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9 SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
10 FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CENTRAL DISTRICT

11 OneTaste Incorporated,

12 Plaintiff,

13 v.

14 Netflix, Inc.; and
15 Does 1-100, inclusive,

16 Defendants.

Case No. 23STCV27119

COMPLAINT FOR DEFAMATION

17
18
19 Plaintiff OneTaste Incorporated (“OneTaste”) alleges as follows:

20 1. On November 5, 2022, Defendant Netflix, Inc. (“Netflix”) released the film
21 *Orgasm Inc: The Story of OneTaste* (the “Film”). OneTaste is a wellness education company.
22 OneTaste sells classes for adults, typically held on weekends in event spaces. At least 35,000
23 people have participated in OneTaste’s in-person events, and at least 16,000 have taken classes
24 and workshops in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, Boulder, Las Vegas, London, and
25 several smaller outposts worldwide.

26 2. The Film says it’s “A Netflix Documentary.” Netflix categorized the Film
27 under the “True Crime” genre. The title and labels are not the basis for this Complaint, and
28 neither are the first 70 minutes of the Film. This Complaint arises from the final 15 minutes or

1 so of the Film before the end credits, which contain the false statements of fact that OneTaste
2 condones violence against women and that a woman was raped and beaten in connection with
3 her employment at OneTaste and participation in its classes and events.

4 3. Netflix’s unprivileged publication of false statements of fact charging OneTaste
5 “with crime” and “imputing something with reference to” OneTaste’s “business that has a
6 natural tendency to lessen its profits” or “which, by natural consequences, causes actual
7 damage” is defamatory on its face, otherwise known as “defamation per se” under California
8 Civil Code Section 46.

9 4. In addition to being presumptively injurious, OneTaste has suffered and
10 continues to suffer actual damages on an ongoing basis in that the Film is the most widely
11 disseminated information publicly available about OneTaste, and OneTaste believes the Film’s
12 defamatory statements have deterred and will continue to deter people from participating in
13 OneTaste’s classes and events and has impacted OneTaste’s ability to bring its teachings to as
14 many customers as possible at affordable prices. Meanwhile, OneTaste does not have the
15 public platform or resources necessary to combat the defamatory statements, while Netflix,
16 compared to OneTaste, has substantial resources to publish and promote the defamatory
17 statements on its own platform.

18 5. In March 2009, *The New York Times* published an article about OneTaste and
19 its founder, Nicole Daedone, titled “The Pleasure Principle.” The *NY Times* wrote that
20 OneTaste had “drawn scant attention during its four and a half years” as a company. The 2009
21 *NY Times* article stated: “A core of 38 men and women ... live full time in the retreat center, a
22 shabby-chic loft building in [San Francisco’s] South Market district. They prepare meals
23 together, practice yoga and mindfulness meditation and lead workshops in communication for
24 outside groups as large as 60.” The *NY Times* opined that OneTaste “questers” were “seeking
25 to fill an inner void and become empowered through Ms. Daedone’s blend of female-centric
26 spirituality and sexuality” and reported that Ms. Daedone “sees herself as leading ‘the slow-
27 sex movement,’ one that places a near-exclusive emphasis on women’s pleasure—in which
28 love, romance and even flirtation are not required.” Ms. Daedone was quoted by the *NY Times*

1 as saying, “I don’t think women will really experience freedom until they own their own
2 sexuality.” The 2009 *NY Times* article described OneTaste as “weaving together strands of
3 radical individual freedom, Eastern spirituality and feminism.”

4 6. In 2011, Hachette Book Group published *Slow Sex: The Art and Craft of the*
5 *Female Orgasm*, a book by Ms. Daedone, and she gave a TEDx Talk, on the same subject.

6 7. Nine people in the Film are interviewed by the Netflix production on camera, as
7 distinguished from those not interviewed by Netflix, but who are seen in archival footage of
8 OneTaste’s classes and events that were recorded by OneTaste with the permission of
9 OneTaste customers for educational purposes or for customers to watch if they could not
10 attend a class in person.

11 8. Netflix obtained OneTaste’s archival footage, which is believed to be at least
12 hundreds of hours of classes and events, from a former OneTaste employee, Chris, who
13 worked as a videographer for OneTaste and sold the footage to Netflix, without OneTaste’s
14 knowledge or permission after Chris’s employment with OneTaste was terminated. The
15 Netflix Film consists of more than 300 video clips from OneTaste’s archives, spanning
16 approximately 60 OneTaste copyright registrations. Approximately 46% of Netflix’s Film, or
17 41 of its 89 minutes, is OneTaste’s copyrighted material. OneTaste’s position is that Netflix’s
18 use of their footage was and remains unlawful and/or exceeded and continues to exceed a fair
19 use or one that’s lawful.

20 9. Chris is also one of the Film’s nine interview subjects, and he states in the Film:
21 “I want the people who are capable of understanding what OneTaste was to know that this
22 thing existed. This thing that had somehow called each of us out of the lives that we’d been
23 living. I can’t even say what that thing was exactly. It was sex, it was orgasm, it was
24 exploration, it was growth, it was fear, it was trauma. It was all of these things, like, woven
25 and wrapped together. And while we were in it, it lit us up in a way that we had scarcely even
26 dared to imagine that we could be lit up.”

