# Sarah Vine reveals how Brexit turmoil shattered her marriage to Michael Gove



Reflecting on the turbulence of political life, Sarah Vine offers a deeply personal account of how Brexit significantly impacted her marriage to Michael Gove, marking the beginning of a prolonged unraveling that would culminate in their eventual separation. Through a series of harrowing events and strained relationships, Vine reveals that their lives became irrevocably entwined with the stormy political landscape following the 2016 referendum.

As the tensions of Brexit intensified, the fallout was not confined to political circles; it spilled over into personal relationships, fracturing long-standing friendships and jeopardising familial ties. Vine recounts the emotional devastation as friends—some of whom had been close since university days—suddenly severed communication, their connections eroded by differing political views. “I was told in no uncertain terms that the order had gone out to send us both to social Siberia,” she describes, illustrating the harsh realities of living in a politically charged environment.

The pivot point of their marital difficulties, according to Vine, coincided with Michael Gove's tumultuous navigation of his political ambitions in the wake of Brexit. Her recollections from the days immediately after the referendum reveal that Michael was in a state of extreme anxiety and confusion, which exacerbated the already growing distance between them. The intense pressure for political manoeuvring and backroom dealings heightened the strain, creating an environment where personal connections fell by the wayside.

Vine paints a vivid picture of a critical Sunday after the referendum, detailing her husband's unsettling confrontation with Boris Johnson, who was preparing to launch his leadership bid. The stark contrast in their approaches—Michael’s serious, meticulous planning against Boris’s more relaxed, carefree attitude—deepened the cracks in their relationship. “A tiny worm of doubt entered my mind,” Vine reflects, revealing her apprehensions about her husband’s political judgement.

The ensuing chaos of political betrayal, particularly involving fellow politicians like Andrea Leadsom, served to exacerbate Michael's already frayed nerves. The revelation that Boris, seemingly oblivious to the political stakes, had inadvertently undermined Michael’s standing heightened tensions at home. A notable moment came when Vine mistakenly sent a sensitive email to an incorrect recipient, leading to a media frenzy that painted her as a Machiavellian influencer in her husband's political life. This reaction to her supportive message only added to her frustration, as she underscored the sexist stereotypes that often overshadow professional women in politics.

Despite the emotional toll, Vine maintained a semblance of normality for their children. However, challenges escalated when their daughter's safety was jeopardised following threats linked to Michael's political role. Such incidents served as constant reminders of the dangers inherent in their public lives, casting a shadow over their domestic peace.

Eventually, the relentless pressures of politics eroded any remaining intimacy between the couple. Despite Michael’s return to government after the snap election of 2017 and the couple's attempts to reconnect, Vine sensed a growing disconnection. She found solace in her work while grappling with the realisation that their paths had diverged significantly. It became increasingly evident to her that while Michael appeared rejuvenated by returning to a ministerial role, she was left feeling like a secondary character in her own story.

By the time they officially announced their separation in 2021, both expressed that their drift had been gradual, with Vine later stating to various outlets that there was no one else involved in their split. “His only mistress was politics,” she clarified, dispelling the gossip that often accompanied high-profile divorces. While still supportive as co-parents, the couple ultimately recognised that their marriage could not withstand the pressures imposed by a relentless political landscape.

The dissolution of their marriage underscores a poignant narrative about the challenges of balancing personal relationships amidst public scrutiny and political turmoil. As Vine reflected on their shared journey, it became clear that while her husband was devoted to his political career, she was left grappling with a changing identity, ultimately questioning her role as a wife in a world increasingly dominated by the ambitions of public life.

