

100 days a Tutsi

written by

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Subtitle: 1994

We hear the rain falling onto the thatch roof of the hut. Keza's eyes are alert, but her hand stroking Mutoni does not give any anxiety away. Mutoni holds Sebi as she listens to her mother.

KEZA

He taught me to dance. He laughed at me when I first tried. "Two left feet," he said. I didn't mind. I just wanted to be close to him.

MUTONI

What did he feel like?

KEZA

Warm, soft, until I reached his jaw. He carried all his worries in his face.

MUTONI

Like you do mawe?

KEZA

Sometimes, yes.

MUTONI

And what did he smell like?

KEZA

New beginnings.

MUTONI

That's not a smell, mawe.

KEZA

Oh but it is. He smelt like the earth, like the harvest time, like the lighting of a fire. He was everything about to happen. He was the excitement of a new season. He was the beginning of me.

MUTONI

How old were you when you met dawé?

KEZA

I was 16 years old. I don't know why it took me 16 years to find him, we grew up in the same village.

(MORE)

KEZA (CONT'D)

But when I did, I held onto him and never wanted to let him go.

MUTONI

I miss him mawe, I miss the way he picked me up with his strong arms. I miss the way he smelled. To me he smelled of chalk and books.

(pause)

Why did you let him go, mawe?

KEZA

To save us, Baba.

Sebi whimpers and Mutoni strokes her. Keza turns the gas light out.

MUTONI

It is colder mawe.

Keza wraps a blanket over Mutoni.

2

EXT. MARKET PLACE - DAY

2

Subtitle: Kibungo Province, 87 miles East of Kigali, Rwanda. 1989.

A 5 year old MUTONI (skinny, blind but with a radiant smile) is sitting on the floor next to her mom, KEZA (a woman who has not lived an easy life), who is busy selling tea to a customer. The market place is busy and humming. Mutoni is playing with a stick in the sand. She runs it through the earth with one hand, then feels the ridges and furrows she has made with the other. Suddenly, a puppy rushes towards her and grabs her stick. Mutoni cries out in fright.

MUTONI

Mawe!

Keza quickly turns around to see what is wrong. She smiles when she sees the puppy and bends down to her daughter.

KEZA

Don't worry, Mutoni. It's a puppy. This little thing wants to play with your stick.

MUTONI

Is she going to bite me?

KEZA

No my darling. Hold out your hand to stroke her.

Mutoni holds out her hand and Keza takes it. She strokes Mutoni's hand over the puppy who loves the attention and drops the stick to lick Mutoni's hand.

MUTONI
(laughing)
It tickles!

Keza watches as her daughter happily plays with this puppy. We catch a glimmer of a hidden sadness in her eyes. We hear an OLD MAN whistling, before we see him coming into sight. He is scanning for something - spots the puppy. He plonks something down on the ground and comes closer.

OLD MAN
There she is. Come here!

The puppy runs towards the man. We see Keza looking at what the old man put down, next a bucket of water there are two dead puppies.

KEZA
Wait! Is this your puppy?

OLD MAN
Found the mother killing my chickens. Followed her and found three more. Nuisances.

KEZA
I'll take her.

OLD MAN
To kill your chickens?

KEZA
For my daughter. She... could use a friend.

OLD MAN
Ha! Some friend, but ok. This runt is yours.

Keza reaches down to the puppy and gathers her in her hands. A close call. She takes her to Mutoni and places her in her lap.

KEZA
Mutoni, today I am giving you a very big responsibility. This puppy is yours to feed, give water and look after.

MUTONI

Ah mawe, I will play with her and I
will love her!

KEZA

I know you will my darling.

MUTONI

(nuzzling her face into
the puppy)

Sebi.

3 EXT. HUT NIGHT TIME -

3

Subtitle: March 1992

Through the persistent fall of rain we hear the last cluck of a hen as she settles into her hutch, a child coughs and a cow moans as it rubs against a fence pole. The village is ready for bed.

4 INT. HUT - MORNING

4

Mutoni is getting dressed. She feels for the pile of dresses in her cupboard. She runs her hand over each one, feeling the stitches, the fabric. She feels the one that she is looking for and smiles as she pulls it out.

MUTONI

Sebi, eleven years ago today mawe
and dawe got married. So we are
going to find some mangoes for
dessert. Come.

Sebi barks as Mutoni picks up her walking stick and the two make their way out of the house towards the fields.

5 EXT. ROWS OF MANGO TREES - MORNING CONT

5

Mutoni holds her stick out as she walks through the mango trees and taps the trunks, counting them.

MUTONI

One, two, three, four...

Sebi runs after a cane rat, which disappears before she can catch it. Mutoni stops.

MUTONI (CONT'D)

Sebi, here.

(Sebi returns to Mutoni's
heels)

These trees are almost four months
old now. They are ready for us.
Grandma won't mind if we take a
few.

The trees bow with the weight of the ripe fruit. Mutoni
smells the fruit, a familiar and welcoming smell. She feels
the mangoes one by one and carefully selects three.

MUTONI (CONT'D)

There.

Sebi barks and wags her tail. Mutoni places the mangoes in a
bag and swings it over her shoulder. They make their way back
home. Mutoni, with her stick out in front of her and Sebi at
her side.

6 INT. CLASSROOM - MORNING CONT

6

PATRICK, a school teacher in his thirties, is writing on a
chalk board. His learners, primary school children, sitting
on long wooden benches watch him closely. He is writing in
Kinyarwanda on a roughly sketched map of Rwanda. Patrick and
the school children speak to each other in Kinyarawana.
Subtitles in English.

PATRICK

(writing the country names
as he speaks)

We are bordered by Uganda, up North
- Zaire, over here - Tanzania to
the west and below us, in the
south, we have Burundi. Since we
have all borders touched by land
and not by the ocean there is a
term for this. Who can tell me what
it is?

A 13 year old BOY raises his hand. Patrick nods to him.

BOY

It means we are landlocked.

