

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:02,260

You're here.

2

00:00:02,260 --> 00:00:05,240

I assure you, if you run away you will make no use.

3

00:00:19,400 --> 00:00:21,980

Tonight, one of the most notorious dictators

4

00:00:21,980 --> 00:00:26,120

in history, a man who led Germany into World War II.

5

00:00:26,120 --> 00:00:28,520

You could go down the line, maskidispper■■■.

6

00:00:28,520 --> 00:00:30,720

The war in Europe came to an end.

7

00:00:30,720 --> 00:00:34,400

Some claim there is not sufficient proof of his death.

8

00:00:34,400 --> 00:00:36,200

So right from the outset, lies were

9

00:00:36,200 --> 00:00:38,720

being spread about how Hitler actually died.

10

00:00:38,720 --> 00:00:42,000

They've never produced anything that can convince us.

11

00:00:42,000 --> 00:00:44,120

The human remains are not convincingly

12

00:00:44,120 --> 00:00:47,200

at all Hitler's human remains.

13

00:00:47,200 --> 00:00:51,160

Now, we uncover the top theories about Hitler's end.

14

00:00:51,160 --> 00:00:53,320

Did the Nazi leader really die in Berlin,

15

00:00:53,320 --> 00:00:55,240

or was he able to escape?

16

00:00:55,240 --> 00:00:58,120

If Hitler can get to Spain, then Franco

17

00:00:58,120 --> 00:01:02,320

will welcome him with open arms and keep him cozy and secret.

18

00:01:02,320 --> 00:01:05,080

There's a reason that we look suspiciously at Argentina.

19

00:01:05,080 --> 00:01:06,760

And that's because people did escape

20

00:01:06,760 --> 00:01:08,320

and make their way there in the aftermath

21

00:01:08,320 --> 00:01:09,560

of the Second World War.

22

00:01:09,560 --> 00:01:13,520

Could Hitler have survived the last days of World War II?

23

00:01:13,520 --> 00:01:15,720

And if so, where did he go?

24

00:01:15,720 --> 00:01:29,200

MUSIC

25

00:01:29,200 --> 00:01:31,200

MUSIC

26

00:01:31,200 --> 00:01:34,200

May 1st, 1945.

27

00:01:34,200 --> 00:01:36,200

The war is over.

28

00:01:36,200 --> 00:01:39,200

Six years of suffering, sacrifice, and death.

29

00:01:39,200 --> 00:01:43,200

After 12 years in power and six years of war,

30

00:01:43,680 --> 00:01:46,680

the Nazi regime has come to an end.

31

00:01:46,680 --> 00:01:50,680

According to news reports, Adolf Hitler commits suicide

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00:01:50,680 --> 00:01:56,680

as Soviet forces close in on his underground bunker in Berlin.

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00:01:56,680 --> 00:02:00,680

On April 30th, 1945, with the final fall of the last pocket

34

00:02:00,680 --> 00:02:02,680

of holdouts, Soviet troops move into the bunker

35

00:02:02,680 --> 00:02:05,680

and they confirm not just the fall of the Third Reich,

36

00:02:05,680 --> 00:02:07,680

but the death of Adolf Hitler himself.

37

00:02:07,680 --> 00:02:09,680

MUSIC

38

00:02:09,680 --> 00:02:11,680

Thanks to the work of Hugh Trevor Roper

39

00:02:11,680 --> 00:02:14,680

and British intelligence officer from MI5,

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00:02:14,680 --> 00:02:17,680

we have a very good timeline of the events in the bunker.

41

00:02:17,680 --> 00:02:20,680

On April 26th, Hitler was briefed that his army

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00:02:20,680 --> 00:02:24,680

could not counterattack, that the war was essentially lost,

43

00:02:24,680 --> 00:02:27,680

and he had a complete meltdown in the bunker.

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00:02:27,680 --> 00:02:32,680

By April 29th, he was clearly contemplating suicide.

45

00:02:32,680 --> 00:02:34,680

There had to be a Hitler legacy.

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00:02:34,680 --> 00:02:36,680

If Hitler wasn't going to survive the war,

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00:02:36,680 --> 00:02:40,680

he needed to sort of martyr himself for the Nazi cause.

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00:02:40,680 --> 00:02:44,680

On the night of April 29th, probably slightly after midnight,

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00:02:44,680 --> 00:02:46,680

he married Eva Brown,

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00:02:46,680 --> 00:02:49,680

and then they had a celebratory breakfast

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00:02:49,680 --> 00:02:53,680

before going on to kill themselves the next morning.

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00:02:55,680 --> 00:02:57,680

Shortly afterwards, newspapers worldwide

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00:02:57,680 --> 00:03:00,680

printed the announcement that Hitler is dead.

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00:03:00,680 --> 00:03:03,680

International reaction to the news of Hitler's death

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00:03:03,680 --> 00:03:05,680

is, at first, joyous.

56

00:03:05,680 --> 00:03:08,680

The sights and sounds of victory in Europe

57

00:03:08,680 --> 00:03:12,680

echo across the Atlantic and around the world.

58

00:03:12,680 --> 00:03:15,680

That gave way rather quickly to suspicion.

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00:03:15,680 --> 00:03:20,680

And that suspicion was based on the fact that there was nobody.

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00:03:20,680 --> 00:03:22,680

The first Soviet troops into the bunker

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00:03:22,680 --> 00:03:26,680

are allegedly more interested in trophies than evidence.

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00:03:26,680 --> 00:03:28,680

The Soviets in taking Berlin,

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00:03:28,680 --> 00:03:32,680

they're going to shell the city to basically rubble.

64

00:03:32,680 --> 00:03:35,680

So by the time the Russians get to the bunker,

65

00:03:35,680 --> 00:03:37,680

they're not going in with scientific teams.

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00:03:37,680 --> 00:03:40,680

It's really being discovered by frontline troops.

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00:03:40,680 --> 00:03:43,680

The Soviet troops who found Hitler's bunker

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00:03:43,680 --> 00:03:47,680

weren't looking for evidence that Hitler shot himself.

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00:03:47,680 --> 00:03:50,680

What they were actually looking for were mementos,

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00:03:50,680 --> 00:03:54,680

were trophies that they could take home at the end of the war.

