

RECEIVED
USDC CLERK, FLORENCE, SC
2020 MAY 18 PM 3:16

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

District of South Carolina

United States of America)

v.)

Case No. 4:20mj51

NATHAN BRANHAM)

Defendant(s)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of May 5, 2020 in the county of Chesterfield in the District of South Carolina, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section

Offense Description

18 U.S.C. § 2422(b)
18 U.S.C. § 1470

Online enticement
Transfer of obscene material to a minor

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

Continued on the attached sheet.

Complainant's signature

Kristopher Mischloney, Special Agent USSS

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: May 18, 2020

City and state: Florence, SC

Judge's signature

Thomas E. Rogers, III, US Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

AFFIDAVIT

I, Kristopher Mischloney, having been first duly sworn, do hereby depose and state as follows:

1. I am a Special Agent with the United States Secret Service, and have been since 2005. I am currently assigned to the Columbia, South Carolina, Field Office. During my tenure, I have assisted with arrests of persons for violations of various federal crimes. I have received training for basic investigative skills, counter surveillance, and interviewing techniques. Throughout my tenure, I have conducted criminal investigations, interviewed victims, witnesses, and suspects, and have participated in criminal cases completed through the judicial process. In addition, I received training in computer forensics recovery in 2019. Since that time, I have conducted numerous forensic examinations of various types of electronic devices with the goal of recovering electronic evidence for use in the judicial process. As a federal agent, I am authorized to investigate and assist in the prosecution of violations of laws of the United States. I am authorized to obtain and execute search as well as arrest warrants issued by federal and state courts.

2. The following information contained in this affidavit is based on my training and experience, my personal participation in the investigation and information provided to me by other law enforcement officials. Unless otherwise indicated, where I have referred to written or oral statements, the statements are summarized in substance and in part, rather than verbatim. Not all of the facts of the investigation known to me are contained herein, only those necessary to establish probable cause for the arrest of **Nathan Branham**.

3. On or about May 5, 2020, Jane Doe A, an adult parent of a 13-year-old daughter “Jane Doe 1,” contacted a Kentucky law enforcement official to report concerning online activity between her 13-year-old daughter and an adult man.

4. The law enforcement official referred Jane Doe A to Investigator Heather D’Hondt, Commonwealth of Kentucky Office of the Attorney General’s Department of Criminal Investigations¹ (AG DCI). On May 6, 2020, Jane Doe A contacted Investigator D’Hondt concerning Jane Doe 1’s online activities utilizing the social media application “UP live.” According to Jane Doe A, while Jane Doe 1 was on UP live, a person unknown to the child utilizing the screenname of “Mystic,” contacted Jane Doe 1 through the application. According to <https://www.upliveusa.com/about/>, UpLive, “As part of Asia Innovations, UpLive is a live-streaming platform that allows viewers to broadcast and view real-time videos via their smartphones. The platform’s unique blockchain protocol allows users the ability to send virtual gifts to content creators, which can then be exchanged for money.”

5. “Mystic” told Jane Doe 1 that he was in love with her and had a crush on her and provided Jane Doe 1 his phone number, (843-287-2540). When the two talked by phone, “Mystic” told Jane Doe 1 he was 16 and when he asked her age, she told him she was 13. “Mystic” asked Jane Doe 1 to contact him using that number on the Google Duo video call application.

6. According to Jane Doe A, Jane Doe 1, believing “Mystic” was a sixteen-year-old boy, contacted him through the Google Duo video call app. Jane Doe 1 immediately noticed that “Mystic” was not a 16-year-old boy as he had portrayed himself, but was an adult male. When asked about his age, “Mystic” stated that he had a genetic condition that made him look older.

¹ The AG DCI is a member of the Kentucky Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task

Jane Doe 1 ended the call. “Mystic,” began texting Jane Doe 1, and told her that if she did not contact him through Google Duo, he would hack her “shit.” He also threatened to use her phone number to find her location. “You know I have your number so your address is not that hard to find do you really want to try me? Advise you not to[.]” When Jane Doe 1 advised “Mystic” that he was scaring her, he continued to call her phone.

7. After receiving the texts and multiple phone calls, Jane Doe 1 called “Mystic” via Google Duo. According to Jane Doe A, “Mystic” told Jane Doe 1, “this is what you are going to do, show me your body or else I am going to find out your address and have a little talk to you.” Jane Doe 1 showed “Mystic” her nude body, including her vagina. At that point, “Mystic” asked if she had ever seen a penis. Before Jane Doe 1 responded, “Mystic” showed her his naked penis. “Mystic” told Jane Doe 1 that when he called in the future, she would have to show him her body and if she refused he would find her address and pay a visit in person. He also directed Jane Doe 1 to perform sex acts on herself. Jane Doe 1 ended the call and went into her mother’s room crying and reported the incident.

