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## A long way gone chapter 17 quotes

Ishmael Beah This Study Guide consists of approximately 20 pages of chapter summaries, quotes, character analysis, themes, and more - everything you need to sharpen your knowledge of A Long Way Gone. This section contains 1,175 words (approx. 3 pages at 400 words per page) Chapter 17 - The nurse who cleaned out Ishmael's cuts when he broke the glass came up to him one afternoon while he was playing table tennis. She invited him to come visit her. The two developed a friendship. At first, he didn't trust her, but she was always kind to him. One time she got him a Walkman and a cassette tape. She had seen in his records that he liked music. She asked him about his scars, and he remembered a battle he had been in. He didn't even feel the bullets as they hit him. He was doing very poorly, but the other soldiers who fought with him took good care of him. The situation reminded him at the time to stay loyal to them. As the nurse, Esther, heard the story, she teared up, and she... (read more from the Chapters 17-21 Summary)

This section contains 1,175 words (approx. 3 pages at 400 words per page) Copyrights A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier from BookRags. (c)2021 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved. Ishmael Beah This Study Guide consists of approximately 20 pages of chapter summaries, quotes, character analysis, themes, and more - everything you need to sharpen your knowledge of A Long Way Gone. This section contains 408 words (approx. 2 pages at 400 words per page) "It wasn't until refugees started passing through our town that we began to see that it was actually taking place in our country." Chapter 1, p. 5. "We didn't know that we were leaving home, never to return." Chapter 1, p. 7. "I get a chance to observe the moon now. I still see those same images I saw when I was six, and it pleases me to know that that part of my childhood is still embedded in me." Chapter 1, p. 17. "These days I live in three worlds: my dreams, and the experiences of my new life, which trigger memories from the past." Chapter 2, p. 20 "This was one of the consequences of the civil war. People stopped trusting each other, and every stranger became an enemy." Chapter 4, p. 37 "If you are alive, there is hope for a better day and something good to happen. If there is nothing good left in... (read more) This section contains 408 words (approx. 2 pages at 400 words per page) Copyrights A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier from BookRags. (c)2021 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved. I HAD NOT BEEN to the hospital since I had walked out a few months earlier, while the nurse was chatting with the sissy city lieutenant, and she had given up trying to get me to come back for a checkup. But one afternoon, during a table tennis match at which the entire staff was present, I felt someone tap me on the shoulder. It was the nurse. She was wearing a white uniform and a white hat. It was the first time I had looked at her directly. Her white teeth contrasted with her dark, shiny skin, and when she smiled, her face not only increased in beauty, it also glowed with charm. She was tall and had big brown eyes that were kind and inviting. She handed me a bottle of Coca-Cola. "Come and see me whenever you feel like it," she said, smiling, as she walked away. The Coca-Cola bottle was cold and it shocked me. I left the game hall with Alhaji and we went outside and sat on a rock drinking the soft drink. "She likes you," Alhaji teased me. I didn't say anything. "Well, do you like her?" she asked. "I don't know. She is older and she is our nurse," I said. "You mean you are afraid of women," Alhaji replied, nodding. "I don't think she likes me the way you are thinking about it." I looked at Alhaji, who was laughing at what I had said. After we finished the bottle, Alhaji left and I decided to go to the hospital. When I got to the entrance, I peeked in and saw the nurse on the phone. She motioned for me to come inside and sit. She smiled and made sure that I noticed that it was because of my presence and not her phone conversation. I looked around and saw a chart on the wall with all the names of the boys at the center. In the boxes beside most of the names there was a check indicating that they had been in at least one session. There was nothing in the boxes across from my name. The nurse took the chart down and put it into a drawer as she hung up the phone. She pulled her chair closer to me and I thought she was going to ask me a question about the war, but instead she calmly asked, "What is your name?" I was surprised, since I was certain that she knew my name. "You know my name," I angrily said. "Maybe I do, but I want you to tell me your name," she insisted, widening her eyes. "Okay, okay, Ishmael," I said. "Great name." She nodded and continued, "My name is Esther and we should be friends." "Are you sure you want to be friends with me?" I asked. She thought for a while and said, "Maybe not." I was quiet for a bit, as I didn't know what to say and also didn't trust anyone at this point in my life. I had learned to survive and take care of myself. I had done just that for most of my short life, with no one to trust, and frankly, I liked being alone, since it made surviving easier. People like the lieutenant, whom I had obeyed and trusted, had made me question trusting anyone, especially adults. I was very suspicious of people's intentions. I had come to believe that people befriended only to exploit one another. So I ignored the nurse and began to stare out the window. "I am your nurse and that's all. If you want to be friends with me, you will have to ask me and I will have to trust you first," she said. I smiled, because I was thinking the same thing. She was perplexed at first by the sudden smile. But then she said, "You have a great smile, you should smile more." I stopped immediately and tensed my face. "Is there anything that you want from the city?" she asked, but I didn't answer. "That's it for today," she said. A few days after that first conversation, the nurse gave me a present. I was watching some of the boys roll a volleyball net onto the yard. Alhaji returned from his session at the hospital and told me that nurse Esther said I should go see her. I wanted to watch the volleyball game, but Alhaji began to pull me and didn't let me go until we were at the doorway of the hospital. He then shoved me inside and ran away giggling. Lying on the floor, I looked up to see Esther sitting behind her desk, smiling. "Alhaji said you want to see me," I said, getting to my feet. She threw a package at me. I held it in my hand, wondering what it was and why she had gotten it for me. She was looking at me, waiting for me to open it. When I unwrapped it, I jumped up and hugged her, but immediately held back my happiness. I sternly asked, "Why did you get me this Walkman and cassette if we are not friends? And how did you know that I like rap music?" "Please sit down," she said, taking the package from me, putting the battery and cassette in the Walkman, and handing it to me. I put the headphones on and there