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Bail Set at \$100,000 For Man Who Attempted to Burn Victims Inside Building, Police Report Says

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Mugshot of Luis M. Felix Santos. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. CROIX — A man appeared before a V.I. Superior Court on Friday to face multiple charges including attempted murder, after he set fire to a building and trapped others inside, according to police.

Luis M. Felix Santos was arrested and charged with first-degree attempted murder, first-degree arson and first-degree assault.

His arrest follows a report of arson at Orange Grove in Christiansted on December 14, where responding officers met with law enforcement already on the scene and firefighters who had already extinguished the blaze.

According to court documents, one of the officers on the scene reported that Luis Felix Santo was in custody after he told police that he was cooking inside the building and that's what started the fire. Police made contact with two victims who said that they were trapped inside of their rooms when the fire began.

According to the probable cause fact sheet, when the first set of officers arrived on the scene, they found three ongoing fires: one near the eastern wall about 5 to 6 feet high and spreading throughout the building. The second and third fires were on the northern wall near the two victims' bedroom. Officer said it was difficult for them to breathe while standing outside the building due to heavy smoke inside. Firefighters managed to extinguish the fire within five minutes.

One of the victims told police that he was on the second floor in his bedroom when he heard someone kicking the front door. He said that a fire was then started on the northern wall of his bedroom and he heard someone shouting, "I'm going to kill you today," using expletives. He told police that he recognized the voice as that of Felix Santos, a man who lived downstairs. He said since he started living in the building, Felix Santos had been harassing and assaulting him. The victim told police that there was no one else in the building at the time of the fire besides himself, his roommate and Felix Santos. Due to the heavy smoke, the victim said he was unable to see anything, however his roommate was able to squeeze through an opening at the back of the room to escape — cutting his right thigh and left ankle in the process, according to court documents.

Police observed damages as a result of the fire, according to court documents. There were piles of plastic bottles and paper being used as burning material on the eastern wall. The northern wall had a smoke stain about 9 to 12 feet high which appeared to be climbing up the wall. The bottom of that stain appeared to be extremely charred. While the fire inspector did not test for accelerants, he did state that the fires were ignited by burning trash and plastic bottles.

Felix Santos was then arrested.

In court on Friday, a judge ruled that Felix Santos's bail of \$100,000 must be fully secured in order for him to be released. If he is able to post the required amount, he would then need a vetted and approved third-party custodian and a suitable address.

If released, Felix Santos will be barred from leaving St. Croix without the court's written permission and must surrender his passport if he has one. He will be placed on 24-hour house arrest and must report to the Office of Probation every Tuesday. He was further barred from entering the premises where the incident took place, and he was ordered to maintain a minimum distance of 1000 ft away from the victims.