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Woman Accused of Running Over Former Partner With Children in Vehicle Faces Attempted Murder Charge

Police say Saidah Harley struck her former partner with a white Acura RDX in downtown Christiansted after a dispute over belongings, with witnesses saying he was crossing the street when she accelerated into him.

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Mugshot of Saidah Harley. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. CROIX — A St. Croix woman is facing attempted murder, child abuse and domestic violence-related charges after police say she struck her former partner with a vehicle in downtown Christiansted while her three children were inside.

Saidah Harley was charged after an incident that began May 16 with a domestic dispute over the removal of her child's father's belongings from her apartment.

According to court documents, Ms. Harley had requested police assistance with retrieving the man's belongings from her residence. Officers accompanied her to the apartment, retrieved the items, and then returned to Christiansted to deliver them to the man.

Police say Ms. Harley followed officers back into town and became involved in a verbal disturbance with her former partner. She was asked to leave the area, but reportedly told officers that she was in town to take care of other matters. Officers advised her not to make any unlawful contact with the man now that the handover of belongings was complete.

A few minutes later, the 911 Emergency Call Center received several calls reporting that Ms. Harley had run over her former partner with her vehicle.

The injured man was transported to the hospital. Officers who spoke with him there reported that he had severe facial injuries, including bruises, lacerations and contusions. His face was covered in blood, as was the T-shirt he was holding over it.

The man told officers that he had been in town washing vehicles when Ms. Harley drove up and started a verbal altercation about items he had left at her house after a disagreement a few days earlier. He said that when he left the home, he took a backpack containing his most important documents. According to the police report, he told Ms. Harley that he did not want the rest of his items because he was tired of her "abusive and violent behaviors" toward him.

When officers returned with his belongings, the man reportedly told them not all of his items had been included.

After officers left, Ms. Harley allegedly returned to taunt him. The man said he placed his backpack in a friend's vehicle, left the area and walked toward a supermarket on Company Street in an attempt to de-escalate the situation.

At the supermarket, he said he saw Ms. Harley drive past and make sure he could see that she had his backpack before driving away.

After leaving the supermarket, the man told police he walked toward the intersection of King and Company Streets and saw Ms. Harley driving east on King Cross Street. He said he began crossing the road to approach the driver's side of her vehicle in an attempt to retrieve his backpack. As he did so, he told police, Ms. Harley accelerated and struck him with the white Acura RDX she was driving.

The man said he fell to the ground after impact and felt sharp pain in his face. A friend handed him a shirt to wipe his face after he realized he was bleeding. Ms. Harley reportedly drove around a second time, and the man said he noticed the three minor children inside the vehicle.

Police later located Ms. Harley at a gas station in Golden Rock and took her into custody for questioning. Officers said the Acura had damage to the front windshield and blood spatter across the front.

At the Wilbur H. Francis Command Police Station, Ms. Harley reportedly admitted that she went into the vehicle where her former partner had placed his backpack and took it without permission. She also admitted waving the backpack at him to taunt him.

However, her account of the collision differed from the man's.

According to Ms. Harley, her former partner became enraged by the taunting and jumped onto the hood of her vehicle. She reportedly said he tried to break through the windshield with his hands and fell to the ground when she braked forcefully. According to the police report, Ms. Harley said she did not realize he was injured until she "saw his flesh on her windshield." She then reportedly suggested that officers interview her children.

Police interviewed two minors, who corroborated major elements of their mother's account.

However, when police interviewed the man's friend on May 17, he supported the injured man's version of events. The friend said Ms. Harley had initially been stopped in the middle of the roadway during the verbal dispute, causing traffic to back up for about 30 minutes before officers arrived.

Regarding the collision, the friend said the man was crossing the street when Ms. Harley accelerated and hit him. He described the impact as substantial, saying the man flew into the air, struck his face on the windshield of the vehicle, and then fell to the ground.

A second witness gave police the same sequence of events, saying the man was crossing the street when Ms. Harley accelerated into him. That witness also told police he believed the impact was hard, again saying the man struck the Acura's windshield before falling to the ground.

Ms. Harley was apprehended Tuesday after first speeding away from the gas station where officers initially approached her, according to the police report.

The report also states that while Ms. Harley was at the hospital following a request for medical attention, she told the detective assigned to the case that she would persuade her former partner to write a letter asking the attorney general to have the matter dismissed "as usual." She also reportedly disclosed that the man had already returned to her home and threatened to hurt her once she got back to the house.

After a second trip to the hospital, Ms. Harley was medically cleared on May 20 and remanded into custody. She was charged with first-degree attempted murder, child abuse, first-degree reckless endangerment and third-degree assault. She was also charged with simple assault and battery, and disturbing the peace by fighting, both as crimes of domestic violence.

Ms. Harley's advice of rights hearing before Magistrate Yolanda Brow Ross was scheduled for Thursday morning. As of press time, details of the outcome had not yet been made available to the public.