In the end, Vine's narrative is not just a chronicle of a marriage undone by politics; it is also a broader commentary on the costs of political life on personal relationships, a theme that resonates deeply in the current climate where political affiliations often overshadow human connections.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14769847/Michael-Gove-politics-extract-memoir-SARAH-VINE-Brexit.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.thelondoneconomic.com/politics/sarah-vine-says-brexit-put-huge-strain-on-marriage-to-michael-gove-307341/)
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* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2022/01/05/michael-goves-mistress-politics-says-estranged-wife-sarah-vine/), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/sarah-vine-tatler-michael-gove-divorce-affair-prime-minister-b975114.html)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14769847/Michael-Gove-politics-extract-memoir-SARAH-VINE-Brexit.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2022/01/05/michael-goves-mistress-politics-says-estranged-wife-sarah-vine/), [[4]](https://www.thelondoneconomic.com/politics/sarah-vine-says-brexit-put-huge-strain-on-marriage-to-michael-gove-307341/)
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* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14769847/Michael-Gove-politics-extract-memoir-SARAH-VINE-Brexit.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/michael-gove-david-cameron-marriage-london-government-b975290.html), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/jul/02/michael-gove-and-wife-sarah-vine-to-divorce)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14769847/Michael-Gove-politics-extract-memoir-SARAH-VINE-Brexit.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/sarah-vine-tatler-michael-gove-divorce-affair-prime-minister-b975114.html), [[3]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2022/01/05/michael-goves-mistress-politics-says-estranged-wife-sarah-vine/)
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* Paragraph 10 – [[3]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2022/01/05/michael-goves-mistress-politics-says-estranged-wife-sarah-vine/), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/sarah-vine-tatler-michael-gove-divorce-affair-prime-minister-b975114.html), [[7]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-57699096)

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2. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/jul/02/michael-gove-and-wife-sarah-vine-to-divorce> - Michael Gove and Sarah Vine announced their separation after 20 years of marriage, stating they had 'drifted apart over the past couple of years'. They remain close friends and will continue supporting their two children. A friend of the couple described the split as 'entirely amicable' and confirmed there was no one else involved. The couple met in 1999 and married in 2001. Vine, a Daily Mail columnist, is also godmother to one of David and Samantha Cameron’s children. ([theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/jul/02/michael-gove-and-wife-sarah-vine-to-divorce?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2022/01/05/michael-goves-mistress-politics-says-estranged-wife-sarah-vine/> - Sarah Vine addressed speculation about her divorce from Michael Gove, stating that his only 'mistress was politics'. She explained that despite rumours, there was no one else involved in their separation. Vine also discussed the strain Brexit placed on their marriage, noting that it led to her 'not speaking to many close friends', which added significant pressure to their relationship. ([telegraph.co.uk](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2022/01/05/michael-goves-mistress-politics-says-estranged-wife-sarah-vine/?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.thelondoneconomic.com/politics/sarah-vine-says-brexit-put-huge-strain-on-marriage-to-michael-gove-307341/> - Sarah Vine revealed that Brexit caused a 'huge strain' on her marriage to Michael Gove. She mentioned that her 'whole life fell away' during the referendum campaign, leading to a breakdown in communication with close friends and adding pressure to her relationship. Vine also expressed her desire to prevent Gove from becoming Prime Minister, stating it was her 'ulterior motive throughout my entire life'. ([thelondoneconomic.com](https://www.thelondoneconomic.com/politics/sarah-vine-says-brexit-put-huge-strain-on-marriage-to-michael-gove-307341/?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/michael-gove-david-cameron-marriage-london-government-b975290.html> - Sarah Vine denied rumours of an affair being the cause of her divorce from Michael Gove, stating that his only 'mistress was politics'. She admitted to working to prevent him from becoming Prime Minister during their 20-year marriage. Vine also discussed the impact of Brexit on their relationship, noting that it led to her 'not speaking to many close friends', which added significant strain to their marriage. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/michael-gove-david-cameron-marriage-london-government-b975290.html?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/sarah-vine-tatler-michael-gove-divorce-affair-prime-minister-b975114.html> - Sarah Vine revealed in an interview with Tatler magazine that her 'ulterior motive throughout my entire life was to stop my husband being prime minister because I can’t think of anything worse'. She also denied rumours of an affair being the cause of their divorce, stating that Gove's only 'mistress was politics'. Vine discussed the strain Brexit placed on their marriage, noting that it led to her 'not speaking to many close friends', which added significant pressure to their relationship. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/sarah-vine-tatler-michael-gove-divorce-affair-prime-minister-b975114.html?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-57699096> - Michael Gove and Sarah Vine announced their separation after 20 years of marriage, stating they are 'in the process of finalising their divorce'. A friend of the couple described the split as 'entirely amicable' and confirmed there was no one else involved. The couple met when they both worked as journalists on The Times newspaper and have two children together. ([bbc.co.uk](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-57699096?utm_source=openai))