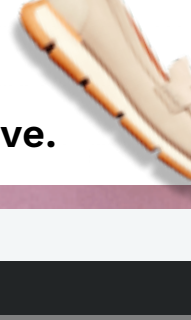


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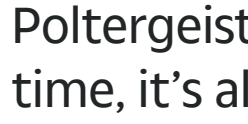


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# DEATH RIDDLE Hollywood's 'Poltergeist' curse after four film stars died mysteriously including 80s child star Heather O'Rourke

Bella Fowler from news.com.au  
6:49 ET, Nov 23 2019 | Updated: 7:04 ET, Nov 24 2019



THE mysterious deaths of 1980s child actress Heather O'Rourke and three of her co-stars from the film *Poltergeist* has sparked fears of a "Hollywood curse".

*Poltergeist* is regarded as one of the most terrifying horror films of all time, it's also known as the most "cursed" film in Hollywood.



Heather O'Rourke's mysterious death in 1988 led many to believe of a curse surrounding the blockbuster film *Poltergeist*



Heather starred in the film *Will Sampson*, who portrayed a friendly ghost named Taylor in the second *Poltergeist* film Credit: Alamy

The 1982 film's grim history has followed it through decades is shrouded in superstition following a handful of mysterious cast deaths.

It even casting fear over the critically reviled 2015 remake.

The "Poltergeist curse", as it's become known, came about after four of the cast members died of mysterious circumstances – the most shocking being that of Heather O'Rourke.

Heather, who was 12 when the film was made, played protagonist Carol Anne in all three *Poltergeist* films.

Her chilling appearance and terrifying deliver of the line "They're here" in the first film of the series, is what helped make the film successful

At 12 years old, she passed away suddenly.

The actress died in surgery when doctors were attempting to repair an acute bowel obstruction, caused by what was believed to be a long battle with Crohn's disease, the [LA Times](#) reported.

The young actress was tragically pronounced dead after suffering septic shock, on February 1, 1988.

Many believe the curse began the same year the first movie was released.

## HOLLYWOOD MYSTERY

Dominique Dunne, who made her film debut in *Poltergeist* as the elder sister of Carol Anne, died a violent death shortly after its release in 1983.

She was strangled to death by her boyfriend, John Thomas Sweeney.

According to a [New York Times](#) article, Dunne was put on life support after the attack but passed away five days later.

Sweeney was later found guilty of voluntary manslaughter, according to a 1983 article from [The Freelance Star](#).

The next actor to die was Julian Beck.

He played Carol Anne's most intimidating spirit, doomsday cult leader Kane in *Poltergeist II* sadly did not live to see the release of the sequel.

He was 60 when he lost a battle with stomach cancer on September 14, 1985, according to [The New York Times](#).

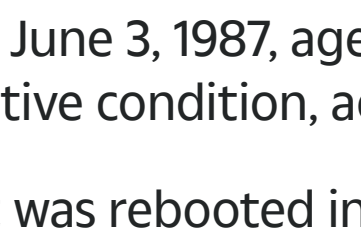
The third mysterious death Will Sampson.

He portrayed a friendly ghost named Taylor in the second *Poltergeist* film.

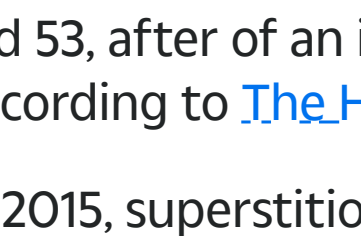
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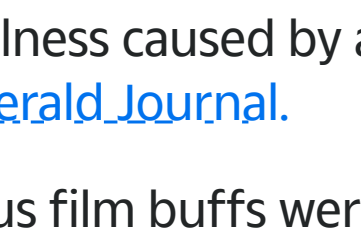
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Sampson died on June 3, 1987, aged 53, after of an illness caused by a chronic degenerative condition, according to [The Herald Journal](#).

