

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Details Emerge on Incident Leading to Death of 70-Year-Old Man; Suspect Must Post \$100,000 Bail in Cash to be Released

Crime / **Published On June 27, 2022 06:18 AM /**

Amanie Mathurin **June 27, 2022**



Mugshot of Nesto Monell. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX — A man accused of murdering his uncle will be permitted to post 10 percent of his \$1 million bail in cash.

Nesto Monell was extradited to St. Croix earlier this week to face charges stemming from the death of his uncle Abraham Ortiz in January of 2021. According to Monell's arrest warrant, the two were reportedly involved in an altercation on September 14th, 2020, the same night police discovered Ortiz unconscious outside his home.

Police say they also discovered Monell with a machete in his hands and blood stains on his clothing that same night. He reportedly told police that earlier in the day Ortiz had stopped at his residence and pulled out a machete which Monell took from him. According to Monell, the blood on his clothing was as a result of a cut he sustained on his hand while trying to take the weapon from his uncle. He further told police that his uncle was acting crazy and continually causing disturbances. When police questioned Monell about his uncle's whereabouts, he stated that Ortiz should be at his residence. He also told police that it appeared that someone had assaulted Ortiz prior to the disturbance between them. Monell reportedly suggested that police should travel to Ortiz's residence to check if he was okay.

When police arrived at the residence they observed Ortiz outside, lying on the ground unconscious. He was transported to the hospital for medical attention while police checked his residence for evidence. They reportedly discovered blood on the floor and walls throughout the residence as well as broken glass ornaments. Police subsequently traveled back to Monell's residence where they asked him to relinquish his clothing for evidence. While he initially declined, he eventually turned his clothing over to a forensic technician after he was asked to travel to the police station.

Police later traveled to the hospital and were informed that Ortiz had sustained head trauma but the severity was unknown. Police were able to speak with Ortiz who was conscious and when asked how he sustained the injuries, he replied "no one did this to me." The following day police traveled to the hospital again to check on Ortiz but were notified that he had been airlifted to Florida due to a major brain bleed. The doctor also told police that Ortiz had stated that his brother's son had assaulted him.

Police investigations in December of 2020 led them to a witness who recalled that Ortiz and Monell were involved in a verbal altercation on the night of September 14th. The witness stated that the men had grabbed each other by the collar but that the argument eventually subsided. However, according to the witness, Monell later disclosed to them that Ortiz had attacked him with a machete and that he cut his finger while trying to take the weapon away from his uncle.

On January 18th, 2021 police were informed that Ortiz had died as a result of his injuries. His death was ruled a homicide following an autopsy which revealed that he died as a result of complications from blunt force injuries to the head. It was later discovered that Monell had requested a lawyer and had told police that there was an altercation between him and his uncle which the family had decided to deal with on their own.

Monell reportedly fled the territory for the mainland where he was eventually apprehended after an arrest warrant was issued. Following his recent extradition, Monell appeared before a St. Croix judge on Friday. The court found probable cause for the charges of first-degree murder, first-degree assault, third-degree assault and carrying or using a dangerous weapon. At the conclusion of the hearing, it was decided that bail would remain set at \$1 million, but that Monell would be released upon the posting of 10 percent in cash and the signing of an unsecured bond for the remainder. If he is able to secure his release, Monell will be placed on 24-hour arrest while he awaits trial.