

# **EXHIBIT D**

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### **STATEMENT OF SASHLEIGHA HIGHTOWER**

On April 19, 2021, WW reached out to Ballard via Instagram because she was dating a man that she thought might be involved in trafficking.

WW didn't know who else to turn to about her suspicions, but she trusted that Ballard and OUR were the right resources to report it to since they work with law enforcement to fight trafficking.

On April 20, 2021, Ballard responded via Instagram and invited WW to his office in Lehi [525 Sunrise Way] to discuss her concerns.

As WW came into Ballard's office, she perceived that OUR employees were suspicious and leery of her.

WW gave Ballard information about the man she had been dating, with whom she had growing suspicions.

Ballard told WW to give him the man's phone number, and he would give it to his guys to check him out.

Ballard then said he noticed from WW's Instagram profile that she was an actor. Ballard asked if WW had ever considered going undercover.

WW answered "no," but that she would definitely consider it.

Ballard had WW sign an NDA and told WW how important it was that she never speak a word to ANYONE, not even friends or boyfriends, "because people's lives were on the line." He explained further the gravity and severity of what was at stake in order to protect women and children and the OPS. WW was not given a copy of this NDA.

Ballard then proceeded to tell WW that female operators are crucial to OUR's work.

Ballard told WW about a tactic they used, called the COUPLES RUSE.

Ballard explained that they were running into problems on operations (OPS) when male operators did not engage in sex acts. He said that if male operators don't touch the women or children, the traffickers would figure out that it was a sting and would create danger for all.

Ballard told WW how the COUPLES RUSE came to him by revelation from God, as there was no way he could have thought up such a brilliant ruse.

Ballard then told WW that if she would act like the jealous girlfriend, then she could "block" for Ballard and Ballard would "block" for her.

Ballard explained that WW was like the "cock blocker."

Ballard expounded by saying that he would take women into couples massage parlors or strip clubs and act as a kinky couple ready to do sexual and deviant things, but that there would be no kissing and no touching genitals, except for his arms around the woman's waist, "maybe on your back pocket, etc.," and that it would be super safe because there would be a team around the corner watching everybody's safety.

Ballard explained to WW that if she agreed to go on an OP, she would be part of the communications, by watching and reporting on activities surrounding the sting.

Ballard told WW that he preferred to hire actors because cops could not act very well, resulting in the traffickers not being fooled.

Ballard explained that traffickers can smell cops miles away.

Ballard asked WW what she thought, and she responded that she was on board because she was a rape survivor herself and felt strongly that she should help women and children.

Ballard responded by asking, “You are a survivor yourself? Wow!!! That would be a powerful story.” He also said, “I feel like you have to be hand selected from God because there are so many I can’t trust. We have thousands of applications every week, but I can’t just bring in anyone.” To be honest, I felt pretty important and believed him.

Ballard then instructed WW to get “training,” and he would go over more details later.

Ballard then told WW that there was a fast-approaching operation, and that he really needed someone quickly.

On April 21, 2023, Ballard put WW in a text thread with Matt Cooper.

Ballard texted WW from a phone number that Ballard instructed her to label as “Brian” for “safety” purposes.

That phone number was 520-406-1139.

Ballard then introduced WW to Matt Cooper and informed her that she was being considered for an OPS position, and that she should get a background check in order to attend a survivor’s graduation.

Ballard further stated that the OPS team would meet that Friday around noon, where Ballard would run her through tacticals and finish conversations.

On April 23, 2023, WW attended a survivor’s graduation. Matt Cooper (Coop) was there with Ballard and WW.

Ballard had told WW prior that her OP name would be “Kelli”, but then Coop had introduced WW as WW.

WW was confused as she was afraid Matt Cooper had compromised the OP, as Ballard had earlier stressed how serious everything was.

WW asked Matt Cooper if she was compromised because he had said her real name. Matt Cooper responded “no” and reassured her that she was safe.

Ballard had told WW to keep track of all her hours while preparing and working on the OP.

Ballard understood that WW was a single mom at the time.

