

Analysis of the main character in three day road

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



Arthur Joseph Boyden represents Carl Jung's idea that humans often create a persona in order to be perceived by society in a certain way through the journey of the main character in the novel ' Three Day Road'. Joseph Boyden illustrates the idea that war may impact someone to become something they initially weren't. That being said, World War I, Aboriginal sniper Elijah Weesageechak becomes mentally and physically corrupted by the war, which results to his inevitable death. Further more, the loss of identity, his desire to become a war hero, and the use of morphine to escape reality caused Elijah Weesageechak to become a motionless killer.

Once Elijah joined the Canadian army, he immediately did what ever he could in order to blend in with the other soldiers. Elijah had initially been able to speak English so he could communicate with the white soldiers, for he was raised by nuns in a residential school. To hide that he was an Aboriginal man, Elijah chose to adopt a British accent and speaking style when among the other soldiers. " Dear Henry, would you be a kind chap and make me a cup of tea? " (144). Elijah's decision to not speak Cree when around his peers was his attempt to blend in with the rest of his former soldiers.

Ditching his original Cree accent and adopting a British one was Elijah first step to creating his new persona. After Elijah became more familiar with the other soldiers, Corporal Thompson had chosen Elijah to be apart of a night raid. During the raid, Elijah and his best friend Xavier threw mill bombs into a German trench, thus killing the people inside. When Elijah returned to the Canadian trench, Corporal Thompson asked him if he enjoyed the night raid. Elijah responded, " It's in my blood" (75). By doing so, Elijah had gone against the traditional Cree ways he was taught by Xavier and Niska.

Instead he had modified his persona to embrace war and killing, which contradicts his initial belief before entering the war. That being said, it is quite evident that Elijah had disregarded his Cree traditions so he could become someone who only cared about killing and to fulfil his desired reputation as a deadly sniper. In order for Elijah to prove his killing abilities as a soldier to his peers, he begins to collect the scalps of his killings as trophies. In the novel, Elijah asks, " And what will collecting these trophies do for me? " " They will buy you honour among us" Francis says. " And we are honourable men" (204).

Elijah feels as though he has to prove his killing abilities by gathering scalps so he will be accepted and favoured by his fellow soldiers. During Elijah's quest on becoming a war hero, Elijah begins to enjoy killing and the fame that he receives from it. Elijah feels he must rise at every opportunity in order to impress his peers. An occurrence where Elijah's persona was shown was when the Germans were retreating from a battle, and Elijah picked a target far off in the distance and shot him. The Canadian soldiers around him cheered and said that they will never see anything like that again.

Elijah arrogantly responded: " Until the next time you are with me in a similar situation" (243). Elijah was unable to stop killing for he had become addicted to the fame he was rewarded with. This is revealed in the novel when Elijah says, " I'd go mad in a hospital so far away from it all" (150). Elijah's desire to become a war hero caused him to partake in countless murders in order to impress others. He was able to do so with no emotion through his frequent use of morphine. Elijah used morphine when he participated in raids in order to get a ' sense' of his surroundings.

Xavier description of Elijah on morphine is explained as: “ But when the golden liquid is in his veins! Even at night the world is bathed in a soft light... He can make himself float from his body at will and look down at the world below him” (212). Elijah’s natural talent for hunting combined with his unhealthy use of morphine made him twice as dangerous. Without the morphine in his veins, Elijah became scared of the worlds, which lead him to use it more frequently. As he abused morphine, the real world became distorted. Without fear and pain, war was a game to Elijah.

A game he enjoyed and became good at. Through the use of morphine, Elijah lacked an anchor to reality and because of this, killing became mechanical. An example of this is when Elijah and Xavier are on a sniping mission, they mistake a woman for an enemy and Elijah shoots her. Xavier angrily questions Elijah’s reaction to kill the woman. Elijah defends himself by responding with “ I am trained not to hesitate in situations of danger” (306). Elijah’s response was robotic and emotionless. Eventually, Elijah starts to kill Canadian soldiers who get in his way.

Xavier realizes Elijah has been completely broken by the war and has to be put down. Xavier is forced to kill his best friend, for the war changed him into a man he no longer knew. World War I was evidently too much for Elijah to handle. In order to fit in with the rest of the soldiers he had to throw away his Aboriginal Cree identity and adopt a British one which eventually lead to Elijah performing actions that went against the Cree traditions. That being said, he began to embrace war and killing in order to impress his fellow soldiers, as his ultimate conquest was to become a war hero.

Further more, Elijah's conscious was too powerful and filled his heart with guilt, which resulted in his use of morphine to conceal his inner emotions. With the aid of drugs, Elijah had become a mechanical killing robot whose thirst for blood was immeasurable. Unfortunately his uncontrollable actions were beginning to cause harm to his fellow peers, which resulted in the decision to kill Elijah to protect the safety of the Canadian soldiers. Finally, Joseph Boyden illustrates the idea that the destruction of war may have an impact on one's inner self and that fame and acceptance is something one is willing to die for.