# The One Hundred YearOld Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared by Jonas Jonasson

## Synopsis

After a long and eventful life, Allan Karlsson ends up in a nursing home, believing it to be his last stop. The only problem is that he's still in good health, and in one day, he turns 100. A big celebration is in the works, but Allan really isn't interested (and he'd like a bit more control over his vodka consumption). So he decides to escape. He climbs out the window in his slippers and embarks on a hilarious and entirely unexpected journey, involving, among other surprises, a suitcase stuffed with cash, some unpleasant criminals, a friendly hot-dog stand operator, and an elephant (not to mention a death by elephant).

It would be the adventure of a lifetime for anyone else, but Allan has a larger-than-life backstory: Not only has he witnessed some of the most important events of the 20th century, but he has actually played a key role in them. Starting out in munitions as a boy, he somehow finds himself involved in many of the key explosions of the 20th century and travels the world, sharing meals and more with everyone from Stalin, Churchill and Truman to Mao, Franco and de Gaulle.

## Discussion questions

1. Allan Karlsson is 100 years old. This is unusual; typical icons these days are much younger. How does his age matter to the novel? Did you relate to him? Why do you think the author, Jonas Jonasson, chose to make Allan a centarian?
2. Allan climbs out a window to escape a birthday party that clearly means something different to him than it does to the people planning it. What do you think of this act? Is this rebellion? Is this simply expedient? Have you ever considered simply escaping out a window rather than facing something?
3. What do you think the author was saying about our society and the attitude towards aging? Who is the oldest person you know?  What have you learned from that person, and did reading the novel make you wish you could hear more of that person’s personal story?
4. Readers learn about Allan’s past through his stories. Do you trust his memory? Did it occur to you that these might not be true? Why? What does it tell you about the nature of the past, and memory?
5. Imagine an “outtake” from the novel --- wherein Allan encounters someone from history who does not appear in the novel. Who would you like it to be?
6. At 100, Allan’s life is filled with important moments. And yet he does not seem to see these encounters as momentous. Is he naïve? Innocent? What does Allan’s own attitude toward his past and his present tell you about him and his view of life? Do you hold a similar perspective?
7. Re-read the final pages of the novel. Some would say that Jonasson has left an episode yet to come. What do you think will happen to Allan? Why do you think the author chose to end the novel like this? Would you read a sequel?

*Discussion questions from https://www.readinggroupguides.com/reviews/the-100-year-old-man-who-climbed-out-the-window-and-disappeared/guide*