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00:03:54,680 --> 00:03:56,680

So the people who were there,

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00:03:56,680 --> 00:03:59,680

who could have provided us the evidence that Hitler shot himself

73

00:03:59,680 --> 00:04:01,680

weren't looking for it?

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00:04:01,680 --> 00:04:06,680

It's very difficult to contain the exuberant energy of a conquering army.

75

00:04:06,680 --> 00:04:11,680

Because the Soviet people had suffered brutally under the German invasion.

76

00:04:11,680 --> 00:04:15,680

No one is treating Hitler's bunker the way that it should be treated.

77

00:04:15,680 --> 00:04:18,680

They weren't doing it with any kind of great caution.

78

00:04:18,680 --> 00:04:20,680

People were just digging everywhere.

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00:04:20,680 --> 00:04:22,680

People were tramping through the bunker.

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00:04:22,680 --> 00:04:24,680

They were going into the rooms, grabbing souvenirs.

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00:04:24,680 --> 00:04:27,680

But it's done in a very ad hoc way.

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00:04:27,680 --> 00:04:29,680

Despite the chaos in the bunker,

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00:04:29,680 --> 00:04:31,680

the Soviets are initially confident

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00:04:31,680 --> 00:04:35,680

that they have found the dead bodies of Hitler and Eva Braun.

85

00:04:36,680 --> 00:04:39,680

That confidence then erodes pretty quickly.

86

00:04:39,680 --> 00:04:46,680

Within weeks, Joseph Stalin himself is commenting that Adolf Hitler escaped from Europe.

87

00:04:46,680 --> 00:04:50,680

Most historians think that Stalin was basically playing a political game.

88

00:04:50,680 --> 00:04:55,680

It was a way to strengthen Stalin's hand in territorial negotiations

89

00:04:55,680 --> 00:04:58,680

by suggesting that the threat of Hitler could mean that it's safer

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00:04:58,680 --> 00:05:01,680

for Red Army soldiers to remain in disputed areas.

91

00:05:01,680 --> 00:05:04,680

He was almost certain that they had Hitler's remains.

92

00:05:04,680 --> 00:05:10,680

But he was going to keep it ambiguous to be able to wield a cudgel against the Western allies.

93

00:05:10,680 --> 00:05:17,680

The United States is one of several countries that quietly tries to ascertain the truth about Hitler's death.

94

00:05:17,680 --> 00:05:22,680

In the aftermath of the conflict, the United States military is not allowed immediate access to Berlin.

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00:05:22,680 --> 00:05:27,680

The Soviets eventually allow us there, but it's nearly two months later.

96

00:05:27,680 --> 00:05:33,680

What that leads to is within months, nearly half of America believes that Adolf Hitler did not die in Berlin.

97

00:05:35,680 --> 00:05:39,680

When General Eisenhower's asked about it, he honestly responds,

98

00:05:39,680 --> 00:05:41,680

we don't have tangible proof.

99

00:05:41,680 --> 00:05:46,680

We have not seen anything, we're just relying on what the Soviets are giving us.

100

00:05:46,680 --> 00:05:50,680

Jared Gauhover at the FBI, he looks into it and he says,

101

00:05:50,680 --> 00:05:54,680

I don't have any evidence that Hitler's remains were found, because he didn't.

102

00:05:54,680 --> 00:05:57,680

You know, the Soviets kept this stuff very secret.

103

00:05:57,680 --> 00:06:01,680

These narratives about the death of Hitler, we must remember at all times

104

00:06:01,680 --> 00:06:05,680

that what information we do have went through a Russian filter.

105

00:06:05,680 --> 00:06:07,680

And it's worse than that.

106

00:06:07,680 --> 00:06:10,680

It was a Stalinist filter, the worst one of them all.

107

00:06:11,680 --> 00:06:17,680

Hitler is so iconic that any inconsistency is going to be examined or exploited.

108

00:06:18,680 --> 00:06:22,680

As the world recovers from the war, confidential investigations begin,

109

00:06:22,680 --> 00:06:26,680

and no one can quite find the answers they're looking for.

110

00:06:27,680 --> 00:06:34,680

Adolf Hitler's death certificate is not issued until 1956, 11 years after his death.

111

00:06:34,680 --> 00:06:37,680

And that's really because there wasn't a body to identify,

112

00:06:37,680 --> 00:06:41,680

and there was a lot of confusion in Berlin at that time,

113

00:06:41,680 --> 00:06:45,680

and in Germany as it's trying to rebuild, so it wasn't a priority.

114

00:06:46,680 --> 00:06:52,680

This death certificate is produced without the presence of physical evidence,

115

00:06:52,680 --> 00:06:55,680

because in 1956 there was no dead body to stand over.

116

00:06:56,680 --> 00:07:02,680

What we see is that the prevailing theory among most historians, most governments,

117

00:07:02,680 --> 00:07:05,680

is that Hitler shot himself in the bunker.

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00:07:10,680 --> 00:07:12,680

The official story looks like this.

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00:07:12,680 --> 00:07:15,680

Adolf Hitler was aware he wasn't going to escape.

120

00:07:15,680 --> 00:07:18,680

He had promised that he would never be captured alive.

121

00:07:18,680 --> 00:07:23,680

He also said he was not going to leave Berlin, that he realized this was his fate.

122

00:07:23,680 --> 00:07:32,680

Those convinced Hitler died by his own hand point to the dramatic death of Italian dictator Benito Mussolini two days earlier.

123

00:07:33,680 --> 00:07:38,680

The word comes into the bunker that Mussolini and his mistress were captured,

124

00:07:38,680 --> 00:07:43,680

hung upside down, killed, and Hitler decides he does not want this for himself.

125

00:07:43,680 --> 00:07:46,680

He is going to control his own death.

126

00:07:47,680 --> 00:07:52,680

And so a decision was made that he would kill himself, that Eva would kill herself as well.

127

00:07:52,680 --> 00:07:55,680

The bodies would then be burned so that they could not be recovered,

128

00:07:55,680 --> 00:08:00,680

so that no spectacle could be made of Adolf Hitler's dead body,

129

00:08:00,680 --> 00:08:03,680

the way that it was made of Benito Mussolini's dead body.

