

Convicted Stradivarius Thief Held in Moscow Apartment Robbery

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Stradivarius violins, such as this one, are particularly sought-after among musicians and command hefty price tags.

Moscow police have detained a convicted thief who once stole a Stradivarius violin on suspicion of robbing a city apartment of 4 million rubles (\$125,000) in cash and valuables.

The suspect, Chechen native Yakob Subbota, 43, was detained Saturday, police said in a [statement](#) Tuesday.

Police offered no further details about the robbery, but said Subbota was previously jailed in 2004 for ransacking apartments in St. Petersburg and the Leningrad region. He disguised himself with wigs and false beards and knocked on the doors of luxury apartments, pretending to be an intercom repairman. When the owners opened the door, he would lock them in the bathroom and flee with valuables, the statement said.

Subbota, also known by the surname Grigoriyev, was earlier convicted in 1998 for stealing a \$400,000 Antonio Stradivarius violin and a \$100,000 Jacob Steiner violin from Moscow's Glinka Museum of Musical Culture, and for making off with \$400,000 worth of old books and manuscripts from the State Public Historical Library, Russia's biggest research library.

It was unclear what charges, if any, have been charged in the latest theft.

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