

EXT. SHORE - DAY

Two men in English colonial uniforms pull a boat to shore, while three others step from it, looking around. GEORGE FITTON, (20's) white, English, addresses SIR RICHARD CHATWYN, (40's) white, English.

FITTON

No sign of trouble, sir.

CHATWYN

None yet, young man. (pauses, speaking to the guards) You two men, secure the area so that we may leave our boat here!

Drawing their pistols, they leave, while one remains behind with a musket in his hands.

FITTON

Are you predicting an incident, sir?

CHATWYN

Colonies don't vanish without a reason, Mr. Fitton, something happened here.

Chatwyn searching the surrounding forest closely with his eyes, moving several times for different views.

FITTON

We have Queen's orders to travel to Croatoa as well.

CHATWYN

I'm aware of those orders, but I feel the answers we seek are here, Mr. Fitton, thus making a trip to that island unnecessary.

The two men return.

SOLDIER

The perimeter is secure, sir. No sign of any hostiles.

CHATWYN

Excellent, now let us travel to the colony grounds while daylight is on our side.

The five men enter the forest.

EXT. FOREST - DAY - SHORTLY LATER

The men travel in military formation.

FITTON

What do you believe happened to Roanoke, sir?

CHATWYN

Absorbed into a nearby Indian tribe I wager, it's the only thing that makes sense.

FITTON

In Governor White's report, he said there were no signs of warfare, no weapons or blood.

CHATWYN

The character of men and women change, Mr. Fitton, based on the circumstances they find themselves in.

FITTON

Sir?

CHATWYN

John White is a decent enough man, hand-picked by the queen to be the leader of Roanoke, but he failed in his efforts, Mr. Fitton, that is why we are here.

FITTON

He had to return to England for supplies for the colony, sir.

CHATWYN

Yes, and it was his responsibility to make sure that Roanoke did not run so dangerously low on those supplies, forcing him to leave at such a critical time?

FITTON

Yes, I guess.

CHATWYN

It was the first English colony in North America, and deserved better than Governor White, so as the colonists suffered waiting for his return, and these natives revealed

(MORE)

CHATWYN (CONT'D)
themselves, what choice did they
have?

FITTON
If we encounter these natives,
sir?

CHATWYN
They are savages, Mr. Fitton,
fearful of superstitions and
myths, quite beneath us. Nothing a
shot from a pistol can't solve.

The men slow their walking, almost halting.

SOLDIER #2
Roanoke is just beyond this hill,
sir.

CHATWYN
Very well, carry on, with caution,
and stop all conversations until
we reach the colony.

EXT. FOREST - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Chatwyn stops, examining a tree, with the word CROATOAN
carved into it.

FITTON
That was included in Governor
White's log, sir.

CHATWYN
Yes, but what wasn't included in
his log was the true explanation
of what made this carving.

Chatwyn pulls a vine attached to the tree over the letters.

FITTON
The vines fit perfectly into the
carving!

CHATWYN
These vines pressed into the tree,
creating that word, not a knife.

FITTON
How is it possible?

CHATWYN

Something with great strength did this, and we are here to find out what that is.

EXT. ROANOKE COLONY - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

A silent, deserted colony, except for birds chirping, and wind blowing leaves around.

CHATWYN

You, begin searching these homes there, and rendezvous with us at the center of the village.

The soldier leaves, entering a building, as the men continue down the road.

INT. HOME - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

The soldier searches the home, emptying a cup still filled with water, moving a bed, finding clothes neatly folded. Suddenly, he is pulled violently downward, into the ground, leaving only his helmet behind.

EXT. ROANOKE COLONY - DAY - SHORTLY LATER

Chatwyn, Fitton, and the remaining soldiers search other homes, with one man looking at a well in the middle of the village.

FITTON

It's quite eerie, sir, the silence, and not a single remain of any one hundred seventeen colonists.

CHATWYN

Unsettling, perhaps, but there is always an explanation for everything, Mr. Fitton.

