

The Brotherhood's Secret



Nazi gold, submarines and treason

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Based on true events

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Summary

The Brotherhood 'sSecret is more than just a book—it is a monumental experience that transcends the boundaries of literature, becoming a ritual journey into the depths of myth, history, and the human soul. Each page is like a gateway to the world of an ancient community whose secrets have been hidden for centuries and are now revealed with extraordinary power. The reader becomes a witness to and participant in a revelation that blends archaeological resonance with poetic imagination, transforming the past into a vivid experience.

This volume was created with precision and passion, with a focus on meticulous detail and aesthetic perfection. It is for those who seek not only literary depth but also an exclusive collector's item that uplifts the mind and touches the heart. "The Heavenly Brotherhood" is a jewel for every collector, a luxurious edition that will become a keepsake and a source of inspiration. Each copy is unique and intended for those who desire more than just a story — they want the key to a mystery that has endured through the centuries.

This book is a testament to the power of words and images, the constant dialogue between past and present, humanity's thirst for knowledge, and the striving for transcendence. It is a work that will not be forgotten, but preserved and passed on as the legacy of a brotherhood that never truly disappeared—it was simply waiting to be rediscovered. "The Heavenly Brotherhood" is an invitation to discovery, a promise of profound insight, and a journey that transforms all who embark upon it. It is a book that deserves its place in every library that honors the beauty, mystery, and power of the human imagination.

About the author

He writes under a pseudonym that is not his own. A pseudonym, born of necessity. For whoever digs too deep into the shadows of history, whoever touches secrets that have remained hidden for generations, risks more than just knowledge. He risks his life.

The man behind this book has gone where others dared not. He stood in archives where documents were signed in blood. He heard whispers in corridors whose walls still breathe secrets. He traveled to shores where the sea preserves shipwrecks and to mountains where the wind whispers names that must never be spoken.

His path was lined with warnings. Eyes followed him, letters arrived without a return address, doors closed as soon as he approached. But he pressed on. For he knew that the truth could not remain hidden forever.

He is not an archaeologist, but a researcher of the unseen. Not a historian, but a witness to what history prefers to keep silent. He is a traveler through time and space, a man who accepted the danger because he knew that some stories are too big to remain silent.

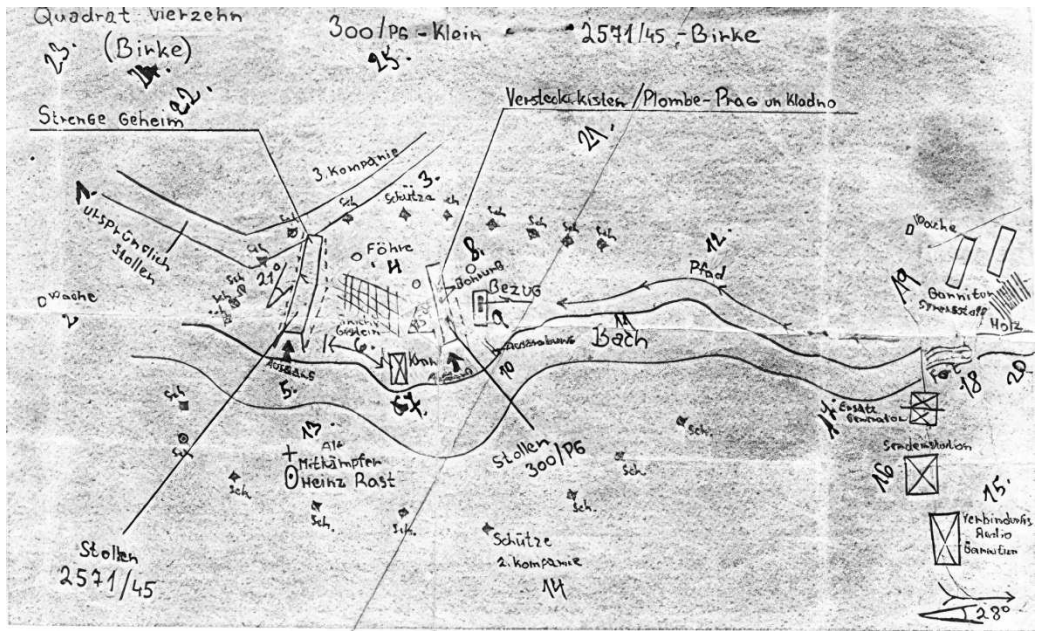
This book is his legacy. Every chapter is a key, every detail an echo of a reality too dangerous to be spoken of aloud. He writes under a pseudonym, yet his words carry the power of a man who was truly there, who truly saw, who truly heard.

