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**WOMAN SENTENCED ON SEX TRAFFICKING,
KIDNAPPING, ASSAULT AND ROBBERY CHARGES**

*Posed as Prostitute to Lure Two Male Victims,
Promised Intimate Relationship to Woman She Then Forced Into Prostitution*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Destiny Lebron was sentenced to 13 years in prison on sex trafficking, kidnapping, assault and robbery charges for three incidents in which she lured victims to a location for sex, then detained, assaulted and robbed them with the help of a male co-defendant.

District Attorney Katz said: “Destiny Lebron was the mastermind of a violent criminal enterprise involving sex trafficking and robbery. We have succeeded in getting this ruthless predator off our streets. She will now pay for the brutality she inflicted on her victims.”

Lebron, 20, of North Portland Avenue in Brooklyn, pleaded guilty on October 6 to sex trafficking; promoting prostitution in the second degree; assault in the third degree; two counts of kidnapping in the second degree; two counts of robbery in the first degree; two counts of robbery in the second degree; two counts of unlawful imprisonment in the first degree; unlawful imprisonment in the second degree; and three counts of grand larceny in the fourth degree. Justice Peter Vallone on Thursday sentenced Lebron to 13 years in prison to be followed by five years post-release supervision.

The case against co-defendant Gil Iphael, 23, of Copaigue Street in Valley Stream, is pending.

According to the charges:

- Lebron befriended a female victim via Instagram in February 2022. The two exchanged messages of sexual content and photos and engaged in prostitution-related conversations.
- In July 2022, when Lebron asked her to engage in prostitution, the victim declined. Lebron continued to call and message the victim over two days and the two agreed to meet.
- On July 30, 2022, Lebron and Iphael went to pick the victim up and the three traveled to the Quality Inn hotel located at 153-95 Rockaway Blvd., where the woman was told that she would have to either help Lebron and Iphael rob victims lured to the hotel by Lebron posing as a prostitute, or she would have to engage in prostitution herself and turn over her profits to the defendants.

- When the victim again refused, Lebron and Iphael slapped, punched and threatened her. They forced the victim to take pictures of herself, and used photos saved in her phone, for online prostitution ads. That evening, several clients appeared at the hotel and engaged in prostitution activity with the victim. Lebron and Iphael kept all proceeds collected from the clients.
- The victim managed to escape on July 31 when she was left unattended in the hotel room.
- On August 6, 2022, another victim, a man in his 50s, answered a prostitution ad featuring a photo of Lebron.
- In a hotel room, after the victim had paid her to have sex and began to undress, Lebron threw bleach in his face. She opened the door to let in Iphael, who covered the victim's head with a blanket and began punching him and demanding money.
- Lebron and Iphael restrained the victim and continued assaulting him for several hours. Iphael reached into a bag and threatened to kill the victim, leading the victim to believe Iphael had a gun. The defendants took the victim's car keys, phone and wallet. When the victim refused to unlock his phone, Lebron burned him with a curling iron until he complied. They also stole the man's car.
- The defendants attempted to transfer the victim's money electronically before making multiple trips to ATM machines to make withdrawals from the victim's account using his bank card.
- The defendants repeatedly threatened to kill the victim's family if he reported the crime to police.
- On August 14, 2022, a third victim, a man in his 20s, answered a prostitution ad featuring a photo of Lebron. The man was instructed to meet Lebron at a location in Queens.
- Once at the location, after the victim had agreed to pay her to have sex and began to undress, Lebron and Iphael beat the man and threatened to cut off his genitals.
- Lebron and Iphael restrained the victim and continued assaulting him, often while holding a pillow over his face. The defendants took turns taking the victim's debit card and going to a nearby ATM to withdraw money. The defendants took the victim's wallet, debit card, driver's license, money and other personal items.
- The defendants repeatedly threatened to kill the victim's family if he reported the crime to police.

Assistant District Attorney Tara DiGregorio, Deputy Chief of the District Attorney's Human Trafficking Bureau along with Assistant District Attorneys Kiran Cheema and Rachel Greenberg prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Jessica Melton, Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

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