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St. Croix Man Charged With Attempted Murder After Allegedly Bludgeoning Friend With Iron at Abandoned Gym

Court documents describe a brutal August 30 assault that left the victim's arm broken and disfigured. The man said his longtime friend, Alexander Mateo, threatened to kill him before using a metal object to beat him until he fled in pain to get help.

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Mugshot of Alexander Mateo. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. CROIX — A man is now facing potential attempted murder charges after a reported brutal assault on someone who called him a friend.

According to court documents, police were called to the Juan F. Luis Hospital on the morning of August 30 because a patient who was brought in by ambulance reported that he was the victim of an assault. Responding officers met the man in the emergency room. According to police, he was screaming in pain, with what appeared to be a bloody bandage wrapped around his arm. His arm was “visibly disfigured compared to the normal human being,” an officer reported, with “a few bones visibly shifted out of place” and “several lacerations.” Although he was still awaiting an x-ray, a nurse reportedly concurred that his arm appeared broken in several places.

Despite his apparent distress, the man was able to speak with the officers. He told them that earlier that morning, he had been asleep at the old American Paradise Gym in Golden Rock, Christiansted, when the sound of someone calling his name loudly woke him up. It was his friend, Alexander Mateo.

The injured man told police that he went outside to greet his friend, but noticed that he was armed with a knife and seemed ready to fight. Once the man came into view, Mateo reportedly announced his intention to kill. Confused as to what was happening, the man said he continued to approach, only realizing he was in jeopardy when Mateo swung at him with the knife.

The man said he was able to angle away from the knife, which then fell from Mateo's hand. Almost immediately, Mateo reportedly picked up a piece of iron and began using it to bludgeon his friend about the upper body. The man told police that he used his arms to try to block the blows until he was in too much pain to offer any resistance. He said the beating continued even after he stopped trying to block the blows, so he ran to the steps to make himself more visible to passersby. Mateo then reportedly stopped his attack and left the area in his vehicle. Afterwards, the man said that he made his way to the gas station nearby, in severe pain, and asked the attendant to call the ambulance.

The man could offer police no potential motive for the attack by his friend, who he says he had known for a very long time with no prior issues. Their last meeting was a few days before the attack, he said, and had not featured any disagreements or altercations.

Officers returned to the scene of the reported attack, where they found a piece of metal on the ground, with what appeared to be blood droplets around it.

The injured man spoke to police again on September 10, reiterating his earlier story about how he came to be in the hospital emergency room at the end of April. With his left hand in a cast, the man told police that the attack had left him “unemployed and helpless.” The hand was broken and he needed surgery, but he told police that his circumstances render him unable to access the resources to get the medical care he needs.

After a fruitless initial search for Mateo, police issued a wanted poster. He turned himself in on September 18.

Mateo gave officers a different timeline of events. The pair were upstairs at the old gym on the morning of August 30, having been drinking and smoking together since the night before, he told police. Mateo said he left the area briefly to get some food, and when he returned, the two of them got into a disagreement over some tools that had gone missing from the back of his vehicle. The man reportedly did not respond well to Mateo's questions about the identities of the so-called “crackheads” who were suspected of pilfering the tools.

The argument turned physical, Mateo said, with “tugging, pulling, and pushing” involved. How the man's arm became broken and disfigured, Mateo could not recall. He suggested that a

previously sustained broken arm had gotten re-injured in the scuffle, especially since the two men had fallen and rolled down the stairs during the fight.

Notwithstanding, police arrested Mateo for attempted murder, first and third degree assault, simple assault and battery, mayhem, and possession of a dangerous weapon during a crime of violence. He was unable to pay the \$100,000 initial bail assessment, and was thus remanded into custody to await his advice of rights hearing.

Court records indicate that Mateo did appear before Magistrate Venetia Velazquez on Friday, however as of press time, there has been no publication of the outcome of that hearing.

His next court appearance is scheduled for October 8.

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