

# Beating The FBI

by Lee Adams

At best, the FBI does not have a history of respect for civil rights. Whether you are guilty or innocent doesn't matter. You are always treated the same way during an FBI investigation – unfairly. Especially if surveillance is involved.

If you snooze, you lose. It's that simple. Many of us are sleepwalking through life. And if you don't pay attention, then you're gonna pay – especially if you engage in behavior that attracts the attention of the FBI.

Make no mistake about it, FBI surveillance teams are lethal. They are very effective at what they do. They have had lots of experience. They've got massive resources. In a major investigation, 30 agents watching one person is commonplace. You never see the same agent twice. You never see the same vehicle twice.

The FBI's triple-threat surveillance strategy of multi-layered teams, rapid response, and managed aggression must be taken seriously.

Threat #1 – A multi-layered team can fool you into thinking that the surveillance has ended. This is an extremely dangerous situation. They're still lurking nearby, of course, waiting for you to say or do something incriminating.

Threat #2 – A same-day response by the FBI means that surveillance might begin before you're ready for it. They'll catch you unprepared. The FBI surveillance team may end up watching you trying to hide the very material that you're hoping to conceal from them.

Threat #3 – The FBI's policy of managed aggression can easily provoke you into losing your temper, or your nerve, or both. It is a wicked strategy. That's why they use it.

It's easy to see why most people are easy prey for the FBI's surveillance machine. But it doesn't need to be that way.

Beating the FBI.

There are people who routinely thwart the FBI. They know how to recognize the telltale signature of an FBI surveillance team. When they find themselves under surveillance, they use tactics that inhibit the FBI's ability to find out what they're really doing. They mislead the FBI.

These individuals make it difficult for the FBI to build a legitimate case against them. Perhaps even more important, they make it difficult for the FBI to build a phony case against them.

An individual like this is called a hard target. That's spy-talk for a surveillance target who knows what he's doing.

The methods and techniques that these individuals use are called countersurveillance. This article reveals some of those methods and techniques. Simply put, the article you are reading is about countersurveillance methods that will beat the FBI.

What you'll learn in this article. The article is comprised of two parts. The first section deals with FBI general strategy. You'll learn about the structure and underlying principles of FBI surveillance. They've been at this game for many years and they've learned many lessons. The second section of this article deals with specific tactics of FBI surveillance teams. A case study is utilized to explain and illustrate FBI behavior. It is based on direct experience and on information from confidential sources.

What you need to know about the FBI...

They are masters of the game. If you have something to hide, FBI surveillance could be the beginning of the end for you. Do not make the mistake of underestimating the capabilities of an FBI surveillance team. They are persistent. They are methodical. They are thorough. And they are fanatical about their work.

Drawing from decades of experience, FBI surveillance strategy has evolved into an advanced system that exploits the classic military principles of space, time, and force. This strategic foundation is present in every major surveillance operation run by the FBI. This foundation relies on the three pillars of rapid response, multi-layered teams, and managed aggression. While each of these is a serious threat to the target of a surveillance operation, the most deadly of the three is the multi-layered team.

NOTE – There is more to multi-layered teams than we cover in this article. The FBI often uses surveillance as an end in itself. As a method for suppressing dissent, criticism, and activism, nothing is more effective than letting the target know that he's under surveillance. Fear is a powerful tool.

### Multi-Layered Teams

The FBI's deployment strategy is insidious and conniving, yet brilliant. Because of the manner in which FBI agents are deployed, it is almost impossible to catch the FBI unawares during a surveillance operation. They always have a fall-back position. This is called the strategy of surveillance-in-depth.

Here's how it works. For most surveillance operations, the FBI actually puts two teams in the field. That's right. Two teams.

The first team is expendable. That means if it is blown (that's spy-talk for detected), the surveillance operation will still survive and reach its objective. This first team is called the Decoy and Diversion Team. In this article we will refer to it simply as the Decoy Team.

In surveillance operations involving hard targets, the Decoy Team expects to get caught. In surveillance operations involving soft targets, they expect to remain undetected in 75% of all cases. (A soft target is a person who has no countersurveillance skills or training, and is not on the lookout for surveillance.)

Any target who is alert – and on the lookout for surveillance – will eventually detect a pavement artist of the Decoy Team. Pavement artist is spy-talk for a member of a surveillance team that is watching you in public places. They are on foot and they are in vehicles.