PATRICK

Very good.

We hear a hand bell clanging, signalling the end of the
class.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

We will continue this lesson tomorrow where we discuss the great body of water that we do have on a border of our country.

CHILDREN

(giggling and singing as they leave the class)

Koko! Koko! Koko!

Patrick laughs as the children exit and the PRINCIPAL arrives. Revert back to English.

PRINCIPAL

It is only from your class that I hear children laughing when they leave. You are very good with them. How is your daughter?

PATRICK

She's well, thank you. She's learning to weave baskets with my mother.

PRINCIPAL

That is good. If she'd like to join our singing classes she is most welcome. She doesn't need to feel left out of school even though she could not come here.

PATRICK

Thank you. I will ask her. I think she would enjoy making some new friends too.

The Principal nods and leaves the classroom.

7

INT. HUT - EVENING

7

Mutoni, Patrick and Keza are enjoying the ripe mangoes. They each hold a whole, peeled mango and take bites into the flesh as the sweet juice trickles down their hands.

KEZA

You spoil us, Mutoni. This is the most delicious mango I have had all year.

Mutoni grins as she wipes some juice from her chin.

PATRICK

My love, our Principal has invited you to join the school choir. Would you like to sing with them?

MUTONI

Yes Dawe! Please! I have heard them singing and someone playing along with an inanga. They are very good.

PATRICK

Lovely, I will let him know in the morning.

MUTONI

Dawe, how can people be cockroaches?

Keza shoots Patrick a concerned look.

PATRICK

What are you talking about Mutoni?

MUTONI

I heard a lady at the market saying that some people are cockroaches.

PATRICK

Oh silly nonsense my darling! People are people and cockroaches and cockroaches.

He reaches out to touch and tickle her head.

MUTONI

(giggling)

What are you doing?!

PATRICK

Just checking. No, no antenna here!...Wings? Nope, no wings.

MUTONI

You're silly Dawe.

Keza smiles proudly at her husband, how he always manages to know just what to say.

Keza is cooking sweet potatoes and beans. The radio is playing in the background. Patrick dips a spoon in to taste.

PATRICK
Magnificent!

KEZA
You say that every time I cook. I think you're just trying to charm me!

PATRICK
Charm you? You are already my wife. No charming needed.

Keza playfully dodges his kisses. We hear a tapping of a stick on the earth, a girl humming and Sebi's bark.

KEZA
Mutoni!

PATRICK
Mutoni!

MUTONI
Mawe! Dawe!

Mutoni enters with a huge smile on her face. In her hands is a woven basket.

MUTONI (CONT'D)
A gift for you.

She hands the basket out and her parents take it.

MUTONI (CONT'D)
I had help with the colours. I wanted green for mawe's tea leaves and blue and brown for the rivers and earth you love so much, dawe.

KEZA
It is beautiful my darling.

PATRICK
(kissing his daughter's forehead)
You are my special girl, thank you. How was your singing class?

MUTONI
It was good. I think I'm getting better, but I'm not sure. Shema's boys are in the choir.

(MORE)

MUTONI (CONT'D)

They sometimes walk with me until
they get to their their home.

PATRICK

That is nice, Mutoni. They are good
boys.

9 EXT. HUT - DUSK

9

Keza hands Mutoni a silver bowl with some left overs. With Sebi, right at her side, Mutoni takes it outside and puts it down next to the front door.

MUTONI

Eat Sebi.

Sebi begins to devour the food and Mutoni feels for the water bowl. She dips her fingers in and feels that there is not much water left.

MUTONI (CONT'D)

Wait here Sebi.

Mutoni goes inside to fetch a water jug and returns to fill up Sebi's water bowl. She sits down next to Sebi.

MUTONI (CONT'D)

Can you hear the singing, Sebi?
There is a celebration.
(Mutoni sings along
softly)

Sebi finishes eating and goes to lie with her head on Mutoni's lap.

10 EXT. MARKET PLACE - NOON

10

The marketplace is hustling with vendors shouting their deals, bartering between stall owners and customers, and children running around laughing as they dodge each other in a game of catch.

Keza sits on a high chair at her tea stand and sorts through tea leaves as she awaits the next customer. It is not long before SHEMA, appears.

SHEMA

Mwiriwe Keza.

KEZA

Is it afternoon already, Shema?
Today seems to be disappearing so
quickly! Sales have been good and I
have only just had a chance to sit.

SHEMA

That's good Keza. You know how to
get your leaves just right. Your
tea is the only tea my wife will
drink.

KEZA

Please send her my well wishes.
Your boys are in the choir with
Mutoni. They are good to her.

Shema smiles then hesitates, not wanting to break the news,
but he must.

SHEMA

There's more unrest, Keza.

KEZA

You worry too much.

SHEMA

And you pretend there's nothing to
worry about.

KEZA

But they cannot care about a small
village like us.

SHEMA

The hate is spreading as quickly as
gossip after church. My cousin came
to speak to me. He was in Kigali
and he could feel the anticipation.
There are meetings. The government
is training Hutus to use clubs,
machetes and guns. They are
training them to kill.

KEZA

This is not Burundi. People surely
learn from history.

SHEMA

Did they learn from the Ikiza?
There is hatred in this country
that I fear will erupt soon my
friend. It is not safe for your
family here.

KEZA

But I am Hutu. What can they do.

SHEMA

Patrick? Mutoni?

KEZA

Mutoni?! What would they want with her? Besides, no one knows **what** we are. They know **who** we are. This village looks after one another.

Shema, shaking his head, takes a bag of tea and pays Keza.

KEZA (CONT'D)

Thank you my friend.

11 INT. HUT - AFTERNOON

11

Patrick, Mutoni and Keza are sitting outside their hut, chatting. Sebi runs after field mice and birds, barking with frustration when they get away.

MUTONI

I don't hear other dogs often. Do many other people have dogs?

PATRICK

No, not many.

MUTONI

We were lucky the day we met Sebi.

KEZA

Yes, we were.

