

# SAHARA ADVENTURE SERIES



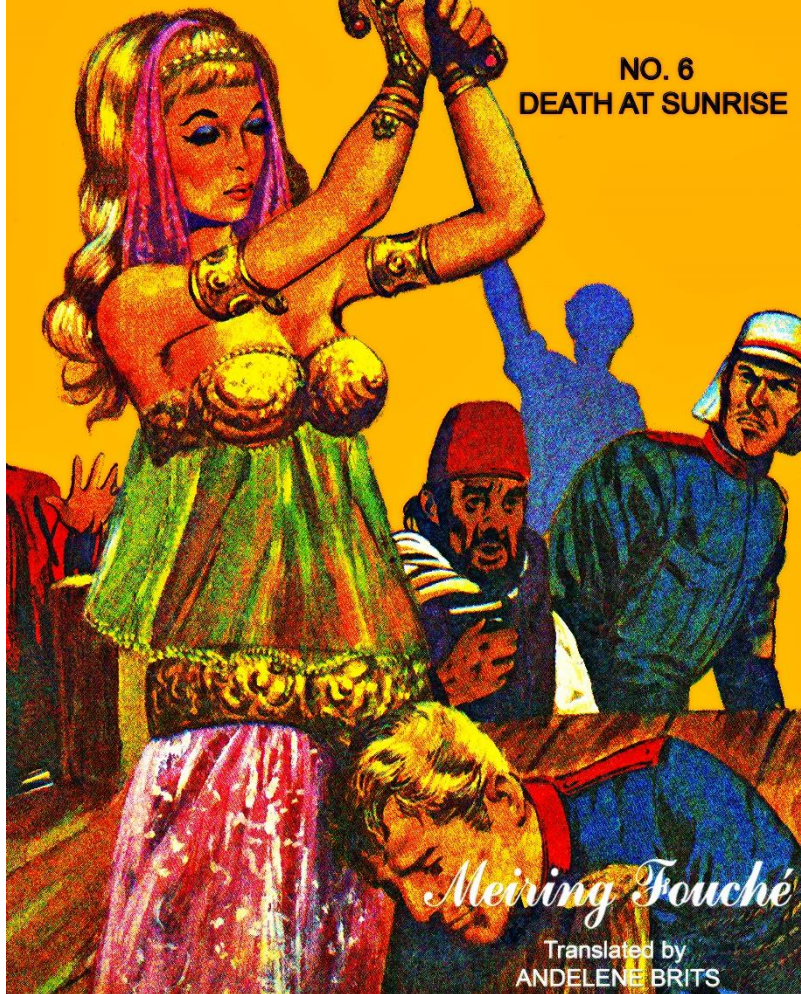
6. DEATH AT SUNRISE

**Meiring Fouche**

Translated by Andelene Brits

# SAHARA - ADVENTURE SERIES

NO. 6  
DEATH AT SUNRISE



*Meiring Fouché*

Translated by  
ANDELENE BRITS

# DEATH AT SUNRISE

*by*

**MEIRING FOUCHE**

and

translated by  
**ANDELENE BRITS**

*Published by:*

**TREASURE CHEST BOOKS -  
PUBLISHERS**

Strand Mews

Strand

2023

## DEATH AT SUNRISE

The sketch on the cover page was generated with AI software. This book is the third edition (updated version) and the first edition translated into English.

Copyright in this work is strictly reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the publisher's written permission. All the characters and the events in this story are fictitious and do not relate to any person, living or dead.

