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Arizona Woman Arrested at St. Thomas Airport After Allegedly Scamming Rental Car Company

Emoni Goldman admitted to police that she did not pay for the rental because she didn't have the money, leading to charges of false pretense and credit card fraud after attempting to leave St. Thomas without settling the bill

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Mugshot of Emoni Goldman. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. THOMAS — A woman was arrested and charged after allegedly renting a vehicle for use on her vacation and subsequently trying to flee the territory without paying.?

Last week, the Economic Crime Unit began investigating a complaint that a woman had scammed a car rental company into giving her a vehicle for which she never paid.?

The manager of the company told police that Emoni Goldman came into the business on August 21, accompanied by three men. She chose a 2021 Ford Bronco for \$125 per day plus a \$250 security deposit and filled out the paperwork, providing her Arizona driver's license as part of the process.?

When it came time to pay, one of the men reportedly provided a credit card number read off his phone. After several unsuccessful attempts to enter the details manually, the rental company tried using Magic Pay for the transaction, but that also proved futile.?

At that point, with Ms. Goldman and her companions pleading the need for a vehicle, the manager says he allowed the group to leave with the vehicle, on condition that she return the next morning to settle the bill. She reportedly never showed.?

Four days elapsed before the rental company manager was able to reach Ms. Goldman. She told him that her card had been blocked, but promised that her father would cover the charges. He contacted her again on August 28, and she again reportedly promised to return the vehicle and settle the outstanding bill, which at that point was \$1,164.37. That promise also proved hollow, as she was once again a no-show.

A third attempt at contacting Ms. Goldman resulted in another promise, this time to return the vehicle at 10 a.m. on August 29. The appointed time came and went with no sign of her or the vehicle. At some point, the manager saw, via the surveillance cameras, a silver Ford Bronco traveling through a nearby gas station. The Bronco parked, and a man could be seen exiting the vehicle and walking towards the service station entrance. When he realized that this SUV was his missing rental, the manager quickly went outside to retrieve it, but did not see who had parked it at the gas station.

Police caught up with Ms. Goldman at American Airlines counter at the Cyril E. King airport. She told them that she had come to St. Thomas to visit her boyfriend, and said that he and his best friend went to the rental agency with her. Ms. Goldman admitted to completing the paperwork to rent the Bronco for a week, and confirmed that the manager allowed her to leave without paying on condition she return the next day. She told police that she did not return, but said that it was her boyfriend who assumed the responsibility of covering the [charges](#). Ms. Goldman excused her lack of response to the several calls from the rental company by saying that she believed her boyfriend was taking care of it. She told police that she did not know who had parked the rental at the gas station, but expressed the belief that the rental company had been paid.

?Police investigations uncovered several text messages Ms. Goldman sent to the rental company, containing credit card details that were supposed to be entered manually, and a suspicious PayPal account, none of which were able to be charged successfully. She reportedly finally admitted that she did not pay for the rental because she did not have the money.

Ms. Goldman was arrested and charged with obtaining money by false pretense and fraudulent use of a credit card. She appeared before Magistrate Simone VanHoltten-Turnbull on Friday for her advice of rights hearing, where the judge found probable cause to uphold both charges against her.?

Bail was set at \$20,000 with the provision to provide 10% in cash. Ms. Goldman must now report to the probation office in person twice a week, or by telephone if allowed to travel back to her state of residence. Her next court appearance has been scheduled for September 20.