MUTONI

Innocent got into a fight at school today.

KEZA

Shema's son?! That doesn't sound like him.

MUTONI

One of the older boys in the choir said his name was no longer Innocent. We must now call him Inyenzi.

(Keza and Patrick share a very concerned look)

Some of the other children started calling him inyenzi.

(MORE)

MUTONI (CONT'D)

He got so mad that he started hitting the older boy who was much stronger than him. The Principal saw and stopped the fight. He punished Innocent - he had to stay behind after our practice.

PATRICK

That older boy was looking for trouble. Innocent should have just left it.

12 INT. HUT - NIGHT TIME

12

Subtitle: 6 APRIL 1992

Mutoni and Sebi are asleep. A radio plays softly in the background. Patrick has one of his geography books out on the table and he is standing over it, pointing out areas. Keza and Patrick whisper to each other so as not to wake Mutoni.

PATRICK

Look, this is where we are. My brother's family is up here. I will follow this river that runs up north. It is safer to travel at night, so when -

He is interrupted by the radio announcement.

RADIO

RTLTM, Kigali's free radio established 1993, broadcasting on 106.94. Habyarimana has been assassinated when his plane was shot down earlier today.

Patrick sits down at his desk and opens a drawer. Inside is an envelope with his identity book and money. He opens the book and turns to where there is "Tutsi" marked on a page.

Lifting it up he shows it to Keza.

PATRICK

They will come for me.

KEZA

No, Patr-

PATRICK

Shh. Don't interrupt because this is the most difficult thing I've ever had to say and if I stop I'm afraid I won't be able to carry on.
(holding out his identity book)

I have been following the news coming in from friends in Kigali. They will start checking this and when they do I will put you and Mutoni in danger. If I leave, you have your papers and that will keep you safe.

KEZA

We will come with you.

PATRICK

Road blocks are being set up. If we get caught...

KEZA

But what if you get caught.

Patrick throws his identity card in the fire. He hands Keza the money and kisses her. With one last look he resolutely turns around and disappears into the night.

RADIO

Tutsi cockraoches eat human flesh.
It's true. They are cannibals.

Keza angrily turns off the radio and weeps. The last of the identity card burning in the fire.

13

EXT. MARKET PLACE - DAY

13

Subtitle: 8 April

Keza is at her tea stand, she sells a few bags of tea and looks around at the mostly empty market place. Shema arrives.

SHEMA

Have you heard from your husband?

KEZA

Shh.

(MORE)

KEZA (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Everyone must believe that he left me for good.

(making sure that no one is listening)

He has family Uganda. He will tell me when it is safe for us to cross. Shema, I don't know when I will hear from him. What if I don't.

Shema puts his hand out over hers and holds it tightly.

SHEMA

God will keep him safe. I have heard of others who have made it safely across the border. It is good he left when he did. Things are tightening up and movement is becoming more intense.

Keza gathers herself and hands him a bag of tea. He pays her and nods farewell.

14 EXT. MARKET PLACE - MOMENTS LATER

14

Mutoni is walking through the market holding her walking stick out in front of her, Sebi at her side.

MUTONI

(calling out)

Mawe!

Keza rushes towards her daughter and embraces her.

KEZA

My darling, you're early. How was grandma's?

MUTONI

She was out, mawe. I called but she wasn't there.

KEZA

Stay at my stand. I will be back soon. Don't leave here, you hear me?

MUTONI

Yes mawe.

Keza runs as fast as she can to her mother in law's hut. It stands empty. Inside has been ransacked. A NEIGHBOUR calls out.

NEIGHBOUR

Keza. Come here.

KEZA

What happened?

NEIGHBOUR

Men came. They were looking for Tutsis. Your husband's mother is in the Catholic church. She is hiding there.

KEZA

Thank you. I will go find her.

NEIGHBOUR

Don't. If you sympathise with Tutsi's they will hurt you. She will be safe there.

Keza nods and rushes back to her tea stand.

15

EXT. MARKET PLACE - DAY CONT

15

KEZA

Mutoni, I'm back. Let's pack up and go home.

MUTONI

Did you find grandma, mawe?

KEZA

Yes, she's fine. She's at church.

MUTONI

That's silly... why go to church when she knows I am coming to see her? She must have something urgent to pray for.

KEZA

Yes my darling. She does.

16 INT. HUT - NIGHT TIME

16

Mutoni is fast asleep and Keza is up at the kitchen table. She has Patrick's geography school book in front of her and she is studying the map of Rwanda, using her finger to trace Patrick's route to Uganda. There is a knock at the door and Keza goes to open it. It is Shema.

KEZA

Shema? It's late. Please, come in.

SHEMA

There will be raids tomorrow. Have your papers ready or make sure that you are out of the village.

KEZA

Thank you Shema.

Keza goes back to Patrick's school book and tears the map out. She folds it and puts it in her pocket.

17 INT. HUT - EARLY MORNING

17

Subtitle: 9 APRIL

Keza has not slept. She is sitting at the kitchen table with a cup of tea and her papers. Waiting. In the distance we begin to hear shouting and crashing. She waits, gingerly. She takes a sip of her tea and as she puts it down on the table her front door is knocked open. Keza quickly stands as she sees two armed MEN walk into her home. One of the men, eyes her papers on the table and points to them with his machete. Keza stands and hands them to him.

MAN 1

(to the other)

Hutu.

(to Keza)

And where is your husband.

KEZA

He left me.

MAN 1

You expect me to believe that?

(to the other)

Search the house.

KEZA

No! Wait!

The men open the bathroom door and open the bedroom door, waking up Mutoni. Sebi begins barking.

MUTONI
Who is it?

MAN 1
Open your eyes girl. Look at me.

Keza rushes in and holds Mutoni.

KEZA
This is my daughter. She cannot see.

The man laughs.

MAN 1
Well her dog sure can.

He moves to kick the still barking Sebi who jumps out of his way.

MAN 2
(shouting)
All clear.

