

Tula Murders Blamed on Local Teen

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Investigators said Thursday that they have "no doubt" that they solved the gruesome murder of five in Tula — now blamed on a local teenager, possibly in love with one of the victims.

The bodies of Maria Shkapura, 35, her elderly mother and her three sons, aged between 5 and 9, were discovered in their locked apartment on Monday. The murder took place at least a week earlier, police said at the time.

The suspect, a 19-year-old local resident, met the Shkapuras when they asked him to fix their computer in 2008 and had occasionally helped out the family since, the Investigative Committee said.

A [statement](#) on the committee's web site said the suspect pleaded guilty but did not specify his motives. He apparently wanted to rob the family, the committee added, despite earlier reports that no valuables were missing.

Several news outlets, including RIA-Novosti and Komsomolskaya Pravda, [said](#) the suspect was romantically involved with Maria Shkapura and speculated that a lovers' spat might have been behind the murder.

Investigators have not commented on this or other versions of the incident, which included a business dispute related to Shkapura's job as a real estate agent and even a conflict with a religious sect.

No evidence of the suspect's involvement was made public Thursday, but Tatyana Sergeyeva, head of the Tula branch of the Investigative Committee, said "there are no doubts we've detained the man behind this crime," RIA-Novosti [reported](#).

If tried and convicted, the suspect may face up to life in prison. He will undergo a sanity check first, investigators said.

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