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SFPD Arrests Keonte Gathron in Visitacion Valley Assault Case Suspect Linked to Carjacking and Two Separate Robberies 19-006

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On January 8, 2019 at approximately 6:45AM, San Francisco Police officers responded to a residence on the 1000 block of Visitacion Avenue. A witness reported seeing an unknown male suspect exit the residence from an interior staircase then walk eastbound on Visitacion Avenue.

Officers noticed that the front door of the residence was unlocked and open and searched the residence but were unable to locate the occupant. Shortly thereafter, an 88 year-old woman suffering from severe head injuries was located in a nearby park on Leland Avenue. The victim was transported to Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital where she is still being treated for her injuries.

The two incidents were linked by video surveillance footage and evidence located at the scene of the assault and the victim's residence. Investigators believe the suspect assaulted the victim, stole the keys to her residence, and was in the process of committing a burglary at the residence when he was interrupted by a witness.

Over the course of two weeks, SFPD investigators worked tirelessly to identify the suspect. Investigators reviewed surveillance footage, conducted multiple interviews, collected evidence and distributed a forensic artist sketch of the suspect to the public for assistance in our investigation. Evidence collected from the incident was submitted to SFPD's crime lab and on January 18, investigators were notified that DNA analysis linked 18 year-old San Francisco resident Keonte Gathron to the assault and subsequent burglary.

An immediate search began to locate and apprehend Gathron. Almost simultaneously, Gathron was also identified as a suspect in a carjacking which occurred in the early morning hours of January 16, on the 1600 block of Visitacion Avenue. The carjacked vehicle was later found abandoned at gas station on San Bruno Avenue. Video evidence obtained at the scene led to the identification of Gathron as the carjacking suspect.

On Saturday, January 19 at approximately 4:45PM, a 14 year-old girl was approached on the 1000 block of Woolsey Avenue by a suspect on a red bicycle and robbed of her cell phone at gunpoint. At approximately 6:00PM, a 17 year-old girl was approached at Charles Avenue and Belle Avenue in the Taraval district by a suspect on a red bicycle. The suspect punched the girl in the face and stole her phone.

Responding officers from Ingleside Station were able to track the cell phone to the Sunnydale district of San Francisco. During a search, officers made contact with Gathron, whose clothing matched the description of the robbery suspect. After a short foot pursuit and search, officers located Gathron hiding in a vehicle and placed him under arrest.

Gathron's charges are as follows:

Assault/Burglary Case: Attempted Murder, Kidnapping, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Elder Abuse, Burglary, Possession of Stolen Property, Attempting to Destroy Evidence.

Robberies: Robbery (2 counts), Child Endangerment, Possession of Stolen Property, and Resisting Arrest.

"SFPD investigators, patrol officers and our crime lab personnel worked relentlessly to identify and arrest a suspect in these brutal crimes," said San Francisco Police Chief William Scott. "We thank all of the community members who came forward to work with us and address safety concerns related to this case."

A booking photo, along with photos of clothing worn by Gathron accompany this news release.

Although an arrest has been made, if you have any information regarding these incidents, please contact the San Francisco Police Department at 415-575-4444 or Text a Tip to TIP411 and begin the text message with SFPD. You may remain anonymous.

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Shortly thereafter, an 88 year-old female suffering from severe head injuries was located in a park across the street. The investigation led to evidence linking the subject leaving the residence to the assault. The victim was transported to the hospital and still being treated for life-threatening injuries.

The department has been diligently working this assault case with the assistance of the Visitacion Valley community. Evidence led to the identification of a suspect. On the evening of January 19 2019, the suspect, 18 year-old Keonte Gathron, was arrested in San Francisco after committing another robbery.

"San Francisco Police Department investigators worked tirelessly to identify a suspect in this case," said San Francisco Police Chief William Scott. "This is an ongoing investigation and we will have further details to follow later in the week. But we want to express our gratitude to neighbors and leaders in the Visitacion Valley community who worked closely with our investigators to address this act of senseless violence."

Due to pending identification matters, a booking photo is not being released at this time.

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