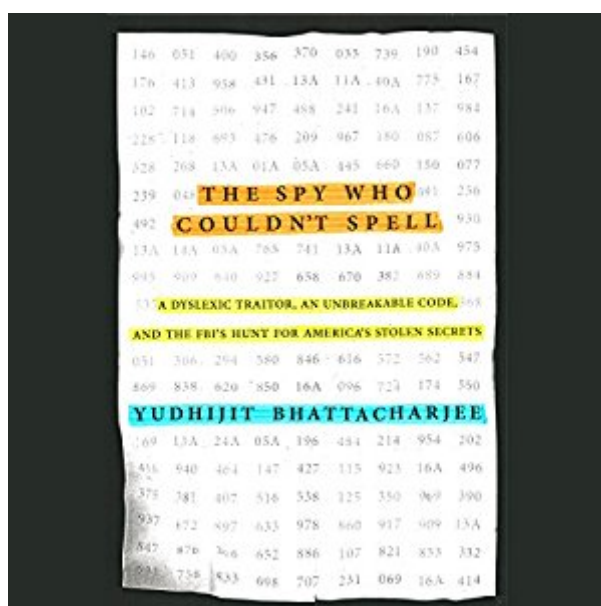


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The Spy Who Couldn't Spell: A Dyslexic Traitor, An Unbreakable Code, And The FBI's Hunt For America's Stolen Secrets



Synopsis

The thrilling, true-life account of the FBI's hunt for ingenious traitor Brian Regan - known as the Spy Who Couldn't Spell. Before Edward Snowden's infamous data breach, the largest theft of government secrets was committed by an ingenious traitor whose intricate espionage scheme and complex system of coded messages were made even more baffling by his dyslexia. His name is Brian Regan, but he came to be known as the Spy Who Couldn't Spell. In December of 2000, FBI special agent Steven Carr of the bureau's Washington, DC, office received a package from FBI New York: a series of coded letters from an anonymous sender to the Libyan consulate, offering to sell classified US intelligence. The offer, and the threat, were all too real. A self-proclaimed CIA analyst with top secret clearance had information about US reconnaissance satellites, air defense systems, weapons depots, munitions factories, and underground bunkers throughout the Middle East. Rooting out the traitor would not be easy, but certain clues suggested a government agent with a military background, a family, and a dire need for money. Leading a diligent team of investigators and code breakers, Carr spent years hunting down a dangerous spy and his cache of stolen secrets. In this fast-paced true-life spy thriller, Yudhijit Bhattacharjee reveals how the FBI unraveled Regan's strange web of codes to build a case against a man who nearly collapsed America's military security.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Spy Who Couldn't Spell is bound for the Hollywood's big

screen. This engaging story of Washington intelligence intrigue is masterfully woven by Bhattacharjee with a tale of personal torment. The story simultaneously conjures compassion for the prime character—convicted spy, Brian Patrick Regan—alongside contempt and disdain for his willingness to sell out his country. This true story reads like a Tom Clancy novel with an all-too-disturbing real life parallel to other contemporary intelligence breaches. Unfolding more than a decade before the Edward Snowden affair, this book is as relevant for history buffs as it is for the Washington policy community.

This book should have been called Mr. 80% or The Spy Who Constantly Sabotaged Himself With His Own Ineptitude. This book detailed the life of a man who was constantly made fun of and considered stupid by his peers throughout his life so he tries to get himself out of debt and get back at everyone by stealing Top Secret information from the NRO and Interlink to sell to other countries. It does go into all the research he did on past spies and his gift for encryption and breaking codes which was really interesting. Unfortunately he kept making thoughtless mistakes like leaving the Internet browser with embassy locations up on a public computer (and not clearing the browsing history) when he thought he was being followed by the FBI and leaving sticky notes with his name on them on the info he wanted to sell to foreign governments when he wanted to remain anonymous. This case should have made the government look at how easy it was to steal top secret government info and fix the loopholes in their security to prevent it from happening in the future but of course this did not happen. I received an advanced copy of this book from Penguin's First to Read Program with no requirement to review book.

This is a riveting read. I literally read it from cover to cover in one afternoon. Fast-paced and detailed enough to draw you in, this is an excellent exploration of "to err is human, to really access things, you need computers"! While it is the human errors that eventually lead to discovery and all sequelae, the real danger of the new digital age and intra-net access is all too evident an error easily exploited. That has continued to our day, a decade and one-half later.

Great story told in a fashion that kept me interested from start to finish ! This was another binge read in two days that I could not put down ! It is an amazing story that I was totally unaware of. Somehow, the media never portrayed this strange case with all of its twists and turns. I could have been reading fiction, but unfortunately, it wasn't. Very said that we have traitors who would compromise our most sensitive secrets for monetary gains.

It would be hard to mess up such an interesting story about an inept would-be spy, so the reader is carried through. I found the writer's style to be tedious and often ham-handed. While I'm interested in codebreaking and was able to follow the very long sections in which he rambled on about Regan's encoding strategies, I felt like the writer had lost the plot and was unnecessarily filling space.

I am not normally a reader of spy books, but a friend recommended this one and I couldn't put it down. It's a riveting tale that gets inside the mind of a spy most of us haven't heard of, and the FBI agent who worked tirelessly to identify him and find the secrets he'd stolen. Bhattacharjee delves into Regan's background, his family and his childhood to examine what motivated him, and offers unusual insights into how spy investigations happen. Highly readable and lots of fun.

I am not a non fiction reader and I had reservations that a true story about espionage had enough of the stuff that I have come to enjoy in modern fiction to be a great book. I was pleasantly surprised and to my amazement I actually felt compassion for a man who decided to commit this hideous crime against our great country. I also had a increased appreciation for the work of the intelligence community. A great story about real people.

Well written book. The scary thing about this story is the ease with which Brian Regan stole classified documents, videotapes, and flash drives by simply putting them in his gym bag and walking out the front door past the nicely paid, highly-trained security guards. He did so for years. The only reason our counterintelligence folks caught on to the guy was a tip from the Libyan embassy that someone had American secrets for sale.

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