27 10. The beginning of the Film includes video clips of Ms. Daedone teaching or
28 speaking at different classes and events that appear to intend to generally convey Ms.

1 Daedone’s and OneTaste’s teachings. Ms. Daedone states in the Film: “The only thing that
2 ever heals, the only thing that ever awakens is connection.” ... “I do think we have a pleasure
3 deficit disorder in this country.” ... “It’s getting faster and faster, our world is getting really
4 hyper-connected, but human connection is beginning to dissolve.” ... “I do think, though, that
5 there is a cure, and that cure is female orgasm.” ... “You know, I have this vision that
6 someday you’ll see yoga and meditation and orgasm, all on the same bill. ... “When you look
7 at orgasm, what I found is it has the same fundamental goal as the internet, and that’s human-
8 to-human connection.” ... “At the fundamental level, we all want the same things. We want to
9 love, be loved, see, be seen, know our purpose and feel connection.” ... “I don’t think that
10 there’s anything of a higher order than having my body feel so good that I emanate a good
11 feeling. And that that good feeling can catch on to you, and then we can begin to pass it on to
12 each other. And when we feel good, strangely enough, we act well.”

13 11. One of the nine interviewees who is seen throughout the Film is Ellen Huet,
14 who speaks about becoming aware of OneTaste in 2017 and writing an article about OneTaste
15 for *Bloomberg Businessweek* in 2018, after which Huet entered a deal with a publisher to write
16 a book about OneTaste that Huet has said will be published in or about 2024 or 2025. Without
17 the benefit of discovery yet, the full extent of Huet’s involvement in the Film is unknown to
18 OneTaste.

19 12. Huet’s statements in the Film, include:

- 20 a. “One taste was a fast-growing startup in the health and wellness and sexuality
21 space. It was started by Nicole Daedone. Having spent a lot of time thinking
22 about Nicole, I think of her as a very skilled craftsman. She seems to know
23 what people will gravitate toward. You know, people wanted to hear from a
24 woman. People wanted to see a woman like her at the top of a company like
25 this. You know, this was really women led and I think that was important
26 based on what OneTaste was teaching.”

- 1 b. “Nicole is very compelling. She’s someone who put others at ease when she
2 was around them, and whose special gift was setting a vision that people were
3 excited about and were willing to do a lot of things in order to help advance.”
- 4 c. “I talked to many people who said orgasmic meditation changed their life, that
5 it helped them experience sexual pleasure that they thought was unreachable for
6 them. And especially women who said, you know, ‘I’ve never had an orgasm
7 before, and this helped me redefine what sexual pleasure could mean for me.
8 You know, I had felt like there was something wrong with me. And now there
9 was this alternative that was presented to me that allowed me to embrace my
10 body rather than feel ashamed.’”
- 11 d. “They started having offices in Los Angeles, New York, London. They started
12 expanding internationally.”
- 13 e. “In 2013 and 2014, they held these conferences, weekend long conferences
14 with thousands of attendees. They just started collecting more and more money
15 from sales of courses. At one point, OneTaste started selling a thing called
16 ‘membership’ that was, like, \$50,000-plus, which allowed whoever the
17 customer was to take any class they wanted for the whole year. By the time
18 2017 came around, the company had about \$12 million in revenue. That was
19 the year that they were listed on a list of fastest growing startups by *Inc.*
20 magazine. And it was a reflection of Nicole’s desire to make OneTaste
21 mainstream.”
- 22 f. “OneTaste caught the eye of really influential people, in particular, Gwyneth
23 Paltrow, who was not only someone who’s very influential in Hollywood, but
24 also someone who’s this, like, wellness god.”

25 13. Elana is another one of the nine people interviewed throughout the film by the
26 Netflix production. Elana was involved with OneTaste for about two months, in or about
27 2004, right around the time when the organization began, and not since then. Elana was also
28 quoted in the 2009 *NY Times* article. In 2009, the *NY Times* wrote: “[T]he upshot of Ms.

1 Daedone’s ability to become exactly the person an individual yearns for is that” according to
2 Elana, ““they take on Nicole, exude Nicoleness.”” The 2009 *NY Times* article also quoted
3 Elana’s husband, Bill, as saying, “Nicole promulgates a message and everyone else reflects
4 that.”

5 14. Eighteen years removed from OneTaste, Elana appeared in the 2022 Netflix
6 Film as one of its nine interview subjects, however, the context that Elana was last involved
7 with OneTaste in 2004, for two months, at a time when there were only a few participants at a
8 single location and not thousands of customers in multiple cities, worldwide, is omitted.

9 15. At the Film’s 28-minute mark, Elana says: “When you are looking at Nicole,
10 you’re looking at Nicole, and she’s looking back, and she locks into your eyes, it is like you
11 are being completely seen, like down to your soul, including everything, yuck and all,
12 especially yuck.” As Elana says this, the Film intersperses footage of Ms. Daedone teaching a
13 OneTaste class. The film adds what can arguably be described as “scary” sound effects, at
14 least as far how they’re sometimes utilized, and the camera zooms in on Ms. Daedone. When
15 Elana says, “and she locks into your eyes,” the Film adds a “negative photo” visual effect.