was Run-D.M.C.: "It's like that, and that the way it is..." coming through the headphones. I began to shake my head, then Esther lifted the headphones off my ears and said, "I have to examine you while you listen to the music." I agreed, and took off my shirt, stood on a scale, and she checked my tongue, used a flash-light to look into my eyes...I didn't care because the song had taken hold of me, and I listened closely to every word. But when she began examining my legs and saw the scars on my left shin, she took my headphones off again and asked, "How did you get these scars?" "Bullet wounds," I casually replied. Her face filled with sorrow and her voice was shaking when she spoke: "You have to tell me what happened so I can prescribe treatment." At first I was reluctant, but she said she would be able to treat me effectively only if I told her what had happened, especially about how my bullet wounds were treated. So I told her the whole story about how I got shot, not because I really wanted to, but because I thought that if I told her some of the gruesome truth of my war years she would be afraid of me and would cease asking questions. She listened attentively when I began to talk. Her eyes were glued to my face, and I bowed my head as I delved into my recent past. During the second dry season of my war years, we were low on food and ammunition. So, as usual, we decided to attack another village. First, I went with my squad to lay a village. We watched the village all day and saw that there were more men than us and that they were well armed and had fewer guns. I am not sure if they were rebels, because they had fewer boys than any of the other groups we had attacked. Half wore army uniforms and half civilian clothes. We returned to base and I reported my squad's findings to the lieutenant. We immediately left for the village, which was about three days' walk. The plan was to first secure the village, then remain there and form a new base instead of bringing the goods back. We left our village that night, alternately walking fast and jogging on the path all night. During the three-day journey, we stopped once a day to eat, drink, and take drugs. We carried with us all the ammunition, guns, and semiautomatic machine guns. Each of us had two guns, one strapped to our back, the other held in our hands. We left only two men behind to guard the base. On the morning of the third day, the lieutenant made us rest longer than we had during the previous days. Afterward, we walked all day and into the evening until the village was in sight. There were many mango, orange, and guava trees in the village, and it looked as if it had been a farm. Surrounding it, we waited for the lieutenant's command. As we lay in ambush, we began to realize that the place was empty. I was lying next to the lieutenant and he looked at me with a puzzled face. I whispered to him that the village had been full of gunmen a few days ago, even though it now looked deserted. As we continued to watch, a dog strolled across the village, barking as it went down the path. About an hour later, five gunmen entered the village. They took buckets from the verandah of one of the houses and headed toward the river. We were beginning to suspect that something was amiss when a shot was fired from behind us. It was clear now: we were being ambushed. The attackers wanted to push us toward the village so they could have us in the open. We exchanged fire all night, until morning arrived, at which point we had no choice but to retreat into the village where they wanted us. We had already lost about five men, and the rebels were coming at the rest of us. They were up in the mango, orange, and guava trees, ready to rain bullets down on us. My squad scattered, running from one end of the village to the other, crouching behind houses. We had to get out before I was too late, but first we had to get rid of the attackers in the trees, which we did by spraying bullets into the branches to make the rebels fall off them. Those who didn't immediately die we shot before they landed on the ground. To avoid the open area and regroup in the nearby forest, we had to make an opening for ourselves; there was too much firepower surrounding us. So we concentrated our firepower on one area of the forest until everyone was dead. As soon as we had time to gather, the lieutenant once again gave us his little talk about how we had to fight fiercely to capture the village, otherwise we would have to roam the forest looking for another base. Some people were injured, but not so severely as to keep them from fighting; others, like myself, had received many bullet wounds that they ignored. Our first counterattack was carried out in order to secure ammunition from the dead. Then we launched a second fierce attack to gain some control of the village. For more than twenty-four hours we retreated and attacked, using the arms and ammunition from those we had killed. Finally it seemed we had overpowered our rivals. The gunshots had stopped. The bushes behind the mango trees were still. The village, it seemed, was ours. I was filling my backpack with ammunition from a hut when bullets began to rain on the village again. I was hit three times on my left foot. The first two bullets went in and out, and the last one stayed inside my foot. I couldn't walk, so I lay on the ground and shot into the bush where the bullets that hit me had come from. I released the entire round of the magazine into that one area. I remember feeling a tingle in my spine, but I was too drugged to really feel the pain, even though my foot had begun to swell. The sergeant doctor in my squad dragged me into one of the houses and tried to remove the bullet. Each time he raised his hands from my wound, I saw my blood all over his fingers. He constantly wiped my forehead with a soaked cloth. My eyes began to grow heavy and I fainted. I do not know what happened, but when I woke up the next day I felt as if I had had nails hammered into the bones of my foot and my veins were being chiseled. I felt so much pain that I was unable to cry out loud; tears just fell from my eyes. The ceiling of the thatched-roof house where I was lying on a bed was blurry. My eyes struggled to become familiar with my surroundings. The gunfire had ceased and the village was quiet, so I assumed that the attackers had been successfully driven away. I felt a brief relief for that, but the pain in my foot returned, causing the veins in my entire body to tighten. I tucked my lips in, closed my heavy eyelids, and held tight to the edges of the wooden bed. I heard footsteps of people entering the house. They stood by my bed, and as soon as they began to speak, I recognized their voices. "The boy is suffering and we have no medicine here to lessen his pain. Everything is at our former base." The sergeant doctor sighed and continued, "It will take six days to send someone to get the medicine and return. He will die from the pain by then." "We have to send him to the former base, then. We need those provisions from that base, anyway. Do all you can to make sure that the boy stays alive," the lieutenant said, and walked out. 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