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The Soviet Union had several famous female snipers who helped their country resist the German invasion. One of those snipers was a Russian-American who returned to the USSR to be close to her grandparents after WWII began. When she lost her grandparents, Tania Chernova resolved to do more. This image depicts a photo of a sniper believed to be Tania (but it could also be Roza Shanina). It is online via a Russian-language website.

Ten days after he began targeting Germans in the rubble of Stalingrad, Vasha achieved 40 "kills." Looking for hero stories to bolster the morale of war-weary Soviet citizens, Igor Danilov, a Russian Commissar and journalist, wrote articles about Vasha's phenomenal results. The sniper was soon famous throughout the Soviet Union.

Danilov had another important mission for Vasily: to train other snipers. Soon Zaitsev (which means "hare" in Russian) had a group of snipers-in-the-making under his instruction. One of those trainees was Tania Chernova, a Russian-American.

Tania had returned to Russia when the war began. She wanted to be close to her beloved grandparents. When they, and many others in their town, were brutally murdered by invading Nazis, Tania became single-minded in her desire for revenge.

Concealing her American background, she became a partisan. Her mission was to kill as many Germans as she could. She wanted to "break them like sticks."

Learning to become an even better sharpshooter, she honed her skills under Vasily's instructions. According to various reports, the two became very close friends.

Based on all available evidence, historians agree that Zaitsev was an amazing sniper with 242 Stalingrad "kills" to his credit. But historians differ whether the famous story of Vasily's duel with a German sniper was truth or Soviet propaganda.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/TANIA-CHERNOVA-Stalingrad-Deadly-Battle-of-WWII>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/TANIA-CHERNOVA-Stalingrad-Deadly-Battle-of-WWII>