Ballard asked WW if she could go on an upcoming OP because the original girl could not go.

WW was moving by herself, so she explained that she could not go on an OP on such short notice.

Ballard responded by offering to pay for a moving van and movers to help so WW could go. He also gave her money to buy name-brand “slutty” clothes for the character. Brad had given her some cash for this. Brad also mentioned to WW that he and Ballard thought that WW would be a great speaker, and WW responded that she had always wanted to be one.

WW felt honored by the generosity of OUR.

Ballard told WW that they would be talking a lot, because they had to create a relationship to convince the traffickers that they were a couple, so they needed to get to know one another.

In some of their “training”, Ballard brought up the name of Hugh V., a person WW actually knew prior to meeting Ballard, and who was a huge part of WW’s healing from her own abuse.

Ballard told WW that Hugh was not to be trusted, along with many other people in his organization.

WW was sad to hear that about Hugh, but WW trusted Ballard.

Ballard told WW that the other female operators would fall in love with him, so he had to change operators often.

Ballard also asked WW to never betray him.

Ballard mentioned a journalist who wrote a negative article about him who he said was just out to get him and the cause, but no one believed her and he “buried her.”

Ballard then told WW that text messages needed to be sent via Signal, and everything, including messages via Signal or their regular phone messaging, was to be deleted every night because it was IMPERATIVE to the safety of the cause.

Ballard warned that if anything got leaked, it could put people's lives at risk.

On April 28, 2021, WW received an email from “Hugh V.” asking her about Ballard’s relationship with her.

WW immediately told Ballard about the email. Ballard said his team was just looking out for Ballard and testing WW’s loyalty to Ballard, and that WW passed.

At one of the “training” sessions, Ballard was briefing WW for the upcoming OP.

Ballard dismissed the others from his office, telling them he needed to prepare WW for the mission.

As WW sat on a couch in Ballard’s office, Ballard told WW that he needed to get to know more about WW so that they were comfortable with each other.

Ballard asked questions about WW’s current relationship, her children, and the trauma abuse as a child.

Ballard again said that it would make an amazing story.

Ballard came over to sit by WW and kept getting closer to WW until at one point, Ballard put his hand on WW's leg and caressed her inner thigh.

WW immediately tensed up but thought that Ballard was testing her and that she should just keep talking as if nothing were happening.

WW kept talking as Ballard stroked her neck.

Ballard finally got frustrated that she wasn't responding to his advances and asked WW, "Why are you not responding?!?"

WW responded, "Because I know you are testing me."

Ballard said he needed to know if WW was attracted to him. Ballard asked WW if she was attracted to him, to which WW said "not in that way." Ballard asked how WW could convince traffickers of chemistry then? WW told him she did not need to practice because that was what she was trained to do as an actor- get in to character when in role but only on "action" and out on "cut". WW explained she never "practiced" chemistry or romance scenes privately/outside of being on set in front of the camera and crew either.

Ballard then stated that this was the practice he mentioned previously, and that WW needed to be attracted to him in order to convince traffickers that they were a "kinky couple."

Ballard told WW that he must know she could pull this off, as a prior female operator went out on a mission once and couldn't perform, so all those donor dollars were wasted, and the mission to save kids failed.

At that point WW felt sheepish for thinking she knew better than Ballard, so she told him she would turn it on for just a moment for him to see that as an actor, she could turn it on and then turn it right back off.

Ballard agreed.

WW approached Ballard in the hallway outside of Ballard's office and put her hand on his chest and spoke to him seductively, saying she could turn it on if she needed to, and then pulled back immediately, but at that point, Ballard got excited and said, "Oh good, ok you can do this!"

WW asked Ballard if there were cameras in the building. He panicked and looked around and said, "No, no we are good."

Ballard continued in his COUPLES RUSE training, instructing WW that from the moment they got inside a plane heading to the location, inside cars, walking on the streets, anywhere except for the safe house, they were supposed to be in character as a kinky couple because the traffickers have people watching them at every move.

On April 30, 2021, I am looped into a group text and Ballard tells WW that the two of them need to go get spray tans as part of their cover.

