



HAWTHORNE POLICE DEPARTMENT

PRESS RELEASE

Issued May 14, 2010

HPD DR #10-7265

Suitable For Public Dissemination

Kidnap / Robbery

On Thursday, May 6, 2010, at about 12:00 PM, the victim, an 81 year old female, was in the parking lot of Target, located at 2700 W. 120th Street. The victim was approached by a female suspect who claimed to have found a wallet full of money in the parking lot. Shortly afterwards, a second female suspect approached and began speaking with the first suspect. This type of interaction with the victim is the initial stage of a common scam used by suspects to bilk unsuspecting victims out of their money and property. If successful, the scam culminates with the suspects tricking the victim into believing that if the victim provides some "good faith money" up front as collateral, he or she will be entitled to a percentage of the "found money," after it goes unclaimed for a period of time. Variations of the scam include a winning lottery ticket, a money order, or a cashier's check, in place of the "wallet full of money" found in a parking lot.

On Thursday's incident, the victim told the suspects she had no money to provide as collateral. The first suspect then asked the victim, who by this point was seated in the driver's seat of her own car in order to leave, if she (the victim) had any jewelry. The victim answered that she did (she was clearly wearing some jewelry that the suspects had seen). The first suspect then showed the victim she had a handgun, and entered the front passenger side seat of the victim's car. The second suspect temporarily entered the back seat of the victim's car, but exited before the victim was forced to drive away.

After taking the jewelry worn by the victim, the first suspect (in the victim's front passenger seat), then ordered her to drive to her home. The suspect accompanied the victim into her home, where the suspect took additional jewelry. The victim was then forced to drive the first suspect back to Target. Once there, the victim was ordered to walk to the rear of the Target store. The victim complied, and by the time she returned to the front of the store, the first suspect was gone (the second suspect was not seen by the victim after being forced to drive to her residence).

Lieutenant Gary Tomatani / Public Information Officer
Front Desk: 310-349-2700 Investigations: 310-349-2820

12501 S. Hawthorne Boulevard
Hawthorne, CA 90250

The victim was not injured during this incident.

The first suspect was described as a female Black, approximately 30 years old, 5'5" tall, large build, wearing her hair in a ponytail. She was armed with a semi-automatic handgun, and was wearing a pink shirt and beige pants at the time of the crime.

The second suspect was described as a female Black, about 30 years old, 6'0" tall, about 175 pounds, and was wearing a brown business suit at the time of the crime.

The suspects are considered armed and dangerous. Detectives are asking that anyone with information related to this incident to immediately contact the Hawthorne Police Department.

Target security is cooperating with the investigation, and has provided detectives with surveillance camera photographs of the first suspect.





5/6/2010 12:29:44 PM Exit Vestibule {AP 423}