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St. Croix Woman Reports Domestic Strangulation Incident with Child Nearby

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Earl Andre By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. CROIX — A man whose ex-girlfriend is accusing him of choking her on the bed next to her infant son is now facing charges of domestic violence.

According to court documents, during the afternoon on October 6, a woman reported to the Wilbur H. Francis Command police station to inform officers that she had been assaulted by her ex-boyfriend some days ago.

She said that she had checked her phone on the morning in question and noticed several missed calls from Earl Andre. When she returned the call, Andre reportedly immediately began accusing her of being intimate with someone else. He then asked her to come to his house, but she

declined.

A subsequent knock on the woman's door turned out to be her ex. She told police that she allowed Andre inside, but did not speak to him, instead moving through the house as she tried to prepare herself and her infant child to leave. Her ex, she told officers, was standing in such a way to prevent her from moving freely, and ignored her request for him to step aside.

Eventually, she says she pushed Andre out of the way, which is when he rushed towards her, grabbing her by the throat and pushing her backwards onto the bed. He then reportedly began squeezing her throat while threatening to kill her in front of her child, who was on the bed next to them. The woman said that when she realized she was having difficulty breathing, she began trying to insert her fingers between Andre's hands and her throat, so as to lessen the pressure.

Her ex eventually released his grip on her throat, she told officers, and went to sit in the living room before returning to the bedroom to demand some clothing that he had left in the home. When she did not respond to his satisfaction, the woman said that Andre attacked her again, this time using a much tighter grip on her throat and placing his thumb on her trachea. She told police that she fainted from the pressure.

After recounting what had happened to her that day, the woman then told officers that this was not the first time her now ex-boyfriend had assaulted her. She showed them a bruise on her thigh that she said was left after Andre punched her during a previous incident.

She did not come to the police station immediately, she said, because she was afraid for her safety and that of her family. Andre had been making threats, she told officers. However, his continued harassment and taunting on social media following the strangling incident prompted her to seek help from the authorities.

Police tracked down Andre on October 8, and brought him to the station on a different matter. While there, he was informed of this complaint against him, and provided a video statement which in large part corroborated the woman's story. He was then arrested and charged with second-degree assault, simple assault and battery, and disturbance of the peace by fighting, all as crimes of domestic violence.

The outcome of his advice of rights hearing, which was held on Monday, have not as of press time been published by the court. However, according to online court records, Magistrate Ernest Morris Jr. did order Andre to be released pending trial, with a cash bail component of \$101. A date for his next court appearance has similarly not been published as of press time.