

Assigned for all purposes to: Spring Street Courthouse, Judicial Officer: Jill Feeney

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8 **SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**
9 **COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CENTRAL DISTRICT**

11 JOO HYE SONG, an individual,
12 Plaintiff,

13 v.

14 TARGET CORPORATION, a corporation,
WATERMARK SECURITY GROUP, INC., a
15 corporation, BROOKFIELD PROPERTIES
(USA) LLC, a limited liability company, and
16 DOES 1 through 50, inclusive,

17 Defendants.

Case No. **23STCV06788**

COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES:

- 1. **NEGLIGENCE**
- 2. **PREMISES LIABILITY**

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

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19 Plaintiff JOO HYE SONG brings this lawsuit for causes of action against Defendant
20 TARGET CORPORATION, a corporation, WATERMARK SECURITY GROUP, INC., a
21 corporation, BROOKFIELD PROPERTIES (USA) LLC, a limited liability company, and DOES 1
22 through 50, inclusive.

23 **GENERAL ALLEGATIONS**

24 1. As a L.A. City Councilmember recently and publicly declared, the streets of Los
25 Angeles “are the largest psychiatric ward in the United States.”¹ Downtown Los Angeles
26 (“DTLA”), in particular, has become overrun with homelessness and violence.² Indeed, it has
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28 ¹ <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2023-03-08/stabbing-suspect-in-standoff-with-police-at-alhambra-home>
² <https://products.xtown.la/neighborhood/downtown>

1 been reported that residents and workers in DTLA fear for their safety every single day.³

2 Businesses and employers in downtown that open their doors to the general public must therefore
3 be vigilant, be on high alert and exercise extreme caution to keep their patrons and the public safe
4 from foreseeable acts of violence carried out by deranged and violent delinquents.

5 2. In the heart of DTLA is one of the area’s busiest and popular shopping destinations
6 called FIGat7th located at Figueroa and 7th Street. Its website states: “FIGat7th is DTLA’s one-
7 stop shopping, dining, and entertainment destination-home to fashion finds, a collection of unique
8 eateries, and a world-class arts and events program.” One of the largest shops at FIGat7th is retail
9 giant Target (“Subject Property”). And that is where this tragic and terrifying case took place.

10 3. Despite knowing that DTLA was seeing an uptick in crime and homelessness, as
11 evidenced, in part, by Target employing an armed security guard to keep the store safe, on the
12 evening of November 15, 2022, a deranged homeless man walked freely into the store, grabbed a
13 butcher knife with a 9-inch blade easily off a shelf and proceeded to brutally attack not just one
14 customer but two customers before he was belatedly shot by the security guard.

15 4. Further, despite the homeless man repeatedly confronting his first victim, a 9-year-
16 old boy, and telling him that he was going to “stab and kill” him, as reported by LAPD Chief
17 Michael Moore, causing the boy to try to escape, neither the armed security guard nor anyone
18 working at the store came to the boy’s (or his mother’s) rescue before it was too late. Shockingly,
19 even after the homeless man brutally stabbed the boy, causing mass hysteria in the store with
20 customers screaming in fear and running away from him, the man was still able to freely walk
21 around the store wielding a large butcher knife before attacking his second victim, a young woman
22 who was located in a completely different part of the store. Again, neither the armed security
23 guard nor anyone working at the store came to her aid before she too was brutally stabbed.

24 5. Upon information and belief, following the subject incident, the knives at Target
25 were locked behind a display case—a safety measure that should have already been in place
26 before this tragedy occurred.

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28 ³ <https://www.latimes.com/homeless-housing/story/2022-04-29/assaults-at-union-station-strike-fear-in-janitors-and-retail-workers>

1 sued said defendants by such fictitious names. The full extent of the facts linking such fictitiously
2 sued defendants is unknown to Plaintiff. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereupon alleges,
3 that each of the defendants designated herein as a DOE was, and is, negligent, or in some other
4 actionable manner, responsible for the events and happenings hereinafter referred to, and thereby
5 negligently, or in some other actionable manner, legally and proximately caused the hereinafter
6 described injuries and damages to Plaintiff. Plaintiff will hereafter seek leave of the Court to
7 amend this Complaint to show the defendants' true names and capacities after the same have been
8 ascertained.

9 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

10 **(Negligence Against All Defendants and DOES 1 through 50, Inclusive, by Plaintiff JOO**
11 **HYE SONG)**

12 14. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates herein by reference each and every allegation
13 and statement contained in the prior paragraphs.

14 15. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereupon alleges, that at all times
15 mentioned herein, Defendants TARGET CORPORATION, WATERMARK SECURITY
16 GROUP, INC., BROOKFIELD PROPERTIES and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive, owed a duty of
17 care to all reasonably foreseeable people, including Plaintiff, to ensure the safety and protection of
18 persons who entered and patronized the Subject Property. Defendants TARGET CORPORATION
19 WATERMARK SECURITY GROUP, INC., BROOKFIELD PROPERTIES and DOES 1 through
20 50, inclusive, also owed a duty to take reasonable steps to secure common areas against the
21 foreseeable criminal acts of third parties that would likely occur in the absence of such
22 precautionary measures. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereupon alleges, that at all times
23 mentioned herein, Defendants TARGET CORPORATION, WATERMARK SECURITY
24 GROUP, INC., BROOKFIELD PROPERTIES and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive, carelessly,
25 negligently, and recklessly owned, leased, managed, maintained, controlled, entrusted, serviced,
26 constructed, organized and operated the Subject Property. Specifically, Defendants breached their
27 duty of care when they carelessly and negligently (1) failed to adequately assess the risks, or to
28 assess the risks at all, of conditions, relating to the open and accessible knife display from which

