

WAR

by

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FADE IN:

EXT - TRENCH - MORNING

Silent, peaceful almost harmonious. A singing bird can be heard in the distance. Calls out for those who are still alive. Lets them know that they yet again draws breath, and are still left in this hell on earth. MORGEN sits cramped together with the rest of his unit. Young innocent faces, not even ripe to taste the sweet nectar of life, yet is forced to take life away.

MORGEN

Do you hear that?

MORGEN looks around in the sky, intrigued. With his muddy army boot he bumps his friend RICHARD, whom sits right across him. He blinks a few times, tries to go back to sleep. Morgen bumps him again, with the butt of his Enfield rifle.

RICHARD

What!?

MORGEN holds a finger up in the air, smiles.

MORGEN

Listen, can you hear it.

RICHARD, even as he is angered by the awakening, tries to listen in to whatever Morgen refers to.

RICHARD

Hear what?

MORGEN

That, the bird welcoming the rays of the sun. Greeting us to a new day.

RICHARD tries to stand up, easier said than done in the mud pit they are stationed in. Even as he slides around he manages to get a grip on the side of the trench.

RICHARD

I can only hear the sound of bullshit in the morning.

He turns, peeks his head over the EDGE, knowing that only a few millimeters is between him and a new peep hole in his helmet. Tightly holding his Enfield rifle. Suddenly the birds' song transitions, to a clear whistle sound. Morgen

reacts in an instant.

MORGEN

Incoming!

Sudden, massive, completely deafens and then silence. It all happens fast, right in the middle of the trench. Only a couple of meters away from Richard and Morgen it smashes into the unsuspected sleeping soldiers. The rest wakes to battle, straight into the nightmare they relive every single day.

MOVEMENT OF THE SOLDIERS are chaotic yet organized, ants in the wake of danger. God save the king! Screams of wounded soldiers, marksmen readies their rifles, the faithful pray, the wheel turns once again.

RICHARD

Morgen! Are you okay? Morg!

An eruption of dirt has covered Morgen, along with his nearby comrades, a wave of mud, blood and flesh. Richard dives down, knows that he can't help everybody, and gets a grip on Morgen.

RICHARD

Morgen! Can you hear me?

He PULLS him up, tries to get him steady, half his helmet is covered with the muddy blood mix. Dripping down. Richard holds up Morgen's rifle as he starts to come through.

Morgen gets a grip on the rifle and falls in line with Richard and the rest of them. The loud and powerful whistles echoes all around them, fills their hearts with fear. Fear to face the last but horrifying moment of death.

SOLDIER

Even though I walk through the valley  
of the shadow of death, I will fear no  
evil, for you are with me; your rod and  
your staff, they comfort me.

Richard looks at the SOLDIER...bloody fool. Yet he focuses on the task at hand. He aims down sight, trying to channel his breaths through the weapon, an extension of himself. He will feel every bullet that passes through and every life he ends. He and all others around him, time to kill or to be killed.

RICHARD

Come on you bastards; show me those  
sweet helmets of yours.

ON THE HORIZON Richard sees a massive gray line that moves against them. The opposing army is upon them, ready to strike. Rushing forward, the bombardment clearing the way. Richard's comrades are far outnumbered. Screams fill their hearts, fear clouds their minds.

SOLDIER

DOWN!

The shells are close, too close for some. Right down in the trench. Kills off ten soldier's right on the spot. Morgen and Richard looks at the horrific scene. The sense of death and defeat is more present than ever

MORGEN

The artillery is getting closer. Bloody  
accurate.

Richard LOOKS around, trying to shed light on the situation. He sees the end of the burned out forest to the left. The vegetation is dense and would easily hide something from searching eyes.

An irritated revelation falls upon Richard.

RICHARD

There! They probably have lookouts in  
the trees.

Morgen turns and pans the site with his BINOCULARS. Through the cracked glasses he sees the minimal yet crucial movement that exposes the spotter.

Morgen hands the binoculars to Richard.

MORGEN

In that tree, I saw movement.

RICHARD

Let's teach the wanker a lesson then!

Richard takes off in the trench, Morgen is in hot pursuit. Careen passes terrified soldiers and battle ready warriors in the crowded and mud filled trench. Shells still hammer around them, gravel and dirt rains down all around.

RICHARD

Keep moving, just keep moving!

Morgen manages to see over the edge of the trench, the army approaches.

CLOSER.

None fires their weapon yet.

Richard and Morgen comes across a crossroad, the absolute edge of the trench on the left flank. Only one barrier left to traverse before open ground. Morgen sits down, breathing heavily from their rush in the deep mud. Richard checks his rifle, ammo count of bullets and grenades.

