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Back in his mother's arms



Frank Kimmel/Rocky Mountain News

Jimmie Watson hugs her son, David Hamden, 8, in a southeast Denver parking lot after he was returned to her yesterday. Her ex-husband is accused of abducting David 16 months ago. He was jailed yesterday. **Page 7**

Mom reunited with son, 8, as former husband is jailed

By Mark Brown

Rocky Mountain News Staff Writer

Sixteen months and nearly 1,000 miles since the last time they saw each other, Jimmie Watson and her only child hugged in a Denver-area supermarket parking lot yesterday.

Meanwhile, Watson's former husband, Emad Hamden, was taken to Arapahoe County Jail on a felony warrant accusing him of stealing 8-year-old David from his mother's custody in Grand Prairie, Texas.

The boy had been living in the Denver area with Hamden, who has remarried since the kidnapping.

And Watson was left to try to put together a life with her son again after an interruption of nearly 1½ years.

David was taken from a vehicle in his mother's driveway on July 4, 1989.

"These are just happy endings," said Mark Miller, the man who tracked down the missing child.

With mother and child both weeping in the back of a rented van yesterday, Watson had to ask her son basic questions no parent should ever have to ask.

"What grade are you in now, honey?" she said.

"Third."

"Do you want to go home?"

He nodded.

She looked in his mouth. "You lost your baby teeth!"

But even the happy endings have their downsides, Miller said.

David was pulled out of his school yesterday by sheriff's deputies and couldn't go back to his home before leaving the state. No toys, no clothes, no books — just the clothes on his back

and the books in his backpack. He's back with his friends in Texas — but gone from the friends he made here.

"It's the children who suffer most in this," Miller said.

Watson, who works for an aerospace contractor, had given up nearly all hope of finding her son before she had heard of Miller's group, The American Association for Lost Children Inc. David is the 36th child found by the group in the past three years, Miller said.

Miller is a former stockbroker and salesman who left all that to search for stolen children from his base in Houston.

"Nobody was looking for these kids. Nobody," Miller said.

Miller's group is non-profit and supported by donations such as those made by Continental Airlines and Gannett Outdoor in the search for David.

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