



# The one hundred year old man who climbed out the window and disappeared

By Jonas Jonasson

First published in 2009 (in Swedish)

Genre & subject

Swedish fiction

Humorous stories

Detective and mystery stories

## Synopsis

After a long and eventful life Allan Karlsson is moved to a nursing home to await the inevitable. But his health refuses to fail and as his 100th birthday looms a huge party is planned. Allan wants no part of it and decides to climb out the window...

## Author biography

Jonas Jonasson is the son of an ambulance driver and a nurse. He was born and raised in Växjö in southern Sweden. After studying Swedish and Spanish at the University of Gothenburg, Jonasson worked as a journalist until 1994. In 1996, he founded a media company, OTW, which grew to 100 employees. He stopped working in 2003, after having two major back operations and being overworked. He later sold his company.

In 2007 he completed his first book *The one hundred year old man who climbed out the window and disappeared*. It was published in Sweden in 2009. Since 2010, Jonas has been living with his son on the Swedish island of Gotland.

## Discussion starters

- Publishers Weekly called this book, a "gentle lampoon of procedurals and thrillers." With a detective, a band of criminals and escapees on the run, it seems a valid description. Are these the terms in which you would talk about this novel? How else would you describe it?
- What do you consider justice for Allan Karlsson?
- Many readers have spoken about the humour and optimism of Allan Karlsson. How do these characteristics weave through the novel? What parts do you find particularly funny...and what makes them funny?
- *The one hundred year old man* is a novel with the topic of ageing at its core. What are society's expectations of how the elderly should act? Talk about the ways—obvious

and not-so-obvious—in which Allan defies the usual stereotypes. What are your own experiences, either as an older person yourself...or as someone who worries about an older friend or family member? Does society do a good job in terms of how we treat our older population? Have you read other novels that explore (and shatter) a strongly held societal belief?

- History and politics sit lightly within the framework of this novel. When it comes to international relations, what worldview would you say the author seem to hold?
- A definition of "satire" is "a literary composition in which vices, abuses and follies, etc are held up to scorn, derision or ridicule" (Macquarie Dictionary). Do you think this novel is a satire—and what is being satirised?

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