

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS
COUNTY DEPARTMENT – CHANCERY DIVISION

SHAWUTI MAIMAITIYUMAIER, an
individual, on behalf of himself and all
others similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

v.

JANE DOE a/k/a “Carrie” and JOHN
DOES 1-25,

Defendants.

No. 2025 CH 05863
Calendar 15

Hon. William B. Sullivan
Judge Presiding

ORDER

This matter coming to be heard on the issuance of a preliminary injunction (“PI”), due notice having been given, and the Court being fully advised in the premises, the Court finds and orders the following:

1. Plaintiff Shawuti Maimaitiyumaier (“Plaintiff”) alleges that he and a class of others similarly situated (“Class”) fell victim to a pig-butcher scheme. Comp. ¶¶ 2-3.
2. Plaintiff alleges that one of the Defendants, going by the name “Carrie,” contacted him on WhatsApp and offered him a part-time job in or around November 2024. *Id.* ¶ 42. In this part-time job, Plaintiff would supposedly earn commissions by creating an account on a Digital Leader Platform (“Digital Leader”) and completing tasks and missions—mostly writing online product reviews. *Id.* ¶¶ 42-45. According to Plaintiff’s testimony, Defendants told him that he would have to deposit Bitcoin (“BTC”) into his Digital Leader account to unlock batches of products to review and access his commissions. Plaintiff alleges that Defendants manipulated him into depositing a total of \$19,018.05 in BTC from CashApp and Strike into Digital Leader.
3. Plaintiff testified that he was able to withdraw \$427.25 in BTC in early December 2024. However, Plaintiff testified that when he tried to withdraw his account’s balance shortly thereafter, Defendants told him that his account had been frozen. He testified that Carrie; a customer service agent; and Digital Leader’s CEO, Samuel Olson, all informed him that he would have to deposit 60% of his account’s balance in BTC to unfreeze the account.
4. Plaintiff testified that he had never intended to transfer ownership of the BTC he had deposited in his account to anyone else. He stated he had understood

that he would withdraw these deposits along with the commissions he had earned.

5. Plaintiff's expert witness, Adam Zarazinski ("Zarazinski"), testified that when Plaintiff had deposited BTC into Digital Leader, he had been depositing BTC into "Intake Wallets." Using forensic blockchain analysis, Zarazinski was able to trace Plaintiff's BTC from these Intake Wallets through several blockchain transactions, or "hops," to so-called Pivot Wallets and then to so-called Deposit Wallets. Zarazinski testified that it was typical of pig-butcher schemes to collect scam earnings into these centralized Pivot Wallets before moving them to Deposit Wallets for "off-ramping." Off-ramping is the process by which cryptocurrency is exchanged for fiat currency and taken from the blockchain to traditional banking systems. Zarazinski further testified that his analysis, using forward and backward traces up and down the blockchain, showed that up to forty-four others had fallen victim to the same scam. Zarazinski emphasized that cryptocurrency can move globally at a "lightning pace" due to its decentralized nature.
6. Plaintiff has filed suit, bringing counts for conversion, unjust enrichment, replevin, and declaratory relief. *Id.* at 21-26.
7. He also moved for an ex parte temporary restraining order ("TRO"), which this Court granted. Defendants were enjoined from transferring, encumbering, or withdrawing any funds held in three specific Wallet Addresses from 3:00 p.m. CT on July 11, 2025 until 3:00 p.m. CT on July 21, 2025. The TRO also set the matter for hearing on preliminary injunction. During the hearing on preliminary injunction, the Court sua sponte extended the TRO until 5:00 p.m. CT on July 22, 2025.
8. A preliminary injunction is an extreme remedy issued only "where an emergency exists and serious harm would result if the injunction is not issued." Scheffel & Co., P.C. v. Fessler, 356 Ill. App. 3d 308, 313 (5th Dist. 2005). The purpose of a preliminary injunction is to allow the circuit court to preserve the *status quo* until a hearing on the merits can be held. *Id.* "The status quo to be preserved is the last actual, peaceable, uncontested status which preceded the pending controversy." Martin v. Eggert, 174 Ill. App. 3d 71, 77 (2d Dist. 1988). While the term status quo has been the subject of often inconsistent interpretations, "[preliminary injunctive relief] is designed to prevent a threatened wrong or the further perpetration of an injurious act." Kalbfleisch v. Columbia Cmty. Unit Sch. Dist. Unit No. 4, 396 Ill. App. 3d 1105, 1118 (5th Dist. 2009). Sometimes the status quo is "not a condition of rest but, rather, . . . a condition of action that [is] necessary to prevent irreparable harm." *Id.* at 1117.
9. To obtain a preliminary injunction, a plaintiff must typically establish: (1) a clearly protected right; (2) irreparable harm by the defendant's conduct if an