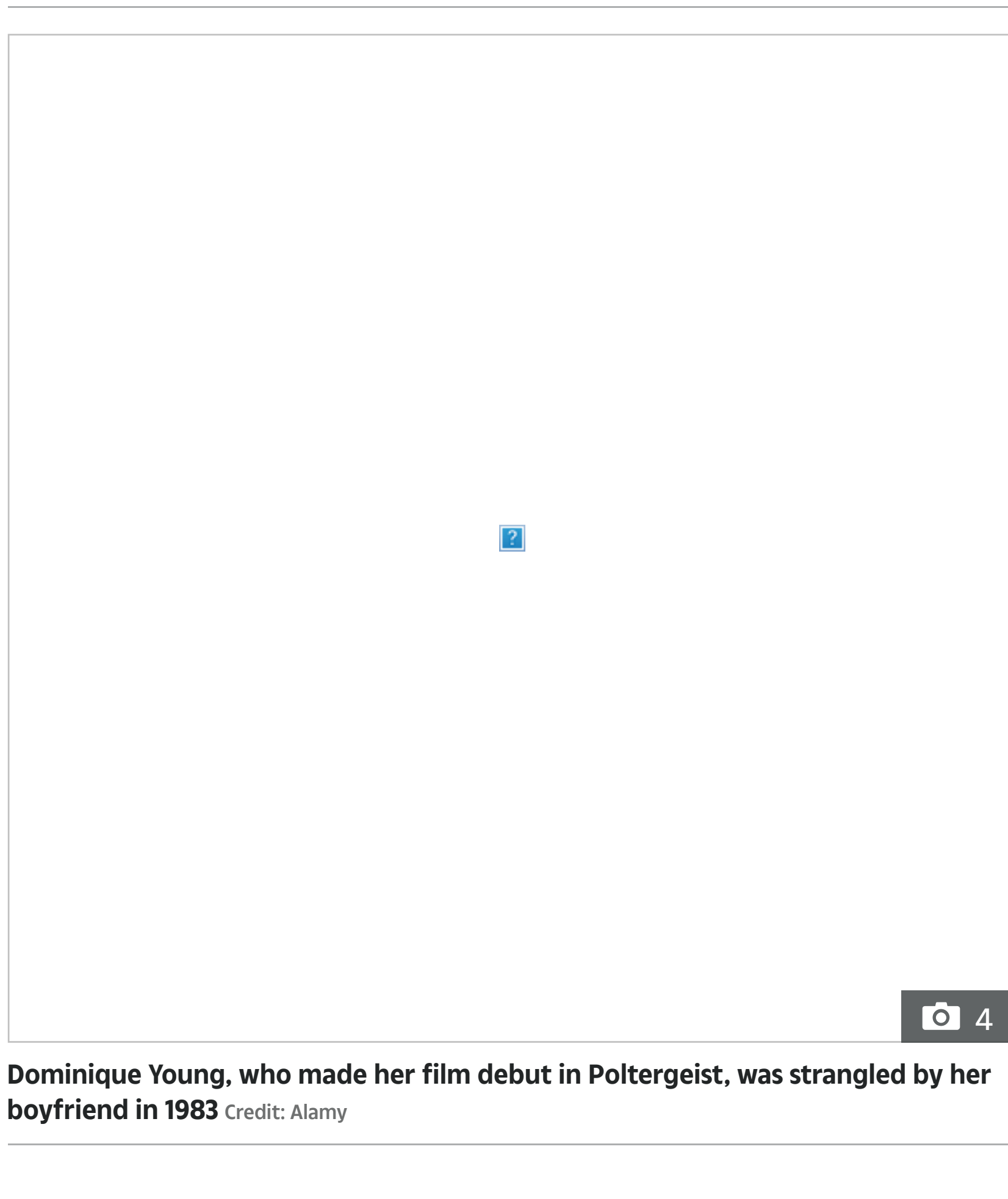
When *Poltergeist* was rebooted in 2015, superstitious film buffs were quick to unearth rumours of the "curse" surrounding the film.

Starring Sam Rockwell and Rosemarie DeWitt, the movie may have been widely panned, but no cast members died.

- A version of this story appeared on [news.com.au](#)



Julian Beck played Kane in *Poltergeist II* and died before the movie was released Credit: Alamy



Dominique Dunne, who made her film debut in *Poltergeist*, was strangled by her boyfriend in 1983 Credit: Alamy

### What is Poltergeist about?


Set in a house built on an ancient Native American burial ground, the original *Poltergeist* trilogy told the terrifying story of the Freeling family and their encounters with the supernatural.

Gifted with a connection to the spiritual world, the youngest daughter, Carol Anne (Heather), was haunted by the malicious spirits buried beneath her home, including that of a sadistic doomsday cult leader named Kane.


It was released by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer on June 4, 1982 and was a commercial success, grossing \$113 million in the United States, making it the highest-grossing horror film of 1982 and eighth overall for the year.