130

00:08:05,680 --> 00:08:09,680

On April 30th, Hitler calls his staff together and says goodbye to them,

131

00:08:09,680 --> 00:08:13,680

shaking hands with each of them as he goes around the room.

132

00:08:13,680 --> 00:08:19,680

One of his secretaries noted that he wasn't even looking at her, rather he was looking through her.

133

00:08:19,680 --> 00:08:26,680

Otto Gunch, one of Hitler's senior officials, stands outside the door while Hitler goes in with his wife Eva,

134

00:08:26,680 --> 00:08:34,680

Eva Hitler now, and at about 3.15 he opens the door and there's Eva, she had taken her shoes off,

135

00:08:34,680 --> 00:08:43,680

she's laying peacefully, Hitler however had put a gun in his mouth and blew his brains out.

136

00:08:44,680 --> 00:08:48,680

Gunch is captured by the Soviets on May 2nd.

137

00:08:48,680 --> 00:08:53,680

He claims to be one of just a few people who handled the bodies of Hitler and Braun.

138

00:08:53,680 --> 00:08:59,680

The witnesses, Gunch especially, report that there was also the smell of burnt almonds in the room.

139

00:08:59,680 --> 00:09:01,680

Now that's a sign of cyanide.

140

00:09:01,680 --> 00:09:05,680

The Soviets when they interview Gunch about Hitler's suicide, they ask him,

141

00:09:05,680 --> 00:09:11,680

is there any other access to this room besides the one door you stood by?

142

00:09:11,680 --> 00:09:18,680

And he said no, there was not, this was the one and that Adolf Hitler and Eva Braun did commit suicide.

143

00:09:20,680 --> 00:09:25,680

Hitler had already instructed his adjuncts to gather petrol to burn his body, he was very clear on that.

144

00:09:25,680 --> 00:09:30,680

Otto Gunch along with a couple of the other people present will wrap Hitler's body in carpet,

145

00:09:30,680 --> 00:09:36,680

Gunch will carry them out into the Chancellery Garden, they place their bodies in a shell crater,

146

00:09:36,680 --> 00:09:43,680

douse them with petrol and then they will like them on fire and their bodies will begin to burn.

147

00:09:44,680 --> 00:09:50,680

According to Soviet soldiers, Hitler's body was unrecognizable and reduced nearly to ash.

148

00:09:50,680 --> 00:09:55,680

The Soviets dug up two really badly fire damaged sets of human remains,

149

00:09:55,680 --> 00:10:00,680

and from these remains they took Hitler's jaw and teeth and they sent it back to Moscow.

150

00:10:01,680 --> 00:10:06,680

The jaw is intact enough that they can examine the teeth and what they do is they find the two dentists

151

00:10:06,680 --> 00:10:14,680

that worked on Hitler's teeth and they were able to point out specifically a bridge that they had done in the upper right jaw.

152

00:10:14,680 --> 00:10:19,680

Dental assistance, that's how little the Soviets have, they've got nothing,

153

00:10:19,680 --> 00:10:23,680

they've got a couple of fragments of jaw bone with some teeth.

154

00:10:23,680 --> 00:10:29,680

Stalin is so paranoid that he starts to think there's real doubt about basically the remains of Hitler

155

00:10:29,680 --> 00:10:32,680

that had been verified by the dental assistants.

156

00:10:32,680 --> 00:10:40,680

So he sends another group of military intelligence officers back to Berlin in 1946, a year after the war.

157

00:10:40,680 --> 00:10:44,680

That's when they find the skull, the skull with the bullet hole.

158

00:10:48,680 --> 00:10:58,680

In 1946, a year after the end of World War II, Stalin sends a team to Berlin to search for further proof of Hitler's death.

159

00:10:58,680 --> 00:11:03,680

He says, I want you to go through that right Chancellor's Garden again and look for remains of Hitler,

160

00:11:03,680 --> 00:11:05,680

and that's when they find the skull.

161

00:11:05,680 --> 00:11:10,680

They couldn't know that was Hitler's skull, they weren't doing DNA testing it,

162

00:11:10,680 --> 00:11:15,680

but it was in the same area where they found the teeth that had a hole and he'd been shot in the head.

163

00:11:15,680 --> 00:11:18,680

The skull's fragment is filed away in Soviet archives.

164

00:11:18,680 --> 00:11:27,680

It's not until 2009, well after the fall of the Soviet Union, that this 1946 discovery can be properly examined.

165

00:11:28,680 --> 00:11:36,680

In 2009, Nick Bellantoni led a team of scientists to conduct DNA analysis on this skull fragment with the bullet hole in it,

166

00:11:36,680 --> 00:11:42,680

and what they found was that the skull was actually that of a female and that it was the wrong age to be Ava Brown.

167

00:11:42,680 --> 00:11:47,680

There's a bullet wound in the skull and we know from eyewitness accounts that she poisoned herself.

168

00:11:47,680 --> 00:11:51,680

That skull fragment cannot have belonged to Ava.

169

00:11:51,680 --> 00:11:57,680

There were over 150 bodies surrounding the Chancelory building, so there were human remains everywhere.

170

00:11:57,680 --> 00:12:07,680

And the skull fragment, it's irrelevant because of the jaw bone in the dental work that almost definitely confirms his death.

171

00:12:07,680 --> 00:12:13,680

The evidence for Hitler's suicide in the bunker on the 30th of April 1945 is forensic evidence,

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00:12:13,680 --> 00:12:18,680

it's eyewitness evidence and it's documentary evidence and it all adds up.

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00:12:18,680 --> 00:12:22,680

Nonetheless, some question the identity of those bodies in the bunker,

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00:12:22,680 --> 00:12:27,680

thanks to information gleaned at the Nuremberg War Crime Trials.

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00:12:27,680 --> 00:12:33,680

The United States of America present count one of the indictment,

176

00:12:33,680 --> 00:12:45,680

that all the defendants participated as organizers or accomplices in a common plan or conspiracy to commit crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

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00:12:45,680 --> 00:12:52,680

The Nuremberg Trials were the first large scale war crimes trials in international history.

