

STATE OF WISCONSIN - VS - Travis M Christianson

And further, invoking the provisions of sec. 939.63(1)(a) Wis. Stats., because the defendant committed this crime while possessing and or using a dangerous weapon, the maximum term of imprisonment may be increased by not more than 6 months.

FACTS:

Your complainant is a Court Officer with the City of Madison Police Department and for this complaint is relying on the written police report(s) submitted by City of Madison Police Officer(s) Alyssa Souza, Nicholas Cleary, Like Lengfeld, Thomas Coyne, Ryan Orvis and Detective(s) Richard Friday, Adam Kneubuhler, Kelly Dougherty and Detective Lisa Fahrenbruch.

Initial Call

Officer Souza reports at approximately 9:04pm, officers were dispatched to an identified residence in the City of Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin for a weapons offense. She heard over city channel 3 Dane County Communications air that the wife had been stabbed by her husband.

Officer Cleary reports additional updates were provided that the husband said he was going to kill the caller's daughter. The caller provided information to dispatch that her 13-year old daughter (whose name forms the initials AKC – DOB: 9/28/2006) was still in the house.

Contact with DRC

As Officer Cleary initially arrived on scene, he observed a female waving in his direction and yelling towards him from the front porch of an identified residence. She was calling out to Officer Cleary, "Officer! Officer!" and waving in his direction.

As Officer Cleary approached the female (whose name forms the initials DRC) on the front step, he observed she had what appeared to be a red bloodlike substance on her lower left abdomen. She appeared to be holding her hand there. She advised the house next door, pointing to the south at the identified residence, was where her daughter (AKC) needed help. She stated her husband, Travis (later identified as TRAVIS M. CHRISTIANSON, the defendant, "Travis" hereinafter), was inside in an orange shirt, and was possibly harming AKC.

Upon arrival Officer Souza made contact with DRC. While Officer Souza waited for the ambulance to arrive on scene, she assessed DRC's injuries. DRC was clearly bleeding from her left hand and had a stab wound to her left inside elbow area. Officer Souza saw an approximate one inch horizontal gash on the inside of her left elbow area and she pointed out a cut underneath the outside of her left thumb. DRC was bleeding from her left hand area and allowed Officer Souza to check her abdomen as there was blood on her shirt. Officer Souza did not observe any injuries on her abdomen area. DRC pulled up her left pant leg. She was wearing gray pajama pants and was able to lift the pant leg up so Officer Souza could see her entire leg. There was a large amount of blood on her left thigh pant leg, however there did not seem to be any wounds on her left leg.

DRC told Officer Souza that she went to Pick N Save and when she returned home, entering her home through the garage door she was met by Travis with a knife. DRC said she thought she was stabbed approximately three times. She was able to wrestle the knife away from him and ran out of the house yelling for help.

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Officer Souza observed there to be a kitchen knife lying next to DRC. Officer Souza observed it to have an approximate 12" blade with an approximate 4"-6" black plastic looking handle. Officer Souza saw that the tip of the blade was bent and that there was blood smeared on the blade as well as the handle.

Initial Contact with Travis

Officer Cleary observed the garage door to the identified residence was open. Officer Cleary observed the interior garage door open. A subject in an orange shirt appeared in the doorway area. As the subject in the orange shirt opened the door, Officer Cleary called him out by his name, "Travis" and then told him to show his hands. Officer Cleary also told Travis to get down on the ground, but Travis continued to blankly stare at Officer Cleary and slowly walked in his direction.

As Travis continued to walk in Officer Cleary's direction, Officer Cleary continued back-paddling onto the grassy area. By the time Officer Cleary had withdrawn his Taser, Officer Cleary had moved from the threshold of the garage entrance backwards to the grassy area in a northwest direction approximately 40 feet. Travis continued to walk in Officer Cleary's direction, and Officer Cleary determined based on Travis' aggressive/homicidal behavior exhibited as well as his intoxicated state, that an electronic control device would be appropriate to use.

As Travis continued to walk in Officer Cleary's direction and clearly ignore his commands Officer Cleary, determined he would deploy his electronic control device to get him under control, as there was also a possible hostage rescue situation going on inside the home. Officer Cleary deployed the Taser and noted it successfully appeared to strike Travis. Travis appeared to curl up in a fetal position and fall down onto his right side. He remained in the fetal position on the ground and Officer Cleary continued to provide directions to him to stay down on the ground. At this point, Officer Cleary could hear additional police sirens responding to the scene.

