

# Character analysis

Business



What excites or thrills you? Maybe you enjoy riding speedy rollercoasters, playing extreme sports, or even skydiving? For General Zaroff in Richard Connell's "The Most Dangerous Game," this thrill came from hunting. Over the years, Zaroff became an expert at this and hunting became boring. He then came up with the "brilliant" idea to hunt people in order to have more of a challenge. General Zaroff is a sociopath based on his actions, speech and other characters reactions.

First, General Zaroff's actions in the story can make us assume that this character is a sociopath. There are many examples in the story that supports this thought. For example: "There was one small trait of the general's that made Rainsford uncomfortable. Whenever he looked up from his plate he found the general studying him, appraising him narrowly" (Connell 18). Later, when Zaroff was hunting Rainsford, the text says, "The sharp eyes of the hunter stopped before they reached the limb where Rainsford lay; a smile spread over his brown face" (Connell 25).

These passages, along with others, show how, through his actions, General Zaroff gives off an eerie, sinister feel to the story. Another example that displays this characters craziness is based from his speech. His views make him seem cold-hearted and it's as if he doesn't have a conscience. "'Life is for the strong, to be lived by the strong, and if need be, taken by the strong. The weak of the world were put here to give the strong pleasure. I am strong.

Why should I not use my gift? If I wish to hunt, why should I not?'" (Connell 21). He also told Rainsford, "'I give him a supply of food and an excellent

hunting knife. I give him three hours' start. I am to follow, armed only with a pistol of the smallest caliber and range. If my quarry eludes me for three whole days, he wins the game.

If I find him'-the general smiled- ' he loses'" (Connell 22). The examples from the text demonstrate how the general has no value for human life, that this is all a game for him. It shows how crazy and sociopathic he is. Finally, the last example that shows how twisted General Zaroff's mind is, is through other character's reactions. When Rainsford first came to his house, Zaroff told him his life story, about how he's been hunting his whole life and how he became bored of it. When he told Rainsford his solution, he expected him to be fascinated with it.

But Rainsford was shocked at the horrific idea. "' But you can't mean-' gasped Rainsford. ' And why not?' ' I can't believe you are serious, General Zaroff. This is a grisly joke.' ' Why should I not be serious? I am speaking of hunting.

' ' Hunting? Good God, General Zaroff, what you speak of is murder!" (Connell 21). Further along the story reads, " Only the devil himself could follow that complicated trail through the jungle after dark. But, perhaps, the general was a devil-" (Connell 25). These parts of the story shows how Rainsford feels about Zaroff and how he disagrees with his views. In the end, he gets a taste of his own medicine when the tables are turned on his twisted game. After General Zaroff returns to his room, Rainsford waited for him from behind the curtains.

He outsmarted Zaroff and won the game. Rainsford showed him that his “brilliant” idea of hunting people was crazy and wrong. Based on General Zaroff’s actions, speech and other character’s reactions, I can conclude that he is a sociopath. Work Cited List Connell, Richard Edward. The Most Dangerous Game. Mankato, MN: Creative Education, 2011.

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