

0. STALINGRAD SNIPERS - Story Preface

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All sides used snipers during WWII. This photo, from the German Federal Archives, depicts a sniper and a spotter (sometime between June-July of 1942). The Archives provide this description (translated into English from German): "Soviet Union, at Voronezh - Two soldiers in position, soldier with rifle and scope in the attack and soldier watching with binoculars; PK 694." During the war, the photo was maintained at the "Propaganda companies of the Wehrmacht - Army and Air Force." Today it is available at the Deutsches Bundesarchiv. Bundesarchiv, Bild 101I-216-0417-19 / Dieck / CC-BY-SA 3.0

By October of 1942, a German sharpshooter, apparently named Major Erwin Koenig (König), was dispatched to Stalingrad. His purpose? To kill Vasily Zaitsev. Word of his arrival spread to the Soviet defenders.

Vasha was worried. He had killed many enemy snipers - but only after he had a chance to observe their habits. Like stalking his prey in the taiga, the Siberian needed time to observe Koenig's routines. No one knew where, or how, the German would strike.

For two days Vasily and Nikolai Kulikov looked for signs of the German. Keeping low, under cover, they used binoculars to scan the horizon. They studied enemy lines. With the battle going on around them, Vasha and Nikolai looked for one man. They saw no irregularities. Koenig had given them no clues.

On the third day, Danilov wanted to accompany Zaitsev. Thinking he had spotted the German, the Commissar stood up to point him out. Koenig shot him in the shoulder.

There was one more shot that day. Zaitsev wanted to test whether he had found the German's hiding spot. His instincts told him Koenig was under a sheet of iron, near a disabled tank and a pile of bricks.

In Enemy at the Gates, William Craig relates what happened next:

To test his theory, Zaitsev hung a glove on the end of a piece of wood and slowly raised it above the parapet. A rifle cracked and he pulled the glove down hurriedly. The bullet had bored a hole straight through the cloth from the front. Zaitsev had been correct: Koenig was under the sheet of iron.

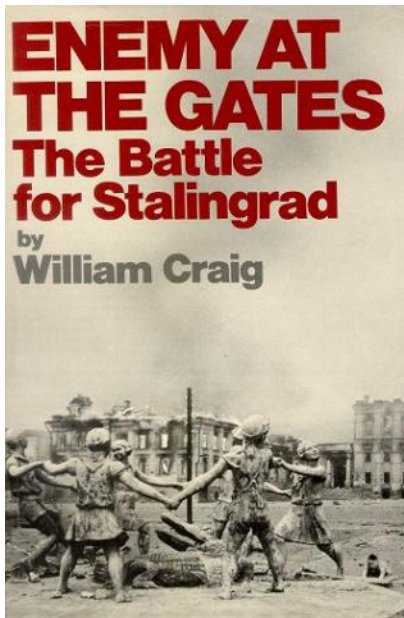
See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

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

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

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

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Enemy at the Gates - by William Craig

Image online, courtesy [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) website.

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