At the same time that the Decoy Team enters the situation and begins surveillance on you, a second team also enters the game. This second team quietly slips into the environment, where it does its best to blend in with the background. This second team is called the Stealth Team.

At the beginning of the operation, the Stealth Team makes no effort to watch you. Its only objective is to establish its presence – and to remain undetected.

This deployment strategy is incredibly effective. Here's why. The first team provides cover for the second team's arrival. Even a hard target is likely to be too busy watching the first team to notice the arrival of the second team. And when both teams are in place, you usually only notice the first team.

The top priority of the first team (the Decoy Team) is to see everything you do. They want to learn your habits and your daily routine. They don't want to be detected, of course, but they are prepared to pay that price if that is what's required in order to make sure they see absolutely everything you are doing. Their first priority is to acquire as much data about you as possible.

If you do detect the Decoy Team – and if they realize you've spotted them – the Decoy Team simply suspends its operations. They realize that you'll notice their departure. In fact, they're counting on it. They also realize that very few people will realize that a second team has blended into the background.

This second team – the Stealth Team – doesn't need to see everything you do. They have been briefed by the first team. The Stealth Team only needs to watch you during certain times and at certain locations where they think you might be up to something. The top priority of the Stealth Team is to remain undetected. And they are prepared to leave you unwatched for brief periods in order to retain their invisibility. This is called picket surveillance by the FBI, named after the gaps in a picket fence.

This two-stage approach to major surveillance operations is brutally effective. It has led to the ruin of many people who thought they could outfox the FBI.

Tradecraft.

The undercover agents of the Stealth Team use methods that are more sophisticated than those used by the Decoy Team. These methods are called tradecraft.

The Stealth Team is much more difficult to catch than the Decoy Team. You need to know what you're doing. It is vital that you do not let the Stealth Team realize that you've spotted them. That's because the best way to beat them is by feeding them misinformation.

The difference in methods used by the two teams is best explained by example. Numerous situations are described in the case study later in this article.

Layered surveillance.

This concept of multi-layered surveillance teams is the backbone of the FBI's surveillance strategy. They almost never lead with their best team. They always hold something back so that they have a fallback position. This strategy is also carried over into other FBI operations.

When the FBI is trying to infiltrate an agent into your circle of friends, associates, coworkers, and acquaintances, they'll often use an expendable agent first. This first agent is a Decoy Agent, meant to provide cover for the infiltration by the second agent (the Stealth Agent).

If the first agent manages to penetrate your organization undetected, the FBI is delighted. But

if he runs into difficulty, he is withdrawn. The second agent – who has blended into the background – is brought into play.

Why the FBI loves your lawyer. It is important for you to realize that most lawyers have no training in countersurveillance. This is unfortunate. When the subject of an investigation first realizes he is being "followed", he is angry – and outraged at the invasion of his privacy. In many instances, one of the things he'll do is complain to his lawyer about being "followed". Many lawyers advise their clients to "confront" the person who is "following" them.

They don't realize that this is a game for foxes, not pit bulls.

The lawyer's advice plays right into the FBI's hand. When the subject attempts to confront the surveillance team, the FBI simply drops back into stealth mode. The Decoy Team suspends its surveillance activity.

Because members of the Decoy Team are relatively easy to detect, their absence is easily noticed. The subject assumes that his lawyer's advice has achieved the intended effect. After all, the subject confronted the people who were "following" him and they immediately "stopped".

What the subject does not realize, of course, is that the Stealth Team is now active. They have been there all along, of course, as part of the background while the Decoy Team was working. When the Decoy Team departs, the Stealth Team is still there as part of the background. So from the subject's point of view, everything appears to return to normal.

Basic psychology.

The FBI surveillance team is only too willing to accommodate your emotional desire for control over your immediate environment. It is a fantasy that will lead to your ruin. Here's why. When you see the Decoy Team has departed, you begin to feel safe, so you let down your guard. You become easy prey for the Stealth Team. Of course, infiltration comes next – FBI agents penetrate your circle of friends, associates, coworkers, and acquaintances. Arrest and indictment are simply a question of time.

Dummy up.

Here's what this means in simple language. You can play the macho man OR you can beat the FBI. You cannot have it both ways. It is an "either-or" situation. If you insist on being a know-it-all tough-guy confronting the people who are "following" you, the FBI is going to play you like a cheap fiddle at a country hoe-down. To beat the FBI you need self-control and self-discipline.