FITTON

I'm not sure I wish to find the explanation for what happened here.

CHATWYN

Mr. Fitton, we will investigate Roanoke thoroughly as ordered by her majesty, Queen Elizabeth the
(MORE)

CHATWYN (CONT'D)
first, return to England, and give
a proper report, is that clear?

FITTON
Yes sir!

Chatwyn eyes something in a home's doorway, as he and Fitton walk to it. Chatwyn picks up a handkerchief, with the initials E D engraved on it.

FITTON
E D, sir?

CHATWYN
Ellinor Dare, John White's
daughter.

FITTON
She one of the missing colonists!

CHATWYN
Yes, she is, strange we would find
it lying here.

A scream from the soldier near the well startles them, as they see him fall into the well, yelling to him as they run to it.

CHATWYN
Are you all right? Answer me!

He waits for an answer, nothing. Chatwyn grabs a rope with a bucket tied to it, pulls it towards him, and cuts the rope with a knife.

CHATWYN
You there, climb down the well and
find him!

FITTON
Sir, the well is too narrow, he
would get stuck inside! He's gone,
probably broke his neck in the
fall!

CHATWYN
Probably?

He begins frantically pacing, holding his face in desperation.

CHATWYN (CONT'D.)
I do not leave men behind under my
command!

FITTON

Sir, look!

Fitton's finger points to the ground next to the well, where a dirt mound now shrinks, right where the soldier was standing.

CHATWYN

The earth moves, but how?

FITTON

The land itself threw him into the well, Roanoke is cursed!

CHATWYN

That is utter nonsense, there must be an explanation!

FITTON

We must leave this place, (pauses, speaking to the guard) Quickly, find the other gentleman and bring him here!

The soldier runs towards the buildings near the colony's entrance.

CHATWYN

We must remain here and figure out what happened here, it is our duty!

FITTON

We tread upon doomed ground, the land itself doesn't want us here!

EXT. ROANOKE COLONY - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

The soldier, hearing a noise behind a barn, walks behind it. A large tree branch spears him through his chest, lifting him off the ground and into the tree.

EXT. ROANOKE COLONY - DUSK - SHORTLY LATER

Chatwyn and Fitton circle the well, weapons drawn, guarding one another.

CHATWYN

Infantrymen, answer me! Where are you!

FITTON

Their gone, sir, we must leave!

CHATWYN

What do we tell our queen, that ghosts and goblins made one hundred and seventeen colonists vanish without a trace? I think not! (pauses, shouting to the soldiers) Return to the colony center, fall in, that is an order!

FITTON

I am not staying here a moment longer!

Fitton begins leaving, but stops, hearing Chatwyn cock his pistol.

CHATWYN

This is insubordination, Mr. Fitton, dare I say, treason. Not another step, remain at your command.

Fitton walks, and is shot in the back by Chatwyn, as he falls down, dying slowing.

CHATWYN

I didn't want to do that! (pauses)
A soldier doesn't run, Mr. Fitton,
we had a mission to complete!

A strong wind builds, slow at first, the increasing, almost knocking Chatwyn over, blowing dirt into his eyes, as he shouts to his men!

CHATWYN (CONT'D.)

Fall in, follow my voice! Return to post!

The earth below his foot begins pulling him down, as he panics to escape, untying his boot, freeing himself, and watches it sink into the ground.

EXT. ROANOKE COLONY - DUSK - MOMENTS LATER

Chatwyn runs to the colony entrance, yelling for the guards, stopping to catch his breath and clean his eyes. Vines from the tree marked CROATOAN grab his arm and leg, dragging him into the brush nearby.

CHATWYN

Stop, no!

More vines wrap around his neck, choking the life from him, as they pull him into the forest.

EXT. ROANOKE COLONY - DUSK

The fierce winds disappear through the now quiet Roanoke colony, as vines drag Fitton's body into bushes.

EXT. SHORE - THE NEXT DAY

Another boat with four men inside it approach the shore.