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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF UTAH

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, Plaintiff, vs. ADAM HUNTER HARMEL, Defendant.	Case No. 2:26mj872-DAO COMPLAINT Judge Daphne A. Oberg

Before the Honorable Daphne A. Oberg, United States Magistrate Judge for the District of Utah, appeared the undersigned, who on oath deposes and says:

COUNT I

Transportation with Intent to Engage in Criminal Sexual Activity
(18 U.S.C. § 2423(a))

Beginning in or about May 2025, and continuing until November 1, 2026, in the District of Utah and elsewhere,

ADAM HUNTER HARMEL,

the defendant herein, did knowingly transport an individual, (Minor Victim "MV") MV, who had not attained the age of 18 years in interstate and foreign commerce, with intent that the individual engage in sexual activity for which any person can be charged with a criminal offense. All in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 2423(a).

The elements of Count I are:

a) The defendant knowingly transported a minor in interstate commerce;

b) At the time of the transportation, the minor was less than 18 years old; and

c) At the time of the transportation, the defendant intended that the minor would engage in unlawful sexual activity.

This complaint is made on the basis of investigation consisting of the following:

1. I, Andrea Elder, being duly sworn, do hereby depose and state as follows.

2. I am a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) assigned to the Salt Lake City, Utah office and charged with investigating crimes related to domestic violent extremism. I am further assigned to the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force. I have been a Special Agent with the FBI since June 15, 2025, and was a Forensic Scientist investigating violent crimes prior to my FBI career. I have experience in searching and seizing electronic devices, investigating domestic terrorism and national security matters, investigating violent crimes against children including child exploitation and sexual abuse materials, search and arrest tactics and protocols, evidence collection, and

identification and analysis of criminal targets. In addition, I have been trained to investigate matters of sadistic online extremist, to include subjects coercing minors to conduct actions of self-harm and child sexual abuse material and sex trafficking. During these investigations, my duties included participating in search warrants, electronic and physical surveillance, and electronic analysis. I have consulted with other law enforcement officers and agents with extensive experience in investigating cases involving child pornography and the sexual exploitation of children.

3. This affidavit is intended to show only that there is sufficient probable cause for the requested warrant and does not set forth all of my knowledge about this matter.

4. Based on my knowledge and experience, and on information received from other individuals, including law enforcement officers, as well as their reports, as set forth below, I have learned the following.

5. On or about August 20, 2025, FBI Salt Lake City received information from INDIVIDUAL-1 that their minor grandchild (the minor victim, "MV") whose date of birth was in 2009, had disappeared on or about May 29, 2025.

6. The report submitted by MV's parent on or about June 30, 2025, gave a physical description of MV. MV's parent also provided information that MV was known to send and post sexually explicit images and/or videos in exchange for money.

7. On or about August 25, 2025, the FBI interviewed MV's parent, who explained MV was initially groomed on gaming platforms, and the grooming transitioned to other

social media applications. MV's parent said MV sent sexually explicit images and images of self-harming to unidentified social media application users for money. MV's parent said MV began cutting their legs in 2023, and in approximately March 2025, MV started to cut their forearms.

8. Through further investigation, including search warrant returns and interviews of individuals identified in search warrant returns from social media applications, FBI has confirmed MV had sent videos of her face, breast, genitals, and anus, and masturbation videos to users on these platforms.

9. On or about November 1, 2026, the FBI received a tip about the possible location of MV.

10. INDIVIDUAL-2 and their minor child, INDIVIDUAL-3, reported that on or about October 15, 2026, INDIVIDUAL-3 met a person playing the online game, AmongUs, (hereinafter "AmongUs USER"). INDIVIDUAL-3 and AmongUs USER transitioned to communicate on a social media application. On this social media application, AmongUs USER disclosed their name which matched that of MV.

11. AmongUs USER also mentioned the following information to INDIVIDUAL-3:

a) That they had run away;

b) The police were not looking for them anymore; and

c) They were currently being held against their will at a man's home in Oregon.

