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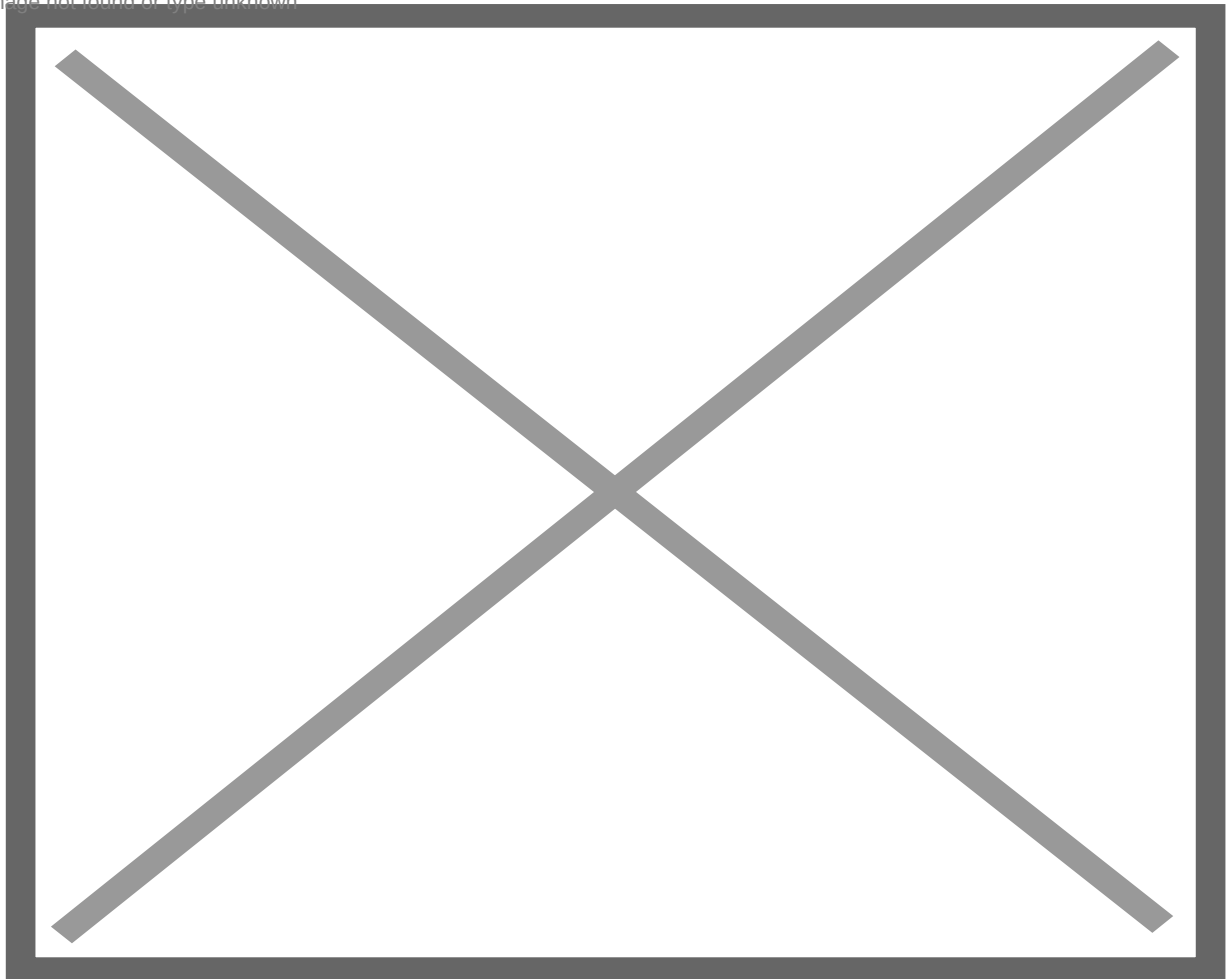
Man in Custody After Shooting 33-Year-Old Woman to Death in St. Thomas

37-year-old Simon Rawlins Jr. faces homicide charges after the shooting death of Mardette Ward in St. Thomas

Crime / **Published On April 20, 2024 07:38 AM /**

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Mugshot of Simon Rawlins Jr. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. THOMAS — A fatal shooting that took place Friday evening in St. Thomas has led to homicide charges against Simon Rawlins Jr., 37, who is charged with shooting 33-year-old Mardette Ward to death.

The V.I. Police Department responded to a distressing 911 call at approximately 6:01 p.m., where a female reported her friend had been shot and appeared unresponsive. The incident occurred in Thomasville, with the caller quickly identifying the assailant as Rawlins, who allegedly fled the

scene immediately after the shooting.

Upon arrival, law enforcement and emergency medical technicians found Ward with a gunshot wound to her upper body. Despite rapid response efforts, she was declared deceased at the scene by 6:15 p.m.

A motive behind the fatal shooting had yet to be established at time of publication, however authorities launched an intensive manhunt in the Thomasville and Bovoni areas, culminating in the arrest of Rawlins without further incident at around 10:00 p.m. on the same day. He is currently held on a \$1 million bail, as ordered by the court.

The VIPD's Major Crimes Unit is leading the investigation into the incident. The VIPD is urging anyone with information about this crime to come forward. Tips can be shared with the at (340) 774-2211, the Criminal Investigation Unit's Major Crimes Division at (340) 642-8449, or anonymously through Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (or online [here](#)).