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This image depicts the town of Lillehammer, Norway (as it appeared in 2005). Erling Storrusten was living in this town when he was part of Milorg, Norway's resistance movement, during WWII. Photo by Användare:Hasse A. Notice the Olympic ski jump, on the left side of the picture. Lillehammer hosted the 1994 Winter Olympics. Click on the image for a better view. License: [CC BY-SA 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/)

As Erling and Inger Storrusten are walking home from a party, the brother tells the sister he isn't going to sleep at home that night.

He has his reasons, and his decision is momentous. Erling tells us why:

*One evening my sister Inger and I were on our way home from a party. I had intended to pick up a radio [so high on the list of banned items that possessing one is punishable by death] and the organization's cash box at home but I didn't want to wake up Mother - she was worried enough. I said 'good night' to Inger, strolled to my hideaway [at the home of his girlfriend, Aase-Brit] and slept innocently while a drama unfolded at home.*

*Earlier that evening a young Norwegian had come to our house and asked for me. He used an alias of one of our men in Milorg. Mother said that she didn't know where I was but that I might be home later that evening. A couple of hours later the same boy returned, this time with his hands in the air and Gestapo soldiers pointing machine guns at his back. My parents were pushed into chairs in the dining room and left with the "prisoner" while the Germans ransacked the house.*

*The "prisoner" said that if only he knew where Erling was he could, perhaps, warn him. Father saw through this play-acting and gave a sign to mother who remained silent.*

*When Inger came home one of the Germans knocked her down and threatened her with strangling. But she absolutely denied that she had any idea where I had gone after she parted from me.*

*One of the Gestapo men (previously a YMCA member from Hamar who had been in to scout camp with me), forced her up to my room at gun point where he found my radio and a small roll of kr50 [50 Kroner] bills. Then he went through a photograph album of mine and ordered Inger to point out my girl-friend. Fortunately, Aase-Brit's photo hadn't found its way into my album yet so this trail was cold.*

*Other photos led them to friends of mine but none of them could give the Gestapo any information. The Gestapo waited all night hoping, in vain, that I would come home.*

Safely asleep at his hideaway, Erling—fortunately—never goes home that evening. Completely unknown to him, momentous events are taking place at his parents' house.

*In the meantime Kiri, who lived in the next house, came home with her boyfriend. Before going in, they went alongside the house to take down some washing. In our house, mother, with the Germans standing threateningly over her, realized that someone was outside so she started coughing violently.*

*Outside, Kiri listened and heard Inger's voice: "I don't know, I don't know." Kiri guessed what had happened. She knew my hideout and was afraid Inger would reveal it under the violent treatment she was getting.*

Kiri knows she has to take action:

*Shortly afterward Aase-Berit's mother woke me and said that somebody had rung the doorbell. I rushed down to the basement but quickly came up again when it turned out that the caller was Kiri's boyfriend.*

*Kiri was with him and they told us what had happened. I flung on my clothes over my pyjamas, my rucksack was ready packed, but I had only a pair of thin street shoes to wear. My walking boots were at home.*

Because he now faces the certainty of detection, and the likelihood of capture, Erling must escape to Sweden from his town of Lillehammer.

How will he make that happen? By skiing most of the distance—which is hundreds of kilometers—over a five-day period.

He will need guides to help him.

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

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/ERLING-HAS-a-CLOSE-CALL-Shadow-on-the-Mountain>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/ERLING-HAS-a-CLOSE-CALL-Shadow-on-the-Mountain>

## Media Stream



### ERLING HAS a CLOSE CALL

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