On May 3, 2021, WW met at OUR's offices with a hair and makeup artist to teach WW how to apply fake tattoos on Tim and herself for the upcoming Puerto Vallarta, Mexico OP.

On May 5, 2021, OUR employee, Mike Porenta, made all the arrangements for WW to fly out to Dallas, Texas.

WW and Ballard stayed at a house in Irving, Texas, so that they could meet with Glenn Beck before flying out from DFW to Puerto Vallarta the next day. OUR employee, David Jacobs, met Ballard and WW at the Irving house and wrote a note to them that read in part, "Go Get Them! XoXoXo".

At Glenn Beck's home, Ballard spoke about how he had to remove the cancer from OUR,



and that many were out to get him.

Beck sympathized with Ballard, sharing his own experiences about how people would try to get him and that he had to hit rock bottom, with people going through his trash. He told Ballard that he may have to go through that too.

Ballard said he already hit rock bottom when he realized so many were out to get him, and he had to make all the changes in his company.

On May 6, 2021, Ballard and WW flew out to Puerto Vallarta.

Ballard went into immediate character from the DFW airport to Puerto Vallarta.

Ballard was all over WW, with his hands on her buttock and his hands wrapped through her legs while sitting on the airplane.

Ballard and WW finally arrived at the very large "safe house" that overlooks the ocean and has a private chef. The secondary team stayed in a second location. WW had her own room and Ballard had his.

The next day, while the chauffeur drove Ballard and WW around, Ballard was in the backseat groping WW.

The windows were dark, but Ballard insisted they had to remain in character. On at least one occasion, Ballard's hand got quite close to WW's groin area. WW told him that he didn't have to be so close, so he pulled back.

Ballard explained that they were going out to find massage parlors.

WW asked him how she could avoid having to get naked in those massage parlors. Ballard responded by telling her it would be fine if she stayed in her underwear.

Ballard said WW could lay face down on the shared massage table, and he would lay face

up so that they could still talk to one another in their ears.

WW expressed concerns to Ballard, telling him that she knew the “massage therapists” would want her to take her bra off, which she didn’t want to do, so she said her story would be that she had a boob job and she could not take her bra off for support purposes.

Ballard assured WW that he would help express that, as the escorts may be speaking in Spanish.

Ballard is fluent in Spanish, but WW is not.

Ballard located a massage parlor and instructed the driver to drop them off.

They were then taken to the back massage room, where they undressed and got on the table.

WW was in a bra and underwear.

Two women came into the room, and Ballard started speaking to them in Spanish.

The two women took their own clothes off, down to their underwear too, and started massaging WW and Ballard.

Ballard asked questions, which then led to talking to them about a party, and him asking for “frescas”—younger girls.

Ballard instructed WW that if the escorts got too close to touching them, the code word was FUCK ME, to which it was WW’s job to convince the women that WW needed to fuck her boyfriend and get the women out of the room.

One of the massage girls undid WW’s bra and WW responded, “oh no no” and told Ballard (whose OP name was “Brian”) to tell the women, in Spanish, why she needed to keep her bra on.

Ballard repeated what WW said, but only in English, not Spanish, and the women did not care.

Ballard said the code word and WW immediately pretended to be jealous, telling the escorts not to touch Ballard.

WW next said the code word because one of the women went straight for WW's crotch. Ballard did not respond to protect her, so WW repeated it again.

Again, Ballard did not respond to protect her, at which point WW understood that she needed to get the women out of their room or she may be compromised and was in extreme danger.

As part of the Ruse, WW kissed Ballard's neck and rubbed his belly and told the women to leave as she needed to f--- her boyfriend.

However, the women just stood back to watch.

WW rolled over on top of Ballard so that the women could see that she was serious, as WW was very scared that the women would not believe them and leave her alone. WW told them again to leave, this time with enough anger that the women left. Once the women left, WW realized she was topless on top of Ballard's chest.

