



The Blue Zone

Andrew Gross

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From the number one *New York Times* bestselling coauthor of *Judge & Jury* and *Lifeguard* comes this electrifying solo debut, *The Blue Zone*.

Kate Raab's life seems almost perfect: her boyfriend, her job, her family . . . until her father runs into trouble with the law. His only recourse is to testify against his former accomplices in exchange for his family's placement in the Witness Protection Program. But one of them gets cold feet. In a flash, everything Kate can count on is gone.

Now, a year later, her worst fears have happened: Her father has disappeared—into what the WITSEC agency calls "the blue zone"—and someone close to him is found brutally murdered. With her family under surveillance, the FBI untrustworthy, and her father's menacing "friends" circling with increasing intensity, Kate sets off to find her father—and uncover the secrets someone will kill to keep buried.

The Blue Zone Details

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Author : Andrew Gross

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From Reader Review The Blue Zone for online ebook

Seizure Romero says

Meh.

James Patterson says this is "a tense and chilling thriller." That statement, like much of Patterson's writing, is overrated. Since Gross is someone who Patterson ~~leans on to churn out pap~~ has written a few books with, it seems to me his recommendation should be viewed with a somewhat jaundiced eye.

This book isn't terrible, it just isn't that good. And really, that ending was visible miles off.

John Matsui says

The Blue Zone by Andrew Gross begins when the FBI investigates respected and wealthy businessman Ben Rabb for his involvement in a money laundering scheme with a vicious Columbian crime family.

The story unfolds through the eyes of eldest daughter Kate, 23, who has a solid medical research career trajectory and the ideal boyfriend/husband.

Ben professes his innocence, saying all he did was buy gold on behalf of a customer over a lengthy period.

The FBI counters that Ben had knowledge that not all things were legit and under RICO laws, that's enough for a long stretch in prison.

The feds want him to testify against the others he dealt with including a long-time friend. Rabb and family, minus eldest daughter Kate, are brought into the Witness Security Program [WITSEC].

We've seen this story before or so we think. The family settles into its new life and then everything falls apart. The body of a key WITSEC agent is found tortured and murdered. Ben enters the Blue Zone, the alert given when a witness' whereabouts is unknown. Kate believes she's being targeted and when she tracks down her family, her worse fears are realized.

The Blue Zone has plenty of twists that divert the plot. I love twists and I am more than willing to suspend disbelief to accept zig-zags that amp anxiety. In this case, however, I found the key twists to be so contrived. I could not accept them as actions human beings would take.

The setup at the end was so blunt, I expected the story to turn again to deliver that final satisfying jolt.

In my opinion, the biggest surprise of all was the lack of a final twist. I found the ending crossed the line of what I consider to be credible. It rendered all of the previous twists as pure contrivances that made a very mediocre story seem like it was heading somewhere.

Stephanie says

As any sardonic old-time native New Yorker would know, if you're from NYC, you don't call 6th Avenue "Avenue of the Americas," no matter what the street signs say. So, first page, Chapter One, we're introduced to one of the main characters, whose office is on 47th and 6th, which the author calls "Avenue of the Americas." Oh well, disappointing start, but then again, the author lives in Westchester and not in The City, so what does he know? This particular main character is introduced as someone who deals with Hasids and Puerto Ricans in his current position as a major diamond trader, a bicultural scenario I'm well-acquainted with. He inserts the Colombian cartel into the action, uses grammatically incorrect Spanish, and beyond that, even tries to include some neurosurgical trivia into the mix, also incorrect. Guess a Puerto Rican neurosurgeon with my background should not have bothered to read this book. Beyond that, the author's

writing style consists of short sentences, few descriptions of interest (presumably to keep the action going), and the action consists of ... well, should I say this? Overkill! Literally, figuratively and every other way you wish to interpret it. The ending was not really a surprise either, so I really didn't think much of this book - but what the hey? It didn't take too long to read and I didn't spend any money on it.

Tom Tischler says

Kate Raab's life seems perfect, she has a boyfriend, her job, and her family until her father runs into trouble with the law. The only thing that he can do is to testify against his former accomplices in exchange for his families placement in the Witness Protection Program. But one of his family backs out and everything Kate can count on is gone. Now a year later her worst fears happen. Her father has disappeared and someone close to him is murdered. Kate's family is under surveillance, the FBI is untrustworthy and her father's menacing friends are circling. Kate sets out to find her father and uncover the secrets someone will kill for to keep buried. This is an older book from 2007 and one that I missed. It is right up there with all the other Andrew Gross tales and will keep you turning pages. I gave it a 5.