178

00:12:52,680 --> 00:13:01,680

It was an effort to hold Nazi leadership responsible for the horrors, the crimes against humanity that had been perpetrated during World War II.

179

00:13:01,680 --> 00:13:11,680

What quickly emerges at Nuremberg is this realization that there were a large number of people that we thought were eyewitnesses, but they didn't actually see a thing.

180

00:13:11,680 --> 00:13:14,680

Did you actually see Adolf Hitler? Was it definitely him?

181

00:13:14,680 --> 00:13:20,680

Yeah, well I saw a person that was rolled up in a carpet and we set that on fire, I saw that happen.

182

00:13:20,680 --> 00:13:25,680

Hitler's body from the head was covered in blood, so it made sense to wrap that body up.

183

00:13:25,680 --> 00:13:31,680

These people were close to Hitler and they wanted to preserve the dignity of the dead bodies.

184

00:13:32,680 --> 00:13:40,680

The eyewitness evidence is divisive. Does it prove Hitler's death or suggest something else entirely?

185

00:13:40,680 --> 00:13:45,680

Adolf Hitler was also a little bit pragmatic every now and then when he absolutely had to be.

186

00:13:45,680 --> 00:13:53,680

As a result of the war, Germans were forced to recognize that they might have to retreat and continue fighting from some other location.

187

00:13:53,680 --> 00:13:58,680

They'd establish a headquarters complex elsewhere where the Reich would live on.

188

00:13:58,680 --> 00:14:06,680

And so Hitler is the one who approved plans for continuity of government in the event of the fall of Berlin.

189

00:14:07,680 --> 00:14:10,680

But if Hitler somehow escaped, where would he go?

190

00:14:11,680 --> 00:14:17,680

If you're trying to escape Nazi Germany, you need to get into a neutral country that can shelter you.

191

00:14:17,680 --> 00:14:22,680

If you can get to the Spanish border, you will get asylum from Franco.

192

00:14:27,680 --> 00:14:32,680

Throughout World War II, Hitler wanted Franco to come on board to join the Axis powers.

193

00:14:32,680 --> 00:14:36,680

Franco holds back, stays neutral, but is friendly with Hitler.

194

00:14:38,680 --> 00:14:43,680

Was it possible for him to slip away? Yes, and he could have done it without ever seeing the light of day.

195

00:14:44,680 --> 00:14:49,680

Underneath Berlin, like a lot of major European cities, you have a complex tunnel system.

196

00:14:50,680 --> 00:14:53,680

Early in the war, Hitler expanded Berlin's subway system.

197

00:14:54,680 --> 00:14:57,680

Some of these tunnels were converted into bunkers and air-raid shelters.

198

00:14:58,680 --> 00:15:04,680

Together, they made up a vast underground network that might allow travel through the entire city.

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00:15:05,680 --> 00:15:09,680

A number of people are able to get out at the bitter end using the tunnel system.

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00:15:09,680 --> 00:15:17,680

Famously Martin Borman, the chairman of the National Socialist Party, makes an attempt to get out and doesn't make it in the end and is killed by Soviet troops.

201

00:15:18,680 --> 00:15:23,680

So the theory is that Hitler could have used that same bunker system to get out of Berlin himself.

202

00:15:24,680 --> 00:15:31,680

Some speculate that Hitler fled via a tunnel to Tempelhof Airport, a fortified airfield in Berlin.

203

00:15:32,680 --> 00:15:36,680

Tempelhof Airport is the last exit out for the Nazi hierarchy.

204

00:15:37,680 --> 00:15:41,680

There are some people who have theorized that Hitler escaped by air.

205

00:15:42,680 --> 00:15:48,680

Now, that seems somewhat plausible in that there were some planes that made emergency escapes while under Soviet fire.

206

00:15:48,680 --> 00:16:01,680

Hannah Reich, the famous German female pilot, flew into Berlin on April 26 in the company of Robert Ritter von Grim, a high-ranking officer in the German Luftwaffe.

207

00:16:02,680 --> 00:16:07,680

They flew out on April 29 in the middle of the night, so they were able to escape.

208

00:16:08,680 --> 00:16:14,680

Because of that, it does seem plausible to some people that Hitler may have also flown out of Berlin.

209

00:16:15,680 --> 00:16:33,680

One of the many stories about Hitler's escape from Berlin was that he and Eva Braun and some others, they flew out of Berlin and they made their way to a monastery called the Monasterio de Samos in Galicia in the northwestern corner of Spain.

210

00:16:34,680 --> 00:16:40,680

Francisco Franco is a fascist who rises to power in Spain through a large civil war.

211

00:16:41,680 --> 00:16:55,680

Because of his victory and his rise to power, he really owes it to Adolf Hitler and German equipment and therefore stays friendly with Hitler throughout World War II, even though he holds back and never joins the Axis powers like Hitler wants him to.

212

00:16:56,680 --> 00:17:00,680

Franco was a deeply religious, deeply conservative leader.

213

00:17:00,680 --> 00:17:05,680

He saw in the Nazis and in the Italian fascists these rigorous systems worthy of emulation.

214

00:17:06,680 --> 00:17:17,680

There's no question that if Hitler had wanted to escape into Spain, he would certainly have allowed it to happen and allowed Hitler to go into hiding in Spain and then denied all knowledge of Hitler's whereabouts.

215

00:17:18,680 --> 00:17:29,680

The view of the Catholic Church was that we need to protect the Nazis because we've got this

godless Bolshevik Joseph Stalin and he's subsidizing Communist parties in Italy and in France.

216

00:17:29,680 --> 00:17:34,680

He's trying to make the revolution everywhere. The enemy of my enemy is my friend.

217

00:17:35,680 --> 00:17:46,680

From a political standpoint, that made a certain amount of sense that there would be elements within Spain's Catholic Church that were sympathetic in some ways to the German regime.

218

00:17:48,680 --> 00:17:52,680

The Roman Catholic Church was really thick as thieves with the Nazis after the war.

219

00:17:52,680 --> 00:18:05,680

They were the ones who basically got travel documents, passports, visas for thousands of Nazi war criminals and they would pass through monasteries like the one in Spain.