The film's special effects – inventive for its era – makes it frequently ranked among the greatest horror films of all time.


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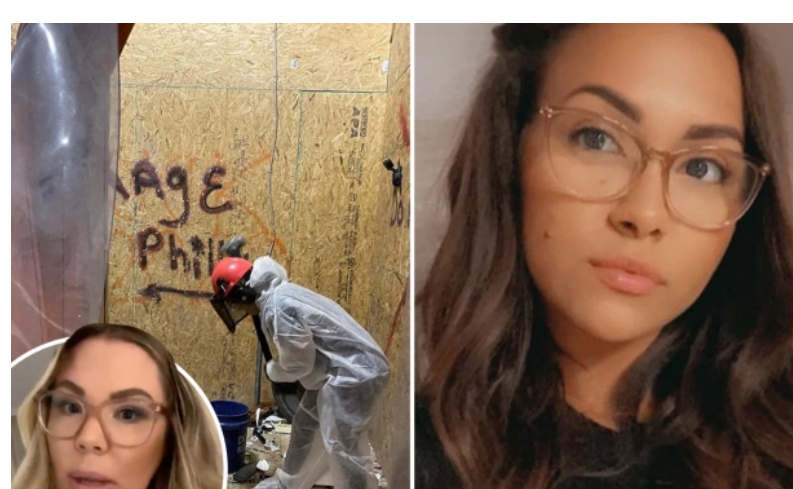
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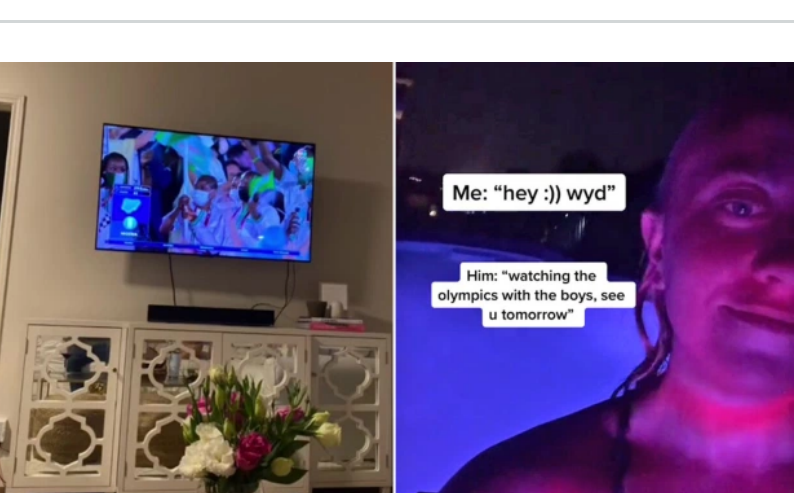
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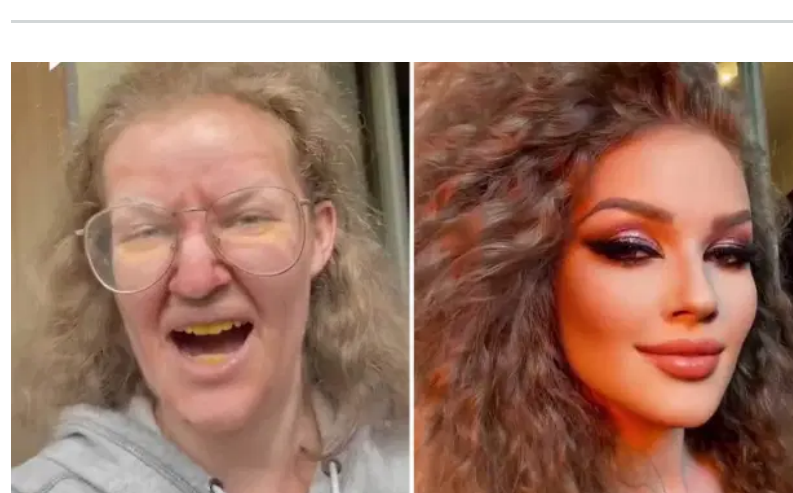
