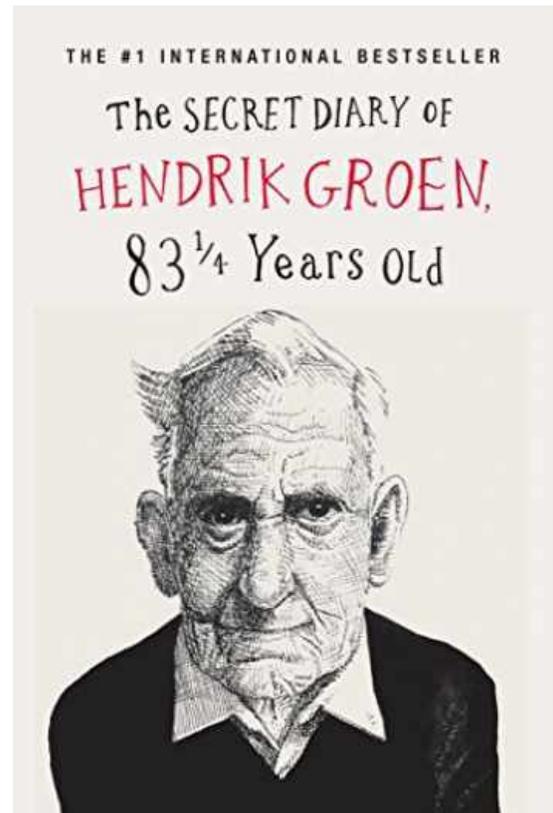


About the Author

Hendrik Groen is actually a pseudonym. The author's real name is Peter de Smet. He is a Dutch writer who doesn't want all the fuss and fame that comes with being a published author. The Dutch title of this book is actually translated to "Attempts to Make Something of Life - The Secret Diary of Hendrik Groen" which won the audience award in 2016, but Peter de Smet didn't show up to receive it.

There is a sequel to this book which is called, *On the Bright Side - The new Secret Diary of Hendrik Groen, 85 Years Old* also called *As Long as There is a Life of Hendrik Groen* which also won the audience award in 2018. The Secret Diary books were adapted for Dutch television in 2017.



About the Book

Technically speaking, Hendrik Groen is...elderly. But at age 83 1/4, this feisty, indomitable curmudgeon has no plans to go out quietly. Bored of weak tea and potted geraniums, exasperated by the indignities of aging, Hendrik has decided to rebel--on his own terms. He begins writing an exposé: secretly recording the antics of day-to-day life in his retirement home, where he refuses to take himself, or his fellow "inmates," too seriously.

With an eccentric group of friends he founds the wickedly anarchic Old-But-Not-Dead Club--"Rule #3: No Whining Allowed"--and he and his best friend, Evert, gleefully stir up trouble, enraging the home's humorless director and turning themselves into unlikely heroes. And when a sweet and sassy widow moves in next door, he polishes his shoes, grooms what's left of his hair, and determines to savor every ounce of joy in the time he has left, with hilarious and tender consequences.

Discussion Questions

1. Hendrik often describes the residents of the care home he lives in as “inmates”. Based on his description of the place, what do you think of this comparison?
2. Hendrik has a preoccupation with suicide. Do you think that he’s truly depressed?
3. The entire book was written in diary entries. Do you enjoy the epistolary format? How do you think it impacted the story?
4. Hendrik mentions his daughter and wife only a few times throughout the story. Why do you think this is?
5. Do you think that this book is a realistic depiction of what it’s like to live in a care home?
6. The book focuses a lot on the issue of euthanasia. What are your thoughts on the subject?
7. If you were to form your own Old but Not Dead Club, what kind of outings would you plan?

General Questions

1. Did you race to the end, or was it more of a slow burn?
2. What did you think of the writing overall? Were there any standout sentences?
3. Which was your favorite part? What about your least favorite?
4. Did reading the book impact your mood? If yes, how so?