Who he is remains hidden. What he discovered now lies in your hands. And as you read, you should know: The Brotherhood is watching. It does not forget. It does not forgive. And perhaps, just perhaps, this book will bring you closer to its secret than is safe.

Introduction

There are books you read, and there are books you experience. The Heavenly Brotherhood belongs to the latter category. It is a monumental work that transcends the boundaries of literature, becoming a ritual journey into the depths of myth, history, and the human soul. Every page is a gateway to the world of an ancient brotherhood whose secrets have been hidden for centuries and are now revealed with extraordinary power. The reader becomes a witness and participant in a revelation that blends archaeological resonance with poetic imagination, transforming the past into a vivid experience.

Among the many artifacts that inspired this work is a rare World War II map—possibly linked to Colonel Emil Christopher Klein—that surfaced during our research. Though absolute certainty remains elusive, the cartographic details and symbolic annotations suggest a connection to covert operations, hidden installations, and esoteric knowledge long buried beneath official history. This map, reproduced in the opening pages, serves as a visual threshold: a fragment of reality that invites the reader to cross into the realm of the unknown. Its mysteries are not left unexplored—this map is examined and discussed in detail throughout the book, revealing layers of intrigue that bind history and legend together.



"Streng geheim. A WWII map believed to be tied to Colonel Emil Christopher Klein. Its cryptic markings whisper of hidden brotherhoods, lost tunnels, and secrets powerful enough to reshape history. Extensively analyzed in the chapters that follow, it is your first step into the forbidden story."

This book is more than just a story—it is a work of art. Crafted with precision and passion, this magnificent edition is for those who seek not only literary depth but also aesthetic perfection. The Heavenly Brotherhood is a collector's item, an exclusive object that uplifts the mind and touches the heart. It is the key to the symbols that have shaped our culture and a bridge between ancient legends and the search for meaning in our present day.

Whoever opens this book enters a world where the past becomes the present and storytelling becomes experience. The Heavenly Brotherhood is an invitation to discovery, a promise of depth, and an unforgettable journey. It is a book that deserves to be preserved, admired, and passed on—as a testament to the power of words, images, and the human imagination.

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I. The Gate to the Lost Kingdom

The Czech Airlines Boeing began its slow descent. For a moment, we were enveloped in a thick, gray blanket of clouds, then suddenly London appeared below us. In the distance, I could see Tower Bridge and the wide Thames winding its way through the city. I heard the pilot extend the flaps, and shortly afterward, we touched down gently on the runway. A beautiful landing.

I love London. No matter how many times you visit, you always discover something new. Check-in at Gatwick Airport was quick, there were only a few dozen people in the arrivals hall, and I had the impression that there were more staff and police than passengers. Long queues used to form here at check-in and baggage claim, but the coronavirus pandemic has changed the world forever. Thankfully, you no longer have to wear a mask on the street, at least not here in England. I briefly considered taking the Tube, which connects the airport to central London, but then realized I would have to change trains several times to get to my hotel. So I took a taxi instead, even though it was considerably more expensive. There were rows of taxis—black, yellow, and dark blue—waiting impatiently for the few passengers leaving the terminal.

I leaned back comfortably in the back seat and looked out the window. The sky was overcast, and rain was expected any moment. Although it was only after five in the afternoon, the first lights were already visible outside the taxi windows. Lost in thought, I watched the cars drive by, and my thoughts involuntarily drifted back to Germany, to the events that had taken place there exactly two weeks earlier. Everything I was experiencing now had begun there, and I had to admit to myself that I still didn't really understand what I had gotten myself into. I only knew that here in London I was supposed to meet someone who would finally explain everything to me. I wavered between curiosity, uncertainty, and perhaps even fear of the unknown at times, but ultimately, curiosity always won out.

