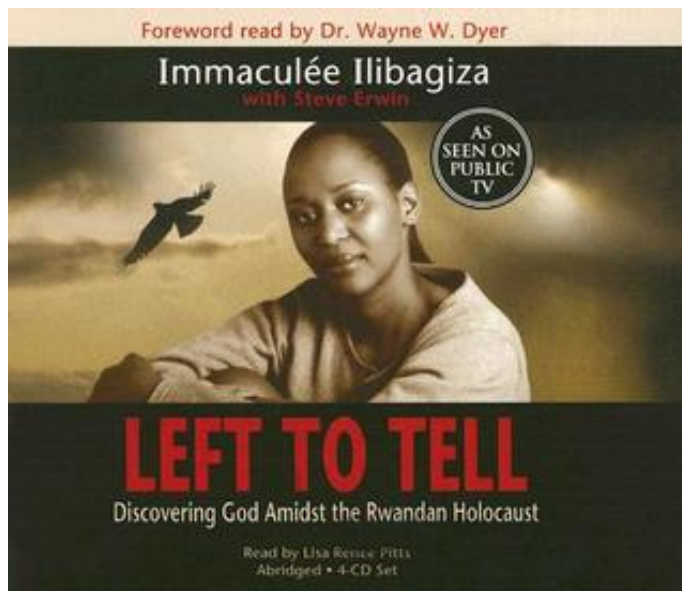

Immaculee Ilibagiza

Left to Tell: One Woman's Story of Surviving the Rwandan Holocaust



Title: Left to Tell: One Woman's Story of Surviving the Rwandan Holocaust

Author: Immaculee Ilibagiza

Format: Audio CD

Language:

Pages: 0

Publisher: , 0

ISBN: 1401911498

Format: PDF / Kindle / ePub

Size: 8.3 MB

Download: allowed

Description

Immaculee Ilibagiza grew up in a country she loved, surrounded by a family she cherished. But in 1994 her idyllic world was ripped apart as Rwanda descended into a bloody genocide. Immaculee's family was brutally murdered during a killing spree that lasted three months and claimed the lives of nearly a million Rwandans.

Incredibly, Immaculee survived the slaughter. For 91 days, she and seven other women huddled silently together in the cramped bathroom of a local pastor while hundreds of machete-wielding killers hunted for them.

It was during those endless hours of unspeakable terror that Immaculee discovered the power of prayer, eventually shedding her fear of death and forging a profound and lasting relationship with God. She emerged from her bathroom hideout having discovered the meaning of truly unconditional love—a love so strong she was able seek out and forgive her family's killers.

The triumphant story of this remarkable young woman's journey through the darkness of genocide will inspire anyone whose life has been touched by fear, suffering, and loss.

Insightful reviews

Erica Thompson: How is it possible that I knew next to nothing about the Rwandan war and genocide? Granted I was in high school when it happened, so I was probably oblivious, but shouldn't we have been discussing it as a current event? I am still wondering how 1 million people could be killed like this in my lifetime and no one stopped it sooner.

This book is the memoir of Immaculee Ilibagiza's survival of the holocaust. She was able to hide and spent the 3 months in almost constant prayer. She credited her survival and ability to stay hidden without going completely crazy to her relationship with God. She is an amazing woman with incredible faith and hope as well as an unbelievable ability to forgive.

This book is a story about war. Some of the descriptions are kind of disturbing.

Matt Evans: Shocking and inspiring. Ms. Ilibagiza tells the story of what happened to her during the Rwandan Holocaust. The narrative's glut of horrific violence made me sick at heart, but Ilibagiza's faith and personal strength pulled me through.

These people are just like you and me: human, educated, desiring of a happy life, and it's stunning to see how quickly so much of this can go down the tubes when mob mentality, based on racial prejudice, sets in. And lest my dear review reader thinks that such things don't happen in America, let's pause for a moment to consider what happened in New Orleans during Katrina. Yes, Katrina, New Orleans, wasn't anything close to a Rwandan Holocaust, but I was shocked

how many people, in the aftermath -- good religious, supposedly god-fearing people -- said things to me like, "Those people weren't smart enough to leave when they should have" or "Why should I send money, they're just a bunch of welfare cheats anyway", etc. Barbara Bush spoke for many when she said of the Houston Astrodome Refugees: "They're loving it here."

It's exactly that brand of dismissive rationalization and downgrading of human suffering, based on class- and racial-prejudice, taking place over decades, that set the stage for the Hutu massacre of the Tutsis. The Nazi Holocaust took off from the nearly exact same foundation of social and class prejudice against the Jews.

Anyway, I think that this should be required reading. Ms. Ilibagiza is remarkably brave, and you need to hear her story.

Jennifer Locke: I can't talk about this book without telling a story. I first read it six years ago, upon recommendation from my sister, Jess, who was going to Rwanda to teach for a year. It utterly wrecked me. I read the last page and then tried to describe the story to my husband, Ryan. I couldn't. I broke down sobbing and hugged him, saying over and over again: "I just want to meet her! I just want to meet her and give her a hug!"

Flash forward about nine months or so. Ryan and I were going to Rwanda to visit my sister. Many times before then, I would lie in bed and dream about meeting Immaculee. On the plane ride over, I thought about Immaculee. Ryan, Jess, and I and I all took a little weekend getaway to Lake Kivu, near Immaculee's hometown. Of course, Immaculee and her family were all we thought about. But there was no way we'd actually meet her: she'd been living in New York for years. We were happy to just to be in her shadow.

