

BOOK REVIEWS

Winter Is Coming

Garry Kasparov (2015)

How many people remember “duck and cover” from their childhood school days? I do. I can still picture the underside of my grade school desk from all the duck-and-cover drill rehearsals for the coming nuclear war with the Russians. While I sat under that desk, I studied all the many years’ worth of chewed gum that had been stuck there, as well as a few other things that I could not identify. The underside of my desk was like a petri dish’s nightmare. I never thought it could save me from the coming mushroom cloud.

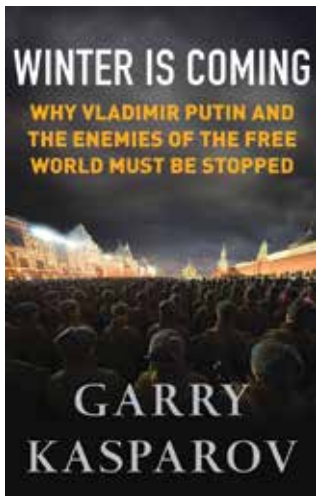
Much later, on November 9, 1989, the communist darkness that had engulfed Russia, along with its menacing threat to us, ended—or did it?

Winter is Coming author, Garry Kasparov, is a Russian who spent 20 years as the world’s number-one ranked chess player until his retirement. With his pen and voice he has been a crusader for democracy in Russia. He now lives in self-imposed exile in New York.

In this book, Kasparov covers the rise to power of the KGB thug and authoritarian Vladimir Putin. In a country where 20 million people can barely make ends meet, Putin’s personal wealth—according to Hermitage Capital Management CEO Bill Browder, who testified before Congress in July 2017—is believed to be around \$200 billion (Fortune.com, July 20, 2017). Doesn’t that make Bill Gates (Microsoft) and Jeff Bezos (Amazon) paupers in comparison?

As Kasparov tells us, as a dictator (all elections are now rigged in Russia), Putin’s wealth has been acquired through thievery, murder, and moral corruption. While reading this book, I realized that Putin makes gangsters such as Al Capone, Frank Lucas, and even Amado Carrillo Fuentes (richest Mexican drug cartel boss) look like Eagle Scouts.

Kasparov lays out a pretty detailed map of events showing that every American president since Putin came to power in



1999 has not really stood up to him. This lack of backbone from American presidents has allowed Putin’s KGB fangs of poison to kill off the anemic start of democracies in Russia.

George W. Bush said of Putin, “I looked the man in the eye. I found him to be very straight forward and trustworthy, and we had a very good dialogue. I was able to get a sense of his soul.” I hadn’t realized myself that Bush

was that blind. Then Barack Obama and his administration decided to do a “reset” with Russia—another “are you kidding me?” moment!

Like all dictators, Putin confiscates all media that does not pledge loyalty to him. Loyalty pledges are a big thing with dictators. According to the book, Vladimir Gusinsky, the Russian media tycoon, spent three days in prison and was forced to give up his media company to Putin and his closest gangster associates.

Putin even went after *Pussy Riot*, a Russian feminist protest punk-rock group, for mentioning Putin by name in the video they made of their performance of a brief “Punk Prayer” inside Moscow’s Cathedral of Christ the Savior. They received a two-year prison sentence for using what we in America call free speech. Russia’s prisons and graveyards are full of people who oppose him. One of Putin’s favorite expressions is “managed democracy,” as long as he is the manager.

The atrocities committed by Putin’s toxic touch have been felt in Georgia, Chechnya, Ukraine, and even in the United States. Kasparov makes it very clear how Putin’s menacing threats to democracy have gone from local to regional and, today, to global. Yet we still haven’t declared or treated Putin’s Russia for what it is: a criminal rogue regime. You don’t negotiate to the advantage of gangsters. You put them out of business.

If you are or are not interested in what’s happening on the world stage, you still need to read this book because Putin’s foul breath touches us all.

