

(I have always been struck by the narrative of the people of Germany following World War 2 that they did not know. That's what many of us Canucks say, too—we didn't know. And it's true that many of us are appallingly ignorant, myself included.)

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IN A LOVING FAMILY, FOOD TO EAT, A GOOD EDUCATION, she was proud to be a seventh generation Canadian. Her family had thrived here before it was Canada. Loyalists, they escaped the American Revolution and settled on land given by mad King George in the Bay of Quinte on Lake Ontario. 170 years later, she grew up a proud Canadian, a nationalist.

*It was discussed at home, what it meant to be Canadian*

At 17, one of ten nice Church sponsored Southerners on a summer of community work in the North, she saw the legacy of Canada on the Tutchone and Tagish peoples through the lens of privilege. Even so, it shook her sense of who she was, and what was her purpose.

In her 20s, living near the Canada-US border, her identity was steeped in the rise of feminism and the sexual revolution and she partook of both with joy and gusto. Surrounded by wealth and privilege she forgot her northern experience. Study past injustice as theory. The next thirty years she worked with like minds to start things and make things and stick up for things. She worked at little non-profit jobs to keep her head above water. She met her love, built a life, birthed and raised their daughter then nursed her love through sickness to death.

Her bright sense of purpose dimmed as allies competed and the suffering of inequality in all its forms grew. It was too vast; too many layers; too many worthy causes; where could she focus and still make a living? She regarded the world from her safe country, uneasy with the building evidence that for some citizens her country was far from safe. She attended rallies and signed petitions and sat on committees.

*Sigh and fret and rage at injustice*

*Sigh, fret, rage, rage and shrug and pull close a blanket of compromises and denial.*

*Rage weep protest deny*

*Justify apologize forget sleep and dream beautifully crafted*

**WAKE UP**

When she was 60 she understood that injustice is systemic by nature; but didn't see her part in the system until she learned that the land settled by her ancestors had previously been given by King George to Six Nations warriors in recognition for their valour fighting on the British side. The warriors arrived after the loyalists, and found their land taken: the deer meadows fenced and grassed for cattle; wagon roads where trails had been; buildings where there was forest. Then she learned BC's small pox history, and what had seemed bedrock was a quicksand carpet of denial floating on generations of others' pain. A new note jangled rapacious in her internal chorus; an implacable holocaust, a shudder of horror. The proud seventh generation Canadian at her core admitted something sombre and frightful. That harm done to others had eased her life's path and the lives of six generations of her ancestors.

*What have we done? (what has been done?)*

*So much*

It's not time for the luxury of guilt; only time to take up the weight of responsibility and turn the back-pack of privilege into a sack of justice for all. She is a seventh generation Canadian.

When those born complicit to a social order

Recognize its injustice

And seek to change it

A Nation may be born.