So: Ryan, Jess, and I arrive at a little collection of guest houses on Lake Kivu. Our room wouldn't be ready for several hours, so we sat out sunning ourselves until we could go in and deposit our bags. Ryan went to a concession stand to get us something to drink as we sat out under the hot Rwandan sun. Jess and I, in a heat-induced afternoon stupor, became dimly aware of people talking in the distance. We soon realized the voices were speaking English. This was rare, so we paid a little more attention. Out of the corner of my eye I saw a figure in a green shirt who looked vaguely familiar. The figure began walking up to us; Jess and I exchanged glances. Could it BE?

"Hello, I'm Immaculee," said the figure, a tiny woman with a big smile on her face.

"Did you . . . write a book?" I asked.

"Yes!"

That was it--Jess and I broke into squeals. I believe I said something like, "I've been wanting to give you a hug for so long!" And I did. Ryan came back from the concession stand clutching a soda. His eyes widened as he approached us.

"Ryan . . . this is Immaculee!"

Turns out, she was leading a group of Americans on a pilgrimage to Rwanda. The group was about to leave to visit her family home when we came upon them; first, though, they'd stopped for lunch at the guest house. THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME IMMACULEE HAD EVER DONE THIS. Immaculee and all of the lovely pilgrims with her bought us lunch: we sat around under a pavilion and ate together. I think I stared at her the whole time.

INCREDIBLE, right? OK, now for the review.

This book is absolutely heartbreaking, horrifying, inspiring, challenging. If you don't know anything about the 1994 genocide, you should read it. If you do know a little (or a lot) about the genocide, you should still read it. The author, Immaculee Ilibagiza, came from a respected, well-beloved family. She loved her parents, idolized her older brother, gabbed with girlfriends, experienced love and heartbreak with her boyfriend--she lived the normal life of a young woman, and then the genocide changed everything. Separated from her family, Immaculee was forced to go into hiding. She stayed in the bathroom of a pastor's house with seven other women for three months. The killers walked outside of her window and on the other side of the bathroom door and called her name. They came hunting for her; not just once, but many, many times.

This story is the most gripping account of ANYTHING that I've ever read. It is transfixing and transforming. Immaculee survived her ordeal by committing herself completely to prayer and study of the Bible. Whatever your religious persuasion, it is impossible to deny that the faith that she found in the bathroom is real and powerful--even life-saving. Reading about all of the times she escaped death by an extremely narrow margin, it's impossible to call Immaculee's story anything but miraculous.

Just like the minor miracle of my meeting with her, 15 years later.

Paul: i am not giving this 5 stars simply because i feel it's a nice piece of literature or that it in any methods suits up with the good books of the world. The 5 stars are extra for a way strong and uncooked the e-book felt and what sort of it bodily effected me. To me this is often the task of a very nice survivor testimony. they do not have to be completely written or include accompanying historic footnotes, etc. there have been instances as i used to be interpreting this e-book that I had a actual response to her story. She tells it in extremely simple phrases and pulls no punches. i believe a few humans could think that she talks approximately her religion too much, and i've matters with that during my very own life, yet i might by no means deny that her religion is what acquired her via this awful ordeal. Her tale isn't really inevitably exact within the realm of the Rwandan genocide, notwithstanding as i do know from own adventure in operating with Holocaust survivors each tale is various and unique. somebody with any curiosity within the strength of human brain to beat absolutely the worst existence can throw at you must learn this book. really every person must learn this book.

Jessika: this can be certainly the main robust booklet that i've got ever read. studying this e-book introduced me to tears such a lot of times, and it actually takes an attractive girl to move via what she did after which forgive the perpetrators in spite of everything used to be acknowledged and done. i feel that this can be a ebook that everybody must learn sooner or later in his life. not just will interpreting this booklet make how a lot you'll take without any consideration on your life, however it additionally indicates you that if she will locate forgiveness via God, so can you, irrespective of how tremendous or small the trespass. This woman's courting with God is extraordinary and will be anything that everybody may still attempt for. remember that this publication will carry you to tears, however it also will open your eyes within the end. I had a sense whilst my aunt got me this ebook to learn that it'll swap my existence forever...and i need to say that it most likely did.

Karen: Eye-opening. i did not are looking to placed it down. so much of all, humbling. i'm ashamed at what horrendous issues we, as humans do to one another and also, what we let to happen. It broke my middle to learn of all these refugees hoping and praying for aid from someone--anyone, and nobody stepped as much as help. They have been left to fend for themselves. i'm ashamed at my very own whining and complaining approximately nothing. i've got everything! i'm so very blessed. i used to be encouraged via Immaculee's skill to imagine what she wanted...and she continuously acquired precisely what she visualized! certainly one of my favourite strains within the publication was once this: "I was once case in point of the ability of prayer and optimistic thinking, which particularly are nearly an identical thing. God is the resource of all optimistic energy, and prayer is tips to faucet in to His power." I additionally enjoyed the half the place she requested the pastor who used to be hiding her for a Bible. (I had the same event lately with starting my very own scriptures to a passage that I knew was once intended particularly for me.) Immaculee had simply prayed for one more girl (the pastor had became the girl away) and he or she had additionally pled for an indication that God was once staring at over her and the ladies within the toilet with her. At that second the pastor opened the door and gave her the asked Bible. She opened it instantly and appeared all the way down to learn Psalm ninety one which reads:"This I declare, that He by myself is my refuge, my position of safety; he's my God, and i'm trusting him. For He rescues you from each seize and protects you from the deadly plague. he'll defend you along with his wings! they are going to defend you. His trustworthy offers are your armor. Now you don't want to be terrified of the darkish any more, nor worry the risks of the day; nor dread the plagues of darkness, nor mess ups within the morning. even though one thousand fall at my side, notwithstanding 10000 are loss of life round me, the evil won't contact me."She used to be spared and lived to inform her story. it really is worthy reading.

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