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St. Croix Man Allegedly Shoots at Woman and Kids Before Pursuing Them and Attempting to Force Their Car Off the Road

A woman told police she fled her home with her children as K’Jahni Rivera allegedly pointed a gun, fired a shot, and later tried to ram her vehicle during a dangerous roadway pursuit. The VIPD recovered a shell casing and witnesses supported her account.

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Mugshot of K’Jahni Rivera. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. CROIX — A man already on probation for [two prior domestic violence cases](#) is now facing a new series of serious charges, after a woman and her children told police he shot at them as they fled their home and then tried to ram their vehicle off the road.

The allegations, detailed to police and later presented in court, describe hours of escalating violence that began inside the woman's residence and ended with a dangerous pursuit across St. Croix roadways.

The incident began during the morning of Sunday, Nov. 9, when officers responded to a 911 call reporting a gunshot near the Concordia Manor housing community. Police were unable to locate victims, witnesses, or a suspect at that time. Later that afternoon, a woman went to the Wilbur H. Francis Command police station and reported that a man had fired at her and her children as they attempted to escape.

The woman identified the assailant as her former intimate partner, K'Jahni Rivera. She told police that he had come to her home a few nights earlier asking for a place to sleep, and she allowed him to stay. Once inside, she said he confiscated her house keys but told her he would keep the front door unlocked so she could access the residence.

On Sunday morning, she said Rivera asked her to do his laundry. When she declined, an argument escalated into violence. She told police that he threw items to the floor, ordered her to sit on the bed, and repeatedly placed his hand on a gun hidden in his pants pocket while yelling at her. She described him working himself into such a rage that he began shaking — a sign she associated with a "blackout" followed by "extreme violent behaviors." Out of fear, she said she suppressed her urge to flee through the back door, noting that he had previously aimed his weapon at her and threatened to shoot. Running out the front was also impossible, she said, because her two young children were in the living room.

The woman said she eventually convinced Rivera to let her into the kitchen under the pretense of needing water. When she attempted to call for help, she found her phone had been disconnected. She then moved to the bathroom to prepare for escape. After instructing her children to get into the car, she was nearly out the door when she saw Rivera approaching with a gun in his hand. She described holding the front door shut from the outside as he tugged the handle from inside, giving her children time to reach the vehicle. When she finally released the door and ran to the car, she noticed one of her sons still outside "frozen in shock." She said that after securing him in the car and driving off, she heard a gunshot.

Once the children were safe inside the vehicle, she said she yelled at Rivera, warning him of consequences for what he had done. But the ordeal continued. She stopped briefly at a service station to make a call about her disconnected phone, then continued driving. Turning off Queen Mary Highway and heading south on Carlton Road, she said she spotted a Honda CR-V ahead — and realized Rivera appeared to recognize her vehicle. The Honda stopped abruptly in the road. When she tried to pass, she told police he swerved in an attempt to hit her. She veered into the grass, but he followed, still trying to ram her vehicle.

With her children in the back seat pleading with her to go faster, she said she took risky evasive measures, overtaking five cars at once before cutting across incoming traffic on the Melvin Evans Highway. Police noted that the woman cried as she recounted the fear she and her children experienced. She also said this was not the first time Rivera had threatened to shoot her in the presence of her children, and noted that the area where he fired the shot was a place where children living in the complex often play together.

The children corroborated their mother's account, and police recovered a spent 9mm shell casing in front of the apartment. Other residents of the complex also supported her report.

Police issued a wanted poster for Rivera after an unsuccessful initial search. He turned himself in on Monday and was charged with attempted murder; third degree assault as a crime of domestic violence; third degree assault; child abuse; unauthorized possession of a firearm during a crime of violence; possession of ammunition; first degree reckless endangerment; and discharging or aiming a firearm. He was remanded into custody to await his first court appearance.

During Wednesday's hearing, Magistrate Venetia Velazquez found probable cause to uphold all charges. Prosecutors objected to fully unsecured bail due to his criminal history, and the judge ruled that Mr. Rivera must pay 20% of the \$100,000 bail amount in cash in order to be released pending trial. If released, he would be placed on house arrest with GPS monitoring.

Mr. Rivera remains on probation for a 2021 assault and is also currently on probation for similar charges from 2023. Nearly a year ago, he was ordered to complete a batterer's intervention program with the Men's Coalition as part of his sentence.

His next court appearance is scheduled for November 26.