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# Man Facing Decades in Jail After Allegedly Dragging Victim Out of House at Gunpoint, Threatening to Kill Her and Others

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**Mugshot of Simon Rawlins. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.**

ST. THOMAS — A St. Thomas man allegedly committed the following criminal acts against a woman and a male homeowner on Saturday: burglary in the first degree, kidnapping as an act of domestic violence, third-degree assault as an act of domestic violence, possession of ammunition, and possession of an unlicensed firearm. The suspect allegedly threatened and kidnaped the female victim at gunpoint as shown in video surveillance.

The suspect, Simon Rawlins, Jr., 34, appeared before Judge Carolyn Hermon-Percell via teleconference in the custody of the Bureau of Corrections on Monday for his advisement hearing.

According to the probable cause fact sheet, Rawlins went after the victim at a male's home. He threatened through the door, "I'm going to kill you if you don't come out the house."

The owner was not at the residence, according to his statement to police given on Sunday. The victim was permitted to stay at the homeowner's residence alone as she was threatened to be killed by Rawlins as recent as Friday, according to the homeowner.

After breaking and entering the residence, Rawlins sought out the victim who hid in the closet. He then dragged her by her shirt while holding a gun, the fact sheet said.

According to the victim's statement to police in the fact sheet, when the victim told Rawlins that she was on the phone with the police, he verbally threatened to kill the homeowner and a member of the homeowner's family.

Rawlins denied having a gun when questioned by police, yet a single round was found in the vehicle. In contrast, the homeowner's security system revealed that Rawlins was indeed holding a gun and threatening to kill both the victim and homeowner. He turned the footage over to the police. Arresting officer Tamia Freeman was able to view the video and confirmed that Rawlins was holding a gun prior to entering the home and told the victim, "Let's go," according to the probable cause fact sheet.

Once Rawlins and the female victim were in the vehicle and driving down Donkey Hill, they passed a police unit with flashing lights. The victim jumped out of the vehicle and ran towards police. She was taken to the hospital for treatment. Shortly after driving away, Rawlins blew his tire, abandoned his vehicle, and ran away from police for fear that he would go back to jail for possession of marijuana, according to the fact sheet.

Rawlins' representation, Attorney Paula Norkaitis of the Office of the Territorial Public Defender, requested a \$25,000 bail.

However, government attorney John Barraco and Judge Percell considered Rawlins a flight risk and a danger to the victims of this case as well as the greater community based on his previous conviction and the severity of the current allegations. Barraco requested a \$75,000 cash bail, without the ability to post 10 percent.

Rawlins was previously convicted of a violent crime (third-degree burglary) 14 years ago. The firearm in this case was never recovered but the loaded magazine was after Rawlins provided an alleged location of the gun. Officer Freeman verified that the suspect is not licensed to carry a firearm as he has a previous conviction.

According to the VI Code, Rawlins can serve a minimum of 10 years and pay a fine of \$10,000 to \$15,000 if found guilty of possession of an unlicensed firearm charge. If found guilty of using the firearm to commit or attempt to commit a crime of violence, he may be fined \$25,000 and imprisoned for 15 to 20 years. Rawlins is also facing charges on four other criminal acts.

"He's facing a lot of time if convicted for these charges," said Barraco.

Judge Percell advised Rawlins of the following conditions of his release: If able to post a \$75,000 cash bail, Rawlins must surrender his U.S. Passport and driver's license. He must also maintain a 25-foot distance from both victims. He will be released under house arrest with electronic monitoring and is only permitted to leave the house for meetings with his attorney, court, emergency medical care, and work. If a suitable third-party custodian is approved by the court, the

Judge is willing to modify the monetary bail.

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