16 16. Elana then relates the following story about a course she took with Ms.
17 Daedone: “And so she starts playing this game with me, which is pulling desires. And so she
18 says, ‘what do you want?’ So you know, she’s fish[ing], she’s pulling them out. So I say, ‘I
19 want to have more sex, I want to have more orgasm. I want to have more fun. I want to have
20 more community.’ So she’s going, ‘Come on what else, what else, what else, what else,’ is
21 how this goes? And so finally I get down in my in my belly in my womb to like, ‘Wow.’ And
22 I had never spoken it out loud. And I said, ‘I want to have a baby!’”

23 17. Elana then says in the 2022 Film that, after coming to the realization in 2004,
24 that she wanted to have a baby, Ms. Daedone said, “Not so fast, what else?” Elana says in the
25 Film that she then, on her own, stated out loud another unspoken desire of hers and said, “I
26 want to have a demo,” which Elana explains is, “a demonstration of a woman in orgasm for an
27 hour.” Elana then says that Ms. Daedone said, “That’s the bottom desire.” The Film explains
28 about 20 minutes later that “orgasm” in that context is not referring to a “sexual climactic

1 experience,” but rather a positive energy or flow state sustained “for an hour” or longer as an
2 alternative to climax. Elana then says, “And so here I have said in front of all these people that
3 I want to have a demo knowing full well that that was not at the bottom. That was Nicole’s
4 desire. So I was just fully giving over to Nicole.”

5 18. Elana then says, at 30:02, “This is how Nicole manipulated people. She agreed
6 that something was true if it matched what she wanted to hear, if you said something she
7 didn’t like she called it a lie. Or that’s not the end of your desire. If you had any doubt, she
8 knew how to increase that doubt, until what she told you was true became what you believed.
9 So, Bill and I paid Nicole \$15,000, which, according to Nicole, at the time, was a very good
10 deal. And my course begins.” The 2022 Netflix Film does not say whether Elana had a baby
11 or a demo, but the 2009 *NY Times* article reported that Elana and her husband, Bill were no
12 longer involved with OneTaste and “[n]ow parents of a baby boy, they view their experience
13 as a cautionary tale.”

14 19. Another one of the interviewees seen throughout the Film, Don, first appears
15 about two minutes into the Film and says about Ms. Daedone: “She would just become
16 fascinated with what she could get people to do. That was kind of, like, her secret thrill.
17 People were getting hurt. People were getting hurt badly.” Don does not explain what he
18 means by that, and Netflix omits that Don was never involved in OneTaste, and never
19 participated in any of its classes or events. When Don is first introduced to viewers, two
20 minutes into the Film, and makes his assertions, the Film omits that Don’s only relationship to
21 OneTaste is that he’s Ms. Daedone’s ex-husband. Don was married to Ms. Daedone for six
22 months, and their marriage ended in 2004, before OneTaste was formed. Like Elana, any
23 information from Don is from at least 18 years earlier, but that context is again omitted.

24 20. It’s not until another interview clip more than 30 minutes later that the Film
25 writes on screen in smaller print under Don’s name that Don is Ms. Daedone’s “ex-husband”
26 and the reference to it fades out after about three seconds. In that scene, at the Film’s 35:04
27 mark, an unseen interviewer prompts, “Tell me a little bit about that. Is Nicole Daedone a con
28 artist?” The portion of the interview with Don that precedes the question is not shown and is

1 unknown, and it's unknown if the question heard was specifically asked to Don, but Don is
2 shown saying "yeah" before the Film cuts to another shot of Don from a different camera
3 angle, who then states, "You got to dissect that word though. It means 'confidence.'" The
4 Film then cuts back to the previous camera angle, and Don continues, "It's like, yeah, she can
5 say things in such an enthusiastic way and have so much knowledge around it, that she is a
6 fantastic salesman."

7 21. Another one of the nine interviewees seen throughout the Film, Mike, was
8 peripherally involved in OneTaste in or about 2014, and not since then, when he was an
9 invited guest lecturer for a portion of a single course offered by OneTaste. At the 25:55 mark,
10 the Film plays a clip of Gwyneth Paltrow welcoming listeners to *The Goop Podcast*, in which
11 she says: "Today's guest is the very magnetic Nicole Daedone. Nicole is the author of *Slow*
12 *Sex*, which is a book I often recommend to women who are looking for more desire in their
13 relationships." In the Film, that clip is followed by interviewee Mike saying: "I really wonder
14 if she was trying to do that L. Ron Hubbard there. 'Let's get some famous people in.' That
15 was one of the many brilliant things that the founder of Scientology came up with, was the
16 power of celebrity. 'If we can get movie stars, music stars, and people like that in our ranks as
17 our public face, boy, that makes us really attractive to your average Joe or Jill out there.' And
18 he was absolutely right. And so, I could see her kind of following that lead as well." As the
19 Film notes, in the wellness industry, an endorsement by Ms. Paltrow and Goop is significant in
20 ways that are not conveyed in the unsubstantiated quote from Mike.