## DEATH AT SUNRISE

by Meiring Fouche and translated by Andelene Brits

ISBN 978-1-928498-83-4

Published by:

Treasure Chest Books - Publishers, Strand Mews  
Strand, 7140  
South Africa

Copyright @ Pieter Haasbroek (2023)

**Online Store:** <https://panther-ebooks.com>

**Website:** <https://www.softcoverbooks.co.za>

## **ABOUT THE TRANSLATOR**

“Andelene Brits was born in Paarl in 1966, the youngest of three daughters. I attended Paarl Gymnasium and matriculated there in 1983. After that, I worked in financial institutions. I got married in 1989, and I have three sons. I do not have grandchildren yet, only a lot of dogs! For the last twenty years, I have been a housewife. I have written many stories over the years but have never published anything, although writing is my passion. I love books and have a whole library in my house. I go and browse second-hand bookstores for treasures. My other passion is people, and I do charity work for those in need. There is not much more I can say about myself, just that what I am doing now is something I have been waiting for all my life to do. Deal with the written word. Words are power. Thank you.”

## SUMMARY

Buckle up for a thrilling adventure in the scorching Sahara desert with the brave men of the French Foreign Legion in Meiring Fouche's action-packed page-turner, "Death at Sunrise". This is the sixth installment in Fouche's wildly popular "Sahara Adventure series" which follows the daring exploits of Legionnaire Teuns Stegmann and his loyal band of brothers as they confront peril at every turn in colonial North Africa.

This latest edge-of-your-seat thriller, "Death at Sunrise" sweeps readers into a gripping adventure in the sweltering Sahara desert. It centers around five comrades of the French Foreign Legion, the impulsive Teuns Stegmann, brawny Fritz Mundt, quick-witted Jack Ritchie, hardy Podolski the Pole, and feisty Petacci the Italian. Together for the first time, they embark on a perilous patrol mission into the barren wasteland. As scorching winds blast their faces and water supplies dwindle, a lethal sandstorm suddenly engulfs them, obliterating their bearings. Their odds of surviving the merciless conditions seem hopeless until they spot two camels racing through the sand. They desperately pursue the two camels for a chance at sanctuary. After an arduous chase, the men finally reach safety in one of three clay huts nestled in a remote oasis. But what they discover inside the humble shelter leaves them shocked and imperiled. There lies the alluring yet cunning Brigitte Bonnet, the notorious "Witch of the Sahara" hellbent on revenge for her sister's death.

Conflict collides as the soldiers confine her, intent on delivering the wanted woman to authorities in Algiers.

Yet Brigitte has a knack for slipping away. After drugging her captors' water and fleeing into the darkness, the men awake parched and furious. As the sandstorm entombs the oasis's life-saving well, they become stranded without water, slowly succumbing to a torturous demise. But just when all hope evaporates, a mysterious bomber plane appears and airlifts the five friends to the Arab stronghold of Dutra. In the capital, they are locked away in a reeking dungeon. While languishing in despair, they uncover something extraordinary concealed beneath the cell's hay that renews their drive for survival. But can they utilize it before Brigitte's next lethal plan takes form? For she and the Arab leaders have concocted a barbaric public execution for the legionnaires, set to take place in front of a bloodthirsty mob at sunrise. As the first glimmer of light creeps over the distant dunes, only a miracle seems capable of saving the condemned men from the ceremonial blade. Can Teuns and his loyal comrades-in-arms escape Brigitte's wrath and derail her genocidal scheme? Against impossible odds, the courageous legionnaires will have to fight with every ounce of strength and cunning if they hope to turn the tables on Brigitte and her bloodthirsty hordes and live to fight another day.

Death at Sunrise delivers a high-stakes tale wound with

tension, valor, and startling twists that will leave readers enthralled until the very last page. Fouche's masterful storytelling ability shines as he weaves vivid desert scenery, high-action drama, and magnetic characters into a profoundly entertaining novel. With nonstop action, diabolical villains, and high-stakes drama across an exotic North African landscape, "Death at Sunrise" will leave fans of Fouche's Sahara Adventure series hungry for more. Only by joining Legionnaire Stegmann on his latest white-knuckle adventure through perilous desert sands will you discover the breathtaking answer for yourself. So sit down, strap in, and get ready for a rollercoaster ride you won't soon forget with this thrilling Sahara desert story.