Two weeks ago, I traveled to Germany to meet a longtime friend I hadn't seen in years. We arranged to meet at the *Ratskeller* in Munich's old town. I love Bavarian cuisine, especially Weißwurst and good Hefeweizen, so Munich was the perfect place to combine good food and drink with an old friend. Jacob and I have known each other for about twenty-five years, and I remember that we'd met at the same restaurant several times in the past. So it was a really good choice for a reunion. I must admit, I was quite surprised when Jacob called me after so many years and invited me to his hometown, including a delicious dinner. He didn't tell me the reason over the phone, but that's just how Jacob was, always a bit mysterious. I knew he worked at the German military archives in Freiburg because he'd helped me a few times with information for my historical studies on the Second World War, but that was about it. We became friends. He was about my age, maybe a little younger. When I asked him about his family, he always steered the conversation in a different direction. But from his hints, I gathered he lived alone and had no siblings. I respected his privacy and never brought the subject up again. Perhaps he would tell me himself when the time was right. I admit I was quite curious about what was going on, because Jacob's voice sounded concerned, and he had even pre-paid for a room for me at a hotel near the *Ratskeller*.

I was in Munich in no time by plane. Naturally, I took a taxi and was quickly out of the hotel. I checked in, and since it would be a while before I met Jacob, I decided to go for a short walk first. I wanted to finally soak up the atmosphere of this Bavarian city again after so long. I took a bag with a bottle of Becherovka—an obligatory gift for Jacob, as I knew he really liked the liqueur—and strolled leisurely through the streets. When I arrived at Marienplatz, where *the Ratskeller* is located, I realized I was a good twenty minutes early, but that didn't matter. So I waited downstairs for Jacob and treated myself to one of Munich's famous Hefeweizen beers, which I also found very tasty. I paused briefly in front of the restaurant and smiled to myself. The same decorative metal lantern hung above the entrance as always. Nothing had changed here since my last visit. I went down the old stone steps, looked around, and was pleased that nothing had changed since my last visit years ago. I'd been here with

Jacob back then, too. The high mahogany ceilings, the stained-glass windows, and the beautiful wooden chairs and tables were still the same. But I noticed that this famous restaurant, too, had suffered the effects of Covid. I remembered that last time we'd had to reserve two days in advance, and the restaurant had been packed. Now, maybe three or four tables were occupied, no more. I sat down, ordered a glass of beer, and waited.

Jacob arrived on time, as always. A typical German... I recognized him immediately as he came down the stairs; he was unmistakable. He was tall, powerfully built for his age, with a broad face and dark brown eyes that were almost always smiling. I didn't even have to get up; Jacob saw me right away. He smiled broadly, hugged me, and sat down opposite me at the elegant wooden table.

"But you never age, my friend...", Jacob said to me in his deep voice and with his typical mischievous smile.

"Oh, come on, man, I have to look in the mirror every now and then," I replied. But I also smiled. I was happy to see him again.

"How was the flight? Was everything okay?"

I nodded. Jacob didn't even wait for an answer, but beckoned the waiter and ordered a beer. Then he leaned across the table towards me, glanced around briefly, and began to speak.

Are you still interested in these historical documents about the German presence in Czechoslovakia during the war?

"Yes, of course. You know it's been my hobby for years and is also a source of income," I replied, somewhat confused. Jacob knew that perfectly well, so why was he asking?

"And you're still publishing articles and books about it, right?" he continued with further questions.

"Yes, during all this corona madness, it was and still is my only somewhat secure income," I replied somewhat hesitantly. He must have noticed that his questions were starting to seem odd to me, because he smiled and waved them off, as if to say, "Don't be afraid."

"So, what's wrong, Jacob?" I decided to ask him directly.

We fell silent for a moment when a waiter came in carrying a huge glass of Bavarian beer. We waited until he had left, cheered ourselves up with a beer, and then Jakob began.

"I know you've been having financial problems lately," he said quietly, and his expression changed abruptly. That completely threw me off balance. How could he know that?

Jacob looked me straight in the eyes and continued: "So, I have a job for you."

I didn't ask how he knew I was broke and had been living off personal loans lately. The truth was, I'd lost my steady job long before this damn pandemic madness and had been struggling financially for almost the entire last two years. But I said nothing; I just waited to see what would happen.

Jacob finished his beer, wiped the foam from his mouth, leaned closer to me, and continued.

"The job I'm offering you will solve your financial problems. I'll pay you five thousand euros a month, plus all related expenses."

I swallowed.

Five thousand euros plus all costs included? That sounded simply unbelievable to me, especially in my current situation.

"And what am I supposed to do, friend? Kill someone?" I tried to joke, but Jakob ignored me and continued.

“No. You simply continue doing what you enjoy and what you’re good at. You search for war documents, for witnesses, piece together information, and create a complete picture. You travel, report your findings to me, and—most importantly—you keep quiet.” Jacob looked me straight in the eye. “And of course, you must be available to us around the clock.”

