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**MAN CHARGED WITH RAPE AND ASSAULT IN ROOFTOP ATTACK ON WOMAN**

*Allegedly Arranged for Paid Sex, Demanded Money Back and Beat Victim*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Jerson Vasquez was arraigned on charges of rape, robbery and assault for allegedly arranging to meet a woman for paid sex and then viciously attacking her on a Jamaica rooftop and taking back the money he paid along with her cellphone.

District Attorney Katz said: “The charges portray a brutal and dangerous sexual predator. We will seek justice for the victim of this horrific attack.”

Vasquez, 23, of 170<sup>th</sup> Street in Jamaica, was arraigned last night on charges of rape in the first degree, robbery in the second degree, two counts of assault in the second degree, strangulation in the second degree and patronizing a person for prostitution in the third degree. Queens Criminal Court Judge Marty Lentz ordered him to return to court on August 21. Vasquez faces up to 25 years in prison if convicted.

According to the charges:

- On August 13 Vasquez responded to an ad on Facebook marketplace for prostitution-related services. He asked the woman who placed the ad to come to an address on 93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue in Jamaica and directed her to the roof of the location.
- Vasquez gave the woman \$150, which she put in her purse.
- The woman undressed and began to have intercourse with Vasquez, who grabbed her from behind, put his arms around her neck, choked her and slammed her head into a concrete wall. He demanded his money back.
- Vasquez punched the woman in the face and took back the \$150 he had given her. He then sat on top of the woman and repeatedly slammed her head onto the rooftop and put his hands around her neck and applied pressure to her throat. He penetrated her for a second time.
- In addition to the \$150, Vasquez took the woman’s phone and fled. Video surveillance footage shows Vasquez leave the location at approximately 5:51 p.m. with what looked like blood on his neck and hand.
- The woman was taken to a local hospital and admitted for treatment for a laceration to the back of her head which required staples to close, bleeding, substantial pain, and bruising and swelling to large portions of her head, face and neck.

Assistant District Attorney Tara DiGregorio, Deputy Chief of the District Attorney’s Human Trafficking Bureau, is prosecuting the case, with the assistance of Assistant District Attorney Kiran Cheema under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Jessica Melton, Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney of Investigations Gerard Brave.

*Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.*

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