MAN 1
(using his machete to lift
Keza's chin)
Where is your husband?

KEZA
I told you he left us. I don't know where, but if I find him and that woman he left me for...

MAN 1
(winking)
You take care now. A woman alone without her husband...

He leaves the room. Keza holds Mutoni tight as they hear the men leave the house. Once the men are gone, Mutoni begins to cry.

MUTONI
I'm scared, mawe.

KEZA
I'm here my darling. I will protect us.

Sebi licks Mutoni's leg as the mother and daughter embrace. Screams and bashing can be heard in the background.

18

EXT. HUT - MORNING

18

Keza opens her front door to look around. There are no signs of the armed men, but signs that they had been there. One of Keza's neighbours, FRANCIS, is sitting on her front door step, bleeding from her head. Keza rushes over to her.

KEZA

Francis, are you alright.

Francis looks out, with distant eyes, gently rocking.

KEZA (CONT'D)

Francis, can you hear me?

FRANCIS

(whispering)

I knew the one man. I said to him to stop and remember that we are neighbours.

(MORE)

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

The other man overheard so he beat me. He beat me, my neighbour, he beat me until the other man walked away.

KEZA

Let me take a look.

Keza gently uses part of her clothing to wipe the blood away.

KEZA (CONT'D)

Come, let me clean you up.

She helps Francis up and they walk to Keza's hut.

19

INT. HUT - MORNING CONT

19

KEZA

Mutoni, I am here, with Francis. She is hurt.

MUTONI

I'll bring water.

Mutoni goes over to the water jug and brings it to the kitchen table.

Keza brings out a medicine bag and uses a cloth to wash away the blood before bandaging her friend's head.

KEZA

Stay here until your husband gets home.

FRANCIS

Thank you my friend.

20

EXT. MARKET PLACE - MORNING

20

Keza is at her tea stand with Mutoni. She is going through the motions of setting out her goods to sell, trying to keep some normalcy alive.

MUTONI

I don't hear many people mawe.

KEZA

It is just a slow day my darling.

Smoke begins wafting through the mostly empty stands. We hear the crackling of fire getting louder, closer.

MUTONI

Mawe?

Keza grabs hold of Mutoni. The armed men are back and are burning Tutsi's huts.

ARMED MAN

(shouting out)

There is no place for a cockroach here. And be warned, there is no place for a cockroach sympathiser either.

The men are patrolling through the market place, smashing stalls owned by Tutsis.

MUTONI

What cockroaches mawe?

Keza grabs her and pulls her behind her body as an armed man passes.

KEZA

Shh.

When the men have left, Keza grabs her tea and bags and packs up as quickly as she can.

KEZA (CONT'D)

Come my darling, we need to go home.

Keza doesn't let go of Mutoni's hand as she lugs her wares with the other.

21 INT. HUT - NIGHT

21

Shema, his WIFE and Keza are sitting around Keza's table.

SHEMA'S WIFE

Keza, our sons have friends that have joined the militia.

KEZA

Children? They are recruiting children?!

SHEMA'S WIFE

He was showing my youngest his nail studded club that an older man had given him. He was so proud of it, Keza. When I told him to leave, he asked if we were joining him or if we were ready to die. He is 11 years old.

SHEMA

That little boy is right. They are gaining strength and momentum.
(MORE)

SHEMA (CONT'D)

It is not long now until we are going to be forced to join them or be killed.

SHEMA'S WIFE

How could you even say that out loud. We will never join them.

SHEMA

That is not what I am saying. I am saying that we need a strategy. We cannot hide in our huts and know that because we are Hutu we will be safe. We also cannot sit in our huts and not fight for our friends, our neighbours, our fellow Rwandan people.

SHEMA'S WIFE

Risk our lives, our sons' lives?

SHEMA

How will we live with ourselves if we don't do something?

SHEMA'S WIFE

No Patrick. I stand by what I said. No Tutsis in our house. We cannot hide them and put our boys in danger.

PATRICK

How will our boys grow up and look at us if we stood idle and did nothing?

SHEMA'S WIFE

What if our boys don't get the chance to grow up?

KEZA

The church needs food and blankets. I am going there tonight.

SHEMA'S WIFE

(getting up)

I have a bag of potatoes and plantains at home. I won't be long.

SHEMA

(grabbing her hand and kissing it)

Be careful.

Shema's wife leaves.

SHEMA (CONT'D)

I have two Tutsi women hiding in our cow shed. My wife doesn't know. I could not turn them away.

KEZA

You're a good man Keza, but she's right too, you are putting your sons at risk.

SHEMA

I am being careful.

KEZA

You know what will happen if they find them.

(MORE)

KEZA (CONT'D)

They don't ask questions. They use force. And they won't just kill you.

SHEMA

I know.

They stop talking as they hear the front door opening. Shema's wife appears with a large bag, filled with food and some clothing. She hands it to Keza.

KEZA

Thank you.

22 EXT. CHURCH - EARLY MORNING

22

Keza stands in the shadows of a bush near the church gate and whispers to a GUARD.

KEZA

I need to see my mother in law.

GUARD

We cannot let anyone out. It is too dangerous.

KEZA

I have food and clothing.

GUARD

Give it to me. I will make sure she gets it.

KEZA

Her name is Alice. Please tell her that we love her and when it is safe we will come back for her.

GUARD

I will tell her. It is starting to get light, you had better go.

Keza rushes back home through the shadows as the early morning light is beginning to show.

23 INT. MUTONI'S BEDROOM - MORNING

23

Keza has tucked herself into bed with Mutoni. Sebi asleep at their feet. We hear Sebi whimpering. Mutoni wakes.

MUTONI

Sebi, what is it?

Sebi gets up and makes his way to the front door. A faint knock is heard.

KEZA
Stay here Mutoni. Be quiet.

24 INT. HUT - MORNING CONT

24

Keza makes her way to the front door. The gentle knocking continues. She holds her hand on her front door. There is a whisper.

FRANCIS
(whispering)
Keza. Keza, are you there?