I had never heard Jacob speak to me in such a tone. My inner *pride* wanted to scream, to send him to hell for the way he spoke to me. But then I remembered that I owed two months' rent and also had to pay my phone and electricity bills. My account at Komerční banka was barely enough. I was broke, unemployed, and in debt. So I took a deep breath and let my pride sink down to my stomach and then into my gut, where it completely dissolved. After all, those five thousand euros would have meant a lot to me before I had to leave the country in such a hurry. I had never been rich, never owned property, and, to be honest, I had never really been good with money. And that's how I always ended up. I vaguely remembered how, during my long stays in various countries around the world, I sometimes didn't even have enough to eat. Thank God for the offer!

"Okay, I agree."

I smiled as I raised my beer glass and took a deep swig. I had no idea what I was getting myself into, but I didn't care at that moment. You simply can't refuse an offer like that.

Jacob smiled again. He ordered Bavarian bratwurst with typical German sauerkraut and another beer, then changed the subject. I ordered the same, also with a beer, and felt a pleasant tingling in my back. I recognized the sensation. It always came over me when I came across information that could lead me to solving a historical mystery.



"In a shadowed beer cellar in Munich, the author receives a proposal that will change everything. A candle flickers between two old friends—one with a mission, the other with a choice. Thus begins the descent into a world of secrets, betrayal, and buried gold."

Jakob didn't mention my future job at all. During the meal, we talked generally, mainly about the economic consequences of the often senseless pandemic restrictions, which had already led to the closure of thousands of businesses across Europe. And the situation in the United States, and especially in Latin America, wasn't any better. When we had finished eating, Jakob called the waiter and paid. Then he suddenly looked at his watch, paused as if he'd lost track of time, and quickly

said, "Sorry, friend, I have to fly now. I have an urgent matter to attend to that unfortunately can't be postponed."

He stood up, and before shaking my hand, he pulled an envelope out of his jacket, handed it to me and said, "Here is your deposit."

I was increasingly surprised. How could he have known that I would accept his offer?

"Thank you very much," was all I could manage. I simply couldn't do anything else at that moment.

"No, thank you," he replied, emphasizing the word "*you*".

We shook hands, I patted him on the back, and as I turned back to the table, my gaze fell upon a strange locket peeking out briefly from under Jacob's unbuttoned shirt. This surprised me quite a bit, because I knew from our last meeting that Jacob never wore a ring, a pendant, or anything of the sort. It looked to me like an irregular piece of stone or rock, formless, neither round nor triangular. Although it was only a moment, I was certain that three small flakes of gold were reflected on the surface of the stone, or whatever it was. It looked like gold nuggets. I remembered that we had sometimes found similar flakes of gold when panning for gold in the mountains. But perhaps I was mistaken; I really had only seen it for a moment. Nevertheless, it piqued my curiosity.

"What is that?" I asked him, surprised, and pointed at his neck.

Jacob quickly buttoned his shirt and replied in a low voice:

"You really don't want to know," he said, his eyes as cold and deep as a frozen lake. "For now..." he added, waving goodbye and quickly climbing the stone steps without turning around.

I really didn't know what to make of it. One absurd thought after another raced through my head. I was still holding the envelope Jacob had given me as we left. So I sat down, drank a beer because my throat was completely dry, and slowly opened the

envelope. Inside were neatly folded hundred-euro notes. I counted them. There were fifty.

The next day, before noon, I landed at Václav Havel Airport in Prague. Arriving at my small apartment, I couldn't concentrate on anything. I kept replaying our conversation from the previous evening in my mind, understanding it less and less. My initial enthusiasm and euphoria quickly evaporated, replaced by anxiety, uncertainty, and perhaps even a touch of fear. What would become of me? What should I do? And who would I even be working for? Hundreds of thoughts and conspiracy theories raced through my mind, but I systematically dismissed them. It simply didn't make sense. Jacob worked in the German military archives, had access to a far broader range of historical documents than I did, and could obtain virtually any available information through his official network. If he needed something specific from me, he would simply tell me and perhaps pay me a flat fee for the work. But offer me a month's salary? That would mean he needed me for longer. But why...? And for what...? He said I would be traveling. Yes, I speak five languages, but that definitely wasn't the reason. I was absolutely certain that Jacob's company had dozens of qualified people like me. I felt like I was walking through a thick fog, completely clueless about what to expect. But one thing I knew for sure at that moment: it wasn't an official transfer, because otherwise Jacob would have definitely given me an employment contract.

