



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

In 1994, I was a carefree 17-year-old at a secondary school with high hopes for the future. Within the space of three months, my whole world had collapsed.

When our house was attacked, my family separated and ran in many different directions. My mother, grandmother and I took refuge at the house of my elder sister who was married to a Hutu man. I thought that our in-laws would protect us. The killers then attacked the house, calling on our brother-in-law to join the killings. The maid told them that he was not at home. They left. Afraid that they would come back, we left the house under the cover of night, at 2:00am. We went to the house of my sister's father-in-law. But he chased us away, keeping my sister and her three children.

As a last resort we went to hide in bushes. For about two weeks we continued to move between different bushes. But, I was found by one en



Once the frail women had left, we were ordered to take all our clothes off. We were raped by so many men, repeatedly every day, that I cannot even remember how many they were. During the day, other girls and women would be brought to the scene in the bush. Any man could call any woman he wanted and just rape her. Meanwhile the killers brought villagers to guard us while they went off to try find more people to kill.

We were in this situation for a whole month. We had to accept our lot, as the chances of escaping seemed very slim. Our guards also raped us, but one of the women told them that she was going to tell the killers that these men were raping their women. Frightened of what the killers would do to them if they f