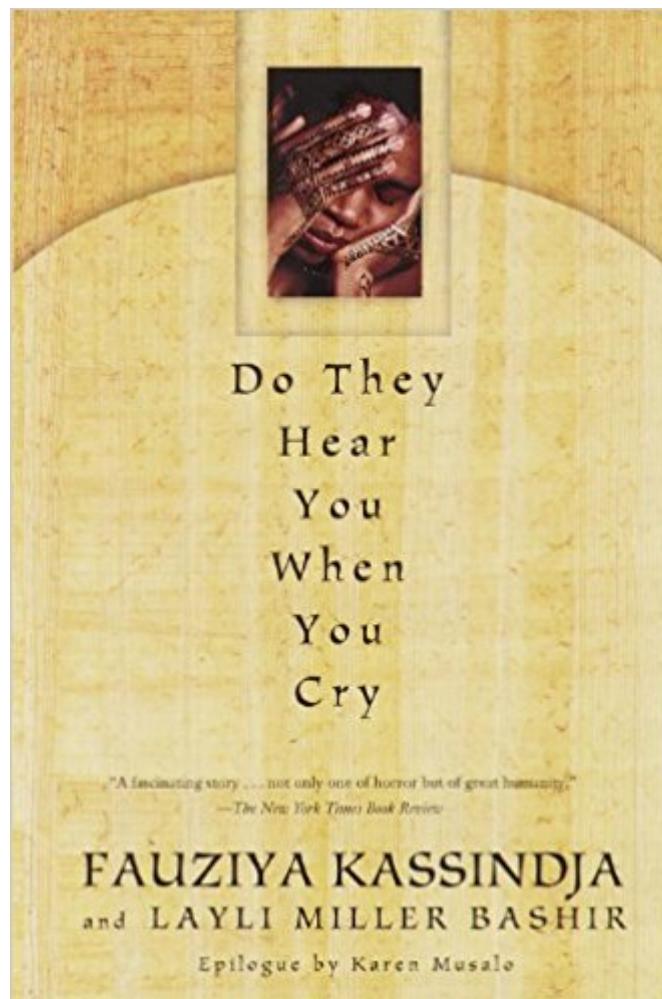


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# Do They Hear You When You Cry



## **Synopsis**

For Fauziya Kassindja, an idyllic childhood in Togo, West Africa, sheltered from the tribal practices of polygamy and genital mutilation, ended with her beloved father's sudden death.Â Â Forced into an arranged marriage at age seventeen, Fauziya was told to prepare for kakia, the ritual also known as female genital mutilation.Â Â It is a ritual no woman can refuse.Â Â But Fauziya dared to try.Â Â This is her story--told in her own words--of fleeing Africa just hours before the ritual kakia was to take place, of seeking asylum in America only to be locked up in U.S.Â Â prisons, and of meeting Layli Miller Bashir, a law student who became Fauziya's friend and advocate during her horrifying sixteen months behind bars.Â Â Layli enlisted help from Karen Musalo, an expert in refugee law and acting director of the American University International Human Rights Clinic.Â Â In addition to devoting her own considerable efforts to the case, Musalo assembled a team to fight with her on Fauziya's behalf.Â Â Ultimately, in a landmark decision in immigration history, Fauziya Kassindja was granted asylum on June 13, 1996.Â Â *Do They Hear You When You Cry* is her unforgettable chronicle of triumph.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

There are some books that are so wonderful, so intense, that I simply get lost in them for the few days it takes me to finish them, and once I'm done, I want to share it with the world. This is one of those books, a truly moving, inspiring, fascinating, terrifying, heart-breaking and rewarding tale. Fauziya Kassindja is a Muslim African woman raised by a father she adored who did not adhere

to many of the more restrictive Islamic customs relating to women. Upon his death, however, Fauziya is faced with a forced marriage and forced female circumcision and flees first to Germany and then to the United States, where she is promptly locked away in prison, initially denied asylum and kept imprisoned for an unbelievable amount of time. The story itself is both fascinating and heart-breaking, but Fauziya tells it with such detail and brutal honesty that it becomes even more powerful. She creates a beautiful picture of her childhood in Africa and life with her beloved father and family, and she conveys clearly and easily her naivete about laws and customs as she went first to the strange land and then to the literal and figurative prison of America. Her ambivalence about America - as the land of hope and escape turned jail - is understandable and she describes why a return to the horrors that awaited her at home suddenly seemed better than remaining in the series of prisons to which she was assigned. What makes Fauziya such a compelling figure - a real heroine - is her honesty and her struggle to stand up for her beliefs. She personifies the adage that courage is being scared but 'doing it anyway.'

"My father was a modern man in a traditional culture who neither repudiated that culture nor let himself be bound by it. He embraced some parts of it, rejected others, and never stopped reevaluating his beliefs about good and bad, right and wrong. He also never deviated from his Muslim faith. We, his daughters, were the same- part modern, part traditional, and Muslim throughout". ~Fauziya Kassindja, Do They Hear You When You Cry, "Muslim Girl" This book is the true life story of Fauziya Kassindja, who lived in Togo, West Africa, for the first sixteen years of her life. Her father, an influential man in her small town society, had always protected her from the dangers that most girls faced as part of her culture. However, when he died, his property (the house where she lived with her mother and sisters) was given to her aunt and uncle, who were very traditional. She was pledged to be married to a man three times her age who already had three wives, whom she was expected to serve. She was also being prepared to undergo what is none in Togo as Female Circumcision and what is known in the U.S. as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Fauziya was afraid of having her sacred, female parts destroyed and did not want to live with this man and his wives. A friend told her she could come to America, which helps victims from other country find safety, and he got her a passport. She was young and didn't know what was going on, and when she got to the U.S., she was put in jail. In this maximum-security ward, the illegal immigrants were treated worse than the prisoners convicted of major crimes.

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