

**PRESS  
RELEASE**

**YOU ALONE MAY LIVE**  
One woman's journey through  
the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide

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**A harrowing and important book released on the anniversary of the Rwandan genocide.**

Over a period of 100 days from 6th April 1994, up to a million Rwandan Tutsi were murdered by Hutu militias. In the most appalling episode of ethnic cleansing since the Second World War, mutilations, killings and rapes occurred on an unimaginable scale, and largely unimpeded by the international community.

Fifty members of Mary Kayitesi Blewitt's family were slaughtered in cold blood during the genocide. Seeking sanctuary in her grandfather's village, they were herded by Hutu neighbours into a school classroom to await the Interahamwe militia, who later arrived in trucks, armed with machetes.

Mary was lucky. She managed to locate the bodies of her loved ones and lay them to rest. After the killing ended she travelled around the capital, Kigali, witnessed the exhumation of mass graves and struggled to understand the scale of the killings. She recounts standing shoulder to shoulder with the Hutu neighbours who had done nothing to help when the killings began but later helped her bury her family.

To try to make sense of what had happened, Mary undertook voluntary work, believing she had been allowed to survive in order to help others like her. She became a figure of trust with survivors seeking her out to tell their own stories of survival. One woman told how she was raped in front of members of her own family who were then murdered. She was allowed to live and told, "You alone may live, so that you will die of sadness." This, Mary found, was a common experience amongst women survivors.

*You Alone May Live* is an important book about grief and survival in the face of unimaginable trauma. It traces the arc of Mary's own extraordinary journey from a childhood in exile in Burundi, Tanzania and Uganda, to trying to come to terms with the loss of her family in the genocide, to setting up the Survivors' Fund (SURF) a charity providing aid to Rwandan survivors. Poignant, sad and sometimes overwhelming, this book records Mary's story but also encompasses the painful testimonies of those who survived and shared their memories with her.

**Mary K. Blewitt OBE is the founder and former director of the Survivors Fund (SURF). She received the Order of the British Empire in recognition of her work for charity.**

**Mary K. Blewitt is available for interview**

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