21 22. The Film contains several other interview quotes from Mike, who states at
22 34:40: "I was immediately taken by Nicole. I thought she was just very charismatic. But at
23 the same time, I could see that she was a hustler." At 51:03, Mike speculates about the course
24 offered by OneTaste in which he participated as a guest lecturer: "I could easily imagine the
25 gross take for the five days being about a million dollars." In fact, the gross revenue for the
26 course referred to was about \$400,000, and after expenses was only marginally profitable for
27 OneTaste. Notwithstanding, Mike nonetheless states in the Film: "But they were getting their
28 money's worth I think."

1 23. Another one of the Film’s nine interview subjects is Ken, who states at about
2 the 18-minute mark of the Film: “I was pretty successful, except in my personal life. I was
3 just kind of a walking encyclopedia of all the ways you can be bad with the opposite sex.”
4 Ken conveys in the Film that his personal life improved as a result of OneTaste and that his
5 “five foot zero” height “was a counter example to all of the men who thought they had to be a
6 certain thing in order to actually have good relationships with women.”

7 24. Another one of the Film’s nine interview subjects is Ruwan. About 40 seconds
8 into the Film, he says about Ms. Daedone, “She really was a celebrity to me. Like I’d seen her
9 TEDx Talk 30 times.” Ruwan reiterates this at the 19:21 mark, when he says, “I probably
10 rewatched that TEDx Talk like 20 or 30 times. I really felt like something she was saying in
11 that talk touched me. Like, something about, like it was more than sexuality, it was about like
12 real connection and realness.”

13 25. At 21:54 of the Film, Ruwan recalls that his first time in a OneTaste class with
14 Ms. Daedone “was life changing, because she could cold-read people with such accuracy that,
15 if you're open to it, it could maybe change your life, give you a new perspective.” Ruwan
16 says, “She would say something like, ‘What are you here for?’ And for some people she’d just
17 say, ‘thank you’ and move on. And when it got to me, I was starting to say something
18 mundane, like, ‘Oh, well, sex is interesting, so I signed up for this class.’ And I could see that
19 she was already turning away from me like that wasn’t a good answer, so she was gonna shift,
20 and then I just blurted out ‘I want to connect with people for real.’ And she turns back to me,
21 and it felt, you know, it felt really good to get her attention. And she read me and she said, ‘I
22 know why you don't connect with people. It’s like you’re trying to stay in this tonal range.
23 It’s a nice range. But you’re denying people the whole spectrum. You’re trying to act like a
24 super cute frat boy who says everything’s cool all the time, when really, you’re a dark,
25 dangerous man.’ And no one had ever spoken to me like that before. I don't know if she was
26 reading something in me for real or reading something that I wanted to be true, but it felt like
27 the most resonant thing anyone had said to me. Because I did, I did feel like I put up a facade
28 with people to be liked, but inside I was angry, I was frustrated, you know, I had, I felt dark

1 inside. It was life-changing just that beginning before I ever OMed. I got over like a fear of
2 being seen, a fear of vulnerability that I had my entire life.”

3 26. In addition to being interviewed for the Film, Ruwan also provided the Netflix
4 production with “personal videos” from his iPhone, which were used in the Film. Some of
5 Ruwan’s videos depicted events that happened at his personal residence, such as a nude
6 woman having her body painted, which had nothing to do with OneTaste, but was nonetheless
7 presented in the Film as related to OneTaste’s events. According to a public statement posted
8 online by Ruwan, Netflix did not honor the assurances they gave him on multiple occasions,
9 that no one’s image would be used in the Film without their consent. According to Ruwan,
10 Netflix did not blur the faces of people who Netflix assured Ruwan would be blurred.

11 27. Another one of the nine interviewees seen in the Film is Audrey. At the 15:43
12 mark of the Film, she states: “Over the course of my four years living and working at
13 OneTaste, I became more relaxed and social in a way, and I think people could see it.” In
14 reference to her profession outside of OneTaste, she said: “I became okay with men giving me
15 attention at work. I became friendlier towards them, and my career took off. I guess I owe
16 that to learning a lot about men at OneTaste. You know, they were really, like, encouraging us
17 to see the soft, sensitive, emotional sides of men.” Audrey is credited in the Film’s end
18 credits, and OneTaste is informed and believes that Audrey was involved in the production of
19 the Film and was paid for her work on the Film.

20 28. In sum, the only people who Netflix interviewed on camera for “The Story of
21 OneTaste” who had any prior affiliation with OneTaste were Chris, Elana, Mike, Ken, Ruwan,
22 and Audrey. In addition to those six people, Netflix also showed portions of on camera
23 interviews with Ms. Daedone’s ex-husband, who was never involved with OneTaste, and a
24 writer who first heard about OneTaste in 2017 and is promoting a book about OneTaste. The
25 final interviewee among the nine, Autymn Blanck, is discussed below.

26 29. The segment that contains the defamatory statements that are the basis for this
27 Complaint begins at the 1:08:45 mark of the Film. The segment opens with about 10 seconds
28 of a person who is seen wearing a black Covid mask, burning sage all around a person who is

1 seen sitting in a chair in a room, the set design of which presents as an apartment or other
2 residence. The Film says the location is “Brooklyn” and the person shown sitting introduces
3 herself as “Autymn Blanck” and says that she’s there to “tell the story of my sister.”