220

00:18:07,680 --> 00:18:19,680

This monastery of Samos along the Atlantic and the Baye Biscay would have been a perfect rat line for Nazi leaders because they could have gone in there and then they could have had safe haven in neutral Spain.

221

00:18:20,680 --> 00:18:31,680

The abbot of the Samos monastery was a close friend of Francisco Franco, the Spanish leader, so he could have made himself available to host Hitler there secretly.

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00:18:32,680 --> 00:18:45,680

The monastery in Samos may be part of a vast escape network. These overland routes are known as rat lines. They connect escaping Nazis with sympathizers who provide falsified documents and identities.

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00:18:45,680 --> 00:18:56,680

The rat line itself had people who understood what they were doing and who they were helping, slipping through gaps in the line and escaping to another country.

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00:18:57,680 --> 00:19:09,680

There are some monasteries that are used as waypoints in the escape from Nazi Germany. They're a good place to conceal yourself short term as you're transitioning to your next mode of transportation.

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00:19:10,680 --> 00:19:22,680

If you were trying to escape Germany, it wasn't that hard because there were something like 12 million ethnic Germans who had all been expelled by the Soviets. These people were all going west as well.

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00:19:23,680 --> 00:19:34,680

If you were a senior Nazi official, you could kind of disguise your appearance and you could just say, hey, I'm a German from Romania and I have no documents because I was expelled from my country by the Red Army.

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00:19:35,680 --> 00:19:49,680

So you've got these rat lines which are really a way to get Nazis or Germans out of Germany by having friendly folks along the way helping you out, providing you money, clothes, food.

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00:19:50,680 --> 00:19:59,680

And so the idea was that Hitler was going to make his way to this monastery and stay there, I don't know, as a monk until he was ready to go further.

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00:19:59,680 --> 00:20:18,680

The 1945 fall of Berlin means the end of the Nazi regime in Germany, but at the end of World War II, did Hitler really commit suicide as most historians agree or did he somehow escape?

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00:20:19,680 --> 00:20:23,680

If you were going to try to escape in 1945, the best place to go would be Spain.

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00:20:24,680 --> 00:20:33,680

The theory here is that if Hitler could make it to Spain, there's a monastery, the Samoes Monastery, that was very friendly to Nazis escaping Germany.

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00:20:35,680 --> 00:20:42,680

There was one guy who was a stone mason's apprentice, a teenager, and then he told the story when

he was 80.

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00:20:42,680 --> 00:20:50,680

I was at Samoos and I remember when Hitler arrived and he was hiding in the monastery with Averbrand, they were both so kind to me, they tipped me so well.

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00:20:51,680 --> 00:20:55,680

None of it could be true, none of it could be true, but he talked about it with absolute utter conviction.

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00:20:56,680 --> 00:20:58,680

Many believe this theory is flawed.

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00:20:59,680 --> 00:21:11,680

A lot of this is a lot of stretched reality, the belief that they had gone through tunnels to temple off airport and flown out of their over occupied Allied territory and landed in Spain.

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00:21:13,680 --> 00:21:21,680

Historically speaking, this idea of Hitler being content with staying in a monastery and living the life of a monk is pretty preposterous.

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00:21:22,680 --> 00:21:31,680

This guy is a megalomaniac, he's pretty much insane by the end of World War II and we're expecting him to keep a low profile, ain't gonna happen.

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00:21:33,680 --> 00:21:38,680

But is it possible Hitler moved on to another destination?

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00:21:39,680 --> 00:21:47,680

The idea is that if Hitler can get himself out of Berlin, get himself into Spain, Hitler's gonna be safe for maybe the next leg of his journey.

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00:21:53,680 --> 00:22:01,680

Then a number of noteworthy cases emerge of war criminals who escaped justice in Europe and they flee to South America and they find a home in Argentina.

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00:22:02,680 --> 00:22:07,680

Argentina ultimately joins the Allies during World War II, but does so very late in the game.

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00:22:08,680 --> 00:22:19,680

There were those in the country who were sympathetic to Nazi Germany and it's because of these sympathies that we have to recognize the possibility that Adolf Hitler could have gotten there himself.

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00:22:21,680 --> 00:22:26,680

Germans had migrated into Argentina in significant numbers in different waves.

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00:22:27,680 --> 00:22:33,680

They were able to build communities, particularly in the southern part of the country where they concentrated slightly more.

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00:22:34,680 --> 00:22:40,680

The symbol of tyranny began to appear in the large South American cities and in the backwoods of Patagonia.

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00:22:41,680 --> 00:22:47,680

So would Hitler have found a welcome reception there? Could he have hidden there? Most likely.

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00:22:48,680 --> 00:22:55,680

So the theory that Hitler escaped to Argentina seems plausible to some theorists, partly because it is plausible.

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00:22:56,680 --> 00:22:59,680

But if Hitler did escape to Argentina, how did he get there?

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00:23:00,680 --> 00:23:05,680

During the war, Germany had a group of submarines called U-boats.

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00:23:06,680 --> 00:23:12,680

They were incredibly lethal and they were far ranging, really traveling all around the world.

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00:23:13,680 --> 00:23:20,680

German U-boats could certainly range across the Atlantic into Argentinian waters. They frequently attacked Allied shipping.

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00:23:21,680 --> 00:23:27,680

They had an incredibly dangerous fleet. They were sinking Allied shipping almost as fast as it could be built.

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00:23:27,680 --> 00:23:37,680

Ordered out from Atlantic bases to destroy or be destroyed themselves, hundreds of newly built Nazi submarines take to the open sea.

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00:23:38,680 --> 00:23:45,680

When the Allies declare victory, all German submarines or U-boats are ordered to give themselves up to the Allied forces.

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00:23:46,680 --> 00:23:53,680

Most do so, but not all. In fact, the U-530 submarine resurfaces in a surprising place.

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00:23:54,680 --> 00:24:02,680

On July 10th, 1945, you actually have a U-boat showing up at an Argentinian naval base called Marta Plata.

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00:24:03,680 --> 00:24:13,680

It's impossible not to recognize that U-530 could have potentially carried very important cargo in the form of a Vibran and Adolf Hitler. The timing works out.

