

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Man Facing Stiff Sentence for Allegedly Kidnaping, Strangling and Raping Woman He Met on Facebook During Second Encounter

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Mugshot of Roldeson Lazard. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX — Bail has been reduced to \$150,000 for a 21-year-old charged with a series of offenses including rape, unlawful sexual contact and false imprisonment and kidnapping.

The charges against Roldeson Lazard stem from allegations that he violently forced himself on a woman he initially befriended on Facebook. The victim told police that one September night she agreed to meet Lazard, after previously meeting him in a public

area and having what she described as a “good conversation”. On the night of their second encounter, they both parked their vehicles near a school in the Sion Farm area where they walked and spoke for a while. However, she alleges that after they got into his vehicle, Lazard raped her despite her continued pleas for him to stop. According to the probable cause fact sheet, Lazard allegedly restrained the victim’s hands and placed his hand around her neck so tight that she was gasping for air. In a statement to police, she detailed Lazard slapping her to the face at least three times as she attempted to fight him off. The woman alleges that when she began crying and told him she wanted to leave the car to go home, Lazard told her she wasn’t going anywhere and that it was “too early” to go home.

The woman says she continued to fight him off until she was able to open the car door and scramble out of the vehicle. She then locked herself in her own vehicle while she called a friend for help. However, Lazard kept banging on her car window and asking who she was calling. When her friend arrived she drove behind their vehicle and was escorted home without incident. She would later receive text messages from Lazard in which he apologized and stated that he loved her. The alleged victim says she did not respond to the messages, which she later showed to police.

Lazard was arrested by warrant on Monday and jailed as he was unable to post bail which was initially set at \$250,000. At an advisement hearing on Wednesday, Public Defender Katherine Slade requested that the unemployed defendant be allowed release on an unsecured bond. Meanwhile, appearing for the People, Attorney Esther Walters asked that the defendant post 10 % of the bail figure. Slade indicated that while Lazard’s parents would be unable to post that amount, they were willing to post their house as bail. At the conclusion of the hearing, Judge Ernest Morris Jr. reduced the bail amount to \$150,000 and ordered that the property be posted to secure the defendant’s release. Lazard is strictly prohibited from contacting the alleged victim and must maintain a distance of at least 1000 feet at all times.

Lazard, who has no prior arrests, faces a maximum sentence of 20 years if convicted of false imprisonment and kidnapping. If found guilty of first-degree rape, the 21-year-old faces a maximum of 30 years in prison without the possibility of probation or parole. In addition to those charges, he is accused of first-degree unlawful sexual contact, which is punishable by imprisonment of not more than 15 years. Lazard has also been charged with simple assault and battery, as well as disturbance of the peace and first-degree assault.