Dokusha says

Benjamin Raab ist ein fürsorglicher Familienvater, der immer für seine Kinder da ist und sich sehr um sie kümmert. Darum ist es für alle ein heftiger Schock, als er wegen Geldwäsche verhaftet wird. Das FBI übt Druck aus und bringt ihn schließlich dazu, gegen Aufnahme ins Zeugenschutzprogramm gegen einige Geschäftspartner auszusagen. Die ganze Familie wird unter neuem Namen an einen anderen Ort gebracht, außer Tochter Kate, die lieber mit ihrem Freund untertaucht.

Aber im Zeugenschutzprogramm läuft bald vieles aus dem Ruder. Und Kate fühlt sich verfolgt. Zudem findet sie Hinweise darauf, dass ihr Vater wohl Geheimnisse hatte und nicht ganz so unschuldig ist, wie er erst schien. Allmählich löst sich ihre Welt auf...

Das Buch ist eine gute und spannende Geschichte, die einen fesselt. Warum also nicht mehr Sterne? Weil mich die Charaktere teilweise doch sehr nerven - ihre Reaktionen und Aktionen sind manchmal nicht nachvollziehbar und für mich nicht normal. Außerdem driftet die Geschichte gelegentlich ein wenig ins Melodramatische ab.

Doran Barton says

I've come down with a cold this last week. I took Thursday off work to try to rest and get better, but I don't think it really helped. I still feel like I've got a pool cue ball lodged at the top of my throat and it's not a very pleasant feeling.

Yesterday, this somewhat painful and uncomfortable sensation in my throat begat the beginnings of a scratchy cough and I knew (actually, my wife knew) once I tried to lay down in bed and go to sleep, that

scratchy cough would become a pesky inhibitor to sleep.

Sure enough, when I tried to lay down and go to sleep last night, the itchy throat kicked in and I was overcome with a compelling need to cough.

Knowing I had to do something about this in order to sleep, I threw some clothes on and drove over to the neighborhood Smith's grocery store in search for some sugar free (because I'm diabetic) cough drops. I quickly found a couple flavors and headed in the direction of the self-checkout station. On my way, I passed their selection of books for sale and I decided to see what they had. I was pleasantly surprised to see they had Glenn Beck's book in stock. It's only been in stock one other time before that I can remember looking. After looking through the hardcover books, I decided to do a quick pass through the paperbacks to see if there was anything interesting. That's when I found "The Blue Zone" by Andrew Gross. I had heard Gross talking about his new book "A Dark Tide" on the radio and thought I might like this book.

That was between 1:30 and 2:00 in the morning.

I decided to let the cough drops work their magic for a little while before I attempted to sleep again, so I started reading "The Blue Zone." I ended up reading about 150 pages of the book before climbing back in bed (fell to sleep without any problems at all). Then, I read some more this morning, and then finished it tonight- about 22 hours after purchasing it.

I think it goes without saying that it's an easy read.

The story is also an easy one to get into. Kate Raab is the central character in the story and is a graduate student doing some kind of research in genetic biology in the New York City area. Her father is a respected and well known trader of gold and other jewelry commodities.

The story begins with Kate's father being arrested for being involved in a money laundering scheme that was connected to Colombian drug cartels, a charge he firmly denied any knowledge of.

As the government explains the evidence they have against him, they also explain they can work a deal wherein he and his family get witness protection in exchange for his testimony against other people higher up in this scheme. After much deliberation, he decides to go ahead and take the deal. While it seemed he really didn't know what his clients were actually doing with the gold he was selling to them, he knew enough about the transactions and the people involved for the government to build a strong case.

Kate is 23 years-old, about to get married, and working on groundbreaking research in her field. When offered the opportunity to flee into the witness protection program, she declines despite knowing it will be very difficult for her to maintain communication with her family once they go into the program.

Several months later, government authorities go to Kate with news that her father has disappeared and they believe he may be involved in a murder and that her life may be in danger. From here, it seems Kate's whole world gets turned upside down as she tries to figure out why her father was charged in the first place, why he's gone into "the blue zone" (a phrase used for someone in witness protection who has gone missing), and who these people are that he was allegedly involved with and testifying against.

Gross's writing style seems very contemporary and somewhat formulaic. While he does a good job of building suspense and mystery, I can't say he did it completely convincingly. There were a couple times, albeit rare, when I saw something coming that was intended to draw a big gasp of shock from the reader.