The next few days passed completely uneventfully. I waited for an email or a call from Jacob, but nothing came. I couldn't concentrate on anything; this waiting was driving me crazy. Sometimes I got chills, and I desperately wanted to call Jacob, give him the money back, and end the whole thing. But it was too late. First, I'd already spent some of the 5,000 euros, and then, I have to admit, I felt the adrenaline rush, the thrill of the unknown waiting for me somewhere, and I just wanted to know what was going on. So I decided to wait. I knew that sooner or later someone would get in touch.

And it wasn't long. Exactly one week later, around nine o'clock at night, while I was at home watching TV and eating my favorite Chinese food, the phone rang. When I saw Jakob's number on the display, I froze. Secretly, I had been hoping all these days that something would happen, that something would distract him, that his plans would change, and that he would completely forget about my mysterious mission. And maybe then he would forget about the five thousand euros too...

Then I took a deep breath, and a thought flashed through my mind—and there it was! At the same time, I felt an immense sense of relief. Finally, the endless waiting, worrying, and guesswork was over. Deep down, I was finally happy. Jacob informed me directly, but politely and kindly, that I would receive both the plane ticket and the hotel reservation by email. Both, of course, were already paid for. I was told that someone would pick me up at the hotel the morning after my arrival and explain the next steps. When Jacob finished, I managed only one question, which at that moment was perfectly logical: "And where am I flying to?"

"To London".

The taxi driver braked suddenly to avoid hitting an inattentive driver who had changed lanes without looking, and the next moment I was back in the present. Through the window, I saw that we were finally approaching my favorite neighborhood, Bayswater, right in the middle of city traffic. I looked at my watch; the ride from the airport had taken almost an hour, but it was a hundred times better than taking the subway.

It was already dark when the taxi pulled up in front of the small, three-story family hotel. Of course, my name was in the reception system, they told me when breakfast was served, and the friendly young receptionist finally gave me the room keys. I thanked her, grabbed my small suitcase, and slowly climbed the stairs to the second floor. I hate elevators.

I was finally able to relax a bit. I liked the hotel. It was relatively small, apparently a family-run business. The rooms weren't particularly large, but it was a very quiet place

with friendly staff. Breakfast was included, and the tube station was very close by. I unpacked my suitcases and suddenly got hungry. The first raindrops tapped against the window, but I didn't care. I knew a few small restaurants in the area and was quite familiar with Bayswater from my previous trips to London. I borrowed an umbrella from the porter in the lobby and stepped out onto the rainy London evening street.

II. The Secret of the Heavenly Brotherhood

I woke up early; it was still dark outside. Naturally, I hadn't slept well. I got up, stretched, and did a few exercises I'd learned: squats, lunges, and hip circles. It was my daily morning routine, which I'd been doing automatically for years. Not that it had given me any wrinkles on my stomach, but it simply felt good. Breakfast was served from seven, so I took a leisurely shower, put on jeans, my favorite shirt, and a leather jacket. I slowly went downstairs to the ground floor, where the dining room was located. To my surprise, three people were already sitting there: an elderly couple and a middle-aged man. "Maybe it's him..." the thought flashed through my mind. I quickly dismissed it as absurd, but couldn't help glancing at him surreptitiously every now and then. Breakfast was quite simple and basic, but it had everything I needed: good, strong coffee, orange juice, toast with jam, beans, sausages, and eggs prepared in various ways. I sat down at a table in the corner so I could see everyone in the room and began to eat in peace. The mysterious man seemed to ignore me; he was engrossed in the morning paper and probably in a hurry. I noticed that he hadn't even finished his coffee before he had hurried off. When I had finished, I went back to the room, lay down on the bed, closed my eyes, and waited.

It was around 9:30 when the hotel phone rang. I deliberately let it ring for a while so as not to show the caller my impatience, and then I answered. Yes, it was him. A deep male voice politely asked me to come to the reception desk. My documents were in my jacket pocket; I didn't need anything else at the moment. I glanced briefly into the room, locked the door, and went downstairs. In the lobby stood an unassuming man in his forties, dressed in canvas trousers, a tweed jacket, and a raincoat. Quite unlike the "Man in Black" I might have imagined in my nightly fantasies of the past week.

"Hello, my name is Wolf," I said to him and offered him my hand.

"I know," the stranger smiled. We shook hands, but he didn't introduce himself.