4 30. Autymn Blanck never participated in any OneTaste classes or events, but her
5 sister, Ayries Blanck, is a former OneTaste sales representative who voluntarily resigned from
6 OneTaste in January 2015, almost eight years before the Film was released. After introducing
7 herself, the Film cuts to a shot of a small box being opened by Autymn, inside of which is a
8 stack of photos wrapped in a red bow. The photos appear to be cell phone photos that have
9 been printed, but the details of the source, transmittal, or production of the photos shown are,
10 at this time, unknown to OneTaste. According to the subtitles, there is “solemn music
11 playing.” The Film states that Ayries Blanck “declined to be interviewed” for the Film.

12 31. In the Film, Autymn Blanck states: “I know my sister struggled with having
13 sex, having connection, and having just that community and love, because we didn’t really
14 have that as children.” Autymn then states that her sister “talked to Rachel, someone older
15 than her, who went through the same exact experience” and, according to Autymn, when
16 Rachel told Ayries that “OM has cured it all” for her, Ayries decided to “try it” as well. By
17 this point, the Film has already introduced viewers to Rachel Cherwitz, who is pictured in one
18 of the photos being looked at by Autymn, and Ms. Cherwitz is presented in the Film as
19 someone who, for many years, was part of OneTaste’s leadership team.

20 32. The Film does not provide the specific details of when Autymn learned the
21 information conveyed about her sister’s communications with Ms. Cherwitz. Setting aside
22 those details and the scope of the quote Autymn Blanck attributes to Ms. Cherwitz, that the
23 teachings of OneTaste and the practice of OM have “cured it all,” the sincerity of Ms.
24 Cherwitz’s beliefs is supported by statements she made 13 years earlier, before Ayries Blanck
25 met her. The 2009 *NY Times* articles stated about Ms. Cherwitz: “Discovering One Taste, she
26 said, has improved her self-image and given her ‘deep physical access to the woman I am and
27 the woman I want to be.’ Ms. Cherwitz commutes to New York and offers private sensuality
28 coaching at a satellite outpost operated by One Taste on Grand Street. Many of her clients, she

1 said, are married Orthodox Jewish couples from Brooklyn.” In the Film, Huet describes Ms.
2 Cherwitz as someone who “inspired a lot of admiration because she really projected the sense
3 of being a woman who was really, like, in charge of her sexuality.”

4 33. In the Film, Autymn continues to look at the photos spread out before her, picks
5 up a photo of Ayries Blanck, and says: “This is my sister before all of it happened. You can
6 tell that she’s very happy and there’s a lot of light in her eyes, still.” Autymn Blanck uses a
7 tissue to dab her tears and wipe her nose and says, “When I had gone to visit her, like, the light
8 had disappeared from her eyes. And that’s when I really knew something was wrong.” Like
9 other instances throughout, the Film omits dates and the relevant facts that Ayries Blanck
10 voluntarily resigned from OneTaste in January 2015, and doesn’t say when “it happened,” or
11 when Autymn “had gone to visit” her sister and “really knew something was wrong.” The use
12 of the word “still” in the phrase “there’s a lot of light in her eyes, still,” juxtaposed with the
13 tissue and tears, implies about Ayries that the “light in her eyes” is presently gone, and it’s
14 insinuated that Ayries is not there to speak for herself about her experience at OneTaste
15 because Ayries is in no condition to be there. However, a Google search in 2021 of Ayries
16 Blanck would have revealed information, images, video, and statements from 2020 and 2019
17 that appear inconsistent with her sister’s characterizations and emotional reactions in 2021.

18 34. Netflix then communicates in the Film that after Ayries Blanck resigned from
19 OneTaste, Ayries started sending emails to Autymn in which Ayries described her past
20 experiences at OneTaste. In other words, without stating the dates, the 2022 Film
21 communicates that, in 2015, Ayries emailed her sister about events from 2014. The word
22 “email” is never used, but instead, Netflix shows Autymn holding and reading from a few
23 typed and highlighted pages, stapled together and three-hole punched, and conveys that what
24 Autymn is holding in her hands and reading from was sent to Autymn by email and printed
25 out. Netflix conveys the communications were sent by email by superimposing over Autymn
26 a transparent overlay of an image of an email message to Autymn Blanck with the subject line
27 “Hi,” which is not intended to show an overlaid image of the actual email from which
28

1 Autymn is reading but to convey that the information was transmitted by email. Below is a
2 screen shot of that image from the Film.



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9 35. Autymn refers to the emails as “journals” that Ayries sent to her as “part of her
10 therapy.” Autymn states before reading aloud from the pages she holds in her hands: “My
11 sister started sending me journals when she got out of OneTaste. It was part of her therapy.”
12 The Film does not convey and, without the benefit of discovery yet, OneTaste does not know
13 the specific assignment given to Ayries in connection with “her therapy,” which resulted in
14 Ayries “sending” by email to Autymn the “journals” that Autymn reads out loud from in the
15 Netflix Film almost eight years later. Making matters even more confusing, the journals read
16 by Autymn were written by Ayries using the present tense about alleged past events.

