

ONE
THOUSAND
LIBRARIES

By Joseph Coelho

One thousand libraries newly created
where there were none before.
One thousand homes to books,
one thousand temples to explore.

One thousand wells of dreams,
one thousand silos of stories,
one thousand places to sit
- to be thrilled by something gory!

One thousand thickets of imagination,
one thousand portals to past ages,
one thousand galaxies of new worlds,
one thousand palaces of pages.

This thousand is just one step
and we shall make thousands more
for every school must have a library
every library opens a thousand doors.

Every librarian is a games master
and everyone can play -
get lost in quantum physics
discover the works of Monet.

But what of those schools
where no library pulses its power!
What happens to those students
with no books to pass the hours?

With no poets to please them,
no illustrators inking unknown lands,
no facts being savoured,
no stories held in eager hands.

What happens to the pupil
without the sanctuary of stories?
What happens in a world
where only some read of glory?

What happens when words can't be trusted?
When knowledge comes at a price?
What happens to humanity
when truth is a game of dice?

These fears are the ogres,
the wicked witch and the voice in the dark.
Each library defeats these villains,
each library thickens our bark,
each library lengthens our roots.
A thousand libraries sprout
ten thousand brand-new shoots.

So, let's celebrate our libraries
and use them all we can.
Let's borrow all the books,
let's explore with ink-stained hands.

Here's to one thousand libraries -
and thousands more to come.
Let reading be our medicine
let libraries be our sun.



Change your story