"Come on," he said without hesitation, turned around, and walked slowly toward the hotel entrance. And of course, I followed him. A black city taxi was already waiting on the sidewalk in front of the hotel. We got in, and the driver pulled away without a word. He obviously knew where he was going. I felt a surge of excitement. It was like a Bond film, only real, and I was the star. I just wanted to know what it was all about. The man remained silent, and I didn't ask anything. I assumed I'd find out everything once we arrived. I looked out the window. To my right stretched a vast park, Kensington Gardens, where I could see people walking, jogging, or simply sitting on benches amidst the lush greenery. Heavy gray clouds still hung in the sky, but the sun was already breaking through. We drove past Marble Arch and joined the flow of traffic on the famous Oxford Street. The traffic was noticeably heavier here. I was quite surprised that the Covid pandemic, at least here in London, hadn't dampened many people's enthusiasm for shopping, judging by the crowds outside the big department stores. We turned right onto Tottenham Court Road, heading towards the Thames. I knew this part of London fairly well and thought we were going to Piccadilly Circus. But no, when we arrived in Soho, London's famous Chinatown, the taxi turned right and after a while stopped in front of a low building. The neon sign advertised the *Baozilin restaurant* – serving Chinese specialties. We got out onto the pavement, and I was astonished to see that my unknown tour guide, despite not having paid the taxi driver, drove off immediately.

We entered the restaurant. The man walked in front of me and led us to a corner table at the far end. He sat down first, facing the entrance. Then he gestured for me to sit as well. I was somewhat surprised that my mysterious companion had chosen this particular Chinese restaurant and not one of the dozens of similar ones in Soho we had just passed. But he must have had a reason. I was about to find out.

"I hope you don't mind Sichuan food?" he asked in a deep voice. Finally, he was speaking! I'm no language whiz, but I knew immediately he wasn't English. But he wasn't Russian either; he didn't have the typical accent. So where was he from? I let the question rest, because frankly, I didn't care. What I didn't realize then was that this man would soon save my life.

"On the contrary, sir," I replied politely, "I really like Chinese cuisine."

And I didn't lie.

I looked around. Nobody was in the restaurant; we were alone. Then I noticed that the man was looking at me.

"That's why I picked you up so early," he said, smiling. I frowned. That's exactly what I'd been thinking at that moment.

A moment later, a Chinese waiter came to our table. He was short, his age was hard to guess, but he politely handed us a large menu, bowed, and left.

"Choose your meal, Mr. Wolf," said my guide, putting his menu aside.

"Aren't you coming with us?" I asked, surprised.

"Yes, of course, I know exactly what I'm going to order."

I realized that this wasn't the first time.

"How may I address you, sir?" I asked, seemingly disinterested, without looking up from the extensive menu. I was almost certain that if he addressed me by name at all, it wouldn't be his real name. But I needed some kind of connection to him, whatever his name was. I couldn't wait forever for him to pick me up somewhere.

He understood and answered without hesitation.

"Please call me José."

José... that was a typical name for Spain or Latin America, I thought. But at that moment, that certainly wasn't important.

Finally, I made my decision. José called the waiter and ordered for both of us. Then he straightened up, folded his hands in front of his chest, and looked at the table for a moment. Then he raised his head, looked me straight in the eyes, and began.

"If I understand you correctly, you are very familiar with the history of the Second World War and in particular with certain activities of soldiers of the Third Reich in the territory of the former Czechoslovakia during the war, is that right?"

I just nodded, and he continued.

"As our mutual friend Jacob told me, you possess certain documents and information that could lead us to a location where several military crates with interesting contents are supposedly hidden." He paused and looked at me. He was obviously waiting for my agreement.

"Yes, that's true, José, but..." I replied slowly, because his direct question had surprised me quite a bit. Many people knew that I was searching for a huge Nazi treasure. It consisted of several hundred military crates that had been brought to our area in an armored train and unloaded at a small train station near Benešov on the night of May 3-4, 1945. In recent years, there had even been several articles in newspapers and magazines about my search, and Jacob certainly knew about it. So why this question?

"But these crates with the stolen gold and the other documents will be quite difficult to get out because..." I wanted to explain the problem before any misunderstandings arose, but José (I decided to call him José, although I was sure that wasn't his real name) interrupted me immediately.

"We are not interested in any gold." I had to admit that the English spoken was absolutely fluent for someone whose native language was clearly not English.

And he looked me in the eyes again, this time with a very serious expression.

"So you must be interested in these few boxes containing the German secret archive," I said, to show him that I actually knew about it too.

"But there's something else, Mr. Wolf."

I was speechless for a moment. Then I swallowed and continued.

