

**Department of Justice**  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
Central District of California

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## **Beverly Hills Man Arrested on Federal Charges of Attempting to Hire Hitman to Murder One-Time Girlfriend Who Had Rebuffed Him**

*LOS ANGELES* – A Beverly Hills man was arrested today on a murder-for-hire charge that alleges he tried to hire a hitman to kill a woman he briefly dated and who had repeatedly tried to break off the relationship.

Scott Quinn Berkett, 24, was arrested this afternoon without incident after being charged in a federal criminal complaint that alleges he sent thousands of dollars in bitcoin to arrange the murder and then wired another \$1,000 to the “hitman,” who was actually an undercover FBI agent.

According to the affidavit in support of the complaint, Berkett met “Victim 1” online last year, and the woman flew to Los Angeles to meet Berkett in late October. Victim 1, who described Berkett’s behavior as “sexually aggressive,” tried on several occasions to break off the relationship following the October trip, the affidavit states.

In April, a family member who had learned that Berkett continued to contact Victim 1 called and sent text messages to Berkett’s father’s phone, and, on April 20, Berkett appears to have responded saying “consider this matter closed.”

But, Berkett allegedly contacted a group on the dark web that advertised murder-for-hire services. While law enforcement believes that this dark web group was a scam, the group contacted a media outlet, which provided information to the FBI, including messages from Berkett, who was using a screenname of “Ula77,” and documentation of payments by Berkett, according to the affidavit.

The media outlet provided “transaction information from an unnamed source on the Dark Web that showed that Bitcoin payments were made with an understanding that an unknown individual would murder Victim 1,” the affidavit states. “The information provided was specific about the identity and location of Victim 1, as well as social media accounts, nicknames, email, and a distinctive tattoo of Victim 1.”

Berkett allegedly submitted his order for the hit on April 28, writing to the dark web group: “I’d like it to look like an accident, but robbery gone wrong may work better. So long as she is dead. I’d also like for her phone to be retrieved and destroyed irreparably in the process.” The information provided to the FBI indicated that Berkett made Bitcoin payments totaling \$13,000 between April 5 and May 5.

An undercover FBI agent, posing as a hitman, made contact with Berkett on Wednesday and eventually sent a photo of Victim 1, which Berkett confirmed was the victim, according to the affidavit. During the discussions with the purported hitman, Berkett demanded a proof-of-death photo that would show the corpse and Victim 1’s distinctive tattoo.

Berkett made the final \$1,000 payment via Western Union late Thursday afternoon, the affidavit states.

Berkett is expected to make his initial appearance in United States District Court on May 25.

*A criminal complaint contains allegations that a defendant has committed a crime. Every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in court.*

If convicted of the murder-for-hire count, Berkett would face a statutory maximum sentence of 10 years in federal prison.

The FBI is investigating this matter.

Assistant United States Attorney Joseph D. Axelrad of the Violent and Organized Crime Section is prosecuting the case.