1 the perpetrator took the knife, that posed a risk of injury or death to persons such as Plaintiff, (2)
2 failed to properly perform risk assessments to detect hazardous conditions and/or target areas to
3 prevent the risk of harm from hazardous conditions, including but not limited to, the open and
4 accessible knife display from which the perpetrator took the knife, to persons such as Plaintiff, (3)
5 failed to adequately supervise the hazardous condition, which Defendants knew or should have
6 known to be a hazardous condition, (4) failed to provide personnel qualified and competent to
7 provide safety and security to persons such as Plaintiff, especially given the prevalence of
8 homeless people in the area and (5) failed to properly train, hire, control, or supervise security
9 personnel meant to provide and ensure the safety and protection of persons like Plaintiff.

10 16. Plaintiff is further informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that Defendants
11 knew, or through the exercise of reasonable care, should have known about the unreasonable risk
12 of harm, both from inadequate security and the knife display, given the high risk to safety posed
13 by the prevalent homeless population people in the area. This unreasonable risk of harm was such
14 a nature and existed long enough that Defendants had sufficient time to discover it and, using
15 reasonable care, take adequate precautions.

16 17. Plaintiff is further informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that said Defendants
17 acts and/or omissions and other wrongful conduct directly, legally, and proximately caused, and
18 were a substantial factor in causing the injuries and resulting damages to Plaintiff.

19 18. As a direct and proximate result of the negligence of Defendants and DOES 1
20 through 50, inclusive, Plaintiff JOO HYE SONG has been injured and hurt in her health, strength,
21 and activity, sustaining serious injury to her body, and shock and injury to her nervous system and
22 person, all of which said injuries have caused and continue to cause Plaintiff great physical and
23 mental pain and suffering. Plaintiff is further informed and believe, and thereon alleges, that said
24 injuries will result in some or all disability to her general damages in the amount which will be
25 stated according to proof, pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Section 425.10.

26 19. As a legal, direct, and proximate result of the aforementioned conduct of
27 Defendants and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive, Plaintiff will also sustain a loss of earning capacity
28 and loss opportunity, as well as additional economic damages, according to proof, pursuant to

1 sufficient period of time prior to the Subject Incident to have taken measures to prevent such
 2 incidents.

3 26. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereupon alleges, that said dangerous
 4 conditions were a legal, direct, and proximate cause of the injury and damages suffered by
 5 Plaintiff.

6 27. As a direct and proximate result of the negligence of Defendants and DOES 1
 7 through 50, inclusive, Plaintiff JOO HYE SONG has been injured and hurt in her health, strength,
 8 and activity, sustaining serious injury to her body, and shock and injury to her nervous system and
 9 person, all of which said injuries have caused and continue to cause Plaintiff great physical and
 10 mental pain and suffering. Plaintiff is further informed and believe, and thereon alleges, that said
 11 injuries will result in some or all disability to her general damages in the amount which will be
 12 stated according to proof, pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Section 425.10.

13 28. As a legal, direct, and proximate result of the aforementioned conduct of
 14 Defendants and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive, Plaintiff will also sustain a loss of earning capacity
 15 and loss opportunity, as well as additional economic damages, according to proof, pursuant to
 16 California Code of Civil Procedure Section 425.10.

17 29. As a legal, direct, and proximate result of the aforementioned conduct of
 18 Defendants and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive, Plaintiff has been compelled to, did, and will
 19 continue to employ the services of hospitals, physicians, nurses and the like, to care for and treat
 20 her, and did incur hospital, medical, professional and incidental expenses, and Plaintiff is informed
 21 and believes, and thereon alleges, that by reason of her injuries, will necessarily incur additional
 22 like expenses for an indefinite period of time in the future, the exact amount of which expenses
 23 will be stated according to proof, pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Section 425.10.

24 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

25 WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays judgment against all Defendants and DOES 1 through 50,
 26 inclusive, and each of them, as follows:

27 1. For general damages (also known as non-economic damages), including but not
 28 limited to, past and future physical pain and mental suffering, loss of enjoyment of life,

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disfigurement, physical impairment, inconvenience, grief, anxiety, humiliation, and emotional distress, in an amount in excess of the jurisdictional minimum, according to proof;

2. For special damages (also known as economic damages), including but not limited to, past and future hospital, medical, professional, and incidental expenses, as well as past and future loss of earnings, loss of opportunity, and loss of earning capacity, in excess of the jurisdictional minimum, according to proof;


3. For prejudgment interest, according to proof;

4. For costs of suit incurred herein, according to proof;

5. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

DATED: March 27, 2023

PANISH | SHEA | BOYLE | RAVIPUDI LLP

By: 
Robert S. Glassman
Attorneys for Plaintiff

DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY

Plaintiff JOO HYE SONG hereby demands a trial by jury as to all causes of action.

DATED: March 27, 2023

PANISH | SHEA | BOYLE | RAVIPUDI LLP

By: 
Robert S. Glassman
Attorneys for Plaintiff