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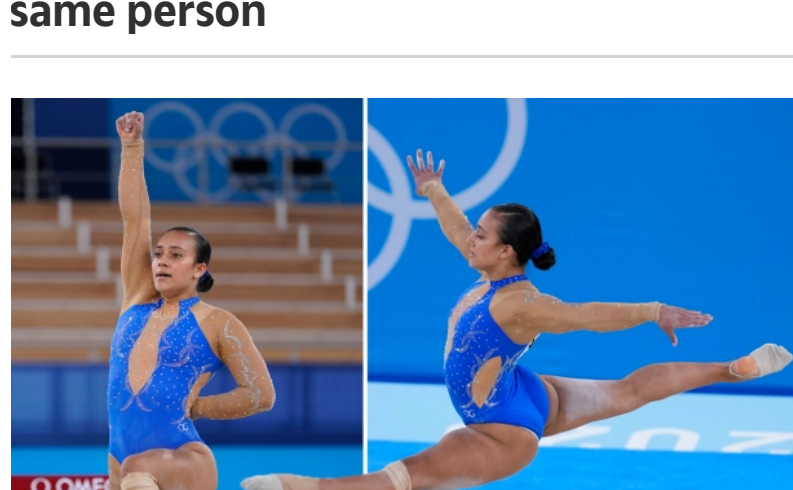
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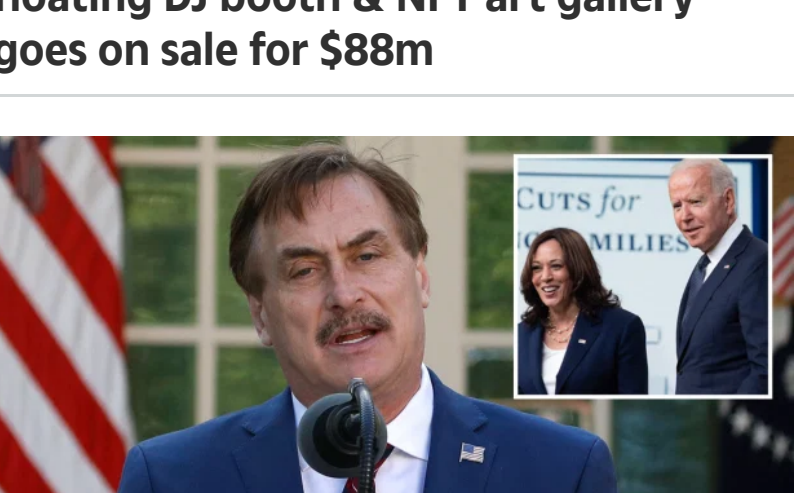
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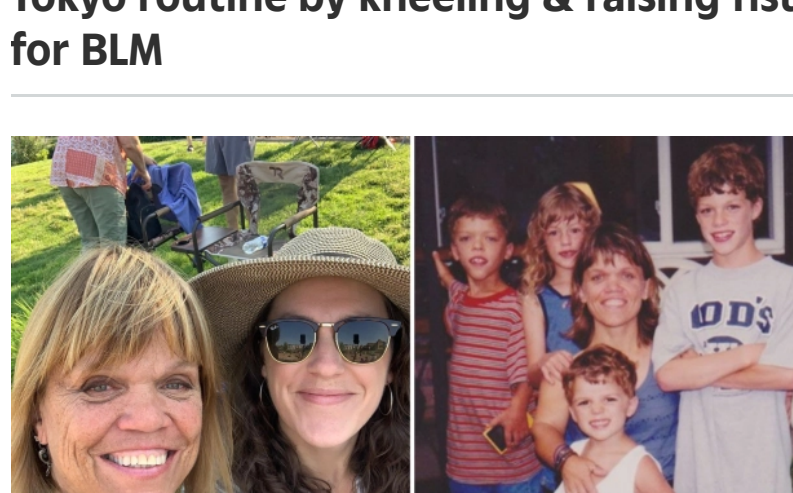
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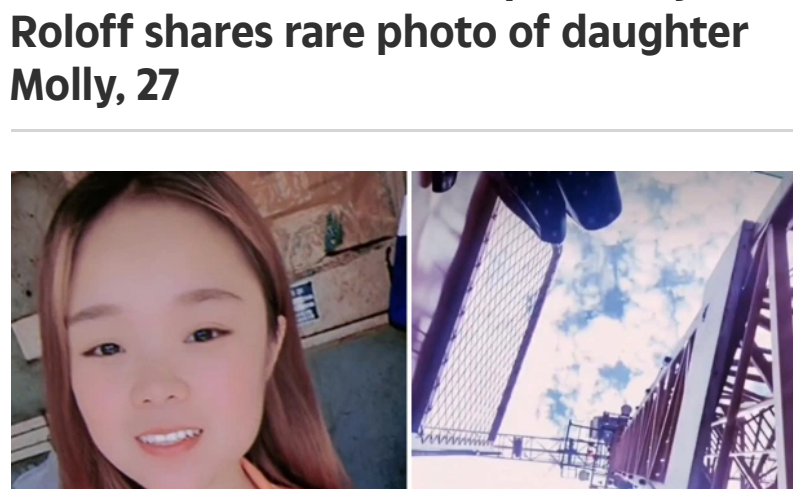
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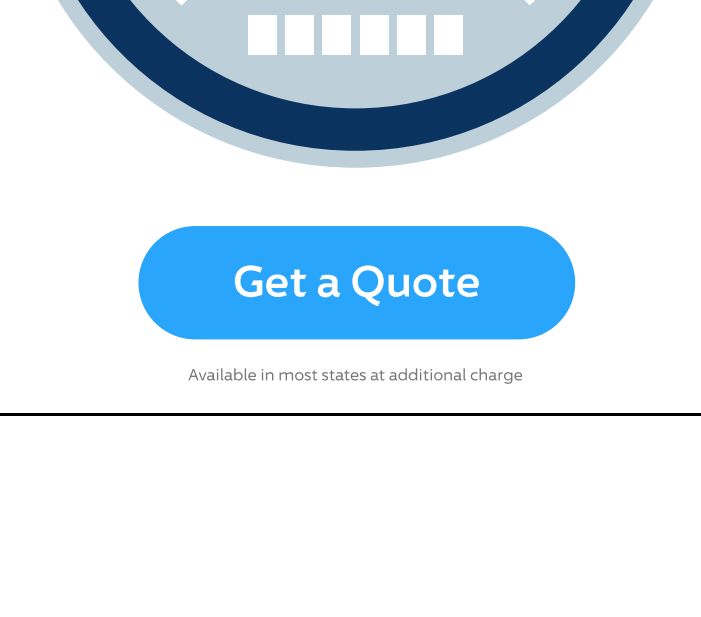


