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REGION: Actor's bail dropped to \$3 million

By TERI FIGUEROA - Staff Writer

VISTA ---- A jailed movie actor accused of brutally stabbing his ex-girlfriend saw his bail reduced Friday from \$10 million to \$3 million, even as prosecutors added a charge accusing him of also attacking the San Marcos woman's companion.

Shelley Mathew Malil, a supporting actor in the hit movie "The 40-Year-Old Virgin," has been jailed since Aug. 11, the day after a prolonged and bloody rampage, allegedly fueled by jealousy, left Kendra Beebe with life-threatening wounds.

His attorney said Malil will try to come up with the bail money.

Because prosecutors are alleging the attack was premeditated, the attempted murder charge alone carries a potential sentence of life in prison for the 43-year-old actor.

On Friday, Deputy District Attorney Steve Carver added two more charges against Malil: one count of residential burglary and one count of assault with a deadly weapon for attacking the man who was with Beebe at the time.

The prosecutor has said that Malil stabbed Beebe in the back on her patio ---- as her two young children slept upstairs ---- before Beebe's male companion restrained him and ran for help.

Malil reportedly grabbed another knife and continued chasing Beebe into and around her house, stabbing her repeatedly as she screamed and gushed blood, the prosecution alleged.

In court Friday, Carver said that at the end of the attack, Malil leaned over the bleeding woman and taunted her by repeating "David, David, David," the name of Beebe's companion that evening. Malil then fled, Carver said.

When Malil pleaded not guilty to attempted murder last month, Judge Marshall Hockett said the Indian-born actor was a flight risk and set his bail at \$10 million.

In court Friday, Malil's attorney, Steve Meister, rejected that characterization. He said his client was born in India, but moved to the U.S. when he was 9, grew up in Texas and studied acting in New York. Malil is a naturalized U.S. citizen, Meister said.

"He has no close ties to India, no friends there. He doesn't even speak the language," Meister told Superior Court Judge Aaron Katz. "Ten million (dollars) is unreasonable on its face."

In setting the lower bail, Katz said he was concerned that Malil fled after the attack, an act he said "demonstrates flight."

Katz also said he "carefully considered the potential risk" Malil presents to the victim, whom he said is "quite scared of the defendant."

Of the more than 20 stab wounds to Beebe, at least three were life-threatening: puncture wounds to both lungs and a throat wound that narrowly missed an artery, the prosecutor has said.

Beebe has since been released from the hospital and is recovering, prosecutor Carver said.

Malil is best known for his role as Haziz, a co-worker to comedian Steve Carell's title character in "The 40-Year-Old Virgin."

The comedic actor has appeared in dozens of TV shows, including "NYPD Blue" and "Scrubs," and starred in a 2001 Super Bowl commercial for Budweiser beer.

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Correction: Attorney's name misspelled

Shelley Mathew Malil's attorney is Steve Meister.

We apologize.