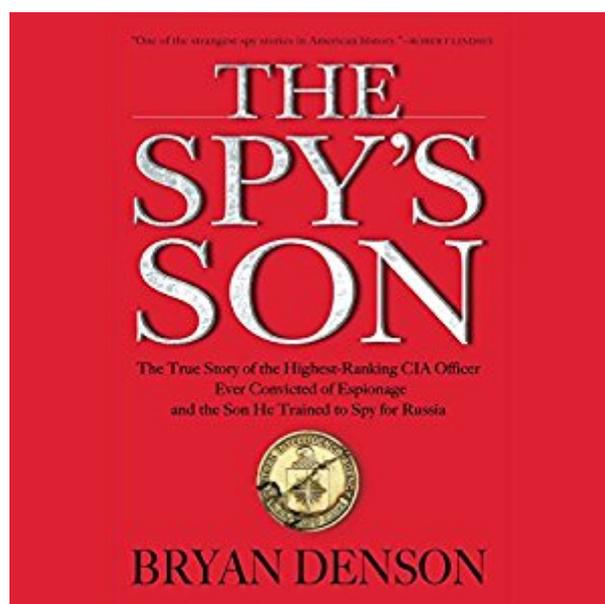


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The Spy's Son: The True Story Of The Highest-Ranking CIA Officer Ever Convicted Of Espionage And The Son He Trained To Spy For Russia



Synopsis

Investigative reporter and Pulitzer Prize finalist Bryan Denson tells the riveting story of the Nicholsons - father and son coconspirators who deceived their country by selling national secrets to Russia. Jim Nicholson was one of the CIA's top veteran case officers. By day he taught spycraft at the CIA's clandestine training center, The Farm. By night, he was a minivan-driving single father racing home to have dinner with his kids. But Nicholson led a double life. For more than two years, he had met covertly with agents of Russia's foreign intelligence service and turned over troves of classified documents. In 1997 Nicholson became the highest-ranking CIA officer ever convicted of espionage. But his duplicity didn't stop there. While behind the bars of a federal prison, the former mole systematically groomed the one person he trusted most to serve as his stand-in: his youngest son, Nathan. When asked to smuggle messages out of prison to Russian contacts, Nathan saw an opportunity to be heroic and to make his father proud.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is a highly informative and very well-written book about two damaging espionage cases in US history - Jim & Nathan Nicholson. "Spy's son" is, simply put, and not withstanding the enormously complicated and strangest stories it tells and a very good read. The book may be about as comprehensive an account of the Nicholsons cases as readers are likely to get. Mr. Denson not only covers what they did, but also provides a thorough analysis of why they did it. He captures the full character of both traitors as well the demons that drove them. I liked the story covering J. Nicholson tour in Bucharest, Romania, as chief of station (COS); also the love affair between his

former wife and a Romanian young vet, plus the different views about Romania's status and perspectives in 1990-1992 between him and former ambassador H.E. John R. Davis Jr. But, in fact, there are two main stories, perfectly told in its 18 chapters, and one that promises for the future. Here I am speaking about Alex. Zaporozhsky, one of the main targets of US to be recovered in July 2010 spy swap. Indeed, it was a major victory for the CIA&FBI to get him back, alive, from infamous Russian gulag. As I said in a previous review, this man really deserves a book for the story of his life. Sensing his huge importance, the author mentioned that he tried, unsuccessfully, to interview him. After five years of investigation, Mr. Denson gives us priceless information: Alex. Zaporozhsky (GT Scythian) helped US to catch J. Nicholson! If I am not wrong, it is for the first time when I see this valuable information in the public domain. So, he contributed, decisively, in both Ames (Q: what about another SVR defector - codenamed Avenger- who supposedly gave up Ames?) and Nicholson cases!

Reads like spy-thriller fiction only it's true. Author Bryan Denson fleshes out the story of CIA turncoat Jim Nicholson, who had everything going for him but control of his ego and a grand sense of entitlement. In no way an ideological spy, Jim Nicholson's ego and hubris is what led him into spying for Russia. Nicholson had already made it to the pinnacle of most CIA field agents' career dream, Chief-of-Station in a foreign country. He was an experienced operative in every way. At the height of his time as a double agent, Nicholson was lead trainer of CIA recruits at "The Farm," the CIA training camp in Virginia. This position gave him access to and great knowledge of those who would become the next generation of covert foreign agents. Nicholson was in a position to blow their cover to the Russians, which he did. He sold a lot of other secrets as well. The plot thickens as CIA senior staff begin to smell a rat. Denson leads the reader through the exhaustive investigation and snagging of Nicholson. What makes this remarkable is that the investigation is conducted in-house, inside the CIA's Langley Headquarters where Nicholson goes about his day job, even as he moonlights as a spy. It's a high-risk, clever investigation but that for a single mistake or an untimely coincidence could have easily been compromised. It is only after Nicholson is convicted, sentenced and put into Federal prison that the next phase of his duplicity emerges, from which the book gains its title, "The Spy's Son."

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