INDIANAPOLIS (AP) -- Two Indianapolis men say they bought advance copies of the sixth book in the Harry Potter series, the latest breach in what was supposed to be a tightly controlled release.

Tim Meyer, 33, and Andrew Rauscher, 25, told The Indianapolis Star they purchased the books at a downtown store on Monday. They declined to provide the store's name because they are frequent customers.

"I thought I was seeing things," said Meyer. "I asked the lady, 'Can I buy this now?' and she was like 'Yeah' and just rang it up."

The 672-page "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince" has been shrouded in secrecy and its debut has been highly orchestrated to enable everyone -- readers and reviewers, alike -- to crack it open all at once.

It officially goes on sale Saturday at 12:01 a.m.

Kris Moran, a spokeswoman for Scholastic Inc., the U.S. publisher of J.K. Rowling's fantasy series, told the Star she was unaware of any security breaches in the Indianapolis area. She said embargo violations would be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.
case-by-case basis.

"We obviously take the security of this book very seriously and investigate any reported breaches of the on-sale date and would take any action that would be appropriate," Moran said.

Fourteen books were accidentally sold last week at a grocery store in Canada, but a judge ordered the customers not to talk about the book, copy it, sell it or even read it before its official release.

A drug store in upstate New York also accidentally sold an advance copy. The family who purchased that copy said they would return the novel.

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