In the story, Kate is an insulin-dependent diabetic and was diagnosed just a few years prior to the events in the book. That's interesting to me because I am also a type-1 diabetic and have only been for seven years or so. Gross's handling of the diabetes was a little weak. I think he could have done his research better on the symptoms of high blood sugar and low blood sugar because I didn't buy everything he said about Kate's condition throughout the story.

Twice in the story, a character receives a surprise call on their cell phone. In each case, the character is shocked to hear the voice on the other end of the call because they assumed the call was from someone else. This bothered me because it's a cell phone! Come on! Every cell phone has Caller ID and if it wasn't whoever they thought it was, they would at least see that the number was different or that the Caller ID information was being blocked. I mean, who answers their cell phone blindly anymore and says, "Hey, honey"?!

That being said, this guy is a good storyteller. I'll probably get his next book when it goes to paperback because the premise is interesting.

If you like suspenseful thrillers where the protagonist is thrown into a situation they don't understand and they have to work against all odds to find their way out, you'll probably enjoy *The Blue Zone*.

Michelle says

A Gripping Thriller that keeps you on the edge of your seat the entire time.

Richard Derus says

Rating: 3.5* of five

Told from the PoV of the daughter of a nasty criminal, this is one fast book. My hair blew back from the speed I was turning pages, and I don't have a lot of hair. (Unless you count my shoulders. Oh, and back. They don't blow around so much, though.) I was awake an entire night finishing the book, and am I glad I did!

So, the girl in question is in her first year at Snazzmatazz U, thinking her life is about perfect: Daddy's rich, kind, attentive, and mommy's adequately drugged, and she's just so happy she could spit, right?

FLOOEY

Her father tells her the truth at last, he's not the sweetie-punkin she thought, and all five of her family are headed for the Witness Protection Program (WITSEC). Well, that's worse than a broken heel on your Jimmy Choos! She goes into the program, expecting all will go well, after all it's a government run program, right?

FLOOEY

A year later, her WITSEC agent-pal is found tortured and murdered and the WITSEC guys show her pictures

of the remains before telling her that Pops is missing. She has to help them figure this out!!

Well, nothing here to strain the brain of a thriller reader, and all unfolds like one would want and expect it to do. Gross co-wrote a couple novels with James Patterson, who returns the kindness with a very nice blurb. He knows his onions about pacing and about plot twists. He's got some grasp of character development, too. He's not up there with Steve Berry, but he's a darn good day's entertainment.

Carmen says

This is a mystery book about betrayal. Kate finds out her father is not the man she thinks he is – in more ways than one. He is not Spanish – he's Columbian. He's a member of a drug cartel. He later murders her mother and many other people, even torturing them. At the end of the book, she finds out that he's not even her real father – he's her uncle and he adopted her.

I like the fact that Kate is just a normal woman – not an assassin or a agent or a survivalist. She is an ordinary woman who finds herself in a terrible situation. She figured things out a pretty fast clip – I wasn't impatient, waiting for her to catch up with me. And that's a relief – sometimes in mystery novels they make the protagonist so stupid. That wasn't the case here.

There were many twists and turns, but I could see most of them coming (her eyes are a different colors from her siblings? Immediately knew that she was adopted. Her friend Tina has just started dying her hair like Kate? Of course the killers are going to mistake her for Kate and shoot her). Still, it was pretty enjoyable. The dialogue and writing were nothing special. The chapters were short and kept my interest. One thing, though: many characters say "What have you done?!" and they say it ALL THE TIME. I was tired of reading that line by the end of the novel.

I liked that there was some Spanish in the novel. In my edition, though, I think they made one mistake. It says "Fraternidad esto destino" and that doesn't make sense. Surely they meant "Fraternidad es destino".

I thought at first that Kate's mother was going to be annoying but she turned out fine. I was fascinated by Ben's character. It was very interesting to see him go from loving family man to stone-cold killer, and to see Kate go from loving and trusting him to being willing to kill him. I have to admit the one part of the book that surprised me was Greg turning out to be working for the cartel. The romance was just a normal, plain romance and the relationship with her sister and brother was normal and realistic as well. This book held my interest, but it wasn't spectacular or fabulous or memorable. I would recommend it for a quick, fun read.

Ken says

THE BLUE ZONE is a rather pedestrian thriller, but if you like the work of James Patterson or Harlen Coben you won't be too disappointed, yet you most likely will not be thrilled.

