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Woman's Car Torched in Her Own Yard After She Asked Trespassers to Leave Her Premises

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A woman's car was torched in her own yard after she attempted to shoo away trespassers during the early morning hours of Sunday. The matter is being investigated, and updates were expected on Mon. Sept. 27, 2021. By. VICTIM

ST. CROIX — A woman's vehicle was torched in her own yard early Sunday in Frederiksted after she told several trespassers to get off her Queen Street Town Homes premises. The female victim along with her neighbor told the Consortium that the suspects were not only trespassing on the victim's property, but also playing loud music and urinating in the yard, a development that caused the victim's frustration to elevate and led her to demand that the suspects leave immediately.

However, according to the victim, instead of leaving the female victim's yard the suspects hurled insults at the victim. One of them said he had police officers in his pocket and proceeded to show the victim two bags, one appearing to show a substance resembling cocaine and another resembling marijuana, the victim stated.

Saturday night's crime was the culmination of incidents that have been occurring in the Queen Street Town Homes community following its establishment in 2007. It was built by the V.I. Housing Finance Authority and the goal was to attract people back to Frederiksted and to revitalize the town. The town homes buildout was also an opportunity for interested Virgin Islanders to become first-time homeowners. At the time, the Housing Finance Authority made promises that nearby bars were on their way out, however to this day the bars remain, according to the neighbor of the victim, both of whom own their homes.

The presence of the bars has led to incessant contention with bar patrons, many of whom constantly trespass and violate the homeowners' properties, according to the neighbor. "Their customers throw garbage in our yard, they pee on our fences, on our houses, lawns, block us in, block us out. You ask them to move, you get cursed — it's... I'm done," the neighbor of the victim said. The bars are locally-owned, the neighbor said.

Police officers, dispatches and 911 know of the situation because of how frequently community members have been calling about the issues, said the neighbor.

Car Torched

Relative to last night's incident, the victim whose vehicle was torched in her own yard was attempting to shoo away the trespassers who were blasting music and had blocked the victim in. They were also urinating on her house, according to accounts of the incident provided by the victim and the victim's neighbor. The trespassers instead hurled insults at the victim, lashing out with curse words and stating that she lived on government-owned property, even though the victim along with the neighbor have long owned their properties.

One of the suspects became more aggressive, telling the victim that he'd marked her, and daring her to call police as he said it would not make a difference, according to the victim. This suspect told the victim that he had police officers in his pocket, the victim said. This suspect further stated that the victim could take all the pictures she wanted as he continued to express no level of fear or respect for law enforcement.

The victim said as the matter escalated she called police. After a lengthy period, a police unit with a female officer and her partner passed in the area, slowed down then left. The same unit made another round and asked if police were called.

The victim said she was attempting to give the officers a statement. She said she told the officers multiple times that the vehicle in which the person she believed to be the main suspect left was a Ford, however the officers kept asking whether it was a Honda.

The police unit eventually left without a statement, according to the victim. She said she then called her father to inform him of that matter and her decision to go to a police station to report what had occurred in the morning. The incident occurred just after midnight Sunday.

"The most I could have done was brush my teeth and turn off the hallway light," the victim said. "As soon as I turned off the hallway light, I sat on the bed and I heard a loud boom. I looked out the window and I saw the car in flames. I put clothes back on, ran downstairs and called 911." The

victim said she called the 911 Emergency Call Center multiple times but no one answered. She said she then ran to the nearby Fire Station to seek help, fearing that her home would be consumed by fire as well.

V.I. Fire Service Personnel hustled to the scene to douse the fire. After being told what had occurred, Fire Service personnel called police and a detective reported to the scene, the victim said.

After the detectives came, the same police unit with a female officer and her partner that had responded to the incident earlier and allegedly never gave their names or took a statement, also traveled to the scene, according to the victim.

"They were standing right there. They never gave their names... there wasn't even a conversation for us to exchange information because they drove off," said the victim, who also provided the detective with a picture of the man she considers to be the main suspect.

Queen Street Town Homes is located between Hill and Market streets in Frederiksted.

Police Commissioner Ray Martinez told the Consortium he was provided with an update about the incident by St. Croix Police Chief Sean Santos on Sunday, and that more information on the investigation would be forthcoming.

Multiple attempts to reach Chief Santos were unsuccessful.

Mr. Derima said as of Monday morning he had not received any information about the incident.