

Man pleads guilty to sex assault, kidnapping

Brighton teen abducted

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A Brooklyn man pleaded guilty to several felonies Monday, including admitting that he convinced a Brighton teen to leave her home, restrained her and took her to New York City last March.

Serdar Ozmen, 41, pleaded guilty in state Supreme Court to one count of first-degree kidnapping as a sexually motivated felony, two counts of first-degree criminal sexual act, and two counts of second-degree criminal sexual act, all felonies, in connection with the incident, according to the Monroe County District Attorney's Office.

The incident involving Ozmen and the 14-year-old Brighton girl was heightened on March 25, 2024, when authorities issued an Amber Alert to locate the missing girl with developmental disabilities. She was reported missing by her family just before 4 a.m. that day. Police found evidence that the teenager had been texting and trading messages with someone on social media shortly before she disappeared. They tracked the phone she was communicating with to New York City.

The teenager was found alone in a Bronx apartment around 9:30 p.m. on March 25, about 17 and a half hours after she went missing.

According to the DA's Office, the pair met online through social media and Ozmen convinced the teen to leave her Brighton home in the middle of the night, restrained her in his vehicle and abducted her. Ozmen drove the teen from Brighton to New York City.

During the abduction, the teen was sexually assaulted, according to the DA's Office.

'Serdar Ozmen was looking for a target when he made contact with this 14-year-old victim,' said Assistant District Sara VanStrydonck, who prosecuted the case. 'Parents, I urge you to stay diligent. Predators exist and they search out children. Because of the swift and intensive work from the various police departments, I am proud to refer to this young girl as a survivor. Now, all I hope for is that she can continue to heal from this devastating and heinous kidnapping.'

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Ozmen is scheduled to be sentenced on March 5 by state Supreme Court Justice Alex Renzi.

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