



Letters to Our Daughters

Real by Maryam Naasir

The clock reads one minute to twelve.
As her child yells,
Cars pass by, tyres humming along
to the city music.
Dull murmurs carry themselves
through the wall,
wrapping around her like a comforting hug.
Her eyes fall on the child held in her arms,
a smile lingering on her lips.
She watches as he begins to settle,
she watches as a final tear falls
onto his delicate cheeks.
And she wonders. She wonders how many
tears he will
shed silently, because real men don't cry.
She wonders how many times his kindness
will be confused for weakness,
because real men are tough.
She wonders how many times her son
will be told to 'man up.'
She places him besides his sister as she
stirs gently in her sleep.
And she wonders.
She wonders how many times she will
feel uncomfortable in her own skin,
because real women have perfect features.

She wonders how many times she will be
told to 'stop being dramatic', because real
women are emotional.

She wonders how long it will be before
her daughter feels insecure about herself.
She gazes at her children sleeping
silently.

Distant sounds echoing around them
like a melody.

She knows she will raise her son to
not be part of the 'real men' but
as a real man.

She knows she will raise her daughter
to not be part of the 'real women' but
as a real woman.

And she knows she will raise her children,
the people of the future,
as equals.

Lights blink through the window,
casting shadows against the walls.
Voices carries themselves through the
floors,

flowing from ear to ear.

Night lies still above the ground as
change is beginning.

A mother whispers goodnight to her
two sleeping children.

And the clock reads twelve.

A new day has come

From the 2018 volume [Letters to Our Daughters](#)



What are the Themes of the poem?

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What is the 'take home' Message of the poem?

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Who are the Characters?

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What is the set-up?

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What descriptions and clues help us understand the Theme?

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