The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Police, Muscovites Search for Guide Dog Stolen From Distraught Owner

By Shura Collinson

July 31, 2015



Diana's owner is distraught over the theft of her trusty companion and guide.

Moscow police are investigating the theft of a guide dog that was stolen from its owner near a busy metro station in broad daylight earlier this week, Russian media reported.

"Police have opened a theft case over a guide dog that was stolen from a blind girl," TASS cited an unidentified local police spokesman as saying on Friday. He said a search for the animal was under way.

Investigative Committee spokesman Vladimir Markin then took to Twitter to publicly vow to the victim, "We will do everything to return to you your loyal friend and assistant."

The dog, a golden labrador named Diana, was stolen at about 6 p.m. Wednesday outside Papa Carlo, a pet store near Profsoyuznaya metro station in the city's south, Anna Arkhangelskaya, an employee of Moscow State University who launched an appeal to find the dog, wrote on her

Facebook page early Thursday morning.

“The dog is a part of me, she's very dear to me — she's my friend, my companion and my eyes,” Diana's owner, Yulia Dyakova, told Moskva24 news channel in an interview aired Thursday.

“It's hard for me because I don't know how the dog is, what kind of conditions she's being kept in, whether she's being fed, looked after. Even if they won't return her, I'd like to know how she is,” Dyakova said, choking back tears.

Several hours after Diana's disappearance, Dyakova received a phone call saying Diana's collar, which had Dyakova's phone number on it, had been found near the metro station, Arkhangelskaya wrote.

In a follow-up post the next day, Arkhangelskaya wrote that several people had contacted her to say they had seen a woman get on a suburban train with Diana at Paveletsky Train Station, and that once on the train, she had been overheard telling a fellow passenger that people who beg with animals in underpasses should not be trusted and that she had saved the dog from a blind person who had been exploiting the animal.

Dyakova, who has won awards for her singing and been featured on TV, sometimes sings on the street or in city underpasses, Arkhangelskaya said.

The woman suspected of having taken Diana got off at Domodedovo station, Arkhangelskaya said, after which she was met by a man and her further movements are unknown. A photo of the suspected abductor taken on the metro was included in the same Facebook post.

Dyakova has had the guide dog for nearly two years, and is completely dependent on her, Arkhangelskaya added, calling on Facebook users to spread the word and notify her or the police if they thought they had seen the missing dog or her suspected kidnapper.

Contact the author at s.collinson@imedia.ru

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/07/31/police-muscovites-search-for-guide-dog-stolen-from-distraught-owner-a48675