Bibliophile’s report

Meeting of March 6, 2019

Robert Hamer

The meeting was a scheduled discussion of the book “Red Notice” by Bill Browder. There was an almost universal recognition of the book’s “page turning” character and of the gripping narrative of this extremely awkward time of attempting to induce capitalism in the Russian portion of the former Soviet Union and the subsequent criminal kleptocracy of the oligarchs. Several people exclaimed surprise that the author is even still alive considering the predatory nature of Putin’s Russia and his political cronies.

Several people expressed the view that the author was both courageous and naïve. It was also almost universally noted that the historical narrative contained many detailed descriptions of the participants, even their personal appearance and that of their surroundings. It seemed to be concluded by most in attendance that Browder had a remarkable memory and intelligent way of expressing himself and he probably made some contemporary notes or kept a journal in developing the details of the story. It was noted that this account was a very personal one and perhaps Browder had made himself a bit more heroic than a third person commentator may have. Several commentators agreed that this was a good example of a book club selection that made them read a book they probably would not have otherwise considered.

It was generally agreed that Browder presented the story in a very logical order from the initial clumsy attempts at capitalization of the economy, the crushing thuggish takeover of the oligarchs and finally the efforts to push through the Magnitsky Act in the presence of some occasionally reluctant and self-interested democratic institutions of the US and others in the western world.

The next book is “Sapiens” by Yuval Noah Harari which will be discussed in the next meeting on May 1, 2019.
Recommendations List

Sue Mattson

Some members asked for a list of books that have been recommended but not chosen. My notes aren’t very good, but here is what I have.

I’ll Be Gone in the Dark by Michelle McNamara
Once We Were Brothers by Ronald Balson
Being Mortal by Atul Gawande
The True Believer by Hoffer
Fascism: A Warning by Madeleine Albright
The Darkening Age by Catherine Nixey
Mass for Shutins by Todd Robinson
The President’s Club by Gibbs and Duffy
Democracy by Condoleezza Rice
Lioness by Kline and Brunn
The Shining Wilderness by Sigurd Olsen
Is Paris Burning by LaPierre and Collins
The Girls of Atomic City by Denise Kiernan
Endurance by Alfred Lansing
The Nix by Nathan Hill
A History of Food (there are many books by this name, not sure which author)
The True Story of Pocahontas by Dr. Linwood Custalow
With Scars on my Soul by Ellen Amy Ryles