

‘Ivy League assassin’ Luigi Mangione’s agonising back pain ‘left him unable to have sex’, roommate reveals

The Ivy League graduate suspect in the murder of a health insurance CEO had a severe back injury that left him unable to have sex or go on dates, his former roommate has revealed.

Kit Heren

10 December 2024

Luigi Mangione, who was charged with the murder of UnitedHealthcare boss Brian Thompson in New York last week, had a back condition that was made worse by a surfing injury.

RJ Martin, who lived with Mangione in a co-living space in Hawaii, told the New York Times: “He knew that dating and being physically intimate with his back condition wasn’t possible,

“I remember him telling me that, and my heart just breaks.”

Martin said that Mangione suffered from the back condition spondylolisthesis that was made worse by a surfing mishap.

He added: “His spine was kind of misaligned. He said his lower vertebrae were almost like a half-inch off, and I think it pinched a nerve.”

Martin said that one surfing lesson caused Mangione to be laid up for a week.

“It was really traumatic and difficult, you know, when you’re in your early twenties and you can’t, you know, do some basic things.”

Mangione arrested on Monday in a McDonald’s in Pennsylvania, was found with a gun, mask and writings linking him to the ambush of Mr Thompson.

He is said to have suffered severe mental health issues — and is thought not to have seen his family in around a year.

Police have not made clear a motive for the attack, but Mangione is said to have singled out Thompson in the manifesto found on him.

The short statement is said to have read: “To save you a lengthy investigation, I state plainly that I wasn’t working with anyone.

“These parasites had it coming. I do apologize for any strife and trauma, but it had to be done.”

He also said the health insurance companies “continue to abuse our country for immense profit because the American public has allowed them to get away with it”.

Hawaii-based Mangione is said to have dropped off the radar after suffering a surfing accident, and was thought to be suffering from serious back pain. He was said to be taking alternative measures to manage his pain, including psychedelics.

What keeps coming up is a back surgery that “changed everything” for him and he went “absolutely crazy”.

A journalist for US outlet Barstool Sports said he had spoken with friends, reporting: “Back injury happened when he was surfing in Hawaii. Surgery didn’t go great. Moved to Japan.

“His contact with family stopped about a year ago. Recently the family reached out to his friends from high school asking if they had info on him.”

A friend told CNN: “I remember he said he had a back issue, and he was hoping to get stronger in Hawaii”.

Mangione sent the friend an X-Ray image of his back. “It looked heinous, with just giant screws going into his spine,” the friend said.

His family spoke out on Monday night, saying in a brief statement: “We offer our prayers to the family of Brian Thompson and we ask people to pray for all involved.”

After being charged, Mangione was ordered to be held without bail during a brief court hearing.

Asked if he needed a public defender, he asked if he could “answer that at a future date”.

Mangione, who was charged with weapons, forgery and other charges, will be extradited to New York to face charges in connection with Mr Thompson’s death.

The chance sighting at the restaurant led to a dramatic break in the fast-moving investigation that had captivated the public in the five days since the shooting that shook the health insurance industry.

Mangione had a gun believed to be the one used in last Wednesday’s shooting of Brian Thompson, as well as writings suggesting anger with corporate America, police said.

He was sitting at a table in the rear of the McDonald’s wearing a blue medical mask and looking at a laptop computer, documents said.

When an officer asked if he had been to New York recently, he “became quiet and started to shake.”

In his backpack, police found a black, 3D-printed pistol and a 3D-printed black silencer, according to the documents.

The pistol had a metal slide and plastic handle with a metal threaded barrel. He was taken into custody about 9.15am, Pennsylvania police said.

“He is believed to be our person of interest in the brazen, targeted murder of Brian Thompson,” New York Police commissioner Jessica Tisch said.

Mangione had clothing and a mask similar to those worn by the gunman and a fraudulent New Jersey ID matching one the suspect used to check into a New York City hostel before the shooting, Ms Tisch said.

NYPD chief of detectives Joseph Kenny said Mangione was born and raised in Maryland, has ties to San Francisco and has a last known address in Honolulu.

Mangione had a ghost gun, a type of weapon that can be assembled at home from parts without a serial number, making them difficult to trace, investigators said.

“As of right now the information we’re getting from Altoona is that the gun appears to be a ghost gun that may have been made on a 3D printer, capable of firing a 9mm round,” Mr Kenny said.

NYPD detectives and staff from the Manhattan district attorney’s office travelled to Altoona to interview Mangione, he said.

Mr Thompson, 50, was killed last Wednesday as he walked alone to a hotel, where UnitedHealthcare’s parent company, UnitedHealth Group, was holding its annual investor conference.

UnitedHealth Group thanked law enforcement in a statement issued on Monday.

“Our hope is that today’s apprehension brings some relief to Brian’s family, friends, colleagues and the many others affected by this unspeakable tragedy,” a company spokesperson said.

The Ted K Archive

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