12. AmongUs USER also sent articles referencing MV to INDIVIDUAL-2.

13. On or about November 1, 2026, FBI conducted telephone calls with INDIVIDUAL-2 while INDIVIDUAL-2 separately video called MV. The FBI observed the video call between INDIVIDUAL-2 and MV. INDIVIDUAL-2 took photos of the video call with MV and shared these photos with the FBI, one of which is depicted below.

14. During these calls, MV provided the following details:

a) MV met Adam Hunter Harmel (SUBJECT) on a social media application in about May 2025;

b) The SUBJECT told MV that he was disabled, and his hips were "messed up;"

c) The SUBJECT offered MV money to help them get to Oregon;

d) The SUBJECT drove from Oregon to Perry, Utah and picked up MV. Based on what I have learned through the investigation, from MV and the search warrant returns for MV's social media application account, this occurred on or about May 29, 2025;

e) After picking up MV, the SUBJECT threw MV's phone into a river in Logan Canyon;

f) The SUBJECT drove MV to his residence in Oregon;

g) The SUBJECT told MV they were not allowed to leave;

h) The SUBJECT and MV slept in the same bed in the basement area of his residence in Oregon;

i) The SUBJECT kept a knife under his pillow and made MV sleep against the wall to prevent their escape;

j) The SUBJECT provided MV with a cell phone, which did not have data capabilities. This meant that MV could only use the phone if it was connected via WiFi;

k) MV indicated the SUBJECT would become very violent and aggressive, often hitting them;

l) The SUBJECT expressed his desire for MV to start a family with him;

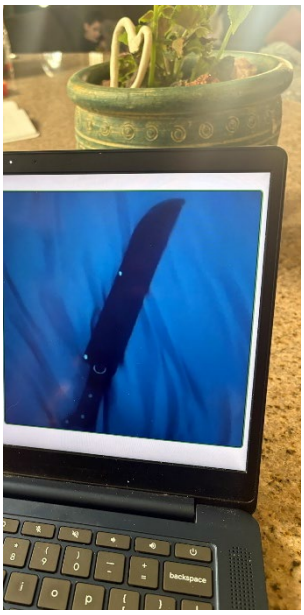
m) The SUBJECT indicated he had an interest in minors, particularly minor girls. The SUBJECT indicated his preference for MV because they are a minor;

n) The SUBJECT sexually assaulted MV in 2025 and again in 2026;

o) MV maintained corroborating evidence of the 2025 assault and displayed it on the call with INDIVIDUAL-2;

p) The SUBJECT further forced MV to remove their braces with pliers so that they could not be identified;

q) MV also showed the SUBJECT's knife, depicted below:



15. Law enforcement was able to recover MV from the SUBJECT's residence and took them for necessary medical treatment and evaluation.

16. A search warrant executed on the SUBJECT's residence corroborated information MV provided on the call, such as items found in the residence and sexual lubricant. These items include knives, female clothing, and guns that were later identified to be BB guns.

17. On or about November 1, 2026, the FBI interviewed INDIVIDUAL-4. INDIVIDUAL-4 shared the SUBJECT's residence and told the FBI that the SUBJECT drove from Oregon to Utah in 2025 to meet MV. INDIVIDUAL-4 also said the SUBJECT brought back a new girlfriend, who was MV, from Utah. INDIVIDUAL-4 was uncertain of MV's age.

18. INDIVIDUAL-4 also mentioned they first interacted with MV two months after MV arrived at SUBJECT's residence, at which point MV frantically ran back to the basement, where they slept with the SUBJECT.

Based on the foregoing information, your affiant respectfully requests that a warrant of arrest be issued for Adam Hunter Harmel for violations of 18 U.S.C. § 2423(a).

ANDREA K. ELDER
Special Agent FBI

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN in accordance with the requirements of Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 by telephone at 5:10 p.m. on November 2, 2026.

Daphne A. Oberg
United States MagistrateJudge

APPROVED:

MELISSA HOLYOAK
United States Attorney

JAWAYRIA Z. AUCHTER
Assistant United States Attorney