

HOUSKA CASTLE

An aerial night photograph of Houska Castle, a large, multi-story stone building with a complex, multi-faceted roof. The castle is illuminated from below, casting a warm glow on its facade and the surrounding dark landscape. The background shows dark, silhouetted hills under a dark sky.

THE GATEWAY TO HELL

1
00:00:03,760 --> 00:00:16,550

[Music]

2
00:00:20,470 --> 00:00:19,510

in the 13th century husker castle was

3
00:00:23,109 --> 00:00:20,480

built

4
00:00:24,390 --> 00:00:23,119

likely by the ruler ottakar ii of

5
00:00:26,550 --> 00:00:24,400

bohemia

6
00:00:28,230 --> 00:00:26,560

located around 50 kilometers from the

7
00:00:30,790 --> 00:00:28,240

capital city of prague the

8
00:00:33,270 --> 00:00:30,800

formidable-looking castle is situated

9
00:00:36,709 --> 00:00:33,280

noticeably out of the way of convenient

10
00:00:38,950 --> 00:00:36,719

trade has no nearby water source and was

11
00:00:41,670 --> 00:00:38,960

built with no kitchens

12
00:00:44,470 --> 00:00:41,680

the castle's long ruined fortifications

13
00:00:47,670 --> 00:00:44,480

are built facing into the castle

14

00:00:50,229 --> 00:00:47,680

an inversion that is exceedingly rare in

15

00:00:52,150 --> 00:00:50,239

european castles

16

00:00:53,590 --> 00:00:52,160

the castle doesn't even have usable

17

00:00:56,150 --> 00:00:53,600

windows

18

00:00:57,510 --> 00:00:56,160

behind the window panes are nothing but

19

00:01:00,150 --> 00:00:57,520

walls

20

00:01:04,070 --> 00:01:00,160

this grand castle atop the limestone

21

00:01:06,550 --> 00:01:04,080

cliff seems unsuitable for the living

22

00:01:08,710 --> 00:01:06,560

the castle changed hands multiple times

23

00:01:11,429 --> 00:01:08,720

throughout the centuries and functioned

24

00:01:14,550 --> 00:01:11,439

as a prosaic administrative building

25

00:01:17,109 --> 00:01:14,560

until it fell into disuse and disrepair

26

00:01:19,109 --> 00:01:17,119

in the 18th century

27

00:01:20,870 --> 00:01:19,119

beginning even before the time of the

28

00:01:23,910 --> 00:01:20,880

castle's construction

29

00:01:26,710 --> 00:01:23,920

folk wisdom and lore has maintained that

30

00:01:28,630 --> 00:01:26,720

the limestone cliff is the site of a

31

00:01:31,590 --> 00:01:28,640

chasm

32

00:01:33,590 --> 00:01:31,600

a bottomless pit leading straight to

33

00:01:36,390 --> 00:01:33,600

hell

34

00:01:39,870 --> 00:01:36,400

a 9th century legend recounted by the

35

00:01:43,030 --> 00:01:39,880

1541 czech chronicle describes an

36

00:01:45,270 --> 00:01:43,040

unfathomably deep crack in the ground

37

00:01:47,830 --> 00:01:45,280

and what came out of it to kill the

38

00:01:50,230 --> 00:01:47,840

villagers livestock and strike fear into

39

00:01:53,510 --> 00:01:50,240

the villagers

40

00:01:56,149 --> 00:01:53,520

visitors from the chasm include chimeras

41

00:01:59,350 --> 00:01:56,159

such as a frog crossed with a human

42

00:02:02,069 --> 00:01:59,360

winged monsters and ghosts have all been

43

00:02:04,630 --> 00:02:02,079

said to have emerged from the depths and

44

00:02:06,789 --> 00:02:04,640

entered the mortal realm

45

00:02:09,430 --> 00:02:06,799

villagers desperate attempts to seal off

46

00:02:11,910 --> 00:02:09,440

the chasm with enough stones or other

47

00:02:14,309 --> 00:02:11,920

debris were in vain

48

00:02:15,510 --> 00:02:14,319

