

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

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:
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA :
:
- v. - :
:
PEACHES STERGO, :
a/k/a "Alice," :
:
Defendant. :
X

SEALED
INDICTMENT

23 Cr.

23 CRIM 020

COUNT ONE
(Wire Fraud)

The Grand Jury charges:

The Fraud

1. From at least in or about May 2017, up to and including at least October 2021, PEACHES STERGO, a/k/a "Alice," the defendant, engaged in a scheme to defraud an 87-year-old Holocaust survivor (the "Victim") of over \$2.8 million, which was his life savings.

2. PEACHES STERGO, a/k/a "Alice," the defendant, is a 36-year-old woman and a resident of Florida. She met the Victim, a then-resident of Manhattan, on a dating website approximately six or seven years ago.

3. The false and misleading statements of PEACHES STERGO, a/k/a "Alice," the defendant, began in or about early 2017. STERGO told the Victim that she had settled a lawsuit involving

injuries she suffered in a car accident, but that her lawyer would not release the settlement funds unless he received a certain amount of money. STERGO asked the Victim if she could borrow from him to pay the lawyer. In May 2017, bank records show the Victim wrote his first check to STERGO for \$25,000.

4. After that initial check, PEACHES STERGO, a/k/a "Alice," the defendant, falsely told the Victim that the settlement funds from the lawsuit had been deposited into her TD Bank account. In truth and in fact, records of bank accounts controlled by STERGO show she never received proceeds from an injury settlement.

5. From in or about May 2017 through in or about October 2021, PEACHES STERGO, a/k/a "Alice," the defendant, repeatedly lied to the Victim to induce him to send money. The Victim wrote almost monthly checks to STERGO, often in increments of \$50,000. After each check was deposited, STERGO told the Victim that her bank needed more money, otherwise the accounts would be frozen, and the Victim would never be paid back. The Victim continued to write checks because he was afraid he would never see his money again. In total, the Victim wrote 62 checks--totaling over \$2.8 million--that were deposited into one of two accounts controlled by STERGO.

6. PEACHES STERGO, a/k/a "Alice," the defendant, falsified documents and emails to perpetuate the fraud. For

example, she created a fake email account, impersonating a TD Bank employee, and used that email account to repeatedly assure the Victim, over the course of months, that he would be repaid if he continued to deposit money into the Victim's TD Bank account. STERGO created fake letters from a TD Bank employee, which falsely claimed her account had a hold which would only be lifted if many tens of thousands of dollars were deposited into her account. STERGO also created fake invoices for the Victim to provide to his bank after the bank began questioning the large and repeated transfers of money to STERGO.

7. In or about October 2021, the Victim confided in his son that, over time, he had given his life savings to PEACHES STERGO, a/k/a "Alice," the defendant, based on her assurances that, after each deposit, he would be paid back. The Victim's son told his father that he had been scammed. After that, the Victim stopped writing checks to STERGO.

8. Because of the fraud committed by PEACHES STERGO, a/k/a "Alice," the defendant, the Victim lost his life savings and was forced to give up his apartment.

9. PEACHES STERGO, a/k/a "Alice," the defendant, was motivated to engage in the fraud scheme to enrich herself. She has lived a life of luxury with the millions she received from the fraud: she bought a home in a gated community, a condominium, a boat, and numerous cars, including a Corvette and

a Suburban. During the course of the fraud, STERGO also took expensive trips, staying at places like the Ritz Carlton, and spent many tens of thousands of dollars on expensive meals, gold coins and bars, jewelry, Rolex watches, and designer clothing from stores like Tiffany, Ralph Lauren, Neiman Marcus, Louis Vuitton, and Hermes.

STATUTORY ALLEGATIONS

10. From at least in or about May 2017, up to and including at least October 2021, in the Southern District of New York and elsewhere, PEACHES STERGO, a/k/a "Alice," the defendant, knowingly having devised and intending to devise a scheme and artifice to defraud, and for obtaining money and property by means of false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises, did transmit and cause to be transmitted by means of wire, radio, and television communication in interstate and foreign commerce, writings, signs, signals, pictures, and sounds, for the purpose of executing such scheme and artifice, to wit, STERGO defrauded the Victim of his life savings by falsely claiming that, if he did not repeatedly deposit money into STERGO's bank accounts, he would lose all the money he had previously deposited into those accounts.

(Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1343 and 2.)

FORFEITURE ALLEGATION

11. As a result of committing the offense alleged in Count One of this Indictment, PEACHES STERGO, a/k/a "Alice," the defendant, shall forfeit to the United States, pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 981(a)(1)(C), and Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461(c), any and all property, real and personal, that constitutes or is derived from proceeds traceable to the commission of said offenses, including but not limited to a sum of money in United States currency representing the amount of proceeds traceable to the commission of said offenses and the following specific property:

a. Any and all monies and funds previously on deposit at TD Bank in account no. 4326399098, and any and all funds traceable thereto, including accrued interest;

b. Any and all monies and funds previously on deposit at Wells Fargo Bank in account no. 5185245528, and any and all funds traceable thereto, including accrued interest;

c. The real property located at 1158 Trappers Trail Loop, Champions Gate, Florida;

d. A white 2022 Ram 1500 Pickup with VIN 1C6RREJT8NN291691;

e. All motor vehicles purchased using funds from either TD Bank account no. 4326399098 or Wells Fargo Bank account no. 5185245528;

f. A Rolex Oyster Perpetual Day-Date 40 with President Bracelet, serial number JF939262;

g. A Rolex Datejust 41 with Jubilee Bracelet, serial number 28QQ4899;

h. A Rolex Datejust 41 with Oyster Bracelet and Roman Numeral dial, serial number 32M48485;

i. The following property purchased from APMEX: two one oz American Gold Eagle BUs purchased on or about September 9, 2021; two one oz American Gold Eagle BUs purchased on or about August 8, 2021; two one kilo cast-poured silver bars purchased on or about December 22, 2020; 10 oz silver bar purchased on or about December 22, 2020; two one oz platinum bars - PAMP Suisse purchased on or about December 22, 2020; .5 oz gold bar - PAMP Suisse Lady Fortuna Veriscan purchased on or about October 28, 2020; 10 oz silver bar - APMEX purchased on or about October 28, 2020; one oz gold bar - Credit Suisse purchased on or about October 28, 2020; two .25 oz. 2020 Gold American Eagle BUs purchased on or about April 28, 2020; and two .5 oz Gold American Eagle BUs purchased on or about April 9, 2020; and

j. All property purchased from R&R Design Jewelry, Jawahir Jewelry, Hermes, Louis Vuitton, Nordstroms, Disney, Target, Saks, Neiman Marcus, Amazon, Ralph Lauren, Lowes, Apple, Tory Burch, Wal-Mart, Tommy Bahama, Tiffany, Polo, and Yves Saint Laurent using funds from either TD Bank account no. 4326399098 or

Wells Fargo Bank account no. 5185245528.

Substitute Asset Provision

12. If any of the above-described forfeitable property, as a result of any act or omission of the defendant:

a. cannot be located upon the exercise of due diligence;

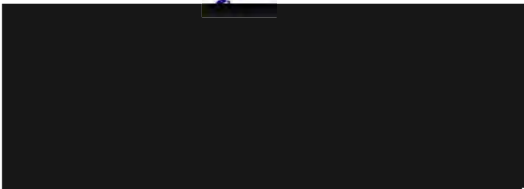
b. has been transferred or sold to, or deposited with, a third party;


c. has been placed beyond the jurisdiction of the court;

d. has been substantially diminished in value; or

e. has been commingled with other property which cannot be divided without difficulty; it is the intent of the United States, pursuant to Title 21, United States Code, Section 853(p), to seek forfeiture of any other property of the defendant up to the value of the forfeitable property described above.

(Title 18, United States Code, Sections 981 and 982;
Title 21, United States Code, Section 853;
Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461.)




DAMIAN WILLIAMS
United States Attorney

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(18 U.S.C. §§ 1343, 2.)

DAMIAN WILLIAMS
United States Attorney