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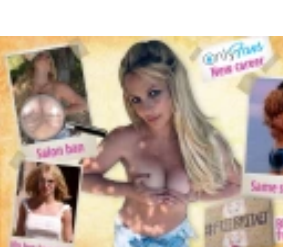
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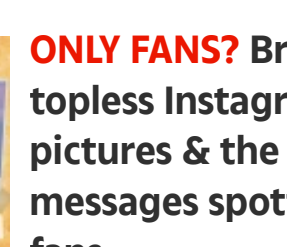
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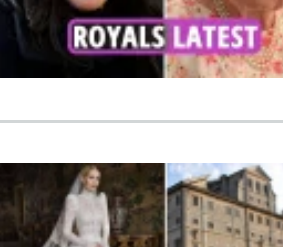
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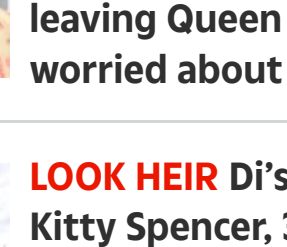
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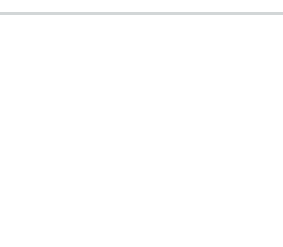
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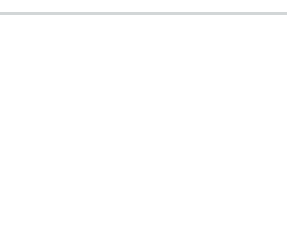
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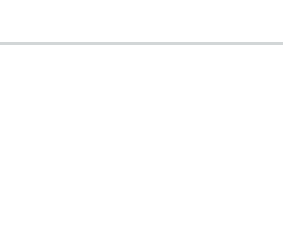


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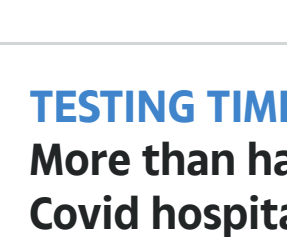


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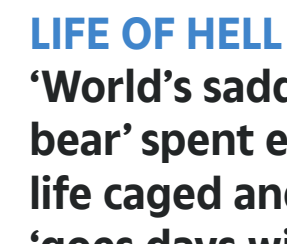
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