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SFPD Warn Chinese Community of Latest Scam Incident

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San Francisco police are alerting the Chinese community of the latest in an ongoing series of scams targeting older Chinese victims, resulting in great financial loss. There have been two reported incidents since October 2, 2014. As a result of the scam, one victim lost \$80,000 in US currency and \$40,000 in jewelry. In this incident, the victim was approached by the first of three female Cantonese-speaking suspects. The suspect told the victim of a doctor who has the ability to cure a variety of diseases. At this point, the two additional suspects approached the victim and suspect one. One of these suspects was acting as the doctor. This suspect told the victim that she is suffering from an illness and under a curse that will adversely affect her loved ones. To relieve the curse, the victim must present her with valuables to be “blessed.” The suspects convinced the victim to bring valuables, consisting of currency and jewelry to a nearby street. A “blessing” was performed. Through sleight of hand, another bag containing worthless items was given back to the victim. The victim was instructed not to look in the bag for a specified amount of time or the “blessing” would be invalidated. A photo of one of the suspects is attached. Anyone who recognizes this suspect is advised to contact police immediately. San Francisco police urge older members of the Chinese community to be suspicious of strangers claiming to provide relief from a curse or who provide “purification” ceremonies in which cash and valuable items must be offered as part of the process. Potential victims are strongly advised to contact police immediately if confronted with such a situation. Anonymous tips can be left on the SFPD tip line at 415-553-9212.

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