

Russian Literature Lover Gets Drunk, Attempts to Steal Pushkin, Lermontov

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An unemployed 23-year-old attempted to steal several literary masterpieces from a book store in Yekaterinburg.

A thirst for alcohol and a love of Russian literature proved to be a potent combination for a young Sverdlovsk region man, according to a police statement released Monday.

After knocking back a few beverages, an unemployed 23-year-old attempted to steal several literary masterpieces — including works by legendary poets Alexander Pushkin and Mikhail Lermontov — from a book store in Revda, a town west of Yekaterinburg.

Recounting the incident in a statement, regional police said the man spent ages perusing the shop's shelves, thereby arousing workers' suspicions.

The avid reader then stuffed seven books — worth a total of 1,885 rubles (\$48) — into his jacket and attempted to flee the scene. He didn't get far before the store's manager stopped him in his tracks.

Investigators said that the man had expressed a desire to read classics from the "golden era" of Russian literature, but that he did not have the necessary funds to purchase the works.

If convicted of attempted theft, the man could spend up to two years in prison.

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