

REDPATCH
GRAPHIC NOVEL SCRIPT
DRAFT #2 - DECEMBER 15TH, 2015

Written by

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Based on the play "REDPATCH"
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EXT. NO-MAN'S LAND - NIGHT

INFORMATION BUBBLE: 1917. Somewhere in France. No-man's land.

A storm builds.

A ghostly mist drifts over No-Man's land: razor wire, sink-holes, mutilated bodies.

A LARGE RAVEN kraas and circles high above.

Artillery shells, exploding in the distance, light up the mist in strange and beautiful ways.

A Canadian soldier, PTE. JONATHON WOODROW (21, First Nations, handsome but war worn) emerges dressed in the attire of an infantry soldier: black boots, puttees, tanned pants, jacket, and on his left shoulder, a single rectangular red patch that distinguishes him as belonging to the 1st Canadian Infantry Division.

His face is concealed by a gas mask. He is covered in dirt and blood. In one hand he carries a standard issue INFANTRY SHOVEL, which he has fashioned into a trench-knife; wrapped in barbed wire, rusty jagged nails pushed through, the shovel sharpened to a point. It is a weapon; a war-axe.

A quick succession of pops and flashes of light.

Gas hisses like a snake. Woodrow watches as the surrounding mist changes to a venomous yellow color.

Lightning flashes, illuminating the sky.

The soldier falls to his knees, allowing the yellow smoke to swirl around him.

Without warning he rips the mask from his face.

Tears stream from his eyes, cutting down his dirt covered face.

WOODROW
Grandmother!!!!

The raven cries-out and swoops down.

INT. CAMPFIRE ON VANCOUVER ISLAND, SUMMER 1914 - NIGHT

Smoke whirls.

The raven lands near a burning campfire.

INFORMATION BUBBLE: On August 4th, 1914, England declared war on Germany. As a member of the British Commonwealth, Canada, was forced to join the war.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN (50s, spry, playful and wise) sits opposite Woodrow.

He is younger. Hasn't felt the burden of war.

WOODROW

All the men are enlisting, grandma.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN

The war to end all wars? Ha! And this must be the fire to end all fires.

WOODROW

Grandma -

SHE RIDES BETWEEN

You must have rocks in your head if you believe that.

WOODROW

I'm going to join up. With or without your permission.

The smoke from the fire whirls.

EXT. REAR LINES AROUND VIMY, 1917 - DAY

SGT. MACQUINTY (40s, hard miles on a handsome face) barks to a company of boys. Eighteen and nineteen mostly. Tough. Well-trained.

The men are in full gear, backpacks, helmets, Ross rifles.

Woodrow stands with the men, a First Nation soldier among white men. He is a vet at 21.

MACQUINTY

When you hear the whistle blast, boys, you go over the top...

Woodrow whispers to a FRESH FACED RECRUIT (18, nervous looking.)

WOODROW

Keep next to me, kid.

INFORMATION BUBBLE: The battle of Vimy Ridge was the first time in history where all four Canadian Divisions fought together. It was a defining moment in Canadian history.

MACQUINTY

Listen lads. The Brits couldn't knock Fritz off this goddamn hill. The French couldn't do it. But this is where we show them all.

The sky darkens above.

The fresh faced recruit grips his rifle nervously.

WOODROW

You'll be fine.

MACQUINTY

We Canadians are going to be the ones who knock Germany off this hill. LET'S SHOW FRITZ WHAT WE'RE MADE OF!

The soldiers raise up their rifles and cheer.

The raven swoops past the men and out towards the battle fields - a bird's eye view of miles of craters, mud, machine gun pits and razor wire.

The soldiers file into the trenches.

EXT. STREETS OF VANCOUVER, SUMMER 1914 - DAY

A giant steel train billows steam and smoke. The train screeches comes to halt.

Woodrow, dressed in civilian clothing, strides through the hustle and bustle of the city.

Street vendors, kids chasing each other with toy guns, a woman pushing her baby carriage.

INFORMATION BUBBLE: Many First Nations men had to lie about their heritage in order to join the Canadian Forces.

Woodrow approaches a clean looking wooden building. A sign out front reads: RECRUITMENT OFFICE

Two boys. Green recruits, tough-looking dressed in military uniforms are leaning against the wall of the recruitment office.

NEW RECRUIT #1
Army's not taking your kind.

WOODROW
What'd you say?

NEW RECRUIT #2
No Indians.

INT. RECRUITMENT OFFICE - DAY

RECRUITMENT OFFICER (45, ex-soldier, greybeard) stands behind a desk in front of Woodrow. He eyes him up.

RECRUITMENT OFFICER
The crown isn't taking Indians.

Woodrow fiddles with his felt hat.

RECRUITMENT OFFICER (CONT'D)
Course... if you say you ain't...
well, then, you ain't...

EXT. ALLIED TRENCHES SURROUNDING VIMY RIDGE - DAY

Allied soldiers huddle against the walls of the trench, preparing for the assault.

Woodrow adjusts his helmet. The fresh faced recruit lights a cigarette.

WOODROW
See that?

He motions to the sky. The fresh faced recruit looks up.