## EXTRACT

Teuns moves so quickly that he manages to knock out three or four guys before Fritz and the others can jump in. Fritz Mundt moves like a maniac, and his big fists work like pistons. There is an ugly sound of blows falling and men groaning, and foreign soldiers are falling like flies from the benches and land in heaps on the floor. Podolski and Jack Ritchie also jump in, and Catroux and Petacci do their part. This was not the first fight the little Petacci had participated in. He had learned to fight in the slums of Italy, and he knew all the dirty tricks in the book. First, he pretends to hit a man in the head, but then he kicks him in the stomach.

But Teuns, Fritz, and Podolski cause the worst damage. They do not need to hit the same man twice. The foreign soldiers suddenly realize that the destruction in their ranks is significant, and their position does not look so much in their favor anymore. The Legion men have come together in a small group, their fists are flying, and their boots are kicking. Some of these strangers have immense respect for the fists of the big Legion men like Teuns, Fritz, and Podolski and even for the dangerous, unexpected blows of the little Petacci and Jack Ritchie, whose blonde fringe is hanging far down over his forehead. Catroux is like a cocky little rooster and gives his best.

The men slowly fight their way open to the front of the plane toward the cockpit. They progress, but it is becoming more demanding because the foreign soldiers fully understand what is at stake here.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **Chapter**

1. Wind of the Desert
2. An Unexpected Guest
3. A Shot in the Night
4. The Booming
5. Bloody Fists
6. Eyes Full of Hatred
7. Blood for the Blade
8. Tunnel of the Dead
9. Death at Sunrise
10. Big Wings

## 6. DEATH AT SUNRISE

### Chapter 1 WIND OF THE DESERT

There are only seven of them. Only seven soldiers in this infinity of the Sahara. They are wearing blue jackets and the white kepis of the French Foreign Legion. Present here is Sergeant Catroux, the diminutive, grey Frenchman with his lively blue eyes and the brash little mustache. Fritz Mundt, the huge German, the biggest and strongest soldier in the French Foreign Legion. Teuns Stegmann, the blonde South African, is broad-shouldered but very agile, like an athlete. Jack Ritchie was the Englishman his family had branded the black sheep. Podolski, the Pole, had joined the Legion only to get away from his fat wife and her constant nagging. Petacci, the Italian, who had fled his country of birth because of his radical views, and Jorgensen, the big, clumsy Norwegian, always looks as if he is dreaming of the cool fjords of his country.

Their boots crunch through the sand as they move in a northerly direction, and their water flasks flap against their sweaty backs.

Podolski, the brave Pole, who has already seen so much bloodshed in the desert, yawns and says. "I wish something would happen. Even a vulture attacking us will do so that I can kill it with my bayonet. This walking is driving me crazy!"

"You are in a good mood, you big old Pole," says Teuns Stegmann while looking back at Podolski. "If you have

that much energy, why do not you run to Fort Laval before us?"

"He is off his rocker," growls Jorgensen. "Who in his right mind will look for trouble in this heat?"

"It is only big talk," Petacci, the Italian, cuts in.

Podolski ignores the others and turns to Fritz Mundt. "What do you say, big guy? You are one of the men who is always looking for action. These patrols through the sand drive me insane."

Fritz Mundt does not answer him but puts his forefinger in his mouth to wet it, then sticks it up in the air like a man pointing at the sky.

"Looks like the big guy is also losing his marbles," Teuns teases. "He is sucking his finger like a baby."

"Wait, I think he is getting ready to risk another one of his predictions," Jack Ritchie mocks. "After all, he is the big oracle of the desert!"

They look at the big German apprehensively because he is usually so outspoken and ready to react with his quick temper. But, then, he would not say something but would not hesitate to use his fists if provoked. Now, he turns his head, looks up into the sky, and scans the horizon with his eyes drawn into slits.

"There is a big wind coming," Fritz Mundt says softly.

"Wind!" Teuns Stegmann guffaws and everybody starts laughing. "The only wind right now in this desert is the wind coming out of your big mouth!"