KEZA
(whispering back)
Francis?

FRANCIS
It's me.

Keza opens the front door and Francis slips in. Keza quickly shuts the door and looks at her neighbour who is standing, shaking.

KEZA
Come, sit. I will make you some tea.

25 INT. MUTONI'S BEDROOM - MORNING CONT

25

We hear the water starting to boil. Keza pops her head around the door.

KEZA
Mutoni, it is alright. It is Francis.

Mutoni nods. Sebi, back at her side.

26 INT. HUT - MORNING CONT

26

Keza and Francis sit in silence. A mug of tea in front of each of them. Francis lifts hers up but her shaking hands loose grip and the mug falls, spilling tea all over. Francis starts to wipe it with her sleeve.

KEZA
It's ok, I got it.

Keza stands to get a cloth and Francis grabs her arm.

FRANCIS

They killed him. My husband. We were trying to protect them.

KEZA

Who?

FRANCIS

Two Tutsi girls... Their parents were chopped into pieces in front of them... One girl had a machete wound across her face, I couldn't stop the bleeding, I tried but I just couldn't stop it... The men followed them to our house, there must have been blood... I was in the outhouse with them when they came. I heard a gun shot. It took only one bullet to kill him. My husband, my strong, healthy, kind husband. One bullet... I grabbed the girls and we ran, but the men caught up. They grabbed the girls and I left them. I just left them with these men to die.

KEZA

You couldn't have saved them, Francis. They would have killed you too.

FRANCIS

I could have traded myself for them.

KEZA

They were Tutsi girls, you know they would have killed them anyway.

FRANCIS

They are looking for me.

KEZA

You will stay here.

FRANCIS

I will put you and Mutoni in danger.

KEZA

You won't argue. You will stay here. They have searched our house and have seen my papers.

FRANCIS

They might come back.

Keza gets up and finds an extra blanket and some food. She puts it on the table in front of Francis. Suddenly a burst of screams and gun shots are heard outside. Keza and Francis run into Mutoni's room and they huddle together. They dare not even breathe until the shouts and gun fire stop. The fighting outside continues.

27 INT. HUT - EARLY MORNING

27

Subtitle 15 APRIL

Francis is lying under the bed. The covers are touching the floor, hiding her. Lying on top are Keza and Mutoni. We hear Mutoni's gentle breathing and see that Keza is wide awake. She gets up and pulls back the curtains. It is almost sunrise. She lies on the floor and lifts the covers to wake Francis.

KEZA

Francis, you better use the toilet and have something to eat before it gets light.

Francis pulls herself out from under and gets up, smiling a weak smile at Keza.

28 INT. HUT - KITCHEN

28

Francis has just come from the bathroom and Keza puts some cooked plantains in a bowl on the table. The two eat together in silence. When finished, Francis moves to the bedroom and crawls back under the bed. Keza passes a mug of water to her along with an empty bowl.

KEZA

If you need it. You won't be able to move from here until tonight.

Francis pulls them towards her. Keza starts to walk away, hesitates, then turns back.

KEZA (CONT'D)

I am sorry about your husband Francis. I'm sorry you couldn't save him or the girls.

FRANICS

God Bless you Keza.

KEZA

(standing up)

Mutoni, wake up. It is breakfast time.

MUTONI

(groggy, smiling)

Plantains? I can smell them.

KEZA

Yes. Now get washed and dressed. Hurry up!

29 INT. HUT - MORNING

29

Mutoni is gobbling up her plantains while Keza sips on some tea.

MUTONI

Is Francis still here mawe?

KEZA

Yes my darling, but she will stay hidden. We need to carry on as usual. Don't tell anyone she's here.

MUTONI

Market today?

KEZA

Yes.

MUTONI

But it is so quiet there. Will you sell tea?

KEZA

Shema always comes to buy tea.

MUTONI

Ok mawe.

30 EXT. HUT - MORNING

30

Keza and Mutoni, with Sebi at her side, are leaving the hut when the armed men arrive with the principal who is leading the search for hidden Tutsis.

KEZA
(whispering to Mutoni)
Mutoni, the men are here. Be quiet
all right?

PRINCIPAL
(pointing at Keza)
Her husband is a Tutsi.

Keza shakes her head.

PRINCIPAL (CONT'D)
It is true!

MAN 1
(to Keza)
Still no husband?

KEZA
I told you he has gone.

MAN 1
Help me believe it.

He takes his hand and puts it on Keza's waist. Keza pushes it away.

KEZA
I have something.

Keza pulls Mutoni with her and they go inside.

31 INT. HUT - MORNING CONT

31

Keza opens the drawer and takes out the money that Patrick left her.

32 EXT. HUT - MORNING CONT

32

Keza hands the armed man the money.

MAN 1
(counting it out)
500, 1000, 1500, 2000, 2500, 3000

He hands half the money to the second armed man.

MAN 1 (CONT'D)
 (to the other armed man)
 Search the house.

KEZA
 But I just gave you everything I
 have...

MAN 1
 A tip, for doing our job.

We hear Francis screaming and Man 1 rushes inside.

33 INT. HUT - MORNING CONT 33

Francis is being pulled by her hair to the kitchen table and the other armed man rushes in to the hut.

34 EXT. HUT - MORNING CONT 34

Keza grabs Mutoni's hand and pushes past the principal.

KEZA
 Mutoni, run!

The two run, with Sebi. They hear Francis screaming from the house. Mutoni's walking stick gets hooked on a stone and she drops it. Mutoni slows to pick it up, but Keza grabs her and pulls her along.

KEZA (CONT'D)
 Leave it, we cannot stop.

The armed men are now chasing them. They run and one of them crushes Mutoni's stick with his heel. Keza runs with Mutoni blindly trying to keep up and tripping. They hide behind a small wall as the armed men rush passed.

MAN 1
 (shouting out)
 You can run, but you can't hide
 from us.

