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Fiancee of Jelani James Says He Needs Help, Not Punishment; Suspect Charged With Assault and Attempted Murder

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Mugshot of Jelani James. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

Shortly after we filed the report on Jelani James, who [police say shot his father](#), we were able to make contact with Hilda McCurdy, his fiancée.

McCurdy, her voice tight with tension, told Consortium reporters that far from being a violent man with criminal tendencies, her betrothed was a kind, loving individual who had, at the beginning of the week, suddenly begun to act out of character. She told us that it was the night after a family Easter party that both she and his father noticed that James was not himself, and that the events which landed her fiancé in legal hot water happened so quickly that the family was

taken by surprise.

McCurdy disclosed that the house which James is accused of breaking into was the home in which they lived for over two years, and had just moved out of a few weeks ago. McCurdy also told our newsdesk that James had had a similar episode some years ago, and had been prescribed medication after a short stint in hospital, but that no diagnosis or long-term treatment had been persuaded after his behavior returned to normal.

The family was hoping for a mental health evaluation order to be at least one of the outcomes of James's advisement hearing, which took place today. In court this afternoon, James was charged with attempted murder, first and third-degree assault, as well as carrying firearms with evidence of intent to commit a crime of violence.

The court heard that police found James incoherent after being detained, while officers were attempting to advise him of his rights. The judge set bail temporarily at \$250,000 pending a hearing on Wednesday focused specifically on the bail issue. However, the judge did indicate that he had no intention of releasing James until the hoped-for psychological evaluation is completed, and the court is able to review the report and decide how best to proceed.