



*2 PARTS
OF DESIRE*

Claire

I work with 3 very understanding men but yes, I still feel the social pressure. Coping with everything isn't easy, I have every day all programmed and if something doesn't go as planned it's a disaster! I don't like the idea of leaving the kids for days at a stretch...it's just not how I want to bring up my kids. My husband helps, and a lot, but I feel that *bhala mara* everything seems to fall on me anyway.

The family comes before everything and everyone, but being full-time and self-employed makes it really difficult! When the kids are sick, it's the worst. Once one of the boys got really sick, and we were just about to open one of our shows. *Ir-raġel jinkwieta miskin*, he's very supportive, but was had his work. I ran the errands, to and from work, doctors...! I felt guilty that I could ruin our business, and that I would leave my sick son alone. *Il-mara thossha...it-tfal minghajr ma trid...*

I feel I have to prove myself equally, or more than my male colleagues, to avoid people saying "*għax din għandha t-fal tippretendi xi trattament speċjali.*" I try to work harder so that nobody will ever say I'm using my kids as an excuse. Some women tell me they're taken less seriously when they have to take the kids to work with them, as if we're less professional because we're mothers.

We've employed a woman recently and she just told us she's pregnant. Sure it's a problem! We need to find a replacement, whilst still paying her salary during maternity leave...it's not easy at all on business; it's quite a burden.

How can I sit at home and be a full-time mummy? You're totally cut off from the rest of the world! How can a woman not work or not desire to be treated equally? I don't get it. Financially, it's just necessary to work. But more than that, *tħossok fulfilled*, you feel that you're contributing to society, you're achieving something, reaching goals!

Women in politics? It must be so difficult to cope with it all...so much work and so many things to do at home. Sure, it's also tough for men, but I still think the pressure to take care of the home and the family is stronger on women. My husband's often offered to stay home and take care of the kids...but I don't think I'm willing to sacrifice the pleasures of being a mother for the sake of my work. Yes, it's my personal choice.

How can I be a good mother if I don't work? What example of success and achievement would I be for my kids?