17 36. Autymn then begins to read from the “journals” that her “sister started sending”
18 her as “part of her therapy” after she resigned from OneTaste in 2015. Autymn speaks: “I
19 woke up today filled with rage, rage at my boyfriend, **he punched me in the face and split**
20 **my lip and bruised my eye.** At first, I was shocked. We had fought many times before, but I
21 had never thought he would go that far. **I found little sympathy.** This, I was told it was my
22 fault. I had forced him to do it. His beast was only fulfilling what my body had asked him to
23 do. Since I was a survivor of childhood domestic violence this was my pattern and what my
24 body was asking for. He was only doing as my body asked, and now I was shaming and
25 blaming him for doing what I had asked for. **I looked around the room, all eyes were**
26 **downcast. Nobody was willing to stand for me.** I never spoke again about the other times
27 he hit me or dragged me around. Looking back now I can’t believe I stuck through it. I so
28 wanted to believe he would change. I was told that sometimes our soulmates must do violent

1 things to help us grow. **It was only a way to condone violence.** They did not want me to,
2 one, go to the authorities, two, to have my boyfriend leave and take his money with him.”

3 37. The events described in the “journals” that are read by Autymn Blanck and
4 presented in the 2022 Film as Ayries Blanck’s recollections from 2015 of experiences she had
5 at or in connection with OneTaste events, prior to 2015, never occurred at any time. There is
6 no evidence of Ayries Blanck ever making these claims before or after resigning from
7 OneTaste in January 2015, and Netflix admits that Ayries Blanck never confirmed the truth of
8 these statements for Netflix and “declined to be interviewed” for the Film. Netflix published
9 the statements from the “journals” despite knowing that the statements, if made by Ayries
10 Blanck, were not contemporaneously made at the time of the events in question and were
11 inconsistent with the true facts.

12 38. Following the scene in which Autymn Blanck reads from the journals that were
13 not contemporaneously written at the time of the events they describe, the screen cuts to black,
14 and written on the screen in white writing is “2018.” In the Film, the narrative device of
15 transitioning with only the year on the screen is used by Netflix in a way that is inconsistent
16 with the way in which the device is normally used. After emphasizing the year “2018,” Huet
17 is seen speaking on the phone and taking notes. Huet states in a voiceover: “I got a call from a
18 source saying, yesterday I got a knock on the door, and it was two FBI agents and they wanted
19 to talk to me about what happened at OneTaste.” It’s unknown if anyone is in fact on the other
20 end of the line with Huet, but presumably not, as the purported phone call with the “source”
21 that Huet is describing, allegedly happened in 2018, while the Film is showing a staged
22 reenactment of it in or about 2021 or 2022 with a voiceover, as opposed to Netflix
23 interviewing Huet about what happened in 2018.

24 39. After Huet talks about getting a call from a source who got a call from the FBI
25 who wanted to speak to the source about OneTaste, Huet says: “I think it’s fascinating to think
26 about people who think that if only women ran the world, then everything would be perfect.
27 But this group, which had an almost, like, a matriarchal spirit from the very first day that it
28 was started, still fell into these patterns of alleged abuse of power.” Huet offers this opinion

1 over a series of images of women teaching and attending OneTaste courses, beginning with
2 Ms. Daedone, followed by an image of two women with unblurred faces who are seen sitting
3 in the audience at a OneTaste class, one of them holding a microphone, followed by a photo of
4 another woman who is seen on stage with Ms. Daedone, also teaching a class, followed by an
5 image of another woman who is seen teaching a class, followed by an image of another
6 woman who is seen teaching a class, followed by an image of Ms. Cherwitz, who is seen
7 holding a microphone, standing with four other women and two men, seen on a stage at a
8 OneTaste class, and the back of the heads of the first five rows of chairs, about half men, half
9 women, are seen attending the class, looking up at the stage.

10 40. At the 1:14:47 mark, the Film cuts to another scene in another location. The
11 interviewee, Audrey, who, as alleged above, worked on the production of the Film, is seen
12 speaking on the phone while driving a vehicle. Audrey is filmed from the back seat of the
13 vehicle, and she states: “I’m back in Tucson where I grew up, I’m about to have a phone call
14 with an FBI agent who’s based out of New York. He contacted me about two months ago.”

15 41. The Film then cuts to Audrey at a dining room table, letting out a sigh while
16 looking at her phone and preparing to make the call, and then cuts to her speaking on the
17 phone. It’s unknown if there is an FBI agent, or anyone, on the other end of the line. Audrey
18 says into the phone: “And so when that thing about **them finding** some strangers to **rape her**
19 happened, totally made sense to me as far as what the conversation I heard and the behavior
20 that I witnessed.” The statement then appears on screen: “Audrey confirmed that the woman
21 whose alleged **rape** she reported to the FBI, was Ayries Blanck.”

22 42. OneTaste is informed and believes that Audrey and Ayries did not have a
23 friendship or relationship during their respective employments at OneTaste, and whereas
24 Audrey primarily worked on the west coast, Ayries primarily worked on the east coast.
25 Audrey was not “reporting” information that she was qualified to report because she was not a
26 witness to and had no contemporaneous knowledge of any events having to do with Ayries.

27 43. At 1:15:38, the Film cuts back to Autymn Blanck at the “Brooklyn” set looking
28 at the same array of photos spread out on the table. Autymn states: “At one point my sister

1 called me. She had been forced upon multiple people and that her boyfriend had beat her, and
2 she was at the bottom of the stairs, vomiting. And I remember just sitting there being, ‘What
3 are you doing?’ And this was right before she got out, and I think this was one of the last
4 things. And I remember just crying on the phone being, ‘Why? Why are you doing this?’”

