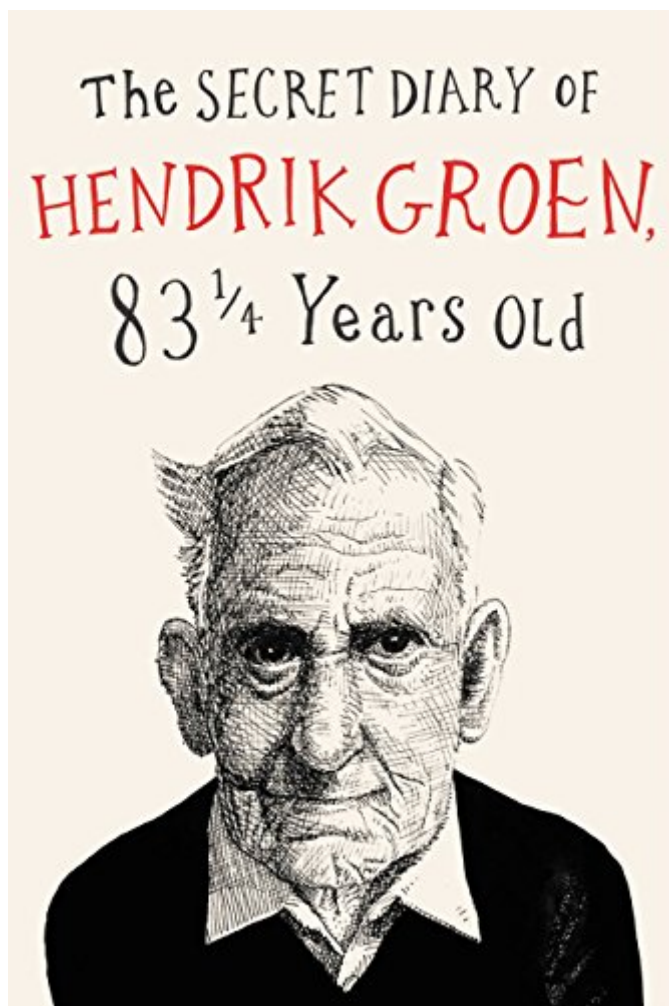


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# The Secret Diary Of Hendrik Groen



## Synopsis

A #1 international bestseller in the vein of Fredrik Bachman's *A Man Called Ove*: an irresistible, funny, charming, and tender-hearted tale about friendship, love, and an old man who is young at heart. "FUNNY AND FRANK...A STORY WITH A GREAT DEAL OF HEART."--Graeme Simsion, New York Times bestselling author of *THE ROSIE PROJECT* 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. A bestselling phenomenon that has captured imaginations around the world, *The Secret Diary of Hendrik Groen* is inspiring, charming, and laugh-out-loud funny with a deep and poignant core: a page-turning delight for readers of any age.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

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Funny, somewhat realistic, a bit sad but a good read!

Love the book.

An enjoyable read. My mom of 80 and my stepdad of 83 both loved it too. Both said a bit close for comfort at times, but that didn't stop them laughing and smiling and nodding at Hendrik Groen's diary.

It is an excellent book

I wish I could meet Hendrik Groen because I know I would absolutely love him. This book is one of the most touching, heart-wrenching stories that I have read in a while. Groen resides in a state-funded nursing home in Amsterdam. At 83 years old, he decides to start writing in his diary to pass the time and to 'give the world an uncensored expose': a year in the life of the inmates of a care home in North Amsterdam. Hendrik Groen proceeds to do just that; I cannot count the times I laughed out loud, and plenty of times I cried as well. Groen hilariously and poignantly chronicles daily life as an 83 year-old. When he begins writing in his diary, he has two people he counts as friends, Evert who lives in the apartment section of the home and Anja, the assistant to the Administrator of the nursing home. The diary provides Groen an outlet for his frustrations about growing old and spurs him to make something of the life he has left. By the time the year is over, he has an entire group of friends, the Old-But-Not-Yet-Dead Club, loyal and kind individuals who work to help each other when illness or tragedy befalls a member. Sadly, several of his friends have health issues during the year, ranging from losing a leg to the onset of Alzheimer's to having a stroke. Groen details how he personally and the group deals with these issues, and the support

they all provide to each other. The group takes occasional day trips together organized by each member on a rotating basis. Reading about their various day trips was definitely a highlight of the book, from the planning to the execution of each trip and the joy the excursions clearly brought the entire bunch. Midway through the year, after debating at length in his diary, Hendrik purchases an electric scooter. His exploits all around Amsterdam and the mobility his scooter provides him lead to several entertaining passages in his diary. He even visits another resident's son to "soo" up his ride. While Groen tells many funny tales, he also addresses some very important and pressing issues in today's society, including funding and care for the aged, Alzheimer's, euthanasia, and the racism that certain groups still face. He also reinforces the notion that the elderly deserve a great amount of respect and empathy; something that seems to be missing today. I cannot recommend this book highly enough for all walks of life "all ages can learn so much from the knowledge and insight he imparts. Thanks to NetGalley and the publisher for the opportunity to read this gem in exchange for an honest review.

'For fans of *A Man Called Ove...*'. That first line in the publisher's description of *The Secret Diary of Hendrik Groen, 83 1/4 Years Old* by Hendrik Groen had me eager to pick up this book. But it was the voice of Hendrik Groen that has added the book to my list of favourites of 2017. "I hereby declare that in this diary I am going to give the world an uncensored exposé: a year in the life of the inmates of a care home in North Amsterdam." I love epistolary novels - they're quite intimate, letting us into the private world of a character. Through Hendrik's diary entries, we experience the highs and lows of living in a senior's care facility - the conflicts, the friendships, the day to day interactions, the worries, some shenanigans, memories, regrets, hopes and more. And though it's been done before - the us vs. them of management vs. seniors will have the reader cheering for the senior's 'team'. Hendrik is so wonderfully drawn - he has a good heart, is kind and thoughtful, has a wry sense of humour, is a keen observer and determined to not just 'exist' for however long he may have left. And from that desire, the Old But Not Dead Club is born. The other members of the club are the supporting characters we come to know the most - especially Hendrik's best friend, the irreverent Evert ("His philosophy: the only point of being alive is to kill time as pleasantly as possible. The trick is not to take anything too seriously.") and the simply lovely Eefje. Hendrik's observations will perhaps encourage the reader to take time with and listen a little more carefully to those nearing the end of their lives. Perhaps they'll also envision what they want their own later years to look like. While this novel is a picture of aging in the Netherlands, the emotions and thoughts expressed are universal." Our calendars are completely blank - today, tomorrow, and the

rest of the year. We have all the time in the world. We once complained about being overscheduled; now we're thrilled to pieces if there's something to jot down other than a doctor's appointment." "Old people are forever grunting and groaning. Sometimes it's out of exertion or pain, but more often simply out of habit. I have made a small study of it." Now, don't think this book is a 'downer' - there are lots of laugh out loud and joyful moments, alongside the realities of being eighty four years old. (And yes, you may need a tissue or two) I found The Secret Diary of Hendrik Groen to be a heartstring-tugger of a read and absolutely adored it! I've discovered that there is another 'Hendrik' diary coming out - "As Long as there is Life continues the story of protagonist Hendrik " now aged 85-years-old - and follows the adventures of The Old But Not Dead Club in the Amsterdam retirement home in which he resides. Internationally, Hendrik Groen has sold in 30 territories including in the US, and a Dutch TV series based on the books, "in the vein of 'The Office', is currently in production.

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