

This is the testimony of Jewel, a survivor of the Rwandan genocide

After Habyarimana's death in 1994, trouble began. My mother plus and seven of her sisters and brothers were killed in the early days of April. I was living with a Hutu lady, when the militia and *interahamwe* came looking for me. She gave them her music system instead of the 100,000 Rwandese Francs that they had asked her to raise if they were to spare my life.

A guard at one of the neighbour's then told me that there was an urgent meeting I had to attend, but on my way out I came face to face with my attackers. One Cyprien told them that he wanted to kill me at his house, but instead he took me to his neighbour's house and raped me. I was made to sleep in a dog kennel. I could not even stand. I was covered in dog ticks. When night fell, I left the kennel and hid in a latrine but was discovered when the militia came looking for Tutsi to kill. I followed them as instructed but managed to fall behind and hide. The house where I hid belonged to my brother-in-law and I found a carton of biscuits and drinking water there. Soon after I was found again, by militia who had come to clean out the house.

They took me to a roadblock where there were lots of militia. I withstood their torture all day until three of them took me to an empty house that belonged to some Catholic brothers and for three days the soldiers raped me, even inviting some of their colleagues to join in. Among the invited colleagues was one who took pity on me and hid me in somebody's kitchen. I stayed there until I was rescued.

I didn't know what to do after genocide. I stayed with my nephews and nieces but later on moved back in with the lady I was staying with before the genocide began.

Because of the many troubles I went through, I went for an HIV/AIDS test; the result was positive. I am now living alone but I don't have enough money to pay my rent. Again my security is threatened because the Hutus are blaming us for suing their brothers, and getting them jailed. Worst of all I get sick so often that I cannot even be employed anywhere.

Today's Reading of the Testimonies marks the 15th Anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, in support of survivors like Jewel.