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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2025

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**LONG ISLAND MAN WHO LURED TWO VICTIMS TO LOCATIONS FOR SEX FACES 20 YEARS  
IN PRISON**

*Third Victim Forced into Prostitution  
Gil Iphael and Co-Defendant Destiny Lebron Engaged in Months-Long Crime Spree*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that Gil Iphael pleaded guilty to kidnapping, robbery and promoting prostitution for three incidents in which he enticed victims to go to a location for sex, then detained, assaulted and robbed them with the help of a female co-defendant. In one instance, he beat a victim and threatened to mutilate him and in another he stole a man's car after beating him.

District Attorney Katz said: "Gil Iphael participated in a sadistic crime spree in which one terrified victim was forced into prostitution and held against her will and others were brutally assaulted, restrained and robbed. He threatened to kill the family members of victims if they reported the crimes. This defendant's reign of violence and exploitation is now over, and he will face 20 years in prison for his actions."

Iphael, 25, of Copiague Street in Valley Stream, pleaded guilty today to two counts of kidnapping in the second degree, two counts of robbery in the first degree and one count of promoting prostitution in the second degree. Supreme Court Justice Peter Vallone is expected to sentence the defendant on March 4 to 20 years in prison and five years post release supervision.

Iphael's codefendant, Destiny Lebron, pleaded guilty in 2023 and was sentenced to 13 years in prison to be followed by five years post-release supervision.

District Attorney Katz said that, according to the charges, on July 30, 2022, Iphael and Lebron went to pick up a woman whom Lebron has befriended on Instagram a few months earlier. The two had exchanged messages of a sexual nature 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.

Iphael and Lebron took the woman to the Quality Inn hotel at 153-95 Rockaway Blvd., where the woman was told that she would have to either help Iphael and Lebron rob victims lured there 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, Iphael and Lebron 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. Iphael and Lebron 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 and met her 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.

Iphael and Lebron 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.

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. They also stole the man's car. The defendants broke one of the man's toes and 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 there, after the victim had agreed to pay her to have sex and began to undress, Iphael and Lebron beat the man, attempted to cut off his toe and threatened to cut off his genitals.

Iphael and Lebron 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, and Assistant District Attorney Kiran Cheema, also of the DA's Human Trafficking Bureau, 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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