after all how do you fill a bottomless

49

00:02:17,990 --> 00:02:15,520

pit

50

00:02:20,830 --> 00:02:18,000

the panic obviously caught the attention

51

00:02:24,150 --> 00:02:20,840

of area authorities who took it

52

00:02:26,390 --> 00:02:24,160

seriously when huska castle was built it

53

00:02:28,630 --> 00:02:26,400

was said that the castle's chapel was

54

00:02:31,509 --> 00:02:28,640

built directly over the pit in order to

55

00:02:33,589 --> 00:02:31,519

once and for all seal away the visitors

56

00:02:36,630 --> 00:02:33,599

from hell

57

00:02:39,430 --> 00:02:36,640

nevertheless curiosity persisted about

58

00:02:41,750 --> 00:02:39,440

the nature of the pit

59

00:02:44,869 --> 00:02:41,760

during the 13th century construction of

60

00:02:47,110 --> 00:02:44,879

husker castle legend has it that local

61

00:02:49,110 --> 00:02:47,120

prisoners sentenced to death were

62

00:02:51,509 --> 00:02:49,120

offered full pardons

63

00:02:54,229 --> 00:02:51,519

if they agreed to be lowered down into

64

00:02:57,509 --> 00:02:54,239

the pit take a look around and report

65

00:02:59,030 --> 00:02:57,519

back on what if anything they saw in the

66

00:03:01,670 --> 00:02:59,040

dark

67

00:03:03,270 --> 00:03:01,680

the first volunteer was lowered by rope

68

00:03:05,430 --> 00:03:03,280

into the dark

69

00:03:08,790 --> 00:03:05,440

no sooner had he disappeared then he

70

00:03:11,990 --> 00:03:08,800

began screaming in terror

71

00:03:14,390 --> 00:03:12,000

lifted out of the portal his dark hair

72

00:03:18,149 --> 00:03:14,400

had gone completely white

73

00:03:20,309 --> 00:03:18,159

and his face had aged decades

74

00:03:23,030 --> 00:03:20,319

whatever it was he encountered had

75

00:03:25,190 --> 00:03:23,040

completely maddened him

76
00:03:28,229 --> 00:03:25,200
accounts here differ on whether he was

77
00:03:30,830 --> 00:03:28,239
locked away in an asylum or if attempts

78
00:03:33,990 --> 00:03:30,840
were made to nurse him back to

79
00:03:36,710 --> 00:03:34,000
coherency regardless the variations on

80
00:03:37,670 --> 00:03:36,720
the tale agree that within a matter of

81
00:03:39,670 --> 00:03:37,680
days

82
00:03:41,509 --> 00:03:39,680
he was dead

83
00:03:43,830 --> 00:03:41,519
with the construction of the castle

84
00:03:46,070 --> 00:03:43,840
hurried to completion it would seem from

85
00:03:48,550 --> 00:03:46,080
the dearth of records that the many

86
00:03:51,990 --> 00:03:48,560
terrors stalking out of the pit were

87
00:03:54,789 --> 00:03:52,000
indeed sealed off from the world

88
00:03:57,190 --> 00:03:54,799

in the 14th century an artist added

89

00:03:59,990 --> 00:03:57,200

frescoes to the walls of huska that

90

00:04:02,949 --> 00:04:00,000

depicted nightmarish sites such as

91

00:04:04,630 --> 00:04:02,959

demons and monsters plaguing mortal

92

00:04:06,869 --> 00:04:04,640

souls

93

00:04:09,030 --> 00:04:06,879

some say these are records of what

94

00:04:13,110 --> 00:04:09,040

happened at the site of the castle and

95

00:04:16,870 --> 00:04:13,120

offer a reason for why the castle exists

96

00:04:20,469 --> 00:04:16,880

a couple of hundred years later in 1836

97

00:04:23,510 --> 00:04:20,479

czech poet karel heineck matra spent a

98

00:04:26,629 --> 00:04:23,520

night at huska and supposedly in his

99

00:04:29,189 --> 00:04:26,639

