



Written by [James Donlon](#) on March 10, 2018

Former Russian Spy Poisoned in Britain: Is the Kremlin at it Again?

A former Russian spy and his 33-year-old daughter were found slumped over on a park bench in Salisbury, England, earlier this week. Sergei Skripal, 66, and his daughter Yulia, remain in critical condition, after being poisoned by what was identified as a nerve agent. While the two are in critical condition, it seems that several emergency personnel who responded to the scene have become ill, including a police officer who is in serious condition.



Skripal, a former spy and officer, is — not coincidentally — considered a traitor in his home country of Russia, after being convicted in a Russian court of selling state secrets to the British. After being imprisoned for four years, he was sent to Britain as part of a prisoner exchange between the Russian and British governments.

The attack has immediately attracted world attention, and it brings back to mind the brutal assassination of Alexander Litvinenko, in 2006, after the Russian was fatally poisoned by a rare radioactive metal. That poison is was thought to have been administered through a teapot. In 2016, a [UK inquiry](#) into Litvinenko's murder found that it was "probable" that the poisoning was carried out at the direction of the Russian FSB and that it was "probably approved" by the head of the FSB and Putin.

While Russian government involvement in the Skripal case is not yet proven, it is the most reasonable conclusion. Consider a few things: First, nerve agents are not exactly for sale to the average consumer. The rarer the poison or agent, the bigger the organization behind the attack. Look at the 2006 Litvinenko case, for example. The rare polonium-210 could only have been obtained by a government or an incredibly powerful and organized group. Also remember the North Korean VX nerve agent assassination. Secondly, this is obviously not the first time such an attack has occurred in Britain, as was just mentioned. Another fact to consider: in the past two years, both Skripal's brother and son died amidst strange and somewhat mysterious circumstances. Moreover, look at the mysterious death of Alexander Y. Perepilichny, yet another Russian and enemy of Putin. While the 44-year-old was out for a run, he suffered a heart attack and died. Later, after examining his body, a plant toxin was [found in his bloodstream](#).

British troops have been sent to Salisbury to contain and remove any material that may be contaminated by the deadly nerve agent. Prime Minister Theresa May held a special meeting on Wednesday to discuss the attack, which is being treated as a serious incident. So while some may have thought that brutal Russian assassinations, both in Russia and abroad, may have been subsiding, this latest incident renews the fear these attacks may be continuing.

Photo of tent covering bench where Skripal and his daughter were found critically ill: AP Images



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