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Man Accused of Dangling Girlfriend From Seventh-Floor Balcony at St. Thomas Hotel; Both Arrested After Violent Altercation

Police say Frank Farrugia bit his girlfriend and pulled her over a seventh-floor balcony railing before bringing her back; he now faces attempted murder and assault charges, while both he and Dana Rodriguez were arrested after officers noted injuries.

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Mugshots of Frank Farrugia and Dana Rodriguez. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. THOMAS — A violent altercation at the Westin Frenchman's Reef Hotel has led to the arrests of both Frank Farrugia and Dana Rodriguez, after police say Farrugia attempted to murder

his girlfriend by dangling her over a seventh-floor balcony.

Court documents state that police were called to the hotel late Wednesday night and escorted to the couple's room, where they interviewed both parties. Rodriguez told officers that the trouble began earlier in the afternoon at the hotel's restaurant when she and Farrugia began arguing. Hours later, the dispute continued in their room, escalating into "verbal insults and body-shaming remarks," according to police.

Rodriguez said she was in the bathroom when Farrugia barged in, grabbed her, and bit her on the right arm. She recounted that he threw a can of soda at her, which missed, then snatched her phone and ran to the porch threatening to throw it away. When she tried to retrieve the phone, she said Farrugia picked her up and pulled her over the balcony railing. Dangling seven stories above the ground, Rodriguez pleaded for her life. She told officers that Farrugia replied, "I don't care if I have to go to jail." Her screams, along with those of two women at the pool below, prompted Farrugia to pull her back to safety. Hotel security soon arrived and prevented further confrontation.

Police noted that Farrugia appeared highly intoxicated when questioned. He described his girlfriend as "mentally unstable and physically aggressive," claiming he had been a victim of repeated theft and abuse. Farrugia showed officers photos of alleged past injuries and said that Rodriguez had struck him three times before he threw her phone over the railing.

Officers documented injuries on both parties: bruising consistent with a bite mark on Rodriguez's right arm, and swelling and bruising around Farrugia's left eye. Because of the conflicting accounts, visible injuries, and lack of independent witnesses, police arrested both individuals.

Farrugia faces charges of attempted murder, third-degree assault, first- and third-degree reckless endangerment, destruction of property, and disturbance of the peace as crimes of domestic violence. Rodriguez has been charged with misdemeanor assault and disturbing the peace by fighting.

Both were scheduled for advice of rights hearings on Friday before Magistrate Simone VanHoltten-Turnbull. As of press time, however, court records did not confirm whether the hearings had been held.