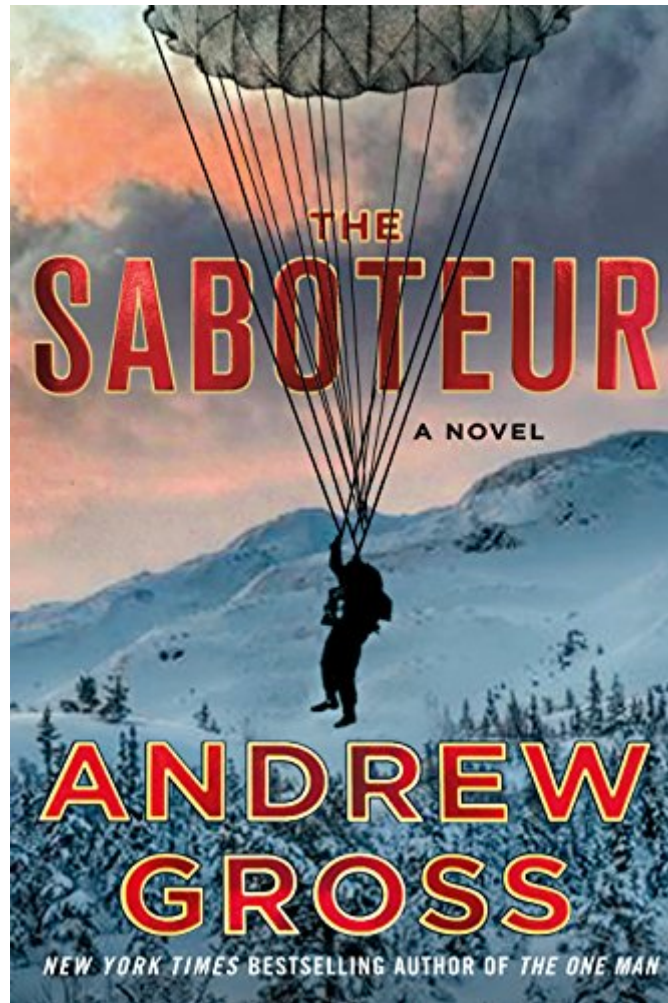




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# The Saboteur: A Novel



## Synopsis

Based on the stirring true story, *The Saboteur* is Andrew Gross's follow-up to the riveting historical thriller, *The One Man*. A richly-woven story probing the limits of heroism, sacrifice and determination, *The Saboteur* portrays a hero who must weigh duty against his heart in order to single-handedly end the one threat that could alter the course of World War II. February, 1943. Both the Allies and the Nazis are closing in on attempts to construct the decisive weapon of the war. Kurt Nordstrum, an engineer in Oslo, puts his life aside to take up arms against the Germans as part of the Norwegian resistance. After the loss of his fiancée, his outfit whittled to shreds, he commandeers a coastal steamer and escapes to England to transmit secret evidence of the Nazis' progress towards an atomic bomb at an isolated factory in Norway. There, he joins a team of dedicated Norwegians in training in the Scottish Highlands for a mission to disrupt the Nazis' plans before they advance any further. Parachuted onto the most unforgiving terrain in Europe, braving the fiercest of mountain storms, Nordstrum and his team attempt the most daring raid of the war, targeting the heavily-guarded factory built on a shelf of rock thought to be impregnable, a mission even they know they likely will not survive. Months later, Nordstrum is called upon again to do the impossible, opposed by both elite Nazi soldiers and a long-standing enemy who is now a local collaborator. One man against overwhelming odds, with the fate of the war in the balance, but the choice to act means putting the one person he has a chance to love in peril. "The One Man contains many different plots and characters that cross the globe, and narrator Ballerini effortlessly manages the complex story line. All accents are portrayed authentically... the audio truly enhances the written text. This historical thriller will keep listeners engaged, and although they know how the war ends, they will find themselves on the edge of their seats wondering what happens next." - Booklist on *The One Man*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