WW immediately got off and got dressed. A trafficker had shown up and a conversation ensued. WW and Ballard left this massage parlor and WW immediately had a panic attack. Ballard told WW, "You are burning up." WW *was* burning up and was shaking. WW could barely walk from shaking due to what had just happened. Ballard gave her a few moments to breathe, and then they were off to the next parlor.

Over the next three days, Ballard and WW had similar experiences in massage parlors across Puerto Vallarta.

After one such “sting” in which WW obtained some phone numbers of “traffickers”, Ballard screamed WW’s accolades in the car after, saying he couldn’t believe what WW was able to do, as she got so many phone numbers that would allow OUR to save so many children.

WW then told Ballard that she was sorry about what happened at the first massage parlor, to which Ballard responded that it was ok, because he and his other operators would “accidentally kiss” because they were so in character.

Ballard also revealed that they would often sleep together in the safe house next to each other, snuggling, because the OPS are so traumatic.

Ballard said that sometimes things would happen in his Couples Ruse and he would just have to go ejaculate as things got too steamy.

WW told Ballard, “That’s interesting. That won’t be me.”

At one of the parlors, the female trafficker and Ballard were talking about something in Spanish, to which the female came directly to WW and grabbed her breasts and crotch. WW said the code word, trying to play it off and looked at Ballard for reprieve. Ballard just watched. At one point, said female trafficker brought up a younger female to take her clothes off down to her underwear and turn around for “Brian” to approve for an upcoming party. Ballard approved, and the young female was dismissed. The older female trafficker did not want to wait for any upcoming party and wanted to partake of WW now. WW immediately knew she was going to be raped if she didn’t get out, as the female kept grabbing her so forcefully that WW fell on the bed. WW knew she had to get herself out, so she made up a story that there was a meeting they had to

get to. Ballard said, “What meeting?” WW left Ballard and went outside. Ballard got upset with WW saying, “Why’d you leave? We were so close to getting information.” WW told Ballard she feared she was going to be raped and was upset he didn’t help her. Ballard told her he would never have let it go too far, to which WW again felt bad for doubting Ballard, and she worried she stopped the opportunity for kids to be saved.

When they were at the safe house, in between these “massage parlor missions”, Ballard would answer his door in just his towel and still have her come in to talk about the OP.

Ballard kept saying, “You know I’m clean, right? I don’t even get turned on by this stuff you see. I don’t even get a boner.”

WW asked Ballard why he still went on OPS when he told everyone he was not doing them anymore.

Ballard responded that Elder Ballard sanctioned the Couples Ruse and it was his [Ballard’s] calling to do OPS.

At one point, WW had to go shower and get ready for an OP when Ballard said, “You can use my shower,” to which WW responded, “No thank you, I’ve got my own.” Ballard double checked with her saying he would leave the room, and she still said no.

Later while they were eating at the safe house, Ballard confided in WW that things with Katherine weren’t the best.

WW asked Ballard if Katherine knew about the COUPLES RUSE, to which he said she did.

WW asked Ballard if she knew all the details though, and he responded that she is such a saint; she does not ask questions, as she is willing to do anything to save the kids.

WW told Ballard that he should stop doing OPS and be home with his family to heal, as his PTSD was very apparent and he needed to rest and just be with his family. The last night in Puerto Vallarta was when Ballard took WW to strip clubs.

Prior to this last night, WW had expressed to Matt Cooper that she was concerned about Ballard. She confided a bit to him that Ballard had been distracted, worried about her betraying him the whole time, and didn't protect her. Coop listened to her and said Ballard did need some help, but that was the extent of it.

Ballard told WW that she was to "block" for Ballard, and the goal was to get some girls into the back private rooms to ask questions and get phone numbers. Coop, Matt O., and Jorge were all there as secondary in another part of the club.

WW was mentally, emotionally, physically compromised after what it took to get a couple phone numbers at this club, and she told Ballard she had to be taken back to the safe house. As WW was leaving the "sting", she observed Jorge heading to a back room alone with one of the strippers for what was going to be a pleasure trip after the OP. Ballard told WW she had done an incredible job this trip and had done enough.

