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Man Accused of Assaulting Intimate Partner at Hull Bay, Faces Domestic Violence Charges

Police say Va'shawn Daniel assaulted his partner during an argument at Hull Bay, leaving him with facial injuries and bite marks. The defendant turned himself in two weeks later and must follow strict release conditions until trial.

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Mugshot of Va'shawn Daniel. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. THOMAS — A domestic dispute between two men escalated into violence earlier this month, leaving one injured and the other now facing assault charges, according to the V.I. Police Department.

According to court documents, on September 14, police received a report that a man at the Schneider Regional Medical Center had been assaulted by his intimate partner. Responding officers found him visibly injured. Days later, he was at the Richard Callwood Command police station to provide an official statement.

The man said he was at home alone on September 13, using his phone to look through profiles on a dating app. He reportedly began communicating with someone whose profile did not have any photos associated with it. As the conversation progressed, the unknown user asked the man for pictures, and he complied, sending ones that did not show his face. Nonetheless, the stranger on the other end of the connection reportedly began speaking as if they knew his identity.

The man told police that the person then asked if he was at home. He said that he was elsewhere, but the unknown individual reportedly rejected that lie, and then his phone began to ring immediately. On the other end was 26-year-old Va'shawn Daniel, the man's intimate partner.

Daniel, irate, immediately accused his boyfriend of using the dating app despite his previous denials. Aware that he had been caught, the man reportedly did not argue, but instead hung up the phone. Daniel, however, reportedly continued to bombard the man with calls, and the man told police that he subsequently heard someone knocking at the front door. He did not immediately respond, and then he received another call. Over the phone, Daniel let him know that he was the one at the door. The man said that he expressed his discomfort with being accosted at home, and noted that the two agreed to meet later to discuss matters.

That conversation occurred around 1 o'clock the next morning, the man said. He picked up Daniel and the two men drove to Hull Bay, listening to music on the way but otherwise silent. The argument began when they got to the beach and the man began to speak about Daniel showing up unannounced earlier that day. That discussion reportedly prompted violence from Daniel, who is accused of walking around to the driver's side, opening the door and punching his partner in the face multiple times. During the altercation that ensued, he is also accused of biting the other man on the hand.

After the fight, Daniel got back into the vehicle and the two men left the beach. On the way home, another argument ensued when he asked his partner to delete their old messages and photos. The other man said that because he was driving, he obviously could not do so immediately, but Daniel became aggressive. The other man had had enough, and when they were near the Wheatley Center, he asked Daniel to leave the vehicle.

As he was exiting, Daniel reportedly tried to abscond with the other man's two cell phones, hurling them back when challenged. One of the phones reportedly caused further injury when it hit the man's nose. After Daniel's departure, the other man drove himself to the hospital to be treated for his injuries, which apart from the laceration to his nose bridge, included a bite mark on his hand and a split lip.

Daniel, when first contacted by police, told them that it was his partner who struck first. He accused the man of being intoxicated, and making unwanted sexual advances towards him. However, police soon learned that the man had taken out a restraining order against Daniel, and filed a previous police report earlier this year about Daniel's unannounced visits to his house. Photographs of the man's injuries also seemed to support his version of events rather than Daniel's.

After being informed that he would be arrested, Daniel agreed to turn himself in, doing so on Sunday, September 28. He was charged with third-degree assault and simple assault, both as acts of domestic violence.

On Monday, Daniel appeared before MAgistrate Simone VanHolten-Turnbull, who found probable cause to uphold the charges. Bail was set at \$1000, but Daniel was only required to post \$120 of that amount in cash to secure his release ahead of trial. He will be required to report to the probation office twice a week in person, and must also surrender his passport to the court. Daniel must remain at least 25 feet away from the alleged victim at all times, and is prohibited from using alcohol or any controlled substance while the case is pending. He will also not be permitted to possess a firearm, ammunition or any other dangerous weapon during this time.

His next court appearance is scheduled for October 17.

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