dreams was visited by a terrible vision

100

00:04:31,350 --> 00:04:29,199

which he later recounted in a letter to

101
00:04:34,310 --> 00:04:31,360
his friend edward hindell

102
00:04:37,030 --> 00:04:34,320
macho described his soul descending into

103
00:04:40,270 --> 00:04:37,040
the pit and then being transported into

104
00:04:44,150 --> 00:04:40,280
a hellish mechanized future proc

105
00:04:47,030 --> 00:04:44,160
2006 to be exact where he wandered in

106
00:04:49,430 --> 00:04:47,040
horror and despair

107
00:04:51,749 --> 00:04:49,440
among other unnerving experiences in

108
00:04:55,030 --> 00:04:51,759
this vision macho wrote that he met a

109
00:04:58,310 --> 00:04:55,040
girl who showed him moving pictures in a

110
00:05:01,110 --> 00:04:58,320
small casket and that in darkness he

111
00:05:03,749 --> 00:05:01,120
walked among high sandstone cliffs

112
00:05:07,270 --> 00:05:03,759
riddled with holes that projected an

113
00:05:09,749 --> 00:05:07,280

eerie yellow light uncannily similar to

114

00:05:12,390 --> 00:05:09,759

the enormous blocks of flats which in

115

00:05:14,790 --> 00:05:12,400

the present day loom about the outskirts

116

00:05:17,430 --> 00:05:14,800

of prague

117

00:05:20,390 --> 00:05:17,440

so how did these visions of the future

118

00:05:22,390 --> 00:05:20,400

emerge from his subconscious was it

119

00:05:24,629 --> 00:05:22,400

really only a dream

120

00:05:27,990 --> 00:05:24,639

or is it possible that he was actually

121

00:05:30,230 --> 00:05:28,000

transported ahead in time

122

00:05:31,670 --> 00:05:30,240

there are those who believe this to be

123

00:05:34,150 --> 00:05:31,680

true

124

00:05:35,110 --> 00:05:34,160

this isn't to say that the story ends

125

00:05:40,150 --> 00:05:35,120

here

126

00:05:42,150 --> 00:05:40,160

the worst of the pit to hell humans

127

00:05:44,950 --> 00:05:42,160

throughout history have introduced their

128

00:05:48,150 --> 00:05:44,960

own unique horrors into the castle

129

00:05:51,510 --> 00:05:48,160

ensuring that huska's dark reputation

130

00:05:53,430 --> 00:05:51,520

only increased with time

131

00:05:56,710 --> 00:05:53,440

throughout the centuries husqva's

132

00:05:59,270 --> 00:05:56,720

notoriety drew in those attracted to

133

00:06:02,629 --> 00:05:59,280

harnessing its power through occult

134

00:06:05,510 --> 00:06:02,639

practices in black magic

135

00:06:07,670 --> 00:06:05,520

during the 30 years war legend has it

136

00:06:11,430 --> 00:06:07,680

that a mercenary of the occupying

137

00:06:15,110 --> 00:06:11,440

swedish force a brutal tyrant known as

138

00:06:16,150 --> 00:06:15,120

aronto or trond took up residence at the

139

00:06:18,390 --> 00:06:16,160

castle

140

00:06:21,189 --> 00:06:18,400

as well as being a violent force in the

141

00:06:24,710 --> 00:06:21,199

area local history tells of aranto's

142

00:06:26,790 --> 00:06:24,720

interest in alchemy and black magic

143

00:06:29,029 --> 00:06:26,800

attracted by the terrifying history of

144

00:06:31,990 --> 00:06:29,039

the castle he performed animal

145

00:06:34,870 --> 00:06:32,000

sacrifices within its walls regularly

146

00:06:38,150 --> 00:06:34,880

seeking to draw out and control whatever

147

00:06:40,870 --> 00:06:38,160

malevolent power dwelled there

148

00:06:43,350 --> 00:06:40,880

when he was finally killed at huska by a

149

00:06:46,309 --> 00:06:43,360