"Okay. But in this case, you have to follow the plans for the Nazis' technological inventions, such as the rechargeable battery."

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only by sunlight or a laser beam, a destructive weapon that reaches a height of up to ten kilometers, or perhaps a car engine that runs on water instead of gasoline..."

I wanted to impress him and was sure I could do it.

But I was wrong.

"Not quite, Mr. Wolf, we're only interested in one box," José replied quietly. "And we know the number of that box."

I paused and simply waited to see what would happen next.

"This box contains certain documents that belonged to the Führer and that his descendants urgently need."

I couldn't hide my surprise.

"Do you mean Adolf Hitler?" I asked incredulously. "But he died in his bunker in Berlin, in the last days of the war in April." I took a sip of water from the glass on the table and added: "That's well known and confirmed."

José leaned forward slightly, placed his palms on the table in front of him, looked at me and said in a very quiet, but at the same time urgent voice:

"No, *Señor* Wolf. The Führer didn't die in Berlin. And certainly not in 1945." Ah, so I was right after all, and *Señor* José may be from Spain, but as a Latin American, I felt a much stronger connection to him.

"It was a joint agreement between the Americans and the Russians. Stalin knew that perfectly well, and so did Roosevelt. Both sides received far more than they had expected. Do you really believe the Russians would ever have allowed Werner von Braun and his entire team of top scientists to enter the United States without

something in return? Of course not. The Americans called it ' *Operation Paperclip* ' to disguise it as a secret operation, but the truth lies elsewhere. The atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were not American, but German. The United States was far from ready to use them at that time. But Comrade Stalin also got his share. More nuclear scientists were handed over to the Russians, as were some high-ranking Nazis."

I simply listened in amazement and at that moment wasn't quite sure if my mouth wasn't also slightly open.

And José continued.

"You are a historian, Mr. Wolf, so you should know that Hitler was last seen alive on April 20th. After that, he is said to have locked himself in his chambers for several days... And when he reappeared, he simply killed his mistress Eva Braun and then poisoned himself, but before that he ordered his chauffeur Kempke to burn their bodies."

José simply shook his head and added with a sarcastic smile: "Nonsense. Absolute nonsense."

"But the burned corpse..." I began to argue, but José interrupted me again.

"His cremated body was kept in the Russian part of Berlin until 1970, when his remains were disposed of. Only a fragment of his skull, with about thirteen teeth, remained and was taken to Moscow. Strange, isn't it? And when, a few years ago, a Canadian doctor was allowed to travel to Russia to examine this skull and these teeth, he clearly stated in his initial report that these fragments belonged to a woman of about 40 years of age..."

I was speechless and listened in stunned silence. Of course, I had *followed the latest episodes of the History Channel documentary about the search for Adolf Hitler with great interest*. The show's main protagonists, Gerrard Williams, Tim Kennedy, and several former CIA agents, traced Hitler's alleged escape route through Europe to

Argentina and then to other Latin American countries—all based on recently declassified documents. They even spoke with supposed witnesses who claimed to have seen Adolf Hitler here and there, but to me, that wasn't solid evidence. José, on the other hand, seemed absolutely convinced and steadfast in his statements.

"Adolf Hitler had several doubles, and one of them, Gustav Wehler, was found dead in a bunker by the Russians. The real Führer secretly left Berlin on April 20th with his mistress Eva Braun."

"If you say that his descendants are interested in certain documents, does that mean he had children?"

"Yes, he does. Two daughters. Both with Eva Braun."

"So, when and where did Adolf Hitler die?"

"In Latin America, in 1973".

For me as a historian, it was really difficult to process all this new information.

"Okay José, now you have to tell me how I fit in there?" I finally asked.

"I'll tell you right away."

III. Rituals of Fire and the Stars

After we had enjoyed our delicious Sichuan meal and a really good white wine, José ordered a typical Chinese dessert. Then he ran his hand over his chin, looked at me, and said:

"It is possible that these documents, which are so important to us, are hidden in an old mine shaft near an abandoned farmhouse that you once searched."

As I discovered, José was fully informed about my years-long, " *secret* " search for a Nazi treasure near Prague. That same treasure that caused me so many problems and ultimately forced me to live a life I hadn't chosen.

"However, there is also the second possibility that this crate containing the archive was on board a German U-boat sailing to Argentina. These documents were then secretly transported to another location in Latin America. And according to our information, this location was supposed to be somewhere in southern Chile."

"Oh yes," I interjected, "you mean the secret German settlement called *Colonia Dignidad* ?"