Be smart. Learn from the mistakes of others. FBI surveillance teams do not just go away.

You don't stop wrestling a gorilla when you get tired. You stop when the gorilla gets tired.

Rapid response

This is the second component in the FBI's three-pronged strategy of multi-layered teams, rapid response, and managed aggression.

The width and breadth of the FBI's presence has been a closely-guarded secret up to now.

Many people do not realize that the FBI can provide same-day response anywhere in North America. This is called the strategy of surveillance-in-time.

In fact, the FBI can mount a same-day surveillance operation in any city located in the United States, Canada, or Mexico. The FBI can also mount a same-day response in many major European cities, most major South American cities, and some Asian cities.

They use a skeleton crew to start. Outside North America they sometimes farm out the work to subcontractors.

Then, in many cases, the full surveillance deployment arrives overnight and begins work the next day. In situations where FBI resources are already stretched by other major cases, it may take two days for the full surveillance compliment to arrive.

But make no mistake about it, surveillance has been underway since day one. If they choose to do so – and they often do – the FBI can initiate surveillance the same day they become aware of you.

The reconnaissance factor. In many surveillance situations, a special team is deployed to provide reconnaissance information for the main surveillance teams. This reconnaissance team is called the Advance Team. The reconnaissance team is deployed ahead of the Decoy and Stealth teams that were discussed earlier in this article.

The Advance Team is tasked with establishing roughly who you are, where you are, and what you're doing. They'll take photographs of you, your home, your office, and your vehicles. The photographs help agents identify you on sight. The person who secretly takes pictures of you is called a peep. The peep often arrives at your doorstep disguised as a volunteer collecting for charity or as a religious canvasser. (Like the CIA, the FBI is big on using organized religion as cover for covert operations.)

Surreptitious entry.

The primary task of the Advance Team, however, is to break into your office or home. This is called surreptitious entry by spies. That's just polite talk for break-and-enter. The break-in usually happens during the first few days of a surveillance operation.

Once inside, they perform a quick search of your property. They've got special ways to get inside locked drawers and office safes. (See future articles in Spy & CounterSpy for more on this.)

They'll often bug your office or home. Being able to hear all your conversations gives them a tremendous advantage. If they already know where you're going, it makes it easier to "follow" you. If they know you're going to a restaurant, for example, they can arrive "before" you do. The FBI's tactic of being the first to arrive at your destination has fooled many people over the years.

They'll also usually attach a tracking device (called a beeper) to your vehicle. This makes it easier for them to track you in traffic.

Clearly, if you are sharp enough to detect the Advance Team – and if you don't reveal that you've spotted them – you can enjoy a major tactical advantage over the FBI during the entire surveillance operation. You can either cloak your activities so they find nothing. Or you can

feed them misinformation. (See future articles in *Spy & CounterSpy* for more on detecting the first break-in.) You can also watch the behavior of the surveillance team itself for telltale signs that indicate they've got your home or office bugged.)

Consequences of same-day response.

What's the lesson in all this? Here's a real-world example. Suppose you are a controversial activist group. If you send out a news release to the media exposing government abuse, then you'd better be prepared for same-day surveillance by the FBI.

Not tomorrow. Not in a few days. Today.

The same advice applies if you are an investigative journalist submitting a controversial article for publication.

The implications of same-day surveillance can be serious. Suppose you've got documents or materials that you relied on when writing your news release or your article. These documents might contain references to confidential sources or informants or whistleblowers. You don't want the FBI to find these materials. You don't want to compromise your sources.

The materials had better be securely stowed away BEFORE you send out the news release. Trying to hide the materials AFTERWARD may be too late. Because if you think you're faster than the FBI, you're asleep at the wheel, heading for Dead Man's Curve. But be careful where you hide the materials. Safes, alarm systems, even bank safe-deposit boxes are generally useless against a determined FBI surveillance team. (Future articles in *Spy & CounterSpy* will describe how to keep information from the FBI. It isn't easy, but it can be done.)

The FBI's capability for same-day response has caught many surveillance targets unprepared. This is not a game for slowpokes. If you don't move fast, you're gonna be roadkill.

Managed aggression.

This is the third component in the FBI's three-pronged strategy of multi-layered teams, rapid response, and managed aggression.

The FBI has a bureau-wide policy of managed aggression. This policy also affects FBI surveillance operations.