MORGEN

We need to hurry or the artillery will decimate us even before the army gets a glimpse of the frontline.

Richard hands Morgen a GRENADE, a mills bomb, looking like a mold covered potato if anything. He attaches the "potato" to his shoulder belt. Also doing ammo check, a deep breath for what is to come. Richard looks at the triage where the lookout is situated.

RICHARD

We will be out in the open for almost one hundred meters, well enough time for him to see us. Any ideas?

MORGEN

I guess that the expression run like hell doesn't do bugger all right now.

Richard loads his rifle, holds it against his shoulder.

RICHARD

It's all we got, be ready to fire on the move. It's nothing for it.

Morgen knows the danger this ensues, it is called no-mans land for a reason. He peaks over at their GOAL; if a spotter would be positioned there he would have a clear sight to anyone that would approach.

MORGEN

Well...that army isn't going away.

He nods at Richard. They stand up and position themselves to dash for their target. Without further ado they jump over the trench wall and legs it for all they are worth.

RICHARD

Move! Move! Move! Don't look back!

THE ARTILLERY fires all the more closer to their position, as if the spotter aims straight for them. A shell hits right in front, creates a large crater behind a boulder. Both fall into it. With only a couple of ten feet left they stay and catch their breath.

MORGEN

That bloody bastard has us locked in tight.

RICHARD

One of these shells will hit on point at any second.

Irritated, Richard tries to come with a solution. Then... Grenades! Morgen catches on what Richard inclines.

MORGEN

Indeed.

They pull the pin on their rotten POTATOES. 1...2...3...Throw! The grenades fly through the air and lands at the bottom of the tree line. A pathetic explosion in contrast to what is happening all around. Yet effective. The trees starts to crumble and crack. They fall over like drunks on a Saturday.

MORGEN

We got him!

Richard is going to stand up, suddenly the all too familiar sound of a speeding bullet whistle past. Hits Richard in the right side of his chest, going straight through. All happens in slow motion. An eternity passes before Richard slams into the ground. Morgen throws himself down with him.

RICHARD

Bollocks! Guess we didn't get him.

Blood pour out of his mouth. Morgen is gut-punched, he does not know what to do, yet he tries to keep calm, do not panic.

RICHARD

Get out there! Get out there and kill that bastard!

Morgen holds his rifle tight in his hands, determined. He

crouches in next to the rock, picks up one of Richards last grenades, and pulls the pin.

MORGEN

Don't you die now and I will be back in a jiffy.

He throws the grenade over and counts 7...6...5...4...3...now! He jumps up and aims his rifle down sight, a second after he is up the grenade explodes, results in a rain of dirt and mud. He frantically scans the surroundings for the spotter as he advances. Armed and dangerous to the teeth. Morgen comes up to a tree, cover in close. His heart is pounding, his breathing sporadic, he looks at the rock where Richard lies. He will not fail.

He hears something, to his left, no to the right. Got to make a move.

Going for a RIGHT.

AS RICHARD puts pressure on his wound, blood still sips out of his mouth. He coughs badly and with every movement, the pain intensifies.

Then...

A gunshot!

Close, very close. He focuses his eyes on the rock, more specifically what's behind it. Footsteps: fast and nibble footsteps. Tries to get his rifle up.

Friend or Foe?

RICHARD

Come on you son of a bitch.

Morgen APPEARS, Richard is relieved beyond comprehension. He let go of his rifle and almost manages to conjure a smile. Morgen jumps down, holds a large square shaped device attached to a thin cable. It's the transmission box that the spotter used.

MORGEN

Let us change the roles a bit!

He clicks several times on the RADIO, in different combinations. Morse code. The strikes of their lines suddenly stops, instead the entire bombardment is moved to the INCOMING ARMY. Shell after shell hits, decimates their ranks and kills hundreds upon hundreds of men. Escalates in

a full retreat. The pure cheers of Morgen and Richards comrades are almost incomprehensive. It simply brings joy to them both; they saved their friends and brought a large defeat to their enemies.

RICHARD

Well, isn't that a sight for sore eyes.

MORGEN drops the radio and crawls closer, he knows that this wound is fatal, and nothing he can do changes that. Deeply saddened and desperate he kneels. Looks up in the air.

MORGEN

Do you hear it Richard, can you hear it?

The BIRD is back; even with all the noise and racket in the background its beautiful song can still be heard. It has found its place in the small shrubbery. Richard manages to smile, even a short chuckle.

RICHARD

I do hear it, I do. No more days for me.

He closes his EYES, tilts his head, his breath seizes. It's over, the bird does not sing anymore. For Morgen it is quiet. The sun does not shine, yet the battle is won. But no hero smiles. Only silence for things to come.

FADE OUT:

THE END