

You're a Girl: Why Must You Read?

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Translation of the original Hindi poem by Kamla Bhasin, as found in the article "Reading is power But what happens if you are a girl?"

Father to daughter: Read? You?

What do you want to read for?

It's enough if my sons read, why on earth must you, a girl?

Daughter to father: Well, since you ask, listen.

Because I am a girl

I must read

Because I am not allowed to,

I must read

I feel, so I must read

My dreams stretch out to me, so I must read

Because I am a girl

I must read

I must not lose my way wandering

I must stand on my feet

I must fight my fears

Because I am a girl

I must read

I must oppose exploitation

Change laws, make new religions

Turn everything around

Because I am a girl

I must read

Learn from the wise

Sing the songs of Mira

Write my own melodies

This is not the age of the illiterate, the unlettered

Because I am a girl

I must read.