

DEVOIR .NO2 CLASSES: 1eres C &D

Text : Death in the train

I lost sight of Usuman again. After the war, my friend obtained for me the passport you are now holding, and took me into French territory. My whole idea was to rest from active life, and to turn my attention to peaceful pursuits. I hoped one day to revisit Mecca. Every time I thought of Dije and the school-children, I longed to go back to that city.

After a few years of a rather roving life, I finally settled in Fort Lamy, trading quietly and pursuing the studies begun with Mallam Gobir. I came back to Nigeria early in the 1930's, and lived peacefully until World War II broke out. In spite of my age, I managed once again to get myself into the british army. That was in 1940.

There is something fascinating about the army and fighting that I cannot quite understand. You make up your mind that you'll never fight again, but when you hear the bugle drumming, and see young blood in iniform ,your own fire is lit, and everything ceases to matter save the the desire to hold a rifle.

So it was me. I could not not handle a rifle, but I could be with the boys, and watch them. We went to East Africa, we came back, and, while the other sailed to India and Burma, we who had already seen action remained in the country

But everything has its end. I grew tired of army life. Late in 1947- that is, early in the month before I entered this train – I applied to be discharged from the army. This was easy enough, since I was old and the war had been over for a long time. As you may gather, I had given up the whole idea of avenging Zarah. What I wanted was to go up to Kano, live peacefully for the few years left, and wait for the great One to call me.

CYPRIAN EKWENSI , The passport of Mallam Ilia from Today 's English
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1) Comprehension questions

A) Answer these questions after reading the text at least twice .(4pts)

- 1) Who lost sight of Usuman again?
- 2) Why did he hope to revisit Mecca?
- 3) Where did the writer and the boys go?