Locating AKC

Around this same time, Officer Palmer, Officer Lengfeld and Officer Ramirez had all arrived on scene as well. Officer Cleary directed them into the home where they began conducting a search for the 13-year old daughter (AKC) of Travis and DRC.

As Officer Lengfeld arrived on scene, Officer Palmer and him went to clear the residence to search for AKC who was still inside the residence. When they completed a search of the bathroom on the second floor. It was at that point they located AKC in the bathtub.

After locating AKC in the bathtub, she was face down with her back facing up towards the ceiling. AKC's face was completely submerged under water and blood. It was at that point. Officer Lengfeld and Officer Palmer then started to remove AKC out of the bathtub.

Officer Lengfeld noted when he first made his initial observations, he observed several wounds all over AKC's body to include her upper chest, arms, and neck area. Based on Officer Lengfeld's training and experiences, his observations of the wounds were consistent with someone being stabbed or cut.

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After they were able to remove AKC out of the bathtub and onto the floor, they started to provide lifesaving measures. Other officers started to complete CCR. Officer Lengfeld noticed there was a large wound which appeared to be very deep in the upper chest area and Officer Lengfeld requested an officer for a chest seal to help seal that wound. Officer Lengfeld also observed a large cut on AKC's neck near her jugular area that Officer Lengfeld then asked for QuikClot gauze. It was at this time that City of Madison paramedics arrived on scene to further assist with providing medical treatment as well as lifesaving measures.

After lifesaving measures were attempted and City of Madison paramedics ceased their lifesaving measures, Officer Lengfeld then stood by with Officer Palmer and Officer Buccellato inside the residence with AKC.

Det. Dougherty reports Medicolegal Investigator Bernadette Week responded to the scene. Medicolegal Investigator Week pronounced AKC deceased at 10:47 PM.

DRC's statement

Officer Coyne made contact with DRC in the ambulance. He observed on DRC's left hand and elbow, gauze wrappings. Officer Coyne saw what appeared to be splattered blood on both of DRC's feet, as well as on her arm.

Officer Coyne asked DRC if she could describe to him what had happened tonight. DRC stated, "I was sleeping at about ten to nine, he came in." When Officer Coyne asked DRC to clarify who "he" was, she stated, "My husband (Travis)."

DRC reported the following: "He turned the light on, he just stood there for a minute, then he left." She could hear Travis then making noise elsewhere in the house. She got out of bed and "came down to see what he was doing, he was going to the store to get more beer." She told him she would go to the store for him and something to the effect of that she didn't want him to drive drunk and kill somebody. She had told Travis, "I'll go to the store and get another six pack." She went to the Pick 'n Save store, but once she arrived there, it was already 9PM and the liquor store area was closed and she was not able to buy any additional beer or alcohol. She arrived home and upon entry to the house, "he was standing there with a long and skinny knife."

DRC would further describe the knife as "silver with a black handle." DRC described entering the home through the garage before stepping up into a landing area at the bottom of the stairway, which is where DRC described this interaction with Travis then occurred. DRC stated she told Travis, "Why don't you put the knife down? What are you doing?"

DRC also stated, "I asked about (AKC) and he said, I already killed her." DRC then described Travis attempting to stab her with the knife. DRC demonstrated this with a jabbing motion with her right hand. DRC stated, "He got me at least two times, I thought." One of the Madison Fire paramedics indicated there were two puncture or stab wounds to the elbow and inside of the forearm area of DRC's left arm. DRC described this interaction as occurring.

DRC further stated she "grabbed the handle of the knife and was able to get away from him." DRC stated that she believed Travis' grip was lower on the knife and she was able to get a hand around part of the handle to get it away from. DRC stated that she "ran outside, I was screaming, help, call 911."

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JTK and JJK's Statements

Officer Orvis made contact at an identified residence and spoke with two individuals, whose names form the initials JTK and JJK (DOB: 3/3/2003).

Officer Orvis asked JTK and JJK if they had seen or heard anything. They indicated they had seen the adult female come out into the driveway yelling for help.

