

INSIDE THE BIEBER TICKET SCAM

Be careful when you buy tour tickets online

SEAN FITZGERALD
24 HOURS

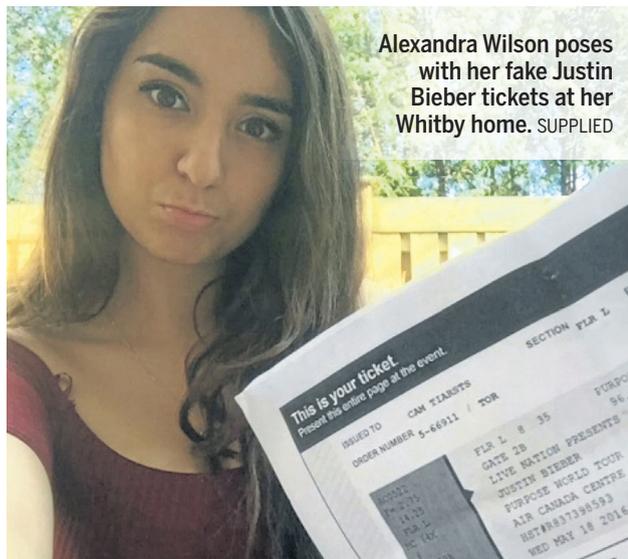
A Whitby-based Justin Bieber fan has a message for the woman who scammed her out of \$400 for fake tickets to the pop star's concert: *Where Are U Now?*

The title of Bieber's 2015 single seems appropriate in this case, as Alexandra Wilson wants to know if there's a way that she can get her money back.

Wilson, 18, recently graduated from a hairdressing program at Marca College, and her parents gave her money as a graduation gift. Since she's a huge 'Belieber' — "I've been a fan since he was first on YouTube," she says — she went on Twitter to see if she could find any ticket resellers for either of the star's two concerts at the Air Canada Centre, which take place Wednesday and Thursday.

After looking up the hashtag #PurposeTourToronto, she found a Twitter user who was selling Bieber tickets. She then drove with her boyfriend to the Chapters location at Square One in Mississauga for the exchange on Monday.

Wilson handed over \$400



Alexandra Wilson poses with her fake Justin Bieber tickets at her Whitby home. SUPPLIED

total for two floor tickets, which go for about \$150 each, plus additional fees, at face value.

After the woman and her friend left, Wilson decided to call Ticketmaster to confirm the tickets under the order number. There were no tickets under that order.

"Then, I noticed that the barcodes on both of the tickets were the same numbers," says Wilson, who adds that they were 'Print at Home' style tickets. "I was literally crying in my car, because I was in shock that this actually happened."

She was able to reach the seller on the phone, and they arranged to meet again at the Chapters to figure out the

situation. Unfortunately, the seller never returned and the Twitter account was eventually deleted.

Postmedia Network tried calling the number Wilson provided for the alleged scammer, but no one picked up.

Wilson says she has been communicating with the police about this incident and wants to make sure other Bieber fans won't get swindled in the same way.

"We want to tell people that if it looks too good to be true, it probably is," says Cst. Rachel Gibbs, from Peel Regional Police. "And those situations where you're buying tickets from people online, through places

like Kijiji or eBay or Twitter, you're going to want to do your homework. A lot of times, that means meeting the seller at a place where you can actually have the tickets verified, like the venue itself."

A spokesperson from Twitter Canada directed us to the social network's Terms of Service, which contains a Counterfeit Goods Policy that prohibits "non-genuine products that attempt to pass themselves off as genuine products of the brand owner."

A Ticketmaster rep sent us links to blog posts that give customers tips for buying and selling tickets. One of the key points? "Buy your tickets from official sources."

Lorne Lipkus, an anti-counterfeit lawyer from Toronto with 30 years of experience in this topic, says that social media platforms are handy for scammers because they can easily set up multiple accounts to conduct their business. He advises people to stay away from Facebook or Twitter when looking for tickets.

"It can't be emphasized enough that people shouldn't be meeting strangers in parking lots, getting pieces of paper that they pay a lot of money for, thinking that they're actually going to get tickets," he says.

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IN THE 6 JUSTIN BIEBER

Where will our favourite bad boy be today?

Pop goes the pop star.

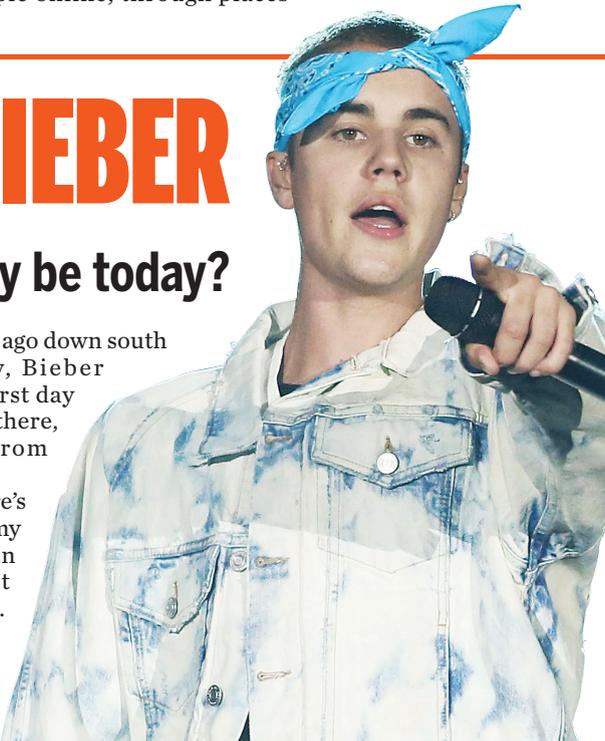
Stratford, Ontario's Justin Bieber, who is performing at the Air Canada Centre on Wednesday and Thursday for his Purpose World Tour, will open a pop-up store at Nomad (819 Queen West), from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily on the same days he struts his stuff on stage.

The *Purpose* merchandise, designed by Jerry Lorenzo of menswear label Fear of God, will be available along with a variety of exclusive Toronto gear and Nomad collaboration pieces.

A couple of weeks ago down south in New York City, Bieber turned up for the first day of his pop-up store there, prompting tears from fans.

At press time, there's no word if the Grammy winner will make an appearance — but we'll let you know. Just follow @24hrs for our Bieber GPS!

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