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CAMBRIA HEIGHTS MAN SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS IN PRISON
FOR ATTEMPTED MURDER OF GIRLFRIEND
WHO REFUSED TO CONTINUE TO ENGAGE IN PROSTITUTION

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that a 31-year-old Cambria Heights man has been sentenced to 10 years in prison after pleading guilty to attempted murder in the April 2018 attack on his transgender girlfriend. The defendant beat and slashed the victim when she refused to continue selling sex for cash to fill his pockets.

Queens District Attorney Katz said, “The victim in this case was attempting to free herself from exploitation and sex trafficking when the defendant – who was taking the money she made – viciously attacked her. The defendant admitted his guilt and has now been ordered to prison for his criminal actions.”

The DA added that, “Anyone who feels trapped by circumstances similar to this victim’s should know this: You are not alone. We are here to continue to vigorously prosecute such cases and protect victims of trafficking and assault.”

The District Attorney’s Office identified the defendant as David Viltus, 31, of 221st Street in the Cambria Heights neighborhood of Queens. The defendant pleaded guilty in February to attempted murder in the second degree before Acting Queens Supreme Court Justice Peter Vallone Jr. This morning Justice Vallone Jr. ordered Viltus to serve 10 years in prison, to be followed by five years’ post release supervision and issued an order of protection barring the defendant from having any contact with the victim.

District Attorney Katz said, on April 18, 2018, the defendant went to the Hillside Hotel in Jamaica, Queens where the victim, a 29-year-old transgender woman was staying. The victim, who had been prostituting herself for the defendant, refused to continue engaging in sex acts for cash. That’s when Viltus erupted in anger. He punched her in the face with a closed fist and used a scalpel to slash her in the face. He smashed a plant on her head and threw her against a door, knocking the door off its hinges.

Assistant District Attorney Amy M. Scotto, of the District Attorney's Felony Trials Bureau II, prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Mark Osnowitz, Bureau Chief, Peter Lomp, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Trials Pishoy Yacoub. Assistance was also provided by Assistant District Attorney Jessica L. Melton, Chief of the District Attorney's Human Trafficking Unit.

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Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted on www.queensda.org