JJK reported the following: He had been the first one who had come out of the residence and sat on their porch. After being outside for several minutes, he began to hear what he thought was a female voice screaming. After hearing it the first few times, his mother came out onto the porch.

JTK confirmed this and stated when she came out to the porch, they could both hear the screaming. JJK stated due to the high pitch of the voice, he thought it might have been kids in the neighborhood.

JTK and JJK stated they heard further screams. JTK described them as almost moaning sounds. They stated they heard them on and off for approximately 5 minutes. Officer Orvis asked them if they could tell what direction they were coming from and they confirmed they were coming from the direction across the street towards the identified residence. They then advised at one point they looked over to the identified residence and saw the adult female in the driveway. JTK stated that the female appeared "frantic." The female was making sudden movements with her arm and appeared to be walking towards the neighbor's house next door.

JTK stated she could hear the female yelling that her husband had stabbed her and that her daughter was in the house. JJK stated he could see one of the female's hands up to her ear and he believed she was on the phone talking with a Dispatcher.

They advised they crossed the street and stood right on the corner. She advised as they were doing that, they could hear the female yelling for help several times. They advised the female was walking towards the next door neighbor's front door and again they believed she was trying to get those neighbor's attention.

JSR's Statement

Det. Dougherty spoke to another witness, whose name forms the initials JSR, who reported the following: Her son was on the couch and she was in the recliner. They were watching television. Her doorbell started ringing frantically and repeated pounding on the door. She told her son, to go to his room. She did not want to open the door, but there was yelling to include: help, help me! She cracked her door and asked who it was and was told it was her neighbor, DRC. She recalled DRC was covered in blood. DRC told her that Travis stabbed her, he was in the house and DRC also indicated Travis had stabbed AKC. DRC was on the phone with 911, and it seemed as the cops were immediately there. She estimated within 90 seconds.

Det. Dougherty noted outside of DRC's front door there was a puddle of blood as well as a path from DRC's house to JSR's of blood on DRC's driveway. JSR stated DRC was covered in blood.

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JSR recalls DRC stating he was in the house and he stabbed her too. JSR's impression was DRC was speaking of AKC. JSR believed DRC ran away from him (Travis) to her house for shelter.

Interview with DRC

On 7/30/2020, Det. Friday met with DRC. Det. Friday began the interview with DRC with identifying her and the people she lives with. DRC told Det. Friday her husband was Travis and they have a biological daughter, AKC. DRC advised they have lived at the identified residence since 2006.

Det. Friday asked DRC to tell him what happened and DRC said she was asleep in her bedroom at approximately 8:50 PM. At approximately 8:50 PM, DRC said Travis came into her bedroom and flipped on the light. DRC told Det. Friday that Travis asked her what she was doing. DRC said Travis stood next to the bed in her bedroom and it was apparent to her Travis was intoxicated.

Det. Friday asked DRC what happened when Travis was in her room and she stated they stared at each other for approximately one minute. After that, DRC reported Travis turned off the lights in the bedroom and exited the bedroom.

DRC reported she went downstairs and Travis was putting on a gray baseball hat which meant to her he was going to leave to obtain beer. She told Travis that if he were to leave to obtain beer, they were done. Det. Friday asked DRC for clarification as to what she meant and DRC told Det. Friday their relationship would end. DRC told Det. Friday she decided to obtain beer for Travis so he would be content and not drive a vehicle.

DRC told Det. Friday after changing clothes and coming back downstairs, she asked Travis if they should sell their house rather than refinancing it. Det. Friday asked DRC what she meant by her question to Travis and DRC described selling the house would lead to separation.

DRC told Det. Friday she left her residence in her green Toyota Rav4 and went to Pick n' Save. DRC said she planned on buying Travis a 6-pack of beer but the chains were being put up at the liquor department in the store. DRC believed it was after 9:00 PM at that point. DRC told Det. Friday she left the store without purchasing any beer and was home by 9:05 PM. DRC told Det. Friday she parked her vehicle inside the garage.