5 44. At 1:16:48, an interviewer off screen says to Autymn about Ayries’s vomiting
6 and sickness: “This is your sister’s body reacting to **the sexual assaults and the beatings.**”
7 Autymn responds: “Yes, yes. Yeah. Yeah. And **the sexual assaults and the beatings.** And I
8 think the manipulation of trying to convince someone that that is right.” There’s no question
9 mark because it’s not asked by the interviewer as a question. It’s stated and confirmed as fact.

10 45. At 1:17:24, the statement appears on screen: “OneTaste has denied this and
11 denied that Ayries Blanck was ever sexually assaulted in connection with her participation in
12 OneTaste courses or employment at OneTaste.”

13 46. At 1:17:31, the off-screen interviewer asks: “What prompted you to tell her
14 story when she couldn’t?” Autymn Blanck responds: “I want other people to see, I want to
15 potentially stop—[the subtitles read: “sighing deeply”]. I wanted to speak out for someone
16 who couldn’t speak for herself. I wanted to tell the story of someone that was, I guess,
17 silenced in all of it and pushed under the rug, and I had the availability to do so, and I only
18 hope that other people don’t fall into it, and that other people see this and understand that it’s
19 just, it’s, it’s not worth it and it’s, it’s dangerous.”

20 47. Written on screen, at 1:25:15: “OneTaste said the company has never condoned
21 or endorsed domestic violence, and that any endorsement of domestic violence would be
22 ‘completely contrary’ to OneTaste’s teachings.”

23 48. Written on screen, at 1:25:47: “OneTaste has rebranded itself as The Institute of
24 OM.”

25 49. Written on screen, at 1:25:54: “The FBI has questioned several former
26 members about OneTaste’s business and labor practices.”

27 50. Written on screen, at 1:26:02: “The investigation is ongoing. No charges have
28 been brought to date.”

1 51. Written on screen, at 1:26:09: “If you or someone you know has experienced
2 **sexual violence**, information and resources are available at www.wannatalkaboutit.com.”
3 The website is Netflix’s own website and was created during the Film’s production. The
4 website contains information originally published by RAINN, the Rape, Abuse & Incest
5 National Network, “the nation’s largest anti-sexual violence organization.”

6 52. At 1:26:16, the Film’s end credits begin.

7 53. The false statements of fact in the Film are:

- 8 a. “It was only a way to **condone violence**.”
9 b. “when that thing about **them finding** some strangers to **rape her** happened.”
10 c. “This is your sister’s body reacting to **the sexual assaults and the beatings**.”
11 d. “Yes, yes. Yeah. Yeah. And **the sexual assaults and the beatings**. And I
12 think the manipulation of trying to convince someone that that is right.”
13 e. “has **experienced sexual violence**”

14 54. These statements were each made of and concerning OneTaste. After watching
15 the final 15 minutes of the Film, the average reasonable viewer would impute to OneTaste that
16 Ayries Blanck was raped and beaten in connection with her employment at OneTaste and her
17 participation in OneTaste’s classes and events, and that it was condoned by OneTaste. The
18 Film’s final statement, directing traffic to Netflix’s own website, asserts that someone, in fact,
19 “experienced sexual violence” in connection with their involvement with OneTaste.

20 55. Prior to the Film’s release, the Netflix production sought comment from
21 OneTaste in response to questions that presumed as fact the false statements that Ayries
22 Blanck had been raped and beaten in connection with her involvement with OneTaste. In
23 response, without having seen the Film, OneTaste provided Netflix with information that
24 proved the falsity of the defamatory statements. Netflix responded with a letter from a lawyer
25 that did not address the substance of the false statements or OneTaste’s response and stated:
26 “The production remains confident in its sources and their accounts in the film, which are
27 corroborated by multiple sources and documentary material” and “trust this resolves the
28 matter.” At the time, OneTaste was not aware that Netflix’s “documentary” evidence

1 consisted of the “journals” that were not contemporaneously written at the time of the alleged
2 events and that Netflix’s “source” was Autymn Blanck, and that Ayries Blanck had “declined
3 to be interviewed,” according to Netflix.

4 56. On November 5, 2022, Netflix published the Film on its streaming platform.
5 Five months later, on April 3, 2023, the United States federal government filed an Indictment
6 against Ms. Daedone and Ms. Cherwitz. The criminal action, pending in the United States
7 District Court for the Eastern District of New York, is entitled *United States of America v.*
8 *Rachel Cherwitz and Nicole Daedone*, Criminal Case No. 23-CR-146.

9 57. After their respective arrests, the government filed a letter in support of its
10 motion asking the district court “to impose appropriate conditions for release” while awaiting
11 trial and argued that Ms. Daedone and Ms. Cherwitz both “pose[d] a continuing danger to the
12 community” because Ms. Daedone and Ms. Cherwitz had “returned to performing public OM
13 demonstrations, although it is unclear to what extent [they are] directing the actions of
14 employees of any organization affiliated with OneTaste.”