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00:24:14,680 --> 00:24:27,680

With this U-boat showing up at Marta Plata on July 10th, 1945, that's almost two months to the day that Hitler commits suicide and it takes two months for a U-boat to get from Spain to Argentina.

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00:24:28,680 --> 00:24:35,680

There's a reason that we look suspiciously at Argentina and that's because people did escape and make their way there in the aftermath of the Second World War.

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00:24:36,680 --> 00:24:41,680

Most notoriously, Adolf Eichmann is living on a house on Garibaldi Street in Buenos Aires.

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00:24:43,680 --> 00:24:49,680

Eichmann, one of the main architects of the Holocaust, escapes Europe and reinvents himself in Argentina.

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00:24:50,680 --> 00:25:02,680

He changes his name to Ricardo Clement and works as a mechanic at the Mercedes-Benz factory in Buenos Aires before being captured and hanged by Israel's Mossad agents in 1960.

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00:25:03,680 --> 00:25:13,680

In 1954, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigations conducts an investigation about sightings, supposed sightings of Adolf Hitler in Argentina.

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00:25:14,680 --> 00:25:27,680

The FBI files include material about an unnamed German expatriate who is living in Argentina and exchanging correspondence with an Adolf Hitler who is alive and well and living somewhere in Argentina.

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00:25:28,680 --> 00:25:40,680

If he could somehow make it to Argentina, is it possible Hitler would have gone further than the coast? Archaeologists have recently unearthed something astounding deep in the Argentine jungle.

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00:25:41,680 --> 00:25:44,680

Well, this could be an answer to what happened to Hitler after World War II.

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00:25:45,680 --> 00:25:55,680

In 1945, the Soviet Union told the world it had evidence that Hitler committed suicide in a bunker in Berlin.

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00:25:56,680 --> 00:26:00,680

FBI documents declassified in 2014 bolster that fact.

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00:26:01,680 --> 00:26:10,680

But there are those who speculate a different end and believe a remote location in Argentina holds important new clues.

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00:26:11,680 --> 00:26:16,680

Destination number one for Nazi war criminals was Argentina.

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00:26:17,680 --> 00:26:23,680

These guys came ashore and there was no attempt by the Argentine government to punish this. They were welcomed into the country.

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00:26:24,680 --> 00:26:36,680

In 2015, a team led by former CIA agent Bob Baer travels to Argentina to pressure test 700 pages of recently declassified FBI documents.

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00:26:37,680 --> 00:26:54,680

Bob Baer goes down to Argentina to sort of check this out in 2015 and what he finds is a big school, a Hitler youth school, and finds out it was used to teach Nazi doctrine to children, just like the Hitler youth in Germany in the 30s and 40s.

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00:26:55,680 --> 00:27:07,680

What he was finding was evidence of a colony where they flew the swastika flag, where they were raising youth and teaching them in the ways of National Socialism and teaching them about the history of Adolf Hitler.

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00:27:08,680 --> 00:27:15,680

It appears that a colony lived on that kept the torch going about National Socialism even after the fall of Berlin.

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00:27:16,680 --> 00:27:21,680

This is almost like a cult waiting for its leader to come back to lead them to power.

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00:27:22,680 --> 00:27:33,680

But Baer's team doesn't stop at San Antonio, Oeste. The trail takes them from the coastal town to areas that would be much harder for prying eyes to find.

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00:27:34,680 --> 00:27:47,680

In the Argentinian jungle in Misiones, there's a compound and farmers there discover a bunker, but

it's not wood and dirt. It's tiled, it's rather fancy, and they find Nazi coins and other Nazi memorabilia.

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00:27:48,680 --> 00:27:53,680

To Baer, the complex seems intended for use by someone important.

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00:27:54,680 --> 00:28:00,680

Also in the FBI files, the locals have noted a network of roads that are controlled by the local German community.

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00:28:01,680 --> 00:28:08,680

These roads, which are small and run through jungle towns and rural communities, could be used to move anyone or anything anonymously.

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00:28:09,680 --> 00:28:16,680

Simple military engineering, if you have one way out, one way in, it's very easy to control who moves back and forth on that road complex.

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00:28:17,680 --> 00:28:24,680

If anyone approached and began snooping, there would be plenty of warning whereby you could skirt off to some place else.

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00:28:25,680 --> 00:28:34,680

The Misiones complex does seem like a place where Hitler could survive safely and comfortably, and Argentina itself does seem like an ideal place for Hitler to be.

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00:28:34,680 --> 00:28:42,680

But Germans have a strong presence in Argentina after the war, so having Hitler exist secretly among them seems like it would be a tall order.

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00:28:43,680 --> 00:28:49,680

There's always the possibility that Argentina wasn't a great place to go, because we were looking there after the war.

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00:28:50,680 --> 00:28:54,680

Certainly U-530 provided us with a big fat arrow pointing directly at Argentina.

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00:28:55,680 --> 00:29:01,680

If people are looking, maybe it's not the best place to hide. Maybe someplace else more remote would be a better place to hide.

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00:29:01,680 --> 00:29:06,680

It's a hop-skipping a jump from the southern tip of Argentina to the south pole.

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00:29:12,680 --> 00:29:15,680

There's a possibility that Adolf Hitler may have ended up in Antarctica.

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00:29:16,680 --> 00:29:22,680

There's been a lot of exploration of Antarctica by Germany even before World War I.

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00:29:23,680 --> 00:29:29,680

The first of two German Antarctic expeditions occurs between 1901 and 1903.

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00:29:30,680 --> 00:29:37,680

The goal of this expedition was to survey a part of the Antarctic continent and to determine if it had strategic value.

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00:29:38,680 --> 00:29:43,680

The German industry needs fuel, and the concept is that the answer to this is whale oil.

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00:29:44,680 --> 00:29:53,680

And so these German patrols go down to Antarctica. They survey the grounds. The idea is to build a plant to produce whale fat into fuel.

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00:29:53,680 --> 00:30:04,680

During the National Socialist period, there was an actual Nazi Antarctic expedition that carved out a slot of the Antarctic continent that was for National Socialist Germany.

