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Man Arrested After Reportedly Assaulting Girlfriend In Front Of Horrified Bystanders

Police arrest Akeem Forbes after bystanders report assault on his girlfriend

Crime / **Published On May 06, 2024 07:45 AM /**

Staff Consortium **May 06, 2024**

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Last updated on Monday, May 6th, 2024.

ST. THOMAS — A man is facing felony domestic violence charges after reportedly punching and choking his girlfriend in front of horrified bystanders.

On Thursday, police were called to the Windward Passage area in response to reports of a domestic disturbance. They arrived to find Akeem Forbes sitting on a chair near Emile Griffith Park. His girlfriend was nearby, as were several bystanders who told officers that Forbes had assaulted the woman.

One witness said that she had been walking in the area and looked across at Windward Passage as she passed. She saw a man later identified as Forbes standing over a woman and punching her in the face with a closed fist. The bystander told police that people in the vicinity were trying to separate the man and the woman, but he kept hitting and choking his target until he was ultimately able to be physically separated from the woman.

Police next traveled to the Schneider Regional Medical Center, where the woman had been taken for treatment. She told them that Forbes, her boyfriend, had become drunk during J'Ouvert, and at some point decided to sit down to catch his breath. He found a resting spot near the Windward Passage Hotel and decided to sit there, but soon began to doze off. His girlfriend told police that she offered to hold his jewelry for him, and he agreed.

The woman returned to her boyfriend's resting spot some time later, woke him up, and handed over the jewelry she had been holding. She told police that he began to accuse her of stealing a gold nugget bracelet, and at some point lunged at her throat.

She described how he held her by the neck, threw her on the floor, and began hitting her, undeterred at first by the attempts of bystanders to separate the two before they were eventually pulled apart by the efforts of passers by.

After police took note of the woman's injuries, Forbes was arrested and charged with second degree assault, simple assault, and disturbance of the peace, all as acts of domestic violence. Although his first court appearance was scheduled for Friday, there is currently no information on the court docket to indicate whether an advice of rights hearing was indeed held for Forbes.