injunction does not issue; (3) there is no adequate remedy at law; and (4) likelihood of success on the merits. Chi. Sch. Reform Bd. of Trs. v. Martin, 309 Ill. App. 3d 924, 939 (1st Dist. 1999). Additionally, courts often balance the equities or the relative hardships. Fessler, 356 Ill. App. 3d at 313.

10. To establish a clearly ascertainable right in need of protection, a plaintiff must raise a fair question that it has a substantive interest recognized by statute or common law. Delta Med. Sys. v. Mid-America Med. Sys., Inc., 331 Ill. App. 3d 777, 789-90 (1st Dist. 2002). A well-pleaded complaint for injunctive relief must contain on its face a clear right to relief and allege facts which establish the right to such relief in a positive, certain and precise manner. Nameoki Tp. v. Cruse, 155 Ill. App. 3d 889, 898 (5th Dist. 1987).
11. Plaintiff has raised a fair question that he has a substantive interest in the BTC he deposited in his Digital Leader account in exchange for tasks and with the expectation that such deposits would be returned to him. See generally, People ex rel. Auditor of Pub. Accts. v. W. Side Tr. & Sav. Bank, 376 Ill. 339, 342 (1941) (title to deposit remains with depositor where there was agreement that deposit would be returned to depositor or where money deposited was to be used for a specifically designated purpose). He raised a fair question as to the commissions he earned, as well. Similarly, Plaintiff has raised a fair question as to the Class' ascertainable right to their funds stolen in a pig-butcher scam.
12. The elements of irreparable injury and inadequate remedy at law required for a temporary restraining order are closely related. Happy R. Sec., LLC v. Agri-Sources, LLC, 2013 IL App (3d) 120509, ¶ 36. An irreparable injury is one which cannot be adequately compensated in damages or be measured by any certain pecuniary standard. Id. However, irreparable injury does not necessarily mean injury that is great or beyond the possibility of repair or compensation in damages, but is the type of harm of such constant or frequent recurrence that no fair or reasonable redress can be had in a court of law. Bally Mfg. Corp. v. JS&A Group, Inc., 88 Ill. App. 3d 87, 94 (1st Dist. 1980).
13. With respect to the element of an inadequate remedy at law, it is widely held that money damages constitute adequate compensation absent a showing that it would be impossible, rather than merely complicated, to ascertain the amount of damages. Wilson v. Wilson, 217 Ill. App. 3d 844, 856-59 (1st Dist. 1991). However, "the fact that plaintiffs' ultimate relief may be a money judgment does not deprive a court of equity the power to grant a preliminary injunction." All Seasons Excavating Co. v. Bluthardt, 229 Ill. App. 3d 22, 28 (1st Dist. 1992) (citing K.F.K. Corp. v. Am. Cont'l Homes, Inc., 31 Ill. App. 3d 1017, 1021 (2d Dist. 1975)). Instead, "for a legal remedy to preclude

injunctive relief, the remedy must be ‘clear, complete, and as practical and efficient to the ends of justice and its prompt administration as the equitable remedy.’” In re Marriage of Hartney, 355 Ill. App. 3d 1088, 1090 (2d Dist. 2005).

