

Earlsdon Literary Magazine 196

The newsletter of the AVID Readers Group, based at Earlsdon Library

Next meeting: Thursday 8 June 2017 at 8pm

Venue: Earlsdon Library

Book for discussion: *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* — Mitch Albom

***The Girl who Saved the King of Sweden* — Jonas Jonasson**

Our May Book

Farce:

a comic dramatic work using buffoonery and horseplay and typically including crude characterisation and ludicrously improbable situations.

Jonas Johnasson's *The Girl Who Saved the King of Sweden* is all of the above, and more. It is a follow up to his international bestseller *The Hundred Year Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared*, and all but one member of the group agreed this first novel was more enjoyable even though there were notable similarities.

Our novel this month was described by members as hysterical, clever, interesting, entertaining and silly. Most felt the book was a tad too long and could have easily had one hundred pages cut. Some concurred the book was a bit of a 'plodder' with events unfolding at the same tempo throughout. This didn't quite make it a page-turner for some who felt they just wanted to get to the end.

So, what is the point? The plot is so farcical that, when you describe it to

somebody who hasn't read it, you sound as though you are making it up as you go along – like a bizarre dream. A style of writing you either love or hate, yet all members agreed that the novel was well-written and Jonasson has a real talent for interweaving historical and political events across a vast time scale with two parallel plots that eventually meet.

The deal-breaker, it seems, is sharing Jonasson's sense of humour; for those members who found the novel laugh-out-loud funny, this would motivate them to seek out his future work. For others, the style of farcical plot superseding character development and emotional connection was perhaps not one they would be in a hurry to revisit.

Karen

Our next book is

The Prison Book Club — Ann Walmsley
and we will discuss it on 13 July 2017

What should WE read next?

In the last newsletter, there was a suggestion from Terry that we take it in turns to describe a new book we have (bought?) read and liked. We have had the following response from a former member who now lives in Derbyshire, but still enjoys reading the newsletter.

If the wonderful AVID group are feeling a little jaded with the readers group set selection/size, perhaps they would consider occasional use of the strategy adopted by the Matlock Library Book Café group. We very rarely have a set book (I can think of only once, when we had an opportunity of the local author coming), occasionally Book Prize shortlists are distributed but most usually we select a theme and members make their own choice.

For example, this month's theme is 'Mountains', but we have on other occasions nominated various genres, authors beginning with a particular letter, an occupation, 'a book I didn't like when I was younger', 'a slim volume' and so on.

Jennifer Vaudin

If you have any thoughts about these ideas; reviews or recommendations; tales of literary events; or anything else you think other AVID readers would find interesting, please send them to:

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