"I am telling you there is a wind coming. You cannot feel it right now, but I can sense it in the air and do not like it.

I think Podolski's wish might be granted by getting some action." Without another word, the German leaves the line and hastens himself over to Sergeant Catroux, who walks in front of them with his head bowed.

"I think Fritz has gone soft in the head," says Jorgensen from behind, but Petacci interrupts him. "He knows this desert like the palm of his hand. He is never wrong with his predictions."

"Well, it looks like Field Marshall Rommel has at least one admirer in the French Foreign Legion," Podolski teases Petacci.

Then they cease talking to try and hear what Fritz Mundt is saying to Catroux, but they are unable to. Catroux suddenly halts his small patrol and gazes over to the west, where the mighty Atlas Mountain rises blue and massive out of the desert, with its peaks reaching heaven. He takes out his binoculars and scans the area while the other men, except for Fritz, sit in the hot sand, thankful for the break to rest their tired legs.

Catroux puts his binoculars back in the bag, and then he also wets his finger and holds it up in the air, just like Mundt did.

"*Mon Dieu!*" he exclaims. "It is true. A wind is coming, but it is difficult to feel at this stage."

Just then, a small whirlwind comes dancing past them over the sand, which cools their burning cheeks for that split second. The men look at one another quickly because they know what that means.

"Look there, *mon Sergent,*" Fritz tells Catroux, pointing

his finger into the sky.

Catroux looks up and sees tiny, black specks in the sky, so high up that it is nearly invisible to the naked eye. The specks are moving eastwards.

“They will not be flying that high up if it were not for strong air currents, *mon Sergent*,” Fritz Mundt remarks.

“That is true,” Catroux concurs. “Vultures know when to get themselves to safety.”

The other men are also looking up into the sky, eyes squinted against the sun’s glare, and subconsciously, their breathing becomes deeper and uneven in apprehension.

“And look over there, *mon Sergent*,” says Fritz Mundt, pointing at the sun. Catroux looks and realizes that the Sahara sun is looking quite different today. It is not the same fiery ball as always, but more like a copper coin that had been polished. It becomes unnecessary to look because now others can feel it too.

Suddenly it is like standing in an airless void that is as hot as an oven. Sweat breaks out over their bodies, breathing becomes difficult, and it feels as if their heads can explode from the pressure.

“Sandstorm coming, *mes amis*,” says Catroux, and those four words of the sergeant fill the men with a nameless dread.

“Still ready for action, Podolski?” asks Petacci and a world of meaning is locked behind his dark eyes.

Podolski only looks at the horizon and does not reply because he would rather march a thousand miles through the desert than encounter one of the Sahara’s sandstorms.

“What are we going to do?” asks the ever-practical Jorgensen. “We are still about eighty miles from Fort Laval, and if that storm catches us here in the open, we are in a world of trouble.”

The men know that is the truth because any man who has ever experienced one of the Sahara’s sandstorms before can tell you how the wind can drive the sand and small stones horizontally against your body, so much so that it can tear the clothes from your body and rip the skin off your face and hands. The sand can penetrate your facial cavities, and if you are not careful, it can smother you. This type of storm can last up to three days, and if you are unlucky enough that it finds you in the open of the desert, it forces the moisture out of your body and can drive you insane with thirst. They have seen victims of sandstorms before and know how the sand can even carve away a man’s eyelids so that the eyes are sitting open, bare, and terrible in their sockets. They know this, which is why they are looking at one another in fear, only to look again towards the horizon where everything still seems so calm and silent. It is deceptive because these desert storms can appear from behind a dune or on the open plains within seconds.

“What shall we do?” Jorgensen complains. “There is not even a stone we can hide behind.”

“You just turn your back to the storm till you have no back anymore,” Teuns Stegmann suggests. “By the time your back is gone, you will be finished anyway.”

“Your skin is so tough that even a desert storm will not be