



The Sound of Light:

by Sarah Sundin
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WWII Novelist Takes Readers to Denmark in a Story Inspired by Real-Life Events

“Fast-paced and rich with historical detail.”
—**Publishers Weekly** review of *Until Leaves Fall in Paris*

Sarah Sundin’s name has become synonymous with her captivating and historically accurate World War II novels. In a recent starred review of *Until Leaves Fall in Paris* (February 2022), *Library Journal* stated that Sundin is “a master at her craft” and that she “rises to the top of World War II fiction.” In her newest novel, *The Sound of Light*, Sundin explores one of the lesser-known facets of WWII, this time taking readers to Nazi-occupied Denmark. Inspired by real-life events, *The Sound of Light* offers a captivating story about ordinary people responding to extraordinary circumstances with faith, fortitude, and hope for a brighter future.

When the Nazis occupy Denmark, Baron Henrik Ahlefeldt is determined to exchange his dissolute life for a life filled with purpose. He assumes the identity of Hemming Anderson and swaps his nobility for mobility and anonymity so he can secretly row messages for the Danish Resistance across the waters to Sweden under the code name Havmand—the merman.

American physicist Dr. Else Jensen refuses to abandon her research in Copenhagen—work that means more to her than freedom. While printing resistance newspapers, she hears stories of the movement’s legendary Havmand and wonders if the silent shipyard worker living in the same boardinghouse has something to hide.

When the Occupation cracks down on the Danes, these two passionate people will discover if there is more power in speech . . . or in silence. And can they hear each other’s voice before it’s too late?

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About the Author

Sarah Sundin is the bestselling author of *When Twilight Breaks*, *Until Leaves Fall in Paris*, and the popular WWII series *Sunrise at Normandy*, among others. She is a Christy Award finalist and a Carol Award winner, and her novels have received starred reviews from *Booklist*, *Library Journal*, and *Publishers Weekly*. Sarah lives in Southern California and serves as co-director of the West Coast Christian Writers Conference. Visit www.sarahsundin.com for more information.

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PRAISE for *The Sound of Light*

“*Until Leaves Fall in Paris* is a compelling exploration of the seemingly simple good things that end up requiring great sacrifice and having far-reaching impacts.”

—***Booklist*** starred review on *Until Leaves Fall in Paris*

“Hair-raising and shocking. The fiery determination to right what is wrong combined with the acts of personal selflessness strengthens this plot into a thrilling read.”

—***New York Journal of Books*** on *Until Leaves Fall in Paris*

“The prose is excellent, the plot appropriately thrilling, and our hero and heroine are perfect for each other.”

—***All About Romance*** on *Until Leaves Fall in Paris*

“Sundin’s novels set the gold standard for historical war romance, and *When Twilight Breaks* is arguably her most brilliant and important work to date.”

—***Booklist*** starred review on *When Twilight Breaks*

“Sundin’s latest World War II tale positively crackles with tension.”

—***Library Journal*** starred review on *When Twilight Breaks*

“Sundin combines suspense and romance to great effect. Inspirational fans who like high-octane action will enjoy this thrilling story.”

—***Publishers Weekly*** on *When Twilight Breaks*



Sample Interview Questions for Sarah Sundin *The Sound of Light*

Please provide a brief summary of your new book, *The Sound of Light*.

In Nazi-occupied Denmark, Baron Henrik Ahlefeldt takes on a secret identity as a shipyard worker so he can row messages for the Danish Resistance across the waters to Sweden. American physicist Dr. Else Jensen chooses to remain in Denmark so she can continue her research, her life's dream. When she makes the dangerous decision to help print resistance newspapers, she hears stories of the movement's legendary Havmand, the merman. Henrik's life depends on keeping his secret hidden—a task that proves challenging when he moves into the same boardinghouse as Else—who seems to see right through him.

In *The Sound of Light*, you take readers to Nazi occupied Denmark. Why did you choose to focus on this location for your novel?

