

From **The Times**:

Childhood Stolen

On Holocaust Memorial Day we remember those killed during the Second World War and in more recent atrocities. Here, Liliane Umubyeyi tells Hannah Fletcher how the brutal civil war in Rwanda affected her

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SECTION: T2

FEATURES: Pg. 23

Today is Holocaust Memorial Day, when the UK remembers the six million Jews who died during the Second World War.

But the day is also for the victims of other atrocities. In 1994 in Rwanda, a small country in Africa, around 800,000 people were killed in just 100 days. An orphan of that war, Liliane Umubyeyi (right), tells us what happened to her.

I was 15 years old when the men came.

There were about 50 of them carrying machetes and guns and running towards the house where my family and I were hiding. I remember I could see the terror in my parents' eyes - they knew what was going to happen.

There was no escape, but when I saw the weapons they had, I was so scared that I jumped out of a window. My mum tried to follow me but it was too late.

Outside the house, there was nowhere to go. There were roadblocks everywhere. So I climbed a tree near my house and hid. I watched as they killed my whole family.

When they had killed everybody, they dragged their bodies outside and left them for the wild dogs. I couldn't bear to see my mother and father and brother like that.

After the fighting stopped, I was completely by myself. I wandered around looking for any family or friends that might still be alive. Everyone was dead. My old house was destroyed and I had no school or job to go to. I spent my days searching for scraps of food in empty farms and shops. I was lost.

In 2000, a Rwandan politician paid for me to come to England. I didn't speak any English or know anyone. But slowly, I built a life here. Now, I am about to have a baby and I work for a charity called Survivors Fund, which helps people from Rwanda like me. I have been back three times. The first time was so difficult, but each time it gets easier. I have to accept that I cannot change what has happened and the more I accept it, the better it will be for me.

The atrocities that happened in my country and in the Holocaust come from ignorance and prejudice. They happen when people forget that we are all human beings, no matter who we are or where we come from.