

# Jail for woman in \$1.2m cheque fraud

A WOMAN who helped a man keep \$1.2 million in ill-gotten gains in her bank accounts was jailed three months yesterday.

Sim Hwei Kian, 30, admitted depositing in her bank accounts four cheques for that amount from a man known to her only as "Kevin", and then withdrawing \$1.18 million and handing it to him.

Sim's offence started out with her money problems. Short of money, she went online in Sep-

tember and posted messages asking for loans.

"Kevin" was one of the many who replied. He offered her \$500 for each bank account she opened and a further 0.5 per cent commission for each transaction.

She was also promised \$10,000 when the accounts were closed after a year.

The former Singapore Turf Club clerk was told by "Kevin" the bank accounts were a repository for 4-D and soccer bet collections.

In truth, however, the money had been misappropriated. The four cheques had been cut from the cheque books of ConocoPhillips Asia Ventures and ConocoPhillips International and the signatures forged.

Sim did not meet "Kevin", even once. When the cheques were slotted under her door, she filled in her name as the payee and deposited them in her bank accounts.

Over two days in late Sept-

ember, she withdrew \$1.18 million, bundled the cash into bags and placed it at a staircase landing for "Kevin" to pick up.

On Sept 25, she withdrew \$5,000 for her own use. This amount has been recovered.

Her lawyer, Mr Satwant Singh, said she was not the mastermind, nor did she benefit from the crime.

She could have been fined up to \$200,000 or jailed up to seven years or both.

**ELENA CHONG**