

In the FBI lair two lay in wait for a certain person to walk out of Seward Park High School. It was nearing 3:00pm. Zero hour.

“See ‘em yet?” A smooth, pliable voice came from behind darkened windows in the building across Grand Street that directly faced the school’s entrance.

Inside that stuffy rental was a king-size bed with a ruffled, a moth-eaten cover, suggesting it’d been sat on but not slept in. A roach trotted across the pillow,

confident that the living space was his and not for the two men sitting nearby.

“Quiet.” Agent Granville, the lead man, spoke with a staunch firmness, second generation at what he did. “Do you want everyone to know we’re here?”

Robert Granville and William Norton were strait-laced, deep in a game that had the rules missing. They wore wrinkled, flat gray, off-the-rack suits with Kmart ties that didn’t match. They were hardcore G-men, lifers, pledged to do anything for God and country. They were

members of the FBI's newly formed Soviet Espionage Squad—two of many attack dogs that were unleashed by the omnipotent J. Edgar Hoover.

Granville was perched at the window, looking through binoculars that caused his bloodshot eyes to water. He never touched alcohol but his were the eyes of any drunk who was known to close-down neighborhood bars well after the bartender shouted, "Go home!"

He wiped away sweat from his forehead with the back of his hand, clearing his sandpaper dry throat. "Pipe-down and do as you're told."

Agent Norton, the one with a stammer that he was able to conceal most of the time, stood at other half of the same window. He stepped away to an open end-table drawer to remove a pack of cigarettes, lighting one, letting out wispy-white smoke. He, too, chased truth and justice. Lately, however, he had grown bored.

"There's g-g-got to b-b-be more to field work than this."

“Cheer up.” Granville grunted in a ‘will you shut-up’ manner. “What other job lets you shoot people?”

“I didn’t sign up to be a sniper,” Norton replied, trying to hold on to the last vestige of his rapidly vanishing religion-based morality.

That fast, the smile left Granville’s tension-lined face. “We’re spy catchers. We gather intelligence then convey the facts to higher-ups.”

He extended his index and middle fingers for Norton to hand him a cigarette from the few remaining in the soft pack. Then he waited for the subordinate to light it.

“If being here’s a problem, get on the first bus back to Washington. Find your way to the undersized desk that you liked because it made you look bigger than you are, drooling at the picture of your wife who you met when she was underage.”

Trembling from that disclosure, Norton snapped his attention to Granville who wasn’t done. “That’s assuming Mr. Hoover hadn’t given your job to someone more dedicated.”

Norton was on a tightrope. More misstatements, anything misinterpreted meant being blackballed. Worse, there was sure to be an investigation into his wife's age.

Granville added the unbelievable. "Relax. It's not in my official report...yet." He hated everyone who didn't believe in everything that he did.

The binoculars went back up, seeking to identify whatever, whoever was so important outside.

"Sir, I apologize. Mine was an off-the-cuff remark with no validity." Norton finally got the point to keep his opinions to himself.

Granville disconnected to make a mental note to get Norton off the case as soon as this surveillance stakeout had concluded. Then his eyes flared. "There's car!"

Norton loosened his tie in front of a wall thermometer that registered eighty-seven degrees, mumbling, "Hope it's got air conditioning. Mine is in the d-d-dealership getting f-f-fixed."

Then he headed back beside Granville, peeking through bent Venetian blinds that hadn't properly folded (open or closed) since the short-stay motel was built. How many years ago was that? Forget it. The important thing was that the federal government's noose was tightening. The subject of their lengthy investigation had been spotted. The trap was set.