JONATHON
Snow.

Sgt. MacGuinty trudges through the lines, pistol in hand.

MACGUINTY
Sixty seconds lad. Ready
yourselves.

Woodrow watches a raven circle high over head.

He closes his eyes tight.

EXT. OCEAN SHORELINE, VANCOUVER ISLAND - DAY

Woodrow stands at the edge of the ocean. He watches as the sun rise rises over the mountains in the east.

She Rides Between stands near.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN
You will go far from here, rock-
head.

WOODROW
I know.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN
To the other side of the world.

He stares pensively at the waves lapping up against the shore.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN (CONT'D)
Take this.

She Rides Between produces a small medicine pouch. She hands it to her grandson.

JONATHON
Grandmother...

SHE RIDES BETWEEN
For protection.

EXT. ALLIED TRENCHES SURROUNDING VIMY RIDGE - DAY

Woodrow clutches the medicine pouch, now attached to a string which hangs around his neck.

He tucks the pouch underneath his uniform and adjusts his helmet.

He clicks a razor sharp bayonet in to place on the end of his rifle.

WOODROW
Remember... don't get pulled ahead
by the creeping barrage.

INFORMATION BUBBLE: At 5:30am on Easter Monday, 1917, Canada attacked German forces embedded on Vimy Ridge.

Allied artillery fires. Huge fifteen inch guns.

Large cannons blasting shells high into the sky.

MACGUINTY

Ready boys!

MacGuinty's whistle shrieks.

WOODROW

NOW!!!

The men go "over-the-top."

MACGUINTY

Go! Go! Go! Go! Go!

The soldiers climb up and out of the dirt into the nightmare of No-Man's land.

Shells slam into ground. The earth quakes. Dirt and debris erupt out of the ground like an exploding volcano

Woodrow leads the battle hardened Canadian forces.

WOODROW

Come on! Come on! Come on!

Hundreds of German machine gunners rain down an onslaught of fiery bullets.

Explosions. Fire. Metal. Flesh.

Soldiers are thrown into the air, or cut down by whiz-bangs.

The Canadian troops crash into a line of barbed wire. Woodrow ducks and weaves through the wire with lightning precision.

The fresh faced recruit gets caught on the wire fence, like a fly on a spiderwebs.

WOODROW (CONT'D)

Keep moving! Faster!

German bullets slams into the recruit. Blood bursts everywhere.

WOODROW (CONT'D)

No!

The boy reaches for Woodrow. A bullet rips through his cheek. The boy dies, his body slumped on the barbed wire.

WOODROW (CONT'D)

Fuck...

Woodrow ducks his head and pushes on.

From the higher position, German snipers and machine gunners fire down at the Canadian forces.

Woodrow arrives at the German line and jumps into a German trench.

Wooden floorboards thunder underneath his boots.

A GERMAN SOLDIER rounds a corner Mauser rifle in hand.

Woodrow impales the man on the end of his bayonet.

GERMAN SOLDIER

Aaaahhhh!!!

Woodrow fires the rifle into the German's cuts and drops him to the ground.

Woodrow pulls out his shovel (the trench knife), and moves forward down the line.

A GERMAN MACHINE GUNNER reigns down fire from a gunner pit.

Canadian soldiers, running through No-man's land, are cut down by the gunner's onslaught.

Woodrow silently stalks towards the gunner.

He raises his shovel high above his head, ready to make the kill.

The clickety-clack of hundreds of bullets whizzing through the machine gun turret.

INFORMATION BUBBLE: In less than 7 hours the four Canadian Divisions did what no one else in the world could do... they captured Vimy Ridge.

Woodrow slams the shovel into the German soldier's head.

The soldiers eyes go wide, and fill with blood.

INFORMATION BUBBLE: The battle of Vimy Ridge would define Canada as its own nation. A nation separate from the England.

The raven kraas high above in the sky, watching the battle unfold.

EXT. OPEN OCEAN NEAR VANCOUVER ISLAND, DECEMBER 2018.

The tip of a canoe cuts through the salty ocean.

Fog and mist hover around the shore of an island. Ocean, fog, mountains, sky.

The canoe scrapes along stones, as it touches down on land.

Woodrow, dressed in a clean uniform, kit bag swung over his shoulder, steps out of the boat on to land.

The medicine pouch hangs gently from his neck.

INFORMATION BUBBLE: ON NOVEMBER 11TH, 1918 THE FIRST WORLD WAR CAME TO AN END.

She Rides Between, wrapped in furs, walks along the beach toward her grandson.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN
Hello, rock-head.

WOODROW
Grandmother...

Woodrow drops his kits bag.

INFORMATION BUBBLE: Because many First Nations soldiers had given up their status to join the army, many were denied post-war benefits when they returned home.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN
Welcome back.

She Rides Between embraces her grandson.

INFORMATION BUBBLE: First Nations soldiers proved to be some of Canada's greatest warriors. Many achieved near-legendary status as scouts, trench-raiders, and snipers.

A large raven soars over head.

WOODROW
I'm home.

The raven cuts through the fog and mist and descends down towards the open ocean.