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00:30:05,680 --> 00:30:14,680

In 1947, a book comes out claiming that German U-boats after the war were actually delivering ex-Nazis to Antarctica in the south pole.

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00:30:15,680 --> 00:30:21,680

But later, one of the German U-boat commanders, a guy named Hein Schaefer, he comes out and denies the whole thing.

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00:30:21,680 --> 00:30:25,680

The captain denies that they proceeded to Antarctica.

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00:30:26,680 --> 00:30:35,680

But of course, if he was trusted with moving the German head of state to an unidentified, undisclosed location, wouldn't that be the story he tells?

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00:30:51,680 --> 00:30:56,680

Some theorists raise the possibility that his ultimate destination is Antarctica.

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00:30:57,680 --> 00:31:04,680

Prior to World War II, Nazi Germany is actually looking to establish bases to support its whaling fleet.

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00:31:05,680 --> 00:31:19,680

In 1938, the Germans take possession of an area of Antarctica called Schwabenland. This actually belonged to Norway, and the Germans basically just plucked up the Norwegian flag and put down their own.

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00:31:19,680 --> 00:31:34,680

Now, it sounds strange that Germany would send U-boats to Antarctica, but at that time, the continent was considered to be a treasure trove of resources, especially for countries that were looking to expand their empires.

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00:31:35,680 --> 00:31:38,680

A season's catch may be valued at over 2 million pounds.

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00:31:39,680 --> 00:31:51,680

The purpose of these bases was to get Germany in on the whale oil game, when whale oil was as good as gold or as good as oil, but those same bases could also be used at the end of the war to harbor fugitives.

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00:31:52,680 --> 00:32:01,680

In 1943, Grand Admiral Karl Dornitz claims that Germany's submarine fleet has created an unassailable fortress on the other end of the world.

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00:32:02,680 --> 00:32:11,680

Now, while this sounds like, you know, oh, there's obviously a fortress down there, this is what he would have said about any locations the Germans possessed during World War II.

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00:32:11,680 --> 00:32:15,680

You know, he understands the power of propaganda and what to use against the enemy.

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00:32:17,680 --> 00:32:24,680

The German U-boat fleet was also known for sneaking off and doing secretive things and conducting secretive landings that we don't find out about until years later.

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00:32:25,680 --> 00:32:37,680

In the example of U-537, it actually sails to what would eventually become part of Canada in 1943, and it establishes a weather station that nobody knows a thing about until the 1970s.

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00:32:37,680 --> 00:32:48,680

So we're not writing science fiction when we imagine the Germans using a U-boat to sail to a remote and very cold place to conduct a landing and put structures ashore.

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00:32:49,680 --> 00:33:02,680

Articles come out with this theory that months after the capitulation of Germany, you know, April of 1945, a German U-boat shows up in Antarctica and the crew gets off and they don't get back on.

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00:33:02,680 --> 00:33:05,680

They stay and they start building shelters for themselves.

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00:33:06,680 --> 00:33:18,680

That leads to this tantalizing possibility that they may have been laying the infrastructure for the Führer himself to come there and to begin this continuity of government program from Antarctica.

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00:33:20,680 --> 00:33:26,680

Nazi Germany definitely had interests in Antarctica, but there's absolutely no evidence to suggest that Hitler escaped to Antarctica.

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00:33:26,680 --> 00:33:30,680

Hitler wouldn't want to have lived in Antarctica. He would have hated living in Antarctica.

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00:33:31,680 --> 00:33:41,680

From a psychological perspective, it would seem odd for a person who's used to having all of this power and control to end up at the bottom of the world with no one around him.

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00:33:41,680 --> 00:33:43,680

Doesn't seem like a good fit.

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00:33:44,680 --> 00:33:50,680

But talk of a German and Arctic base persists, and the international search continues.

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00:33:51,680 --> 00:34:07,680

Down the road, articles, books come out saying that after World War II, in August of 1945, months after Germany's surrender, the British launched Operation Tabernet, the idea being that they sent troops down to Antarctica to take this fortress,

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00:34:07,680 --> 00:34:12,680

but were held back by the Germans who possessed it for decades after.

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00:34:12,680 --> 00:34:18,680

So again, every time they tamp down, one rumor and another is going to pop up.

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00:34:19,680 --> 00:34:32,680

As the foremost maritime power in the world prior to World War II, it's unsurprising that the British Navy is involved in a substantial number of expeditions, mapping out the rest of the world and looking for basing opportunities.

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00:34:32,680 --> 00:34:38,680

However, Operation Tabernet was not a secret military mission to attack some Nazi base in

Antarctica.

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00:34:38,680 --> 00:34:42,680

It was a scientific mission designed to study the climate of Antarctica.

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00:34:43,680 --> 00:34:53,680

It doesn't look like the theory that Hitler left Germany after World War II and went to a secret Nazi base in Antarctica isn't any way true.

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00:34:53,680 --> 00:35:01,680

The only evidence that we've been able to find shows that Germany had a base in Antarctica for whale oil.

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00:35:02,680 --> 00:35:10,680

After the fall of Germany in 1945, some intelligence reports suggest Hitler may have escaped.

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00:35:10,680 --> 00:35:16,680

Others have made an even more startling claim, one that boggles the imagination.

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00:35:17,680 --> 00:35:23,680

There were a lot of people that didn't like him and there were a lot of people who wanted him dead,

even in Germany.

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00:35:23,680 --> 00:35:34,680

So there's a possibility that the person who killed himself in the bunker in Berlin was somebody who just looked like Hitler, that it wasn't him at all, that it was a body double.

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00:35:40,680 --> 00:35:46,680

To support this theory, some turn to the many assassination attempts made against the Nazi Union.

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00:35:46,680 --> 00:35:50,680

There were 42 assassination attempts if we're counting actual attempts.

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00:35:50,680 --> 00:35:57,680

And if you add up plots that were foiled before they could be sprung, the number reaches over 100.

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00:35:58,680 --> 00:36:04,680

One of them was, a general was going to hug him with two hand grenades in his hands and blow him up.

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00:36:04,680 --> 00:36:09,680

They also put explosives on his airplane when he was traveling to the Russian front.