J.D. Rogers • 541-846-7736

Sugarbob goes to the Lodge

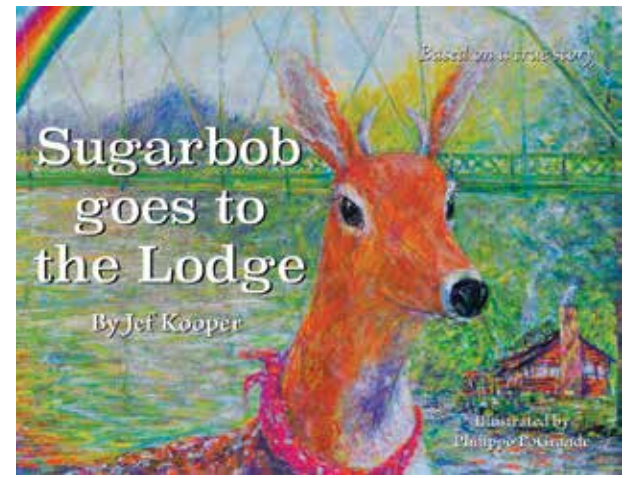
Jef Kooper (2018)

Having grown up in the Applegate Valley, I’ve heard many stories about Sugarbob, the playful deer who was rescued from the Applegate River by the owners of the Applegate River Lodge. If you live near Applegate, you probably have too. I remember hearing how, even as a fawn, Sugarbob would make his way across the busy Highway 238 to say hello to people at the Applegate Store & Cafe. I didn’t have the pleasure of meeting Sugarbob personally, but after reading this book, I’ve come to know his story better than I ever have before.

Sugarbob goes to the Lodge first introduces Richard and Joanna, owners of the Applegate River Lodge. One day while they are working, Joanna sees a baby deer floating down the Applegate River. Richard runs outside, hopping into the chilly whitewater to save the fawn. They bring the baby deer back to the lodge and take care of him, naming him Sugarbob and tying his famous orange bandana around his neck. Growing up around people and animals made Sugarbob an outgoing and playful creature. I heard that he would walk right up to you so you could pet him.

As the story continues, the reader watches as Sugarbob learns to adapt to his new surroundings and learns important things about safety and manners along the way. Then, as Sugarbob returns to his natural habitat, he is able to continue living his life as a normal deer, but still with close ties to his friends and family at the lodge.

The cute tales of Sugarbob the deer really show how a bond can grow between



humans and animals, no matter what kind. It’s amazing how a wild and usually shy animal can come to be an outgoing companion with the love of a few kind people. Rarely does something amazing like this happen, and I feel lucky to have had it happen in the small town of Applegate.

Sugarbob’s story really is a heartwarming one. And thanks to the wonderful writing of Jef Kooper, along with some truly beautiful illustrations by Filippo LoGrande, the story comes to life. *Sugarbob goes to the Lodge* is a sweet story that can be enjoyed by both children and adults. There’s never going to be another story quite like this one, so do yourself a favor and read it.

Carlen Nielsen

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The book’s author, Jef Kooper, provided another review, this one from five-year-old Aliza, daughter of Chris and Meghan, owners of Crossroads Café in Williams: “It’s the best book ever. I love it!” *Sugarbob goes to the Lodge* is available at Applegate Store & Cafe, Provolt Country Store, Pennington Farms in Grants Pass, Takubeh Natural Market in Williams, and Rebel Heart Books in Jacksonville.

POETRY CORNER

Arthur moved

by Barbara Summerhawk

With great, quiet purpose
To the deck shadows
Where peppermint tea (and if lucky, a buttered bagel),
Stoked our casual forays into the sublime-light, and listened
As if whatever babble we believed at the moment was
Worth the wait.
The hallmark comment, a gentle chuckle, lends us hope
The cats may someday sit on our laps, too.
The only point Arthur pushed was an awl that
Laced up many of our Humbug feet and
Encouraged the process to make our roads and
Lives a little less dusty, so we could walk the
Valley with a clean slate.

Somewhere up ahead in the sky
He sits slapping his cosmic knee, a
Galaxy-wide grin on his face, patiently waiting
For all of us who love him: Arthur.

See Arthur Coulton’s obituary on page 2.

— NOTICE —

The Community Calendar seems to have taken up permanent residence on our website at applegater.org.

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