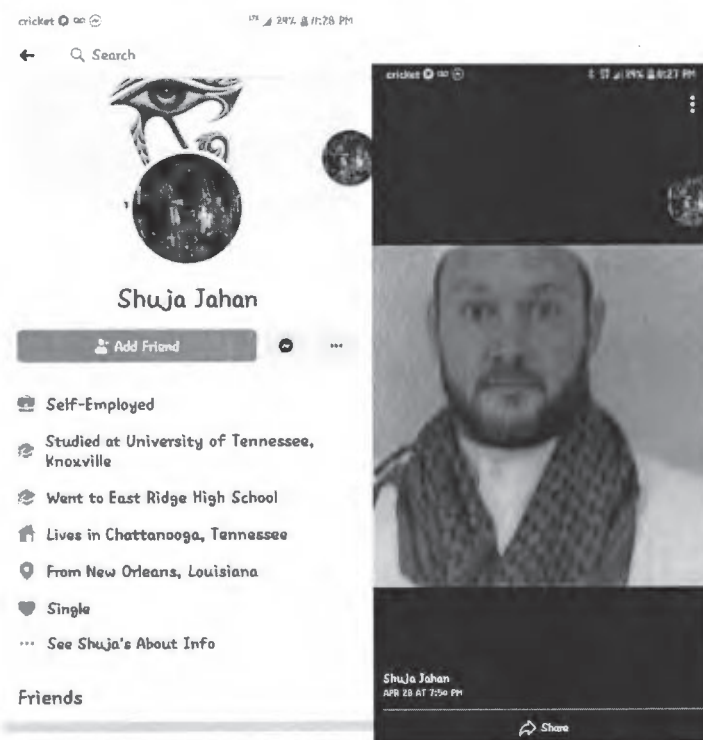
8. Jane Doe A and her adult boyfriend called the phone number previously provided by “Mystic.” “Mystic” answered and identified himself as a 20-year veteran of a state police force. When confronted about the communications with a 13-year-old girl, “Mystic” claimed his two sons had been responsible. The suspect then called back, blocking his number. When Jane Doe A answered, the man portrayed himself as the Lieutenant of the officer that they previously talked to. The man stated that “Mystic the state trooper” (for 20 years), had whipped his two boys for using his phone to contact Jane Doe A’s daughter. While the call was going on, Jane

Force.

Doe 1 heard the voice and recognized it as the person she had talked to on Google Duo and told her mother to hang up.

9. Jane Doe A also advised that a family friend had created a fake phone number on May 5, 2020. The friend (an adult female), reached contacted the phone number previously provided by “Mystic.” She did so on the UP live app, using the name “Kat.” The suspect requested to talk to Kat *via* video chat. Kat advised that she could only video chat on Facebook Messenger. The suspect provided his Facebook name. Kat reached out through Facebook and captured his user information, including a profile picture.

10. As shown below, the username on the profile is Shuja Jahan. The picture shows a white male with dark hair, a short beard and mustache (also dark hair). He is wearing religious clerical garb including a skull cap, white tunic, and scarf.



11. As set out below, Kat captured a screen shot of her video chat with the suspect. He is a white male with short dark hair as well as a short beard and mustache. Jane Doe A showed Jane Doe 1 the screen capture obtained by Kat. Jane Doe 1 identified the man in the screen capture as the person with whom she had communicated – “Mystic.”



12. Law enforcement officials gathered information about the phone number (843-287-2540), “Mystic” had used to contact Jane Doe 1. The number was confirmed as a legitimate number belonging to Verizon Wireless. Verizon confirmed that the number is assigned to a Tracfone account with cell phone towers being utilized in North and South Carolina.

13. United States Secret Service Senior Special Agent Rick Nord, Louisville, Kentucky, Filed Office, obtained records from Google and Facebook for the Google DUO account associated with the phone number 843-287-2540 and the Facebook Messenger account that was associated with shuja.jahan. The records revealed the following subscriber information:

Name: Nathan Branham
E-Mail: oasis.shriner.50@gmail.com
Google Sign-in Phone Number: (843) 287-2540

14. A search of commercial databases linked Nathan Branham, 1038 Peachtree Rd., Cheraw, South Carolina 29520, to the referenced telephone number. Similarly, Jane Doe 1’s phone log revealed Cheraw, South Carolina, as the geo locator for the phone number.

15. Records obtained from Wells Fargo for Nathan Branham lists 1038 Peachtree Rd., Cheraw, South Carolina, as his address. As of May 14, 2020, the United States Postal Service confirmed that Branham receives mail at the Peachtree Road address.

16. Records obtained from Google for the account oasis.shriner.50@gmail.com (referenced above), revealed a search history for items used to build the Shuja Jahan Facebook page profile. For example, the records revealed searches for “what does shuja mean” “Mascot for East Ridge high school Chattanooga Tennessee” and “New Orleans zip codes.” Additionally, a Google search was conducted for “ xnxx.com Daughter finds her mother on a dating site: and “ xnxx.com teenage camel toe.”

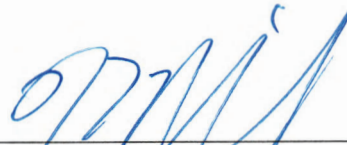
CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, there is probable cause to believe that on or about May 5, 2020, in the District of South Carolina, and elsewhere, Nathan Branham:

- a. used a facility and means of interstate commerce, to knowingly persuade, induce, and entice an individual, who had not attained the age of eighteen years, to engage in sexual activity for which a person may be charged with a criminal offense, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 2422(b); and

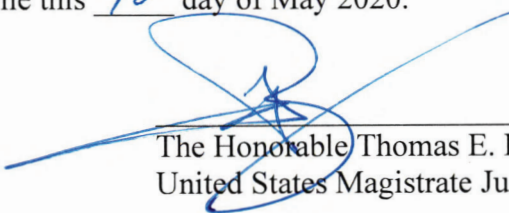
- b. using a facility and means of interstate commerce, did knowingly attempt to transfer obscene matter, specifically, pictures of his naked penis, to another individual who had not attained the age of 16 years, knowing that such other individual had not attained the age of 16 years, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1470.

This affidavit has been reviewed by AUSA Derek A. Shoemake



Kristopher Mischloney
Senior Special Agent
United States Secret Service
Columbia Field Office

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 18 day of May 2020.



The Honorable Thomas E. Rogers, III
United States Magistrate Judge