local hunter it was said that this evil

150

00:06:49,270 --> 00:06:46,319

remained at home on the grounds

151
00:06:51,510 --> 00:06:49,280
this brutal and power-hungry soldier

152
00:06:54,230 --> 00:06:51,520
remains one of the malicious spirits

153
00:06:55,990 --> 00:06:54,240
said to haunt the castle even up until

154
00:06:59,350 --> 00:06:56,000
today

155
00:07:01,510 --> 00:06:59,360
while oronto's legend is apocryphal

156
00:07:04,550 --> 00:07:01,520
modern history proves that indeed the

157
00:07:07,029 --> 00:07:04,560
castle's undeniable mystery drew in

158
00:07:10,070 --> 00:07:07,039
occult-minded groups hungry to gain

159
00:07:13,350 --> 00:07:10,080
power for evil ends

160
00:07:17,350 --> 00:07:13,360
from 1938 onward the nazis began their

161
00:07:21,029 --> 00:07:17,360
brutal campaign of annexing sudentaland

162
00:07:23,670 --> 00:07:21,039
and ultimately occupying czechoslovakia

163
00:07:26,629 --> 00:07:23,680

among adolf hitler's top leaders was

164

00:07:27,909 --> 00:07:26,639

reichser fuhrer ss reich leader enric

165

00:07:32,870 --> 00:07:27,919

himmler

166

00:07:35,430 --> 00:07:32,880

been coined esoteric hitlerism had a

167

00:07:37,990 --> 00:07:35,440

penchant for the occult and sought to

168

00:07:39,350 --> 00:07:38,000

integrate it into nazi ideology and

169

00:07:41,830 --> 00:07:39,360

practice

170

00:07:44,710 --> 00:07:41,840

with czechoslovakia now under nazi

171

00:07:46,550 --> 00:07:44,720

control himmler took an interest in the

172

00:07:50,469 --> 00:07:46,560

notorious castle

173

00:07:53,430 --> 00:07:50,479

from 1939 until the end of the war nazis

174

00:07:55,430 --> 00:07:53,440

occupied husker castle for an oddly

175

00:07:58,550 --> 00:07:55,440

specific purpose

176

00:08:01,990 --> 00:07:58,560

himmler's obsessively dedicated library

177

00:08:04,309 --> 00:08:02,000

of esoteric and occult manuscripts some

178

00:08:06,869 --> 00:08:04,319

five hundred thousand of them were

179

00:08:09,350 --> 00:08:06,879

transferred to husker castle for safe

180

00:08:11,430 --> 00:08:09,360

keeping through the war

181

00:08:13,990 --> 00:08:11,440

under the auspices of the nazis

182

00:08:16,550 --> 00:08:14,000

ideological research and evaluation

183

00:08:19,589 --> 00:08:16,560

office which was for all intents and

184

00:08:22,550 --> 00:08:19,599

purposes a nazi think tank that oversaw

185

00:08:25,110 --> 00:08:22,560

the proliferation of nazi ideology and

186

00:08:27,990 --> 00:08:25,120

anti-semitic propaganda the special

187

00:08:31,670 --> 00:08:28,000

interest library was kept handy

188

00:08:33,670 --> 00:08:31,680

for what purpose is still unknown

189

00:08:36,070 --> 00:08:33,680

official record of what the nazis got up

190

00:08:38,550 --> 00:08:36,080

to at huska castle remained shrouded in

191

00:08:40,469 --> 00:08:38,560

mystery throughout world war ii

192

00:08:43,430 --> 00:08:40,479

there is some speculation that the

193

00:08:46,710 --> 00:08:43,440

castle was also used as a site for

194

00:08:49,590 --> 00:08:46,720

lebensborn a maternity program that the

195

00:08:53,269 --> 00:08:49,600

nazis ran to encourage racially pure

196

00:08:55,190 --> 00:08:53,279

women by nazi standards to birth perfect

197

00:08:57,590 --> 00:08:55,200

aryan babies

198

00:09:00,790 --> 00:08:57,600

at the lebensborn the children would be