Surveillance teams are given specific goals. The FBI command structure accepts no excuses. It tolerates no failures. This strategy of surveillance-for-results leads to aggressive behavior in FBI surveillance teams because of the pressure they're under. This results-driven aggression tends to manifest itself as professional aggression.

An FBI surveillance team is using professional aggression when it intentionally and deliberately applies pressure to the subject of a surveillance operation. Actions like this are called psy-ops, which is spy-talk for psychological operations.

Here is an example of how an FBI surveillance team will deliberately provoke you.

When you're walking through a mall or a downtown shopping district, the surveillance team will intentionally interfere with your route. A pavement artist will "absent-mindedly" cross your path, forcing you to change course to avoid walking into him. A group of agents will

"inadvertently" obstruct your path – they'll be standing together chatting, forcing you to walk around them. Other pavement artists will "accidentally" create near-misses as you walk along. Some of these "pedestrians" will create situations with a potential for a head-on collision, forcing you to dodge them.

As the psychological pressure continues to build, agents may "innocently" bump into you, jostle you, or step on your heel from behind. A group of pavement artists will cue up ahead of you, creating a line-up that delays you as you try to make a purchase, order fast food, buy tickets, and so on.

Activity like this can quickly create frustration, even anger, in you. But because the incidents occur in public locations, it's difficult to prove who's behind them. You never see any agent more than once. You don't know where the next provocation is going to come from. You're beginning to get upset, irritated, unstable. You're more likely to make mistakes in judgment. And that's exactly what the surveillance team wants.

When a surveillance team is experiencing difficulty cracking open an investigation they sometimes resort to professional aggression. This is a wicked mind-game. It can be very effective if you're not anticipating it. The FBI surveillance team has the power to make or break your day – and they don't hesitate to use that power.

This is not a game for choirboys.

Conclusions: FBI surveillance strategy...

The FBI's triple-threat surveillance strategy of multi-layered teams, rapid response, and managed aggression must be taken seriously. These three threats were mentioned at the beginning of this article. They are important enough to be repeated.

Threat #1 – A multi-layered team can fool you into thinking that the surveillance has ended. This is an extremely dangerous situation. They're still lurking nearby, of course, waiting for you to say or do something incriminating.

Threat #2 – A same-day response by the FBI means that surveillance might begin before you're ready for it. They'll catch you unprepared. The FBI surveillance team may end up watching you trying to hide the very material that you're hoping to conceal from them.

Threat #3 – The FBI's policy of managed aggression can easily provoke you into losing your temper, or your nerve, or both. It is a wicked strategy. That's why they use it.

Case Study: Beating an FBI surveillance Team

The preceding discussion provided the background knowledge you need to begin beating the FBI. But the real value of this article lays in the section you're reading now – the case study. That's because the case study is based on actual events.

The background. The author resides in a city where a joint USA-Canadian defense research facility was located. It developed anti-submarine warfare systems. This meant a community with active espionage and surveillance operations.

The author was under hostile surveillance for eight years. In order to strengthen his countersurveillance skills, the author hit on the idea of provoking other agencies into

conducting surveillance against him. Much like the way hackers break into computer systems, the author hacked surveillance operations.

The situation.

The author sent a letter by commercial courier to the head of counterintelligence at FBI headquarters in Washington DC. The letter offered to provide information about the countersurveillance capabilities of the FBI's adversaries.

The following discussion describes part of what happened next. The case study is a compilation of incidents that occurred during surveillance operations mounted by the FBI over a one-year period.

The incidents have been organized into four episodes for easier reading. Events are reported in the present tense using the first person singular. This reporting style provides a more authentic portrayal of what it feels like to use countersurveillance in an adversarial environment.

Case Study section begins...

The setup.

Before sending the letter, I establish a personal routine that makes it easier for me to detect surveillance. When driving, I choose the same times along the same routes. I select busy streets and quiet streets. I study the timing of traffic lights. I observe the driving habits of other motorists. I learn vantage points where observers might lurk.

Then I go through the same exercise for my pedestrian routes.

I establish a lifestyle that will capture the attention of a surveillance team. I want them to focus on certain aspects of my behavior. I choose social activities that offer situations where spies will suspect "secret contacts" are taking place. I study the venues, people, and events that are normally part of these situations. I begin to fit in.

I become a creature of habit at home and at my office. I store items in particular ways. I allow dust to accumulate in some locations, while others are kept meticulously clean. I hide mildly incriminating documents for the FBI to "find". I tune myself to the feel of the locks in my life – doors, desks, filing cabinets, office safe, personal vehicle, and so on.