When it is safe Keza picks Mutoni up and they continue running along paths, dodging more armed men. They don't stop until they get to Shema's hut. As they arrive they see devastation and Keza freezes.

MUTONI
 What is it mawe?

They hear sniffing coming from a few feet away.

KEZA

Shh. Something is not right.

Holding Mutoni, Keza quietly creeps towards the noise coming from behind the outhouse. There sits Shema's eldest boy, INNOCENT, holding his younger brother's body and rocking back and forth.

KEZA (CONT'D)

(putting Mutoni down and hugging Innocent)

Innocent, you poor boy.

(after a while)

Have they gone?

Innocent nods.

KEZA (CONT'D)

Wait here with Mutoni.

Keza slowly moves towards the house, anticipating what she might see, but it is far worse than anything she could have imagined. Shema's face is almost unrecognisable. His body slumped over his wife's torso, sitting in a pool of blood. The bodies of the two Tutsi women lie naked, bludgeoned with appendages angled as if someone was trying to piece them back together again. Keza cannot help but throw up, onto the floor before she could make it out the door. It takes her a moment to recover.

She ventures back in, this time with laser focus. Food and warmth. She hurriedly gathers whatever edible food she can find and throws it into a sack half filled with sweet potatoes. She find matches and throws them in. She goes to the bedroom and pulls out warm jackets and shoes. Opening all the drawers and tins she searches for money. She finds a few notes and shoves them in her pocket. As she does so she finds the map which she unfolds and traces her fingers along the route.

Outside she is on high alert.

KEZA (CONT'D)

Innocent, I know this is hard, but we need to go.

Innocent kisses his brother's forehead and holds him tighter. Keza pries his hands off of his brother and takes them in hers. She gathers Mutoni and hand in hand the three of them form a chain.

KEZA (CONT'D)

Watch and listen to my movements.

If I stop, you stop.

(MORE)

KEZA (CONT'D)

Don't make a sound. We need to get
to the church. We will be safe
there.

They weave silently through the village, hugging walls and trees. Freezing when they hear footsteps and ducking for cover when the sound of a car engine gets near. Mutoni walks like a flamingo, lifting each foot higher than normal to avoid tripping over a root or stone that she cannot see. Sebi senses the tension and doesn't make a sound. Instead she hugs Mutoni's side and keeps the pace.

Keza moves swiftly and silently in the shadows until she reaches the Nyarubuye Roman Catholic Church. She sees bodies everywhere and freezes. The children stop. Innocent gasps.

MUTONI

(whispering)

What is it?

KEZA

Stay here with Innocent, behind
this bush. I will be back.

There had been a mass shooting, 20000 bodies lie dead. Keza moves towards the church entrance.

INNOCENT

(whispering to Mutoni)

Everyone at the church is dead.

35

INT. CHURCH - MORNING CONT

35

Keza moves quickly through the church and softly calls out for her mother in law but she gets no answer. She keeps calling and turning over bodies to see their faces, trying to find her.

KEZA

Alice! Alice!

There are moans and a few others calling for relatives.

Keza keeps looking. She sees a body on its stomach, lying next to a basket - matching the style that Mutoni made for her parents. Keza walks towards it and as she gets close she notices her mother in law's bracelet. She rushes close and turns her over. Her neck has been slit and blood has covered her body.

Keza runs back to the children and grabs them.

KEZA (CONT'D)

Come, we need to get to the forest.

36 EXT. FOREST - MORNING 36

Making it to the forest, they crouch low while Keza scouts a route. She lifts Mutoni and carries her, with Innocent and Sebi following until they find a well hidden place under an embankment. Here they sit as the sun sets and the shadows lengthen until they are in darkness. Keza softly sings them traditional folk songs that they all know. They can hear other people also hiding in the forest join in. The children fall asleep from utter exhaustion. Keza's eyes dart at every sound as she stays awake through the night.

37 EXT. FOREST - EARLY MORNING 37

The armed men have been tipped off about people in the forest and come looking. Keza hears them in the distance

KEZA

Stay hidden. Don't move.

Keza moves to be a decoy. The men are getting closer and Keza runs in the opposite direction, pulling the men away from the children and towards where they hear her. Mutoni whimpers for her mom as Innocent rushes off deeper into the forest. The men hear Keza and she gets them away from Mutoni. She tries to lose them and nearly does when she sees huts on the edge of the forest.

38 EXT. HUT NEAR FOREST - EARLY MORNING 38

Keza tries to open the door to a hut, but it is barricaded. The men catch her and we recognise one from before.

ARMED MAN

Tutsi sympathiser, we told you
could not hide from us.

Keza is pushed to the ground by one man who starts beating her with a club as another unzips his pants. We hear her screams until everything fades to black.

39 EXT. HUT NEAR FOREST - NIGHT 39

We see a close up of Keza's bloodied face. Her one eye is swollen shut. She is not moving and looks dead. We hear a creak and a MAN opens his once-barricaded door and pulls her in.

40

INT. HUT NEAR FOREST - NIGHT

40

We hear water boiling and see a small fire going. Keza slowly opens her eyes. She is shocked that she is alive. She is bleeding and there is blood running down her legs. The MAN'S WIFE washes her with warm water as she winces in pain. They prepare some food for her but Keza cannot stomach it.

WIFE

(holding a spoon up to
Keza's lips)

Try to have a little. You are going
to need your strength.

MAN

You will.
(MORE)

MAN (CONT'D)

(beat)

I'm sorry, but you cannot stay here
long. They search our hut every
day.

WIFE

(standing with the bowl of
food)

I'm going to put this food in a bag
for you.

Keza takes the map from her pocket and looks at it. She slides it across the table to the man. She points at where they have come from and where they need to get to.

KEZA

My husband took this route. I am
trying to get to him.

MAN

(pointing on the map)

You are now here so you are going
in the right direction. This area
is heavily patrolled during the
day, so avoid it. So is this area.
It is difficult to get through the
forest along here so take this
route, it is tough but less risky.
There is a priest here who I know
will help. Look for a house on the
outskirts of the village with a
cross on the door and a large
vegetable patch.