The title refers to a classification within the Witness Protection Program (WITSEC). "Blue Zone" means that a subject's new identity has been blown, and is no longer under the protection of the program. THE BLUE ZONE relates the tale of a happy American family that is essentially destroyed because of the father's dark and dangerous past. Ben Raab is a very successful businessman, but decades earlier he had a strong and

compelling connection to an evil South American drug cartel. Presently, he is under indictment by US authorities for his involvement, and violent elements within the cartel force Mr. Raab and his family to enter a government protection program. His eldest daughter, Kate, becomes the heroine of the novel and must uncover her father's real motivations, and seeks to determine his true identity.

This is an ideal novel if you just want to pass the time, and is about on the level of a better-than-average Made for TV Movie.

Kathe Pines says

Fast paced read. Entertaining!

Laura says

Well this book was certainly a thriller. It had suspense, mystery and my heart was definitely racing throughout. James Patterson had a quote on the front cover of this book, 'Tense and Chilling'. I agree with the tense. Chilling? Not so much.

The story is about a family that has to go into witness protection because the father, Ben, has to testify against some dangerous criminals. He then goes missing. The eldest daughter, Kate, gets involved in finding him and soon finds herself questioning everything she has ever known. Will she find him? Will she find out the truth?

I enjoyed reading this book. It was interesting, there were twists, a complex plot and enough suspense to get the heart pumping. It was very clever, even if it was a bit predictable. However i feel that the ending didn't do the rest of the book justice. It was like a huge buildup with a tiny ping instead of fireworks.

There is a part in the book that is a little disturbing - the FBI show Kate some pictures of a murder. I think that because you aren't reading the murder as it's happening but reading the FBI telling someone else about it, it is not as disturbing. If Andrew Gross had described the murder as it was happening, then maybe chilling would have been fit to describe the book - and i wouldn't have read it. That's where i draw the line. If you read it, i think you will understand.

If you like thrillers, then this is for you. I don't know if i would read it again. I would recommend it though, also for people who like crime and mystery.

www.readingforthemasses.wordpress.com

Petra says

Fun to read. Not terribly hard to piece together but somewhat suspenseful, at times.

I cringed each time one character called another character "Baby". Ugh! It seemed to happen a lot.

Kate, the main character, seemed rather naive throughout the book and didn't seem to catch on to the seriousness of her situation but, still, it was a fun mystery thriller.

This book won't rock your world but it's still pretty good.

Rob says

This my third Andrew Gross book and so far so good.

In the past Andrew Gross has written books in collaboration with James Patterson and it's not hard to miss the Patterson influence here. Short chapters and tight plotting.

Kate Rabb's, the central character, life is devastated when her father is arrested by the FBI for money laundering for a Colombian cartel. The entire family is to be taken into protective custody but Kate, who is in her mid twenties and married, refuses to go. She can look after herself, or so she thinks.

Kate is convinced that her father is innocent and works towards proving his innocence. As time goes by the FBI and the State Marshals give information to Kate that brings her father's innocence into question.

Kate can't believe the thing that are being said about her father but the evidence seems to be overwhelming.

Kate can't trust anyone. The FBI are lying to her, the State Marshals are lying to her and worst of all, it seems, her father is lying to her.

Little by little the truth unfolds and when that truth is revealed Kate's life will change for ever.

I really enjoyed this book. Easy to read and a definite page turner.

A four star recommendation.

Terri Lynn says

Kate Raab's life is turned upside down the day she finds out that her father is being arrested on RICO charges and the family must enter the Witness Protection Program. At age 23, her life has been near perfect. She is a biologist working in a lab for a future Nobel Prize winning medical biologist, finishing up her master's degree (with plans for a doctorate), and half-living with her boyfriend who is finishing up medical school.

Kate chooses not to enter the witness protection program with the rest of the family and her boyfriend chooses this time to propose. As the stunned family (Mom Sharon, sister Emily, and brother Justin) is taken away into the Witness Protection Program and her dad is carried off to spend a year locked up before testifying against the Colombian drug lords and his own best friend, Kate feels all alone and decides to marry Greg.

A year later, her world becomes a roller coaster ride. The agent in charge of her family and others being protected from the same Colombians is found tortured and murdered. Her dad has gone missing or, as the feds say, in the blue zone. Another man in the same program also goes into the blue zone. When someone shoots her co-worker and friend Tina in the head at the lab (after Kate leaves early unexpectedly) and leaves her in a coma, events start to unfold that leaves a trail of dead bodies and Kate as a target. But who is targeting her- the feds, the Columbians, or her own dad?

The story is exciting- I read it in one afternoon/evening. What would any of us do if we found ourselves in Kate's situation? She makes some dangerous mistakes and finds she can't trust anyone- not even her own

husband. The secrets her mother, her father, and even a stranger in the park hold could get a girl murdered.