Although Denmark is a small country, the stories that came out of Denmark during the war are huge—from the courageous acts of resistance to the astounding way that the Danes managed to save almost all of the Jews in Denmark by ferrying them across to Sweden. I wanted to tell those stories.

Can you provide more information on the Danish resistance?

Each occupied nation has a unique story. When the Germans occupied Denmark, they made the country a “model protectorate.” They allowed the king and the government to remain in place, and they gave the Danes, as “fellow Aryans,” freedoms unheard of in the rest of Europe. For that reason, resistance was slow to develop in Denmark, but it did develop—and well. In late 1943, the German crackdown on the Danish Jews dramatically fueled the resistance, and the various groups united to form the Freedom Council to coordinate their efforts, not only with each other but with the Allies. By the end of the war, the Danish Resistance was extremely well respected at home and abroad.

Both of your protagonists, Baron Henrik Ahlefeldt and Dr. Else Jensen, choose to participate in the resistance movement in their own way. Can you explain how each character played a part in the movement?

Henrik begins his resistance soon after the Germans invade. As a former Olympic rower, he works with his friend Svend, a vocal anti-Nazi who escapes to Sweden, to ferry messages between the Danish Resistance and Svend in Sweden—and Svend passes on this intelligence to the British. Meanwhile, Else, as a female physicist, is often roped into “feminine” tasks at work, like mimeographing documents. But this provides a convenient front for Else to clandestinely print copies of a resistance newspaper. Neither Henrik nor Else is aware of the other's activities—but both are playing with fire.

***The Sound of Light* is based upon real life events. Can you provide some insight on which of the events featured in your book actually took place?**

I enjoyed featuring many true events in this novel, from resistance attacks to the German crackdown to the inspiring rescue of the Danish Jews. Henrik's character was inspired by Knud Christiansen, a Danish Olympic rower who rowed Jews to Sweden, and I chose to make Else a physicist after hearing about Nobel Laureate Niels Bohr's institute in Copenhagen and the role Bohr played during the war.

***The Sound of Light* focuses on ordinary people responding to extraordinary circumstances. Are there other lessons or inspirational themes found in the pages of your novel?**

Else is a kind-hearted woman who hates confrontation, but to succeed in her career—and to aid the resistance—she has to learn to speak up. Henrik also needs to step up into leadership roles, which he avoids out of fear of

abusing power as his father did. Both of them learn that sometimes silence takes great courage—and sometimes silence is nothing but cowardice.

Your novels are well praised for their historical accuracy. What type of research was required for writing *The Sound of Light*?

Each time I start a new novel, I think the research will be easier because of the previous research I've done. Not so, especially for *The Sound of Light*. The Danish Resistance was small, because the nation is small, and Danish modesty means fewer stories were transcribed. I had to do some sleuthing to find resources in English, but I found them! I also found myself reviewing quantum mechanics—a source of recurring nightmares for this chemistry major—but I also learned so much about Danish Nobel Laureate Niels Bohr, who played a quiet but remarkable role during the war.

What do you love most about writing World War II novels?

The era is full of dramatic stories, and the war highlights both the utter depravity of humanity as well as the capacity of people choosing courage and goodness and right at great personal sacrifice. The war challenged ordinary people to make extraordinary decisions—and that fuels amazing stories.

What are you working on next?

In my next novel, Aleida Martens is separated from her young son when she flees the Netherlands during the Nazi invasion. In London, the widow desperately searches for her child. As German bombs set London on fire, BBC radio correspondent Hugh Collingwood reports live on the Blitz and helps Aleida seek the missing boy. But then they discover murders flaming among the ashes of the city . . .

How can readers connect with you?

I love hearing from readers! You can find me on my website at sarahsundin.com or on social media on Facebook (@SarahSundinAuthor), Twitter (@sarahsundin), or Instagram (@sarahsundinauthor).