Chris cut her son’s hair.”

41. Defendant then claimed she “was just stating facts. So that’s what happened.”

42. In making the Post and repeating the untrue statements, Defendant recklessly disregarded the truth.

43. Even after Lowry publicly denied Defendant’s allegations, Defendant continued to reassert and republish the false information found in the Post.

44. To date, Defendant has not recanted the alleged facts that she published in the Post.

FIRST CLAIM FOR RELIEF

Defamation

45. Lowry repeats and re-alleges paragraphs 1 to 2 and 8 to 43, as though fully set forth herein.

46. The Post was created by the Defendant and published to her social media account.

47. The Post was an unprivileged publication that concerned Lowry.

48. The Post was false.
49. The Post was published to Defendant's approximately 1.4 million followers on Instagram.
50. Third parties understand the character of the Post as defamatory.
51. The Post charges Lowry with an infamous crime.
52. "Breaking and entering," charged as burglary under Florida law, is a felony.
53. The Post subjects Lowry to hatred, distrust, ridicule, contempt, or disgrace.
54. The Post interferes with and injures Lowry's profession, occupation, business, and employment.
55. Upon information and belief, Lowry's sponsors, as well as her podcasts' sponsors, are aware of the allegations made in the Post.
56. The Post imputed conduct to Lowry incompatible with the essential functions of her job as a cast member of the Series.
57. The Post imputed conduct to Lowry incompatible with the essential functions of her job as a podcaster whose podcasts focus on motherhood, family, and parenting.
58. Defendant made the Post with actual malice.
59. Defendant knew the Post was false and/or acted with reckless disregard of whether it was false or not.
60. The injurious nature of the Post is apparent from the words in the Post itself.
61. As a result of the Post, Lowry has suffered damages consisting in the impairment of her reputation and standing in the community, personal humiliation, and mental anguish and suffering in an amount to be determined at trial.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Lowry respectfully requests a judgment in her favor, and against Defendant as follows:

- A. Award Lowry compensatory and special damages;
- B. Award Lowry reasonable costs and attorneys' fees;
- C. Grant Lowry any other and further relief as the Court may deem just, equitable or proper.

JURY TRIAL DEMAND

Lowry requests a trial by jury on all issues so triable.

Dated: June 25, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

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