

THOSE DYING WORDS

By Jeremy Robson

'Kill me, I'm dying anyway' is what others heard
her scream as one by one the men thrust themselves
upon her, hard as the barrels of the rifles they
carried. And once they were satisfied, they did
just that, shooting her in the head where she lay.
Oh what mighty warriors were they, and
to whom I wonder do they pray.

The night was silent, cold, black. Not a star
to be seen. Overcome as I was by horror, pity
rage, when I picked up my pen only intemperate
words raced like molten lava across the page.

Simchat Torah, The Rejoicing of the Law.

Far away, in another world, I knew the fields where
the young had come to dance and celebrate the Festival
were drenched in blood, bodies everywhere.
No milk, no honey. And that the following day
holy men, shaken but dutiful, would come to
collect from amidst the carnage what body

parts they could for sacred burial.

Yitgadal veyitkadash.....

The bible tells us that Abraham, his faith tested, was willing to sacrifice his son, but Israel's modern sons are not as acquiescent. For them, aware of their tragic heritage, Never Again means Never Again. The haunting past is always present.

The cost, they knew, would be high, hunting the terrorists in their web of booby-trapped tunnels, storming their intrenched positions, while the world watched, sympathetic at first when they were down, but condemning and bewailing once they were on top. Such is their lot. History's leopard it seems will never change its spot.

Yet there was no choice, and this year, on Simchat Torah, with so many lost, it may not be easy to rejoice, though rejoice, somehow, one must.