

Working Mother

By Sayda Morales

I wake to the sound of mechanical bells ringing
as the moonlight slips through the blinds leaning down to greet me
She's done with the night shift and so am I
Having woken first to let the dog out so she can bark at the trees
whispering secrets to each other in the dark
Woken again an hour later to hold my toddler as he climbs in bed beside
me seeking the warmth and safety of his mother's arms
Woken yet again but this time by my baby boy who roots around for my
breast, as I press him to my chest, breathe in his sweet scent at the top of
his small head, and make a wish upon a star that my boys will always know
safety and will always know comfort and will always know love
This is what it means to be a working mother
The work and the mother that never stop
Even when the Sun takes over from the Moon,
That is my sign to get the toddler to school Have a wonderful day y pórtate
bien I tell him before I'm back on the road not a moment too soon
Heading to daycare to drop off my baby, my arms feeling empty and my
heart feeling heavy
But before the tear can even creep down my cheek
My phone in my pocket buzzes and beeps
It's time to suit up and fight
Fight for our kids' birthright:
a free public school where they can learn and explore and grow up to be
who they want to and more
Every day, I fight despite the pushback and despite the plight
From the south Bronx to the southside of San Antonio, I carry the stories
from the barrios on the west side to the stadiums on the east side
From the rivers in the south side to the hills of the north side
I elevate and amplify so that our lawmakers will have no choice but to listen
For they answer to us. We are their boss.
And so I share all this so that my sons may know that mommy works so

that they may grow up in a city that nurtures and encourages them just as much as I do

For neither the moon nor the Sun could ever compare to how bright I see their futures

That's what it means to be a working mother -

to work tirelessly to leave this world just a little bit better than how I came into it.

So that my kids and your kids are all better off for it.