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Wife Finds Husband at Bar With Another Woman, Husband Allegedly Beat and Pushed Wife Down Flight of Stairs

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Mugshot of Oriel Etienne By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. THOMAS — A man has been granted bail after allegedly pushing his wife down a flight of stairs and striking her at a bar. Oriel Etienne, age 31, was arrested and charged with simple assault and battery stemming from an incident on September 14th, 2021.

According to the probable cause fact sheet, on the day in question, Etienne's wife was driving around with a relative when she noticed his car parked in the area of a local bar. The wife said she subsequently went into the bar to locate her husband and found him with a woman, and that the two were smoking hookah. The wife said Etienne questioned what she was doing at the bar and

that she exchanged words with the female who was in her husband's company. The fact sheet also alleges that the wife and the other female were about to fight when Etienne grabbed his wife by the arm, opened the door and pushed her down the stairs. The wife further said Etienne struck her about the body several times and that while he held her, the female was also able to hit her.

While someone at the bar did call police during the incident, when officers arrived at the scene Etienne's wife decided not to make a statement and instead went home. However, she said that when she arrived home her injuries were observed by her daughter who asked her whether she was going to "let Mr. Etienne continue to treat her like a dog."

The alleged victim said it was at that point that she noticed a contusion to her head and several abrasions to her body which prompted her to make a police report. Officers subsequently contacted the accused by telephone and requested that he visit the station to provide a statement and detail his version of events. However, according to police, Etienne did not show up or call the station. The following day officers apprehended him at the same bar where the altercation occurred and he was arrested and charged.

At a virtual advisement hearing on Friday, Attorney Brenda Scales asked that bail be set in the amount of \$1000 and that Etienne be barred from contacting his wife and visiting her residence or place of employment. Scales, who appeared for the people noted that Etienne had previously been arrested on a domestic violence matter involving his wife. However, Public Defender Alexia Furlow attempted to argue that Etienne was simply attempting to separate his wife and his female companion, noting that the accused had been cut or stabbed on the hand by the alleged victim. Furlow requested that Etienne be granted an unsecured bail or a very low bail as he currently supports three children, one of which he shares with the alleged victim. Furlow emphasized that Etienne is not considered a flight risk or a danger to society.

Judge Henry Carr noted that while there was no conviction in Etienne's previous arrest, his primary concern was that the accused stay away from his wife while the current matter remains pending.

The Judge agreed to an unsecured bond of \$1000 and several conditions, including no contact between the accused and the alleged victim. Judge Carr further noted that Etienne would be allowed visitation rights with the young child which he shares with his wife. However, this will have to be arranged through a neutral third party to ensure that the no-contact order is upheld.

Etienne will also be allowed a one-time police escort to retrieve his belongings from his wife's residence. His arraignment has been scheduled for October 1st 2021.