Upon parking in the garage, DRC told Det. Friday she had to unlock the door leading into the house from the garage. DRC said, when she opened the door, she immediately saw Travis standing at the bottom of the stairs with a knife in his right hand, held by his side. DRC told Det. Friday the knife was a "long silver" knife and Det. Friday observed DRC held her first fingers apart by a distance of approximately 8". Det. Friday asked DRC if approximately 8" was the size of the blade and DRC stated she thought so. DRC told Det. Friday the knife had a black handle in addition to the blade. Det. Friday asked DRC what Travis was wearing and she stated an orange t-shirt and blue jean shorts.

DRC continued to report the following: She asked Travis what he was doing and thought, due to the proximity of the bottom of the stairs and the kitchen, Travis was possibly just using the knife to prepare food. Travis stared at her with a blank expression and was facing her. She said to Travis, "Why don't you put the knife down." She took a step towards Travis and he used

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the knife in a “jab” motion, moving it forward toward DRC, leading with the tip, from the side of his body. She described several jabbing motions by Travis. She was stuck with the knife three times on her left side, twice to her left arm and once to her left hand. She could not recall the order of her injuries but she knew her left side was injured so she had to act with her right hand. At one point, she asked about AKC and Travis said, “I already killed her.” She used her right hand to grab the knife, as she believed Travis had a loose grip toward the back of the knife handle. She was able to “wrestle” the knife away from Travis. At no point during the altercation did she or Travis go to the ground. It was “very quick” and all happened in a “matter of minutes.”

DRC told Det. Friday when she took the knife from Travis, she immediately ran towards JSR’s house. DRC said she saw the lights were on at JSR’s residence and she started screaming for help. DRC told Det. Friday, if facing the road from DRC’s residence, JSR’s house would be to the right. DRC told Det. Friday that JSR came outside and DRC put the knife on the steps outside of their house. DRC said she had her cell phone with her and she called 911. When police arrived, DRC said she saw Travis approaching an officer and not obeying commands. DRC said she saw an ECD used on Travis and Travis being taken into custody.

Contact with Travis

Det. Kneubuhler reports Det. Friday and him entered the room where Travis was being monitored. Travis’s left hand was handcuffed to railing on the hospital bed. Travis was lying supine on the bed and had his eyes closed. Det. Kneubuhler noticed a significant amount of dried blood on Travis’s right hand. Det. Kneubuhler noticed a small chunk of dried blood on Travis left thumbnail. Det. Kneubuhler continued to inform Travis that he wanted to get a statement from him. Travis did not respond.

Autopsy Observations

Det. Fahrenbruch reports on 8/1/2020 and 8/2/2020, she attended the autopsy of AKC. Dane County Chief Medical Examiner Dr. Vincent Tranchida performed the examination.

The stab wounds and incised (cut) wounds were located on the head, neck, torso, and extremities. This includes multiple injuries consistent with defensive wounds on the right wrist and right index finger. The majority of the injuries were on the right side of the face, right chest, and right abdomen.

The cause of death is determined to be sharp force injuries (stabbed and incised wounds) to the head, neck, torso and extremities. The manner of death is homicide.

Your complainant believes the information provided by Dr. Vincent Tranchida to be truthful and reliable as he/she is a trained forensic medical doctor, as well as Medicolegal Investigator Bernadette Week performing their duties in an official capacity for the Dane County Medical Examiner’s Office.

****THIS COMPLAINT IS BASED ON** the information and belief of your complainant, who is a Court Officer for the city of Madison Police Department, and who learned of the above offense from the reports of city of Madison Police Officer(s) Alyssa Souza, Nicholas Cleary, Like Lengfeld, Thomas Coyne, Ryan Orvis and Detective(s) Richard Friday, Adam Kneubuhler, Kelly Dougherty and Detective Lisa Fahrenbruch, which report your complainant believes to be

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truthful and reliable inasmuch as they were prepared during the course of the officer(s) official duties.

Further, your complainant believes the information furnished by witness(es) to be truthful and reliable inasmuch as they are citizen informant(s) and witnessed the events described.

Your complainant believes the statements of the Defendant(s) to be truthful and reliable insofar as they are admissions against penal interest.

Subscribed and sworn to before me on	Electronically Signed By:
08/04/20	Cornelius Smith
Electronically Signed By:	Complainant
Will R. Davis	
Assistant District Attorney	
State Bar #: 1116115	