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00:36:10,680 --> 00:36:17,680

The most famous one probably being Operation Valkyrie, which has been immortalized in the film starring Tom Cruise.

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00:36:19,680 --> 00:36:30,680

Valkyrie becomes known as the July 20th bomb plot because it occurs on July 20th, 1944, just a little bit after D-Day where the Allies are coming across France.

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00:36:31,680 --> 00:36:40,680

By the summer of 1944, a growing number of Germany's senior military leaders are losing hope. Many blame Hitler for leading Germany to disaster.

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00:36:41,680 --> 00:36:54,680

One of Hitler's army officers von Stauffenberg is going to bring a briefcase bomb down into his wolf's lair and he's going to break two little glass tubes in the briefcase that will start a timer.

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00:36:54,680 --> 00:36:58,680

He's going to put the suitcase under a table and get out of there.

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00:37:01,680 --> 00:37:06,680

Because of the heavy legs of the table, one of those legs absorbed a lot of the blast.

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00:37:06,680 --> 00:37:20,680

Hitler survived it. He actually gets on the phone and begins calling people, putting down this insurrection and it's probably the best known attempt to kill Hitler and restore some degree of normalcy in Germany.

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00:37:20,680 --> 00:37:29,680

According to Bauer, he may have been killed in the July 20 assassination plot and they just didn't want to let Germany know because it was at a critical moment in the war.

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00:37:29,680 --> 00:37:34,680

This is not a good time to have to go, oh yeah, hey, by the way, somebody killed him and it was one of our guys that did it.

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00:37:35,680 --> 00:37:52,680

In 1939, Maximilian Bauer writes this book called The Strange Death of Adolf Hitler and claims that Hitler died in 1938 and so all events that are going to take place hence on is actually going to be from a body double.

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00:37:52,680 --> 00:37:58,680

According to Bauer, Adolf Hitler is dining with some of his critical leaders and he's poisoned during the meal.

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00:37:59,680 --> 00:38:08,680

And so the senior leadership, they felt like that would just be too much of a blow to morale and so what they did was replace him with a series of body doubles.

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00:38:11,680 --> 00:38:16,680

The Nazi propaganda machine is one of the most well oiled machines there is.

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00:38:16,680 --> 00:38:32,680

What is Joseph Gerbel is using every incident, everything to churn out language of the Nazi party and so if anybody's going to be able to cover up the death of Adolf Hitler and convince everyone that this other person is him, it's going to be Joseph Gerbel's.

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00:38:33,680 --> 00:38:39,680

If Hitler was dead long before the end of the war, is it possible he was replaced by a body double?

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00:38:39,680 --> 00:38:44,680

As proof, some turn to a body found in the wreckage of the right chancellor.

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00:38:46,680 --> 00:38:53,680

And he looks so much like Adolf Hitler that all these Soviet soldiers kind of piling around him, they're taking photos of him.

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00:38:53,680 --> 00:39:01,680

It actually belongs to the man named Gustav Weller, but he looks so much like Adolf Hitler, they at first thought, oh my gosh, here's his dead body, we found him.

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00:39:01,680 --> 00:39:08,680

They even placed a painted portrait of Adolf Hitler on the chest of the dead body as if to confirm, see, it's the guy in the painting.

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00:39:09,680 --> 00:39:16,680

Is this a coincidence? Man who looks exactly like Adolf Hitler is found just feet away from where he's cremated?

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00:39:16,680 --> 00:39:27,680

Maybe Weller is exactly what they wanted the Russians to find. You have personal accounts describing the bitter end, you have a body double that looks like Adolf Hitler with a bullet wound to the head.

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00:39:28,680 --> 00:39:35,680

Detractors of this theory point out that a body double would be unlikely to fool those who knew Hitler well.

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00:39:36,680 --> 00:39:44,680

Hitler first met Mussolini in 1934 and although Mussolini was a very bad man, he wasn't an idiot

and I think he would notice if Hitler was replaced by a double.

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00:39:45,680 --> 00:39:53,680

Similarly, Hitler was dating Ava Brown since 1932 and I think she would definitely tell the difference if Hitler had been replaced by a double in 1938.

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00:39:54,680 --> 00:40:05,680

There is no evidence, there is nothing written by Adolf Hitler, by anybody in his inner circle that said there was a doppelganger, there was a person looking like Hitler that we used to trick people.

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00:40:05,680 --> 00:40:14,680

There's nothing like it. It was simply people found that looked like Hitler that this assumption was made that there was a doppelganger.

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00:40:15,680 --> 00:40:22,680

The idea of Hitler living anonymously as a Mr. X somewhere in Spain or in Argentina, in Antarctica, it's not Hitler's style.

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00:40:23,680 --> 00:40:32,680

He was the Fuhrer of Germany, he wanted to go down as such and one of the reasons why he killed himself is because he wanted to avoid the shame of overthrow or surrender.

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00:40:32,680 --> 00:40:49,680

Thousands of historians have spent decades looking at all of the theories of what possibly could have happened to Hitler at the end of World War II and more outlandish theories seem to come out every day.

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00:40:50,680 --> 00:41:01,680

Hitler's death is a mystery that's really deliberately fanned by the specific circumstances of Hitler's demise in Berlin on April 30th, 1945.

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00:41:01,680 --> 00:41:10,680

And really, Dahlung did his work too well. He clouded the issue so much at the outset that he left the mystery alive and then the mystery just festered and persists down to this day.

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00:41:11,680 --> 00:41:20,680

Nazi Germany's downfall remains a source of fascination nearly 80 years later.

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00:41:20,680 --> 00:41:28,680

The overwhelming majority agree that the official story is the true one, Hitler committed suicide in Berlin.

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00:41:28,680 --> 00:41:34,680

But why is the idea of Hitler escaping such a long lasting theory?

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00:41:34,680 --> 00:41:39,680

Perhaps it's the quest for justice that appeals to many of us.

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00:41:39,680 --> 00:41:44,680

Regardless, Hitler's death may remain the subject of investigation for many years to come.

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00:41:44,680 --> 00:41:50,680

I'm Lawrence Fishburne. Thank you for watching History's Greatest Mysteries.