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Russian Woman Confesses to Throwing 9-Month Baby Off Italian Cliff

By The Moscow Times

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Arrested Natalia Sotnikova told police that she had thrown the boy into the sea because she "feared he had a serious illness."

Italian police have arrested a Russian woman on suspicion of killing her 9-month son by throwing him off a cliff while vacationing on the Mediterranean coast, media report said.

The woman, identified as Natalia Sotnikova, 40, told police that she had thrown the boy into the sea because she "feared he had a serious illness," Italy's La Repubblica reported Thursday. She had initially claimed that she had abandoned the baby on a cliff, the report said.

A spokesperson for the Russian Consulate in Genoa has confirmed that the suspect was a Russian citizen, TASS reported. She has been charged with murder, the report said, and has been held in detention in Italy's coastal city Imperia since Thursday.

Sotnikova had been staying at the Grand Hotel in Bordighera, near the border with France,

for a week, and was accompanied by a man who occupied a separate room and was not the child's father, La Repubblica reported.

The child's father is a Russian oligarch, Sotnikova reportedly claimed during police questioning, without specifying any further details.

The woman reportedly left the hotel at 2 a.m. on Thursday morning with the baby in her arms, according to video camera footage, and came back around 4 a.m. — without the child.

Sotnikova told police that she was afraid the baby had a "rare genetic disease," after the boy "showed signs of epilepsy," according to La Repubblica.

The baby's body has not been found, despite extensive search by police and firefighters. Italy has alerted the French authorities, the report said, adding that the area had powerful sea currents.

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