(MORE)

MAN (CONT'D)

The best time to travel is after
midnight when they have passed out,
but hide before sunrise and stay
hidden.

The man's wife hands her a bag with food and some water.

KEZA

Thank you.

WIFE

I am sorry we cannot do more. We
will pray for you.

41 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

41

Keza makes her way back to the forest, avoiding all people -
rebels and other - not knowing who she can trust. She reaches
the spot where she left Mutoni but she is not there. Keza
panics, she grabs the food and blankets and starts whispering
for her daughter. She makes her way through the forest
whispering for the children.

KEZA

Mutoni. Innocent. Mutoni. Innocent.

INNOCENT

(whispering back)

Keza.

He runs to meets her. Looking at Keza, tears fall down his
face. He can see what has happened to her, her torn dress,
her swollen shut eye and the cuts still oozing blood.

KEZA

I'm ok, Innocent. We must find
Mutoni.

The two go through the forest calling for Mutoni. They find
other children hiding. Keza hands them some food and asks if
they have seen her daughter. Nothing. They call through the
night and walk. Nothing. Innocent gets weak and needs to
rest. Keza wraps the blanket around him as he sleeps. She
keeps calling for Mutoni as he sleeps.

42 EXT. FOREST - EARLY MORNING

42

After a few hours of sleep Keza strokes Innocent awake and
they continue. They hear a soft bark of a dog. Sebi?! They
run towards the sound. It's Sebi!

KEZA

Mutoni?!

MUTONI

Mawe!

Mutoni is up a tree. Keza climbs up and they are reunited. Mutoni feels Keza's gash on her arm.

MUTONI (CONT'D)

Mawe, you are hurt.

KEZA

Not badly, my darling. It will heal now that I have found you.

She helps her daughter out of the tree as Mutoni explains.

MUTONI

They heard me but when they saw Sebi they thought it was her making a noise. They threw rocks at her. She is hurt, Mawe.

Sebi tries to stand up to greet Keza, but she has a broken leg and broken ribs. Keza and Innocent share a look - they know Sebi won't make it.

KEZA

You're right my darling, Sebi is badly hurt.

MUTONI

She saved me mawe. She barked at them and they didn't see me. She saved me.

She gently sobs. Keza places Mutoni on the ground next to Sebi. Mutoni strokes her and Sebi whimpers back.

MUTONI (CONT'D)

Sebi, be strong. Please?

They settle in to wait for the day. It is deep in the forest and they don't hear any danger.

43

EXT. FOREST - DUSK

43

Keza unwraps the parcel of food that was given to her and the three eat and drink. Sebi has a little water but won't eat.

MUTONI

Is Sebi eating mawe?

KEZA

No, but she had a little water.

MUTONI

(softly stroking Sebi)

Yes, I heard that.

44 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT 44

As night falls and silence takes over they move. Keza carries Sebi, wrapped in a blanket. They walk through the forest and stop every now and then to listen for footsteps, in case they are being followed.

45 EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF VILLAGE - EARLY MORNING 45

They see a village in the distance.

KEZA

(whispering as she points
to the village)

We are going to stop there, at that
village.

They get close to the village and move along the outskirts until Keza sees a large vegetable patch, larger than the others. They move closer and see a white cross on the front door of the house.

46 EXT. PRIEST'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING 46

Walking to the front door, Keza, knocks softly. There is no answer. She knocks again and there is still no answer. They begin to move away when the door opens.

PRIEST

Quickly, get in.

47 INT. PRIEST'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING 47

KEZA

I am Keza. This is Mutoni and
Innocent. And this is Sebi.

The priest looks concerned when he sees the dog.

KEZA (CONT'D)

She is hurt and won't make a sound.

PRIEST

We don't have much time. It is getting light. Use the bathroom now if you need to. Have you eaten?

KEZA

Yes, thank you.

48 INT. HIDING ROOM IN PRIEST'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING 48

They are ushered into a small room behind a cupboard. They are squished in with about 13 others who nod in greeting. Once the door closes the room seems to shrink. The day is long and people take turns sitting as not everyone can at once. The room is windowless and no one can keep track of the time. People doze off, sweaty and tired. Someone leaning against the door flinches as they feel movement. Everyone holds their breath until they see it is the priest, alone, who opens the door.

49 INT. PRIEST'S HOUSE - NIGHT 49

They quietly move out of the room and stretch their legs as he passes around mugs of water and bowls of food. He says grace and prays for them as they eat and drink.

Keza watches Mutoni and Innocent tenderly as they eat. Mutoni is holding water up to Sebi, who is in her arms. She laps up a little out of Mutoni's hand.

Another mother, MARTHA, comes over to Keza.

MARTHA

You have lovely children.

KEZA

Mutoni is my child. Innocent's parents were close friends of mine, but they were found hiding Tutsis.

MARTHA

My two sons are with me. I lost my daughter and my husband a few weeks ago.

KEZA

How long have you been here?

MARTHA

Almost ten days. When they burnt our home we ran. They caught my husband and daughter.

PRIEST

It's time to move back in.

The priest ushers everyone silently back into the room and the door is closed. The mood shifts to solemn silence.

50 INT. HIDING ROOM IN PRIEST'S HOUSE - DAY

50

Without talking people know when it is time to take turns sitting and standing. We can see that everyone knows the routine, the code for being here. It is another long day in the room. Mutoni is asleep at her mother's feet, with Sebi on her lap. She wakes and starts wailing.

MUTONI

Sebi! Sebi!

Sebi is dead. The other people shush her and Keza bends down and holds her daughter's mouth, crying with her as Mutoni calms down. When she stops wanting to shout Keza removes her hand. There is a mixture of sadness, anger, frustration and fear in the room. Did anyone hear Mutoni?

KEZA

We will bury her here, in the priest's yard.

That evening the priest opens the door to give them food and water. Mutoni, Innocent and Keza make their way to the front door.

