

Die Liste: Revenge on the Black Sun

**By
Tom Gauthier**

CHAPTER ONE

**Village of Blumenau, State of Santa Catarina, Brazil
3 December, 1949, 0650 Hrs.**

He'd been sitting cramped and cold since before first light, trying to control his thoughts. The cold, the dampness, and his numbing fear conspired to keep his breathing shallow, barely sufficient to ingest the oxygen of life.

But life is not his mission.

Now be still ... it will soon be over, his thoughts came to rest, his senses keened, the river flowed slowly by.

A man appeared at the appointed time, walking his dog down the narrow path by the Rio Itajai every day at precisely seven o'clock in the morning. This early in the morning the breeze flows down from the Serra Geral mountains toward the Atlantic Ocean mixing with the coolness wafting from the river's water, and the man shivered slightly as he picked his way down the moss flecked stone steps to the river's edge. His dog, a small mixed-breed terrier, lapped at the cool water, ignoring its red-brown murkiness. It had rained during

the night and the river always flowed muddy for the next day or so after a rain.

As he eased along the slippery lower path his thoughts were far away. Any sounds from the bustling village beyond the brush and trees at the top of the riverbank, just awakening to the spring day, were beyond his hearing. Shortly, he came to the spot he'd found some months before, the spot where he could think, undisturbed, about his new life—life after the war. Too early for most people to be down this river path, he enjoyed the solitude alone. The man reached down and released the leash on his little companion. The dog knew the routine and turned to lap the man's hand, spun around a couple of times in happy-dog fashion, then trotted to the patch of reeds that swayed in the mild current to search for frogs—frogs he never caught. The man smiled as he stepped back into the stone grotto nestled in the shadow-muffled undergrowth of the riverbank, built there years before as a quiet retreat. Easing himself down onto the cold stone slab that served as a bench, he inhaled deeply of the earthy but pleasant musty smell of the damp, moss flecked world.

The man was not alone.

The blade was so sharp and the thrust so precise that he had no chance to register reality. As the blade slid with no resistance between the third and fourth cervical vertebrae, slicing cleanly through his basilar artery, a strong hand circled around to his chest, propping him upright. He still could not register his fate. He felt no pain, though he remained aware of everything in front of him. He could not move a muscle as the severed artery deprived his brainstem of oxygen. Only his eyes moved, darting left and right, then staring as the river faded into his final oblivion.

As he is slowly laid back against the cold stone, a voice whispered into his unhearing ear, "Greetings, Heinz Sigvelde. By now you should be in the presence of your god, Wotin. Or not. If Wotin is a lie, then your life has been a lie and you will have to choose Hell for your eternal rest ...

suffering in equal measure to the suffering you caused. You escaped Nuremburg and the gallows ... but you have not escaped revenge. Auf Wiedersehen (goodbye).”

The assassin climbed from his hiding place and knelt down with a familiar treat in his hand to summon the frolicking dog. As the small terrier accepted his tasty morsel, the assassin clipped on the leash, rose to his feet and strolled on along the placid river, the small dog glancing back only a moment toward the silent grotto.

Dressed nearly the same as his victim in a Bavarian Loden Coat, deep blue with green stitching, horn buttons, an embroidered edelweiss on the left sleeve, and a dark green narrow brimmed Alpine hat with a ragged shank of Ibex beard pinned to the right side, he moved with practiced ease up the path, pocketing the gloves he’d worn. He was not comfortable in the unfamiliar garb, but it allowed him to blend in, to hide in plain sight, with the growing morning whirl of this transplanted Bavarian village in the mountains of southern Brazil.