

Article 3: Florida woman arrested as French fugitive

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By Holly Hickman

MIAMI, Florida, June 13 AP - Thinking they had caught a French fugitive who had kidnapped her two children from their father, authorities held a mother in jail for six nights until DNA tests proved them wrong.

When officers brandishing guns ran toward her car, Nona Cason thought they were after somebody else. Instead, they arrested Cason, accused her of being fugitive Nadine Tretiakoff, and seized her children.

"People kept calling me, and made me sign things saying I was her," she said.

"I'm not Nadine Tretiakoff. I'm Nona from Macon, Georgia," she said yesterday, with no trace of an accent.

Both French and US federal authorities mistook her for Tretiakoff, accused in France by ex-husband Pierre Fourcade of kidnapping their children.

Cason spent the next six nights in jail. Arrested on a Friday, she said she had no knowledge of the whereabouts of her children until the following Monday, May 19. On that day, she stood "three feet" in front of Fourcade in a Fort Lauderdale courtroom where he testified repeatedly that she was his ex-wife.

Finally, the state ordered a DNA test. The results eviscerated any possibility of a blood link between Fourcade and Cason's two children. She was subsequently released.

"I was sure it was her," Pierre Fourcade said yesterday from France. "The French authorities assured me this was the woman, these were my kids."

"It's a horrible situation. I haven't seen my family in six years, and she really does resemble my ex-wife. I'm furious with the French officials."

Cason, 39, said that she was arrested by US Marshals in front of her children.

"I was in traffic and I see this row of police cars in front of me and behind me."

Courtesy: Australian Associated Press

Article 4: A tragic error leaves families holding the babies

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A tragic error leaves families holding the babies

New York correspondent Cameron Stewart discovers love knows no DNA boundaries:

SHORTLY before midnight on June 29, 1995, a 27-year-old secretary named Paula Johnson gave birth to a 4.2kg baby girl in the University of Virginia Medical Centre.

Johnson and the girl's father, Carlton Conley, named the baby Callie Marie. But they barely had a chance to hold Callie before she was whisked off to the nursery to have tests.

When the nurses brought Callie back the next morning, the baby seemed lighter, say Johnson and Conley. However, they had no reason to suspect anything was wrong.

When Johnson walked with Callie along the corridors of the hospital in the following days, she would pass other mothers, including a teenager called Whitney Rogers, who had given birth to a young baby, Rebecca, only hours after Johnson had Callie.

After several days, Johnson and Rogers took their babies to their respective homes, 120km apart in rural Virginia. For the next three years, each girl was

raised lovingly. No one suspected anything was amiss.

No one would have been any the wiser if Johnson had not taken former boyfriend Conley to court earlier this year to try to extract an increase in his \$US75 (\$120) weekly child support.

Conley — who was confused by the fact that Callie looked nothing like him — wanted to confirm he was the father.

When the tests showed that he wasn't, Johnson was shocked. She undertook DNA tests herself and on July 2 discovered, to her horror, that Callie was not her biological child. The only possible explanation was that Callie had been switched at birth.

The hospital investigated and concluded Callie was probably Rogers' biological baby, which made it logical to assume that Rogers had taken home Johnson's biological child.

The chastened hospital dispatched a nurse and a doctor to tell the bad news to Rogers, 19, and Kevin Chittum, a 25-year-old builder, who were raising

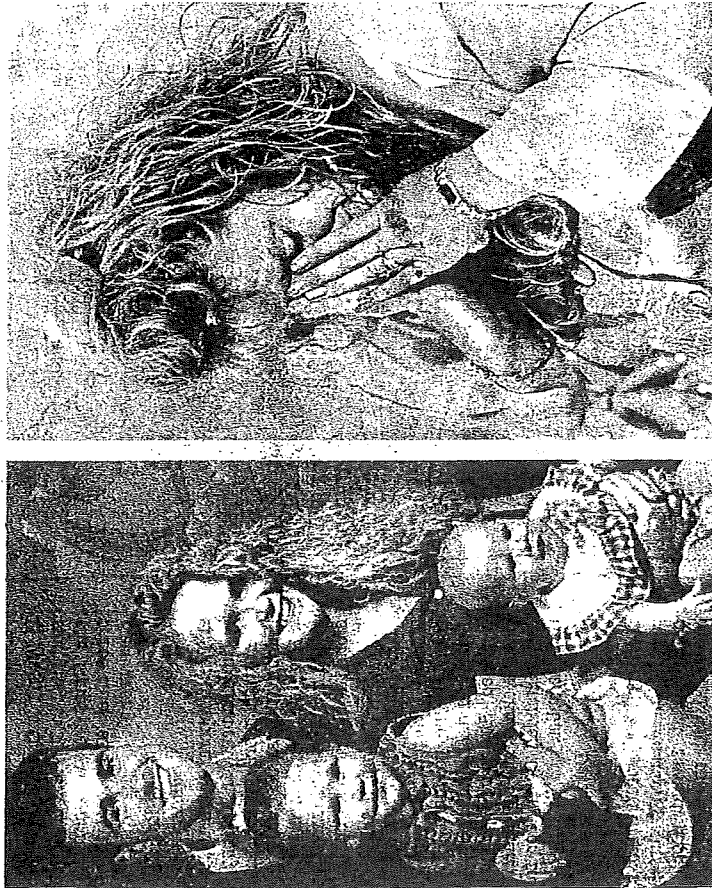
Rebecca. But the hospital did not make it in time.

On July 4, Rogers and Chittum were killed in a car accident that claimed seven lives.

When the saga eventually broke in the US media this week, there seemed to be a thousand questions that needed answering.

But eventually, both families said they were leaning toward having each child stay with the family that raised them, while allowing visiting rights for the biological parents or, in Callie's case, her biological grandparents. Adding to the confusion, the hospital has not yet confirmed that Rebecca is Johnson's child or Callie is Rogers's child.

DNA tests will be done soon to determine who the parents are. In a news conference this week, distraught Johnson said no fir decisions had been made about who should keep which child. For now, both families are anxious to settle the matter privately. The say psychologists, is by far the best way to deal with the mess.



Victims: Chittum and Rogers, with Rebecca, left, and Lindsey and, right, a distraught Johnson. Picture: Reuters