PRIEST

(unlocking the front door)
5 minutes, no longer.

They nod as they walk out into the night.

51 EXT. PRIEST'S GARDEN - NIGHT

51

It is a quiet evening and the rain gently falls on the soft earth as Keza digs a grave. They drink in the fresh air. It feels good to be outside. Keza guides Mutoni's hands, holding Sebi, into the earth. They cover her with soil and whisper their goodbyes.

Through their whispers they hear the distant sound of an engine. They hear drunk men shouting and a truck getting closer. They run to the house to warn everyone. The priest is at the front door.

KEZA

People are coming!

PRIEST

Run! It is no longer safe here.
They must know. Run!

The priest runs inside to tell everyone to leave. Keza grabs the Innocent's hand and carries Mutoni as they run into a bushy area.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

(shouting over the sound
of the engine's roar)

Get to Byumba. There is a camp in
Byumba.

The trucks arrive. There are three and they are loaded with armed men. They hear gun shots and screaming.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

May God protect you! May you find
peace! God speed!

The priest is yelling prayers until there is a shot and it stops.

52

EXT. BUSH - MONTAGE

52

Keza, Mutoni and Innocent run through the bush and the forest until they can no longer hear the men or the shooting. That night, they travel with a few others that made it from the priest's house.

During the day they climb up trees and hide. At night they travel. In the moonlight Keza reads her map and directs everyone where to go. They follow rivers and forests. They stop to drink from the rivers.

Mutoni walks but when the terrain becomes too difficult for her to navigate Keza carries her. We see Keza bleeding as some old wounds open up. She carries on. Days pass as they move up north.

Martha and Keza have a bond that grows as they help each other along. Martha's two boys form a friendship with Innocent and Mutoni, helping them along like two older brothers.

Some people in the group have times when they cannot carry on. Other help them to find the strength to continue. We see a range of human dynamics.

53 EXT. BUSH - NIGHT

53

Subtitle: Days later

While walking along the river's edge at night, they meet up with a group of other Tutsis. At first there is a moment of tension, but as they take each other in - the weary eyes, the skinny bodies, the torn clothing - they know that they are the same and that they are safe. The tallest man, VICTOR, introduces himself to Keza.

VICTOR
I'm Victor.

KEZA
Keza.

VICTOR
Is anyone badly injured, sick?

KEZA
No, we are okay.

VICTOR
Good. We are close to a camp. Two days walking and we should be there.

Keza, Innocent, Mutoni and the others in their group breath a sigh of relief. Could this be over soon?

VICTOR (CONT'D)
But we have two road blocks to avoid before we can get there.

Victor and Keza look at Keza's map and plan a dangerous route, but it is the only possible route for them to take to avoid the main roads until the last possible moment.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
(pointing at a road)
Here. This is where we cross. Any sooner and we could be seen, any further on and we miss the camp.

54 EXT. BUSH - DAY

54

They rest. We see them sitting, softly talking, planning.

55 EXT. BUSH - DUSK

55

As night falls they start moving.

56 EXT. BUSH - EVENING

56

A car's headlight catch one of the travellers before they can hide. Men jump out the car with machetes and start chasing them. Keza grabs Mutoni and Innocent and they run. An armed man grabs the Innocent's arm and is about to butcher him when Victor runs up from behind and hits the rebel over the head with a rock. Victor grabs the machete and the four run. They make it to just outside the camp and hear a car behind them. The camp gates are opened and a UN vehicle charges through. It reaches them before the rebels, loads them in and makes it back into the camp.

57 EXT. CAMP - NIGHT

57

Once in the camp they are surrounded by thousands of people, they are in shock and not quite sure where to go. It is dark.

UN OFFICER

Here is a blanket. I only have one
for you to share. Follow me to a
space to rest. Tomorrow, please
head to the main tent to sign in.

Mutoni falls asleep on her mother's lap. Innocent holds Keza's hand tightly and lies next to them. Keza looks down at the two children and holds them, tears falling down her cheeks.

VICTOR

(to Keza)

I am going to try and find my
family.

Keza smiles a goodbye.

58 EXT. CAMP - MORNING

58

Subtitle: THE NEXT DAY

They are woken the next morning with a consistent buzz of noise, people calling out for friends, for family. There is a long queue to a table where there is a sign-in list for them to register. Keza, Mutoni and Innocent stand in silence in the queue. They look at what is around them and drink in the chaos.

There is an endless sea of people. Many are missing limbs, are bleeding, bandaged, limping. As Keza reaches the front she hands them her papers. In her hand is also the map. She looks at it and at the close distance between the camp and Uganda. So close to her husband, if he made it...

UN OFFICER 2
Keza Mugisha. And your children?

KEZA
Mutoni. And this is Innocent.

The officer writes down all the details as we see from Keza's POV the sea of people.

KEZA (CONT'D)
Patrick. My husband's name is
Patrick.

UN OFFICER 2
Let me check the list.

She moves her finger down as she scans a long list of names.

UN OFFICER 2 (CONT'D)
Patrick Mugisha. Yes. He was picked
up five weeks ago.

MUTONI
Dawe?!

UN OFFICER 2
(picking up a loud hailer
and speaking into it)
Patrick Mugisha. Patrick Mugisha.
Please come to the receiving tent.
Patrick Mugisha.

MUTONI
Can you see him mawe?

KEZA
No Mutoni.

UN OFFICER 2
Patrick Mugisha!

MUTONI
Is he here mawe?

We see Patrick emerging from the crowds. He is thin and weak and moves towards the receiving tent. When he sees his family he breaks into a painful run.

KEZA
Patrick! Patrick!

Keza grabs Mutoni's hand and rushes towards Patrick and the family embrace. Patrick looks down and sees Innocent and knows that the rest of Shema's family must have been killed.

He waves for Innocent to come to them. The four of them stand there together, holding each other.

CAPTION: The genocide ended on 15 July. Over half a million people, primarily Tutsi, were murdered.