This was the common and well-known name for a village high in the mountains of southern Chile, founded shortly after World War II by escaped SS members and some Nazi leaders. They lived there with their families, cultivated their fields and pastures, engaged in trade, and were essentially isolated. No one was allowed to leave the village except for selected individuals with the permission of the local council, and these were always sent out on a specific mission. Gradually, German schools and a self-governing body were established there, and this German enclave continued to grow over the years. Access to the colony was strictly guarded; no outsider was even allowed to look inside, let alone enter. The Chilean authorities were, of course, aware of this, but apparently, for political and probably also economic reasons, they

remained inactive for decades. Due to public pressure and international institutions fighting for human rights and, in particular, against the crimes of National Socialism, they were forced to close the settlement, and all its inhabitants had to leave.

"No," José shook his head, " *Colonia Dignidad* has long since ceased to exist, but there are still several similar settlements in this area."

I hung on his every word, listening to what would happen next.

"And then there is a third possibility: This crate was actually on board a specially converted German submarine. However, this *submarine* was sunk in a specific safe location after Admiral Dönitz's surrender."

He paused for a moment, lowered his head, and then continued.

"And we suspect that in this case, that place would most likely be somewhere in the Caribbean."

Then José looked directly into my eyes.

"In all three cases, regardless of which one is true, you are, in the eyes of many, the most logical person to be interested in this fact from a historical perspective. Many know that you have been searching for Nazi treasures underground and underwater for decades. If you continue with this, no one will suspect who is really behind it."

"So who's behind all this?" I asked José, perhaps too much. "Adolf Hitler's descendants?"

José looked at me again, smiled, and said: "Yes and no. Let's just say our private company is working in your interest. Believe me, that's all you need to know for now."

"But why are you only looking for these secret documents now, 75 years after the war? Why didn't you start earlier?" I continued.

"It's a bit more complicated than you might think, *Señor Wolf*," José replied slowly, paused for a moment, and then continued: "There were other interests at play, but believe it or not, this pandemic catastrophe has opened the door for us."

I didn't understand, and José must have noticed. He placed both hands on the table, interlocked his fingers, and continued explaining.

"The economies of many countries collapsed, the financing of many projects came to a standstill because traditional sources of funding suddenly dried up, there were travel restrictions, and paradoxically, all of this suddenly offered us new opportunities."

José looked me in the eyes: "Now or never, Mr. Wolf. Now we finally have the opportunity to get our hands on these documents, but this opportunity will not last long, so we must act quickly and with maximum efficiency."

I remained silent and tried for a moment to think rationally, but I couldn't. My mind was completely scrambled. Something big was going on. I knew I hadn't been told the whole truth, and I began to worry that I might be made a scapegoat, someone who could easily be killed if necessary. But it was too late to regret it or even back down. I was in it up to my neck, whether I liked it or not. I decided I'd better get on with it.

"So, where and when do I start?" I asked.

"Well, firstly, you've already started," José smiled and continued.

"You must provide us with all the information you have gathered over your years of research about the underground system of old tunnels around your property. I mean the tunnels that were converted by a battalion of German engineers from Hradištek."

"Do you mean the engineering school under the command of Colonel Christopher Klein, which was located in Štěchovice?" I asked, to make sure I knew what he was talking about.

José took a sip from his glass of white wine and nodded.

"Yes, of course. But as I have been informed, you also have in your private archive a description of the military crates hidden there, including some codes."

"Yes." I realized that José most likely knew everything about my research. "They were heavy military crates, and according to a witness I spoke to, it took two men to transfer them from the railway wagon to the truck."

"And who was the witness?"

"He was a man who worked at the small train station where the armored train arrived at night in early May 1945. He told me that he was forced to help the prisoners unload crates onto the waiting trucks."

"What was the name of the train station?"

"Týnec nad Sázavou".

"What??"

"Týnec nad Sázavou," I repeated the name slowly, even though I knew it was quite difficult to pronounce for someone who wasn't born in the Czech Republic.

"The Germans called it Teimnitz," I tried to explain to José, "this name was also on all German maps of that time."

"Okay. I understand. And what's the man's name?" José began, asking the questions in rapid succession.

"His name is Strnad," I replied without hesitation.

José just nodded.

I still didn't quite understand why he was asking me all those questions when he most likely already knew all the answers. Maybe he just wanted to make sure I wasn't hiding anything. And I understood that.

"Did your witness see Colonel Skorzeny with his own eyes?" José continued with his questions.