After getting back to the secondary team's safe house, Ballard explained that WW was done and had a super successful trip, but that he and a couple others were going to go check out one more spot. They were gone for a few hours with no "blocker" and no comms. Matt O. and a couple other secondary team members were with WW and kept getting angry and worried saying, "This isn't right."

WW warned Ballard that the type of conduct that she saw with Jorge as well would take down OUR. WW told Ballard, "Either you tell someone, or I will." Ballard responded, "You

can't do that to me," to which WW said, "Watch me". The next day Omar and Ballard had a private chat with WW, thanking her for letting them know. Omar told WW the rule was that no operator should operate without their blocker, and that can't happen, so he would take care of it.

WW also learned that DS was one of the other operators. WW knew DS from her line of work and had deep affinity for DS.

When Ballard found out that WW cared about DS, he told WW that DS had crossed the boundaries and kissed him.

Ballard told WW that DS was in love with him, and that she was the one that when he met WW at the very beginning in David Jacob's office, that he had explained was in love with him and that's why he had to get new operators.

When WW got home, she immediately had nightmares and knew she was re-traumatized.

She was also paranoid of being watched or saying anything about her experiences with Ballard, and her boyfriend at that time (her current husband now) was very concerned for her.

Ballard continued telling her that he needed her on the next OP, and that he was super excited because it was this really cool place with an amazing house and boat.

WW told Ballard that she was re-traumatized, and it wasn't wise for her to go on another OP.

Ballard said he would pay for her to go to his therapist, in order to see if his therapist could help WW be able to get back out there. Ballard told WW that she made the most difference out of any other operators.

WW went to see Ballard's therapist, K.M.

Ballard was pretty persistent about WW coming back out, even though she told him no

several times.

Ballard told her she could maybe do a secondary, but then after thinking about it, she said no to that too. Ballard then said, “Well, what if you become the female face of OUR.?”

Ballard knew her dream was to be speaking on stages, so she said “Oh my gosh yes!! I could still help the cause!”

Ballard helped the ruse by telling her that they needed to probably have better training for operators, so he was going to have future training for it and to watch for it. He said they could get footage, and since she had “kicked ass” on the undercover OP and was a survivor herself, this would be a HUGE thing.

Before the training, Ballard sent her a text in July, 2021, telling her that he was pulling out of OPS to be with his family.

She told him she was proud of him.

He had asked for replacement female operators for other operations, so she told him she may have someone, and recommended DM.

WW went to the OUR OP training held in Salt Lake City, as she believed Ballard and the organization were turning things around. They had the cameras follow her around a lot.

She gave them an interview, and Ballard told people she would be the face for speaking.

After this training, DM (who did not attend the “official” training), called WW, saying she needed to talk to WW but that she couldn’t talk over phone—it had to be in person.

DM told her she went to meet with Coop and Tim to be considered for the position of female operator, but things happened, and DM wanted to know if it was normal.

WW and others were told to not even talk to one another because of safety, so WW knew



why DM was nervous and scared to talk to her.

DM told her that Tim had pushed her up against the wall and licked her stomach, and then went out on a fake op practice at a local strip club where he was taking pills while his son was there.

DM thought it was strange and wanted to know if it was normal. That is when WW snapped and realized this was not normal.

WW then started questioning her own experience.

WW then called Ballard and told him that she could no longer be a part of OUR, even as a speaker.

Ballard was frustrated and sad, and kept trying to get her to come speak for another year.

Ballard also invited her to a separate private meeting that no one knew of, and he told WW that he was starting to do his own OPS.

WW didn't go, and kept asking the status of the OP that they had gone on, and if they had rescued any kids?

Ballard kept telling WW that it just takes time, but they were making progress.

DM told WW that she had verbalized to Ballard and Coop her boundaries, that she did not want to do things, and didn't need to practice, and then they dropped her.

WW wanted to tell Matt Osborne of her concerns at the training prior to this, but thought she couldn't trust anyone. She felt so small compared to Ballard, as he had told her he would deny everything if she said anything, and she would be buried.