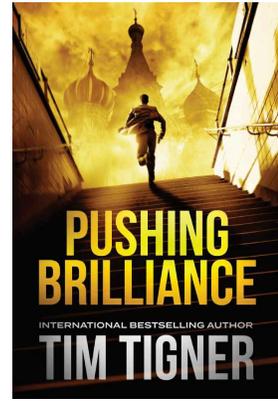


# PUSHING BRILLIANCE

by Tim Tigner

## Discussion Questions



*Authors learn quickly that reader perceptions and opinions vary widely. What works wonderfully for some, falls flat for others. I find it fascinating. I trust these questions will expose some of that variance within your group, hopefully to your enjoyment and edification.*

- The first paragraph of the novel was: “How do you pitch an audacious plan to the most powerful man in the world? Grigori Barsukov was about to find out.” How did that set the tone for you? (NB: While the US is the world’s most powerful country, POTUS is constrained by the other branches of government. In Russia, one man controls everything. Case in point: if Putin wants a wall, he gets a wall.)
- Did you trust Katya?
- Vondreesen and Casey yielded to fear and greed and their desire to believe a justifying narrative they’d created or been fed. Do you think that’s common in places like Wall Street and Washington?
- Were Vondreesen and Casey villains or victims?
- Brillyanc was marketed to make money, knowing it would do harm. Can you think of other products fitting that description?
- What surprised you?
- What was your reaction to Achilles’ climbing skills? Was it more “Cool! I wish I could do that.” or “No way!” (NB: He’s based in part on Alex Holld, who recently starred in National Geographic’s feature film *Free Solo*—and makes Achilles look amateur.)
- Recall the fight scenes in the prison shower and the hotel stairwell. Did you enjoy the detailed delivery or was it too much?
- On average, the chapters were just 900 words long (about 4 pages.) Was that a good pace for you? Did the changing perspectives build suspense for you? Did the Chapter Titles add to your enjoyment?
- What did you think of Achilles losing his money? (NB: While this was an extreme case, people proven innocent in court routinely remain stuck with crippling legal bills. Easily six-figures in capital cases like Achilles’. As for bail, the courts keep a percentage in any case as a processing fee, usually 3 to 10%. Bail bondsmen keep 10 to 30%.)
- Were you satisfied with the conclusion, or would you have ended the novel differently?
- Do you plan to continue reading the series? (Five published novels and counting.)