14. Plaintiff has made an adequate showing that he and the Class will suffer irreparable harm with inadequate legal remedy unless preliminary injunctive relief issues. Zarazinski testified that he was “99.99%” confident that Defendants would off ramp Plaintiffs and the Class’ funds into fiat currency. Other courts have recognized this unique harm posed by the anonymized and decentralized nature of cryptocurrency. See Mot., Exs. C-F, J. Similarly, Illinois courts have previously granted preliminary injunctive relief freezing funds in order to preserve the status quo. Comp. All Seasons Excavating Co. v. Bluthardt, 216 Ill. App. 3d 504, 512-14 (2d Dist. 1991); Carriage Way Apts. v. Pojman, 172 Ill. App. 3d 827, 838 (2d Dist. 1988).
15. To show a likelihood of success on the merits, a party must raise a fair question as to the existence of the right claimed and lead the court to believe that she will probably be entitled to the relief prayed for if the proof sustains her allegations. Ron & Mark Ward, LLC v. Bank of Herrin, 2024 IL App (5th) 230274, ¶ 71. An element of the likelihood of success on the merits is whether the complaint states a cause of action sufficient to withstand a 2-615 motion to strike. See Strata Marketing, Inc. v. Murphy, 317 Ill. App. 3d 1054 (1st Dist. 2000).
16. Plaintiff has raised a fair question as to his likelihood of success on the merits as to his conversion and unjust enrichment claims.
17. To satisfy the elements for conversion, a plaintiff must allege (1) the defendants unauthorized and wrongful assumption of control, dominion, or ownership over the plaintiff’s personal property, (2) the plaintiff’s right in the property, (3) that the plaintiff has an absolute and unconditional right to immediate possession of the property, and (4) the plaintiff’s demand for possession for the property. Wei Quan v. Arcotech Uniexpat, Inc., 2018 IL App (1st) 180227, ¶ 17. Plaintiff testified that he deposited BTC into his account without transferring it to Defendants. In spite of this and Plaintiff’s requests for the return of his deposits and commissions, Zarazinski testified Defendants transferred Plaintiff’s funds to Pivot and then Destination Wallets. Plaintiff has shown a likelihood of success on the merits for his conversion claim, Count I.
18. To satisfy the elements for unjust enrichment, a plaintiff must allege a “defendant has unjustly retained a benefit to the plaintiff’s detriment, and that the defendant’s retention of the benefit violates the fundamental principles of justice, equity, and good conscience.” HPI Health Care Servs., Inc. v. Mt. Vernon Hosp., Inc., 131 Ill. 2d 145, 160. Plaintiff testified that Defendants

misrepresented that he would be able to fully retrieve his deposits and fully access the commissions he earned. He testified that he was now out thousands of dollars in BTC—thousands now held by Defendants to his detriment. Zarazinski testified that his analysis showed that a Class of others had very likely experienced the same pig-butcher scam. Plaintiff satisfies likelihood of success on the merits as to his unjust enrichment claim, Count II.

19. Because Plaintiff has shown a likelihood of success on the merits as to Counts I and II, it is unnecessary for the Court to consider whether he has shown a likelihood of success as to Counts III and IV.

20. A court need only balance the hardships and consider the public interests if all of the TRO elements are met. Rodrigue Ceda Makindu v. Ill. High Sch. Ass'n, 2015 IL App (2d) 141201, ¶ 31. Since Plaintiff has satisfied all the prerequisites, the Court must consider the hardships and interests of the parties.

21. Nothing indicates that freezing the funds until a decision on the merits would impose a great hardship on Defendants. A preliminary injunction would prevent the possibility of Plaintiff's and the Class' funds virtually disappearing into thin air—which is an inherent hazard with cryptocurrency—and preserve the status quo until the Court reaches the merits. The balance of the hardships and equities favors Plaintiff and the Class.

22. For the foregoing reasons, Plaintiff's motion is granted:

- a. Defendants are preliminarily restrained from withdrawing, transferring, or encumbering any assets currently held in the following Wallet Addresses:
 - i. 1GoKwxgMgK7oWKyaWsiwh9Yj5zS9WgbmDy (held at Binance);
 - ii. bc1qpaxma6vz4yexujhh7vgaxl0np69r2rpnjyftdz77u80nl0g8vspqesmq (held at OKX);
 - iii. bc1q3cmxrnu9a4xcm4asjpqh6ry43k65ua8r2szrdk23ewf7stheuyxqclrzps (held at OKX);
- b. The Court will permit service of this Order by the method known as "Ordinal Inscription Process," which is described in Plaintiff's Motion and was discussed during the hearing.
- c. Plaintiff shall serve this order personally on Binance and OKX.
- d. This preliminary injunction shall expire only upon court order.

23. This matter is continued for status to September 22, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. CT via Zoom (955 3557 3920).

SO ORDERED.

ENTERED:



Judge William B. Sullivan, No. 2142

DATED July 22, 2025

ORDER OF THE COURT

