

Beat: News

California girl found alive 10 years after abduction

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USPA News - A woman who was 15 years old when she was abducted in Southern California about a decade ago has been found alive, though she suffered years of physical, sexual and mental abuse at the hands of her captor, police said on Wednesday. The victim was 15 years old and living in Santa Ana when she was reported missing by her mother in August 2004. The mother told police at the time that her daughter went missing along with the man she had been dating and living with after a domestic violence incident. She also said she believed her boyfriend was sexually abusing her daughter but had no evidence to support that claim.

The girl, who is now 25, finally contacted police on Tuesday and disclosed what had happened to her. Isidro Garcia, 41, of Bell Gardens, was arrested that same day on suspicion of kidnapping for rape, lewd acts with a minor and false imprisonment, according to the Santa Ana Police Department. The victim has since told investigators that she was living with her mother, her sisters, and her mother's boyfriend when Garcia began sexually abusing her in June 2004. Two months later, after Garcia assaulted his girlfriend, he allegedly drugged the young girl and drove her to a house in nearby Compton. "There, Garcia provided the victim with falsified identity documents and locked her overnight in a garage to prevent the victim from fleeing," a police spokesman said on Wednesday. "Over the course of the following months and years, Garcia repeatedly told the victim her family had given up looking for her, and if she tried to go back to them, the family would be deported." The two moved on several occasions to avoid police detection as the victim, whose identity has not been disclosed, suffered from frequent physical and sexual abuse. "Garcia arraigned for the two of them to receive employment at a night cleaning service, so he could keep a close eye on the victim," the spokesman said. Garcia forced the victim to marry him in 2007 and the two had a child in 2012. Police say the victim was not physically restrained throughout her captivity, but she saw no way out of her situation after years of sustained physical and mental abuse. The young woman gained the courage to contact police this week after recently finding her sister on the social networking website Facebook. The woman's escape comes just over a year after three women were rescued from a house in Cleveland, where they had been held captive by Ariel Castro for years. The young women had been abducted from a nearby street between 2002 and 2004 and were physically, emotionally, and sexually abused on a daily basis. Castro hanged himself in September after being sentenced to life imprisonment. The Ariel Castro case was one of the most disturbing crimes in recent U.S. history and dominated the headlines for weeks as more details were released. But it also echoed other infamous kidnappings, such as the case of 11-year-old Jaycee Lee Dugard who was kidnapped in California in 1991 and was held captive by convicted sex offender Phillip Craig Garrido and his wife for more than 18 years.

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