My goal is to know my environment. I want to be able to detect the arrival of the surveillance team – no matter how silently they stalk their prey.

Episode 1: Reconnaissance

The FBI's Advance Team

Day Zero, 1:00 pm, Wednesday afternoon – The FedEx® truck arrives to pick up the letter. I've already got the waybill prepared. For \$24.50 they guarantee next-day delivery. The driver tells me I'm his last pickup on his way out to the airport. My package will be going out on the 1:30 flight.

Day One, 2:00 pm, Thursday afternoon – I call FedEx and I ask about package 400-7033-

0341. The package has been delivered. My letter is now in the hands of the Assistant Director, National Security, Federal Bureau of Investigation, #7110 – 935 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington DC, 20535-001.

4:30 pm, later that afternoon – I decide I'll go out later for the evening. I won't have that many more chances to relax. It's already Thursday. I'm expecting surveillance to begin Monday.

9:15 pm, later that evening – After a meal at The S----- restaurant downtown, I'm driving out to The W-----, a working class bar in the suburbs. They've got karaoke on Thursday nights. The crowds they get there love classic rock and country. That suits me fine. I like to sing rock'n'roll.

As I turn left off Gorge Road onto Admirals Road, something behind me catches my attention. This is normally a quiet stretch of road this time of night. It's early March, too dark to see anything but headlights. The vehicle behind me is maintaining a constant distance.

Unusual. Most motorists drive 5 or 10 mph over the limit here.

"Unmarked police car," I tell myself. I glance at the speedometer. Bang on the legal limit. I make a note to watch my driving habits anyway.

A mile later I go through a choke-point and merge onto Sooke Road. My follower turns away. He is replaced by another vehicle maintaining a fixed distance. After years of surveillance I see things like this. I can't turn it off any more.

"That's not how traffic cops work," I caution myself.

I don't have enough data yet, but I'm already figuring somebody might have me under surveillance. But who? I don't want any third party messing up the ambush that I have laid for the FBI.

10:15 pm, same evening – Two songs later at The W-----. The place is only half full, but it's rocking. There are 60, maybe 70, people in the place. A swarthy mixture of working-class folks, with a sprinkling of biker types. A rough crowd, but good people at heart. You get the picture. They don't put on airs or dress up. Hey, when you do what I do, you learn to fit in anywhere.

I'm sitting with a couple of women at a table at the far end of the room from the entrance. The karaoke stage is to my right. The music is loud. The place smells of beer and sweat. A honky-tonk kind of place. Between singers the MC is doing a pretty good job working up the crowd.

A thirtyish guy walks in – physically fit, clean shaven, a trim haircut, slacks, brown leather Bomber jacket, slightly overdressed for the joint. He looks the place over. He doesn't make eye-contact, but he seems to be keying on me. He chooses a seat that gives him a clear line-of-sight – right to where I'm sitting with Diana and Kimberley.

I make a note to myself. Run some surveillance tests tomorrow. I hear the MC calling my name over the speakers. My song is up next. Okay, now we rock, I tell myself.

Day Two, 10:30 am, the next morning – It's a nice sunny day. It seldom gets cold enough for snow here. I decide against going into the office. Instead I plan to go downtown, pay a few

bills, pick up mail at the PO box. I'll use routes that will provide opportunities to check for surveillance – vehicle or pedestrian, or both.

Instead of taking a direct route over to the mall on Hillside Avenue, I take the long way around. I drive through Mt. Douglas Park. It's picturesque and rugged – full of old Douglas Fir trees. Fists of gray rock thrust up through the moss that covers the forest floor.

The main road through the park snakes along the sea coast. There's a straight stretch, though, notorious for speeders. But I'm in no hurry. The sun is flaring through the fir trees, blasting lines of shadows across the road like zebra stripes. It's hypnotic. I check the mirror. The vehicle behind me is holding the same fixed distance since before I entered Mount Doug.

I can't help thinking about last night. Same style, same team? Hmm. Am I beginning to see a pattern? I warn myself about jumping to premature conclusions.

10:55 am, same morning – Inside the mall, I head for B---- Books. They've got a good selection of computer books. I zero in on the titles for programmers. I used to write this stuff myself and I'm still interested in it.

Then I get my first break. (I don't mind admitting that it cuts both ways – you have to be lucky to be good, and you have to be good to be lucky.)