199

00:09:02,630 --> 00:09:00,800

raised and indoctrinated in nazi

200

00:09:04,470 --> 00:09:02,640

ideology

201
00:09:07,190 --> 00:09:04,480
some children from other european

202
00:09:09,590 --> 00:09:07,200
countries who were deemed aryan enough

203
00:09:11,910 --> 00:09:09,600
were even kidnapped from their families

204
00:09:14,870 --> 00:09:11,920
and brought to such centers

205
00:09:16,870 --> 00:09:14,880
to be germanized and handed off to

206
00:09:19,350 --> 00:09:16,880
german parents

207
00:09:22,870 --> 00:09:19,360
husker castle might have served as a

208
00:09:25,110 --> 00:09:22,880
site for this shocking program

209
00:09:27,269 --> 00:09:25,120
there remain theories that the occult

210
00:09:29,350 --> 00:09:27,279
obsessed ss with their wealth of

211
00:09:32,389 --> 00:09:29,360
knowledge and books about the occult on

212
00:09:34,870 --> 00:09:32,399
hand might have done as errato the

213
00:09:37,670 --> 00:09:34,880

swedish mercenary did hundreds of years

214

00:09:40,470 --> 00:09:37,680

before used the castle's uniquely

215

00:09:43,190 --> 00:09:40,480

terrifying environment to feed their

216

00:09:45,829 --> 00:09:43,200

power through shocking experiments and

217

00:09:49,990 --> 00:09:45,839

prisoners and conducting rituals and

218

00:09:52,150 --> 00:09:50,000

sacrifices within the chapel

219

00:09:55,590 --> 00:09:52,160

their defeat was all but certain the

220

00:09:57,509 --> 00:09:55,600

nazis set fire to many of their records

221

00:10:00,550 --> 00:09:57,519

some of those records being about the

222

00:10:02,230 --> 00:10:00,560

goings-on at huska

223

00:10:04,790 --> 00:10:02,240

regardless of what the nazis might have

224

00:10:08,389 --> 00:10:04,800

gotten up to the evil they brought to

225

00:10:12,389 --> 00:10:08,399

huskah castle sealed its reputation as a

226

00:10:15,509 --> 00:10:12,399

fearful place beyond faded legends

227

00:10:18,870 --> 00:10:15,519

so what is of husqva castle today

228

00:10:21,990 --> 00:10:18,880

in 1999 husker castle opened to the

229

00:10:23,670 --> 00:10:22,000

public as a tourist attraction after

230

00:10:27,350 --> 00:10:23,680

years of disuse

231

00:10:30,389 --> 00:10:27,360

it sees thousands of tourists every year

232

00:10:32,790 --> 00:10:30,399

striking a dramatic clifftop image

233

00:10:34,310 --> 00:10:32,800

it's considered a remarkably well

234

00:10:36,710 --> 00:10:34,320

preserved building

235

00:10:39,430 --> 00:10:36,720

but the location's dark valances

236

00:10:40,949 --> 00:10:39,440

continue to influence the area to this

237

00:10:43,750 --> 00:10:40,959

day

238

00:10:45,750 --> 00:10:43,760

locals say cars often won't start near

239

00:10:47,990 --> 00:10:45,760

husker castle

240

00:10:51,110 --> 00:10:48,000

some have reported sightings of strange

241

00:10:53,910 --> 00:10:51,120

creatures flying in the area after dark

242

00:10:57,269 --> 00:10:53,920

and dark silhouettes haunt the castle

243

00:11:00,150 --> 00:10:57,279

including one in the shape of a monk

244

00:11:02,870 --> 00:11:00,160

and if you stand in the castle's chapel

245

00:11:04,630 --> 00:11:02,880

and listen very closely

246

00:11:07,670 --> 00:11:04,640

many agree that you can hear a

247

00:11:09,430 --> 00:11:07,680

scratching sound from a gateway just

248

00:11:12,710 --> 00:11:09,440

beneath the floors