15 58. The government did not bring any charges against Ms. Daedone and Ms.
16 Cherwitz relating to any nonconsensual sexual activity, including rape, sexual assault, sexual
17 violence, sex trafficking, or sexual harassment. The government charged Ms. Daedone and
18 Ms. Cherwitz with a single count of “forced labor,” under 18 U.S.C. § 1594, a statute enacted
19 under the Thirteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution, which abolished slavery in
20 the United States, and was signed by Abraham Lincoln on February 1, 1865, at the end of the
21 Civil War. If convicted at trial, Ms. Daedone and Ms. Cherwitz each currently face up to 20
22 years in a federal prison. The government alleges that the “**teachings and ideology**” advanced
23 by Ms. Daedone and Ms. Cherwitz allegedly “**instructed** ... Individuals who **associated**
24 themselves with OneTaste, either as employees, or as frequent **participants in OneTaste**
25 **courses** and events ... to engage in sexual acts they found **uncomfortable or repulsive** as a
26 requirement to obtain ‘**freedom**’ and ‘**enlightenment.**’” OneTaste believes that what was
27 being taught or “instructed” by Ms. Daedone and Ms. Cherwitz is similar to the concept that
28

1 beauty is only skin deep, but with a more nuanced and thoughtful approach, and is not in any
2 way analogous to slavery abolished by the Thirteenth Amendment, as alleged.

3 59. After the Film was released, OneTaste asked Netflix to take corrective action
4 because the Film was defamatory. On December 23, 2022, Netflix’s lawyer wrote, “In sum,
5 we see no basis for a defamation claim (or any other similar claim) by your clients, nor have
6 you identified any matter that requires correction or retraction. We therefore respectfully
7 decline your demand for a ‘retraction/correction and takedown’ of the Documentary or any of
8 its contents. Should your clients choose to move forward with a meritless suit, our clients
9 would vigorously defend against it—including by filing a motion to strike under California’s
10 SLAPP statute, which provides for early dismissal of lawsuits targeting free speech and
11 requires a mandatory award of attorneys’ fees and costs for prevailing defendants.” Netflix’s
12 also provided OneTaste with a list of cases where plaintiffs who had filed defamation
13 complaints lost and were forced to pay the other side’s attorneys’ fees under California Civil
14 Procedure Code Section 425.16(c). Netflix cited fees awards imposed against plaintiffs in
15 amounts ranging from about \$247,000 to \$790,000. In the past few years, Netflix has been
16 sued on several other occasions for defamation and has filed anti-SLAPP motions that have
17 been denied by courts on the ground that the plaintiffs in those cases adequately established
18 that Netflix published the false and defamatory statements with actual malice.

19 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

20 **(Defamation Per Se – Against NETFLIX and DOES 1-100)**

21 60. OneTaste re-alleges and incorporates herein by this reference each and every
22 allegation set forth in paragraphs 1 through 59 of this Complaint as though set forth fully
23 herein.

24 61. Netflix published on its streaming platform the film *Orgasm Inc: The Story of*
25 *OneTaste*. The Film contains false statements of fact that a former OneTaste employee was
26 raped and beaten in connection with her employment at OneTaste and participation in classes
27 and events at OneTaste, and that it was condoned by OneTaste. To impute this conduct to
28

1 OneTaste, the Film, in reference to OneTaste, specifically used the words “condone violence,”
2 “rape her,” “the sexual assaults and the beatings,” and “sexual violence.”

3 62. Netflix published the false statements with knowledge that the statements were
4 false or with reckless disregard of whether they were false or not. Although OneTaste believes
5 the actual malice standard is clearly satisfied in this case, OneTaste believes the facts of this
6 case and the unequal positions of the parties highlights the deficiencies in applying the actual
7 malice standard and that the standard is unconstitutional if or as applied to OneTaste here.

8 63. In addition to being presumptively injurious, OneTaste has suffered and
9 continues to suffer actual damages on an ongoing basis in that the Film is the most widely
10 disseminated information publicly available about OneTaste, and OneTaste believes that the
11 Film’s defamatory statements have deterred and will continue to deter people from
12 participating in OneTaste’s classes and events and has impacted OneTaste’s ability to bring its
13 teachings to as many customers as possible at affordable prices. Meanwhile, OneTaste does
14 not have the public platform or resources necessary to combat the defamatory statements,
15 while Netflix, compared to OneTaste, has substantial resources to publish and promote the
16 defamatory statements on its own platform.

17 64. Netflix acted with oppression, fraud, and/or malice, as defined by Civil Code
18 Section 3294(c), and OneTaste is therefore also entitled to punitive and/or exemplary damages.

19 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

20 OneTaste prays for judgment against defendants, and each of them, as follows:

21 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

22 **(Defamation Per Se – Against NETFLIX and DOES 1-100)**

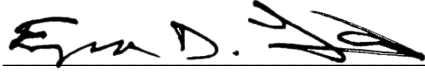
- 23 1. For compensatory damages and other special, general and consequential
24 damages;
- 25 2. For punitive and exemplary damages;
- 26 3. For an award of interest, including prejudgment interest, according to law;
- 27 4. For an award of costs of suit;
- 28 5. For such other and further relief as this Court deems just and proper.

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

OneTaste hereby demands a jury trial.

Dated: November 3, 2023

SPERTUS, LANDES & JOSEPHS, LLP

By: 

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