I've been on the lookout for signs of foot surveillance, but I haven't seen anything odd yet. The book store is relatively quiet – maybe twenty customers in the place, and it's a sizable place. There are two or three other customers near me, but they're a few aisles over, either behind me or in front.

A woman, thirtyish, plain, walks in and comes over to the section I'm in. She's checking out books at the end of my aisle, about four or five paces from me. She squats down to go through the titles on the bottom row. I've seen this squatting behavior before in spooks – they use it to throw you off by changing their profile, appearing less threatening. But that doesn't mean everyone who squats is a pavement artist. By itself, it means nothing. It only counts if it's part of a larger pattern of behavior.

But while I've been watching her, a male has arrived behind me. He's about three paces away. He's wearing a businessman's suit and tie. You don't see many programmers wearing suits.

The clerk catches him completely off guard. She approaches from behind. She offers to help him find whatever he's looking for. In fact, she insists on it. She proceeds to engage him in conversation.

And he chokes. Big time.

He doesn't know anything about programming. Or computer languages. Or applications. Absolutely zip. Nuttin' at all. And the more the clerk presses him, the less he knows. I can't believe my good luck.

Keep in mind there's maybe twenty people in the whole place, spread out evenly throughout the book store. Except for the section on computer programming books. Where there are now four of us crammed together.

And I'm starting to consider all the angles. Hmm, if the squatting female was an agent, maybe

she was providing cover for the male. It takes resources to run operations like that. Could this be the FBI? Already? Did they initiate surveillance last night? The same day they received the courier package?

Aw, come on. Nobody's that good.

I've seen enough here. I leave the book store. I head for my car. I've got some errands to take care of downtown. Besides, I need more empirical evidence before I can draw any conclusions. What happens next is a jolt. Literally.

11:20 am, same morning – I pull out of the mall parking lot, turn right on Hillside Avenue, and point my Mazda® 626 towards downtown. Two miles down the road I ease into the left-turn lane as I approach Quadra Street.

The light is red. I come to a full stop.

The car behind me doesn't.

It's a mild collision – the impact is barely stiff enough to skid my car ahead a few inches. I glance at the mirror. Two young fellas, laughing, kidding around – not paying as much attention as they should.

Off comes the seatbelt and I'm out of the car, stepping around back to check for damage. The driver pokes his head out the window. He's still laughing. He apologizes, says he hopes there's no damage. He's the friendly type, all smiles, genuinely sorry. Hey, how can you not like a guy like that?

I can't see any damage. I spin on my heels and head back to my car. He yells out another sorry. I toss him a no-hard-feelings wave as I slide back into the Mazda.

The light flips green. I turn left onto Quadra. I'm already replaying it in my head. Was there any way I could have avoided the collision? Maybe slow down a little earlier? Give him a little more warning?

The driver in front of me slows to make a left turn. He hesitates, changes his mind, and proceeds straight on. At the next corner he slows again. Same thing. What's wrong with this guy? Finally, at the third corner he makes his left turn. Good riddance, jerk.

A few blocks later – it's another idiot. He can't decide which lane he wants. He starts to change lanes, goes back, ends up straddling both. Get out of my way, dolt.

Then – zzzap!

"Look at all the lousy drivers I'm encountering," I think to myself. Yeah, right.

Right after I left the mall. Right after the book store thing. Right after the spook in the book store had his cover blown by the clerk. With me standing next to him.

Nasty traffic. Yeah, right. They're trying to recover from their blunder. This traffic stuff is a diversion. They're trying to salvage their surveillance operation. They hope to distract me – force me into a different mind set – stop me thinking about what happened in the book store.

Professional aggression, I'm telling myself. I've seen it in other surveillance teams. Usually not this rough, though.

The trick is to detach yourself from what's happening to you. Then you can put it in perspective. Most targets would still be fuming over the collision. And would have completely forgotten the book store incident.

These guys are good, I tell myself. Very good. We're talking advanced psychology here.

I remind myself not to leap to hasty conclusions. But if I'm right – and I'm beginning to think I am – if indeed this is a surveillance operation – then I can expect to start seeing more of the pattern.

As I begin to enter the downtown section of the city, I steel myself for what's coming next. Whoever they are, these guys play for keeps. I cannot rely on luck anymore. The book store thing was a freak event. I need to make my own luck.

It's time to begin using active countersurveillance.