great book kept on your toes

Andrew Gross's "The Saboteur" is a work of historical fiction based on events that occurred during the Second World War. As early as 1939, German scientists were engaged in atomic research and several years later, Niels Bohr, the Danish physicist and Nobel laureate, warned the British that "the Nazis were on the verge of obtaining a devastating weapon." A committee in England known as the SOE, or Special Operations Executive, dispatched teams of highly trained and courageous men to Vemork, Norway, where scientists were using the Norsk Hydro plant to manufacture deuterium oxide--or heavy water--an essential step in the process of creating fissionable material. Gross keeps us engaged with this action-packed account of how in 1943, a brave band of "Northmen," as the Norwegians called themselves, had to parachute into forbidding terrain and endure frigid temperatures, punishing winds, and terrifying snowstorms. Their ultimate objective was to enter the hydroelectric plant with enough stealth to set explosive charges. There are many characters in this story, but the central figure is the daring Kurt Nordstrum, who is strongly motivated to risk his life in order to defeat the German war machine. "The Saboteur" draws us in with its vivid depiction of the obstacles that confronted Nordstrum, his close friend, Jens Strollman, and their comrades, all of whom volunteered to undertake a possible suicide mission. Gross describes Norway's unpredictable wintry weather so well that just reading about the horrendous conditions the soldiers encountered makes us shiver. This book has its share of clichés, stilted dialogue, and poorly phrased metaphors ("his blood burned with envy"); the British leaders are "stiff-upper-lip" types who order their subordinates to do the impossible, and the Nazis and Norwegian collaborators are universally slimy, cruel, and self-serving. On the plus side, there are exciting escapes, scenes of

incredible heroism, a bit of romance (fortunately, not overdone), and a gripping finale. What makes this novel succeed, in spite of its flaws, is the atmosphere of authenticity that Gross creates, and the ways in which he humanizes his heroes. We empathize, not just with Nordstrum and his intrepid fellow soldiers, but also with those ordinary individuals who, in spite of their fears, supported the Allied effort to defeat Hitler.

The book was fast paced and it was hard to put down. The actual events of the attacks are true, but the story is a work of fiction. I really enjoy reading history and historical fiction of events. I like more reading of the actual people involved, but a good story with fictionalized people is very close. And this book makes it very close. Good, well rounded characters that felt like real people would feel in those situations. At the end it left me with the feeling and hope that the author would continue with another work just to let everyone know how they fared to the end of the war. I would highly recommend this book to those that are interested in history, particularly the efforts to stop the Nazi heavy water production in Norway.

Wow! Excellent!!!! In 1943 the Nazis were working on powerful weapons like an atomic bomb that they hoped would help them win the war. British and American Intelligence learned of this. The Nazis were needing to build up a supply of deuterium oxide also known as "heavy water". Unable to produce enough electrical power needed to produce the heavy water the Nazis used a factory in a remote location in Vemork, Norway. Kurt Nordstrum a Norwegian man left his second year of engineering school and joined the British trying to block the Nazis from invading Norway. Kurt was in charge of Special Operations Unit of the Free Norwegian Army. Nordstrum hijacks a steamer headed for Scotland and joins the British and is trained along with friends to be part of Linge Company. Their aim is to return to Norway to set explosives in the Norsk Hydro Plant in Vemork. This book is exciting and is a true story but of course the author created some of the characters. Beautifully written and fast moving with a little humor thrown in. Loved it.

In an afterword of this novel Andrew Gross goes over the facts and personnel that he has incorporated into the story. He indicates that the narrative is based upon the deeds and actions of a small group of men who may have turned the tide of World War II towards the allied side. The time is early 1943 and both sides are in the process of building weaponry powerful enough to win victory over the other. The activity is geared towards the construction of a nuclear bomb. Germany appears to be in the lead awaiting the delivery of an amount of "heavy water" needed to complete the

weapon. They are utilizing a plant in Norway converted over to produce the product and which seems to have an advantage in location that could prevent attacks by planes. Kurt Nordstrum an engineer in Oslo has put his civilian life aside in order to take up arms with the Norse resistance. He gets information that points to the successful production of the heavy water needed for manufacture of an atomic bomb. In order to rush the information to the British he bravely commandeers an ocean going ferry and takes it across the North Sea to deliver the data to the allies for action. A plan is then developed to parachute a small contingent of Norse patriots led by Nordstrum into an almost impossible area in Norway in order to mount an attack on the plant. The group faces horrific weather and constant searches by both German troops as well as the well organized groups of Quislings allied with the Nazis. Action is carried on in the face of almost insurmountable odds, constant danger and the fears that loved ones will suffer for their deeds. The reader will get caught up in the book and certainly feel impelled to finish it in one sitting. The only bad part of reading the novel is that it ends. The good part is certainly that we will have the pleasure of more books written by Andrew Gross in the near future.

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