

7-Year-Old Boy Kidnapped Over His Name

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The bus stop where 7-year-old Ilya Yaropolov was dropped off after being abducted, shown in a broadcast by local news station RifeyTV

A woman kidnapped a 7-year-old boy from a kindergarten in the Perm region because she liked his name, investigators said.

Ilya Yaropolov left the kindergarten in the town of Krasnokamsk with an unknown woman on March 27, sparking a five-day search involving the Federal Security Service, the Emergency Situations Ministry, more than 1,300 police officers and hundreds of volunteers, news reports said Thursday.

On April 1, the kidnapper left the boy at a local bus stop and called the police to notify them of his whereabouts. Four hours later, the police detained the suspected kidnappers, a 20-year-old woman, her 60-year-old boyfriend and another man.

The boy was unharmed.

A senior Perm police official said the woman, whose name has not been released, has admitted to taking the boy.

"The woman just had a dream about having a child named Ilya, and when she went into kindergarten and saw a sign with that name, she decided to take him," said the official, Andrei Podolyan, [Rossiiskaya Gazeta](#) reported. "The girl is not barren, but she could not have children because of her complicated personal situation."

The boy agreed to go with her after she told him that his mother was ill, RIA-Novosti reported.

Meanwhile, the director of the kindergarten has been fired, while Krasnokamsk's mayor has presented awards to people who participated in the search for the boy. The searchers quizzed more than 6,000 people about the boy.

In fact, it was because of the search that the kidnappers panicked and decided to return the boy, Rossiiskaya Gazeta said, citing city officials.

Neighbors of the suspected kidnappers expressed surprise at finding out that the boy had been held in their dilapidated five-story apartment block. Valentina Murasheva, an elderly woman with dyed red hair who lives in the apartment next door to the suspects' apartment, told local television that she only learned from her neighborhood police officer that the boy had been kept at the other side of the wall. "Everything was very quiet," she said.

The suspects have been freed on condition they not leave town. Under a quirk of Russian law, they may not face charges because they freed the boy voluntarily.

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