

Three day road by joseph boyden

[Transportation](#), [Road](#)



Elijah and Xavier were always the best of friends. From the day they met at Residential School, they started to bond, and had a connection as strong as two brothers. However, they were eventually split apart, as Xavier had decided to fulfill his role as a bush Indian, and left with his Aunt Niska to live in the wilderness. When years had passed, Xavier got lonely, and the only person he wanted to have by his side was Elijah; thus, their friendship was rekindled. Now, many years later, they still have not left each others side. They consider each other as brothers, and yet, Xavier ends up killing Elijah.

In the book Three Day Road, it is clear that Xavier enables Elijah's actions before and during war that lead to Elijah's eventual death, causing Xavier to fall ultimately responsible for Elijah's death. Without Xavier, Elijah would not have succeeded in war. He learned how to shoot, hunt and have killer-instinct from Xavier, turning him into an eventual heartless killing machine. The first example of Xavier being responsible for the training of Elijah comes from the first scene in the book, when both boys are out together for the first time. After hunting and effectively catching a marten, they suspect it to be dead.

As they walk closer to the Marten, it is clear to both characters that it is still quite alive and struggling to break free from the trap that Xavier and Elijah had laid. Panicking, Elijah says: " What do we do, Xavier? " (2) Xavier quickly responds, without hesitation, by running towards the nearest log he can find, and brutally smashing the marten to death with it. Elijah, in shock, is told that it had to be done by Xavier. He believes him. It is clear that the first

example of brutal violence that Elijah was exposed to before the war was both with and produced by Xavier.

This one moment is what provoked eventual quotes from Elijah in the novel, such as: "Killing is in my blood." (236). Without Xavier, Elijah wouldn't have known how to kill an animal, let alone a man, therefore causing the battlefields of Europe to be no place for Elijah Whiskyjack. Xavier is a naturally quiet and passive person, which ultimately resulted in always allowing Elijah to continue on with his inhumane actions during the war. "He seems to be spending more and more time with Grey Eyes, but I don't ask much of it" (Xavier, 124). Elijah stating that, "Scalping Fritz feeds my unger" (312), and sharing that, "I know you don't like what happens next, so I won't give you the details" (Elijah speaking to Xavier about scalping, 286). Each of these quotations are examples in the book of Xavier hearing or witnessing something Elijah saying or doing. Xavier sees Elijah doing things morally wrong all the time, and consistently does nothing about it. He doesn't even utter a word. When Grey Eyes started spending time with Elijah, Xavier automatically assumed that Elijah wouldn't try morphine, as it 'isn't in his nature' to do such a thing. He did.

When Xavier noticed the scalps piling up in Elijah's army bag, he feared that something was wrong with Elijah. He feared even more when Elijah stated that scalping Fritz fed his hunger. But surely, thought Xavier, Elijah would not become Windigo; he did. As it is clear to see, Xavier did not voice his opinion at important stages in Elijah's life. Perhaps if Xavier had simply told Elijah that Grey Eyes was not only a bad influence on him, but a bad person in

general due to his heavy morphine use, Elijah would have listened to him and not hung around with Grey Eyes, and never become addicted to the drug.

Maybe if Xavier had forced Elijah to stop scalping and take a breath from reality, Elijah would have realized that he was getting out of hand and stop taking Fritz scalps altogether. This way, he never would have turned Windigo. As you can see, there are two clear times in the novel where Xavier should have been a true friend and voiced his opinion towards Elijah about his problems, but not once did he do so. This caused Elijah to not see any problems with the things that he was doing or even realize what a terrible person he was becoming. It could have all been prevented.

Xavier affected not only the events leading up to Elijah's death, but literally was the one to kill him. In fact, he attempted to kill him twice. The first time was in an army tent. When Xavier suspected Elijah to be sleeping, he pulled out a needle filled with morphine from Elijah's army kit. He plunged the needle into one of Elijah's larger veins, but ended up not going through with the injection, as Elijah woke up confused, asking Xavier what he was doing. Xavier quickly responded, saying that he was giving him morphine, and then " slowly pulled the needle from Elijah's arm and placed it back in his kit" (323).

This attempt of killing Elijah went miserably wrong, and caused Elijah to question whether or not he could trust Xavier as a friend anymore. It is clear that Xavier did not have the best track record with Elijah at this point. He trained him for War at a young age and did not speak out about both

morphine addiction and scalping enemies. Furthermore, he attempted to kill Elijah with morphine, fearing that he had gone mad. By not going through with killing Elijah in the first place, it lead to him having to deal with him one on one in the middle of a crater on the battlefield (368-372).

Elijah, knowing that Xavier would have killed him the first chance they were alone, planned to jump Xavier in the crater. Xavier, at this point, had no choice but to kill Elijah; the war machine that he himself had created. He ended up succeeding in this, only to find himself in a hospital days later. The all-out fight to the death between two best friends could have gone either way, however, it never should have occurred in the first place. If only Xavier had made different decisions in respect to Elijah as their friendship progressed, the death of Elijah never would have occurred. Xavier is ultimately responsible for the death of Elijah.