



## **Let Her Fly: A Father's Journey**

*Ziauddin Yousafzai , Louise Carpenter , Malala Yousafzai (foreword)*

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\*\*\**Guardian* pick as one of the biggest and most interesting books of the year \*\*\*

## The story of the father who inspired the phenomenon

For over twenty years, Ziauddin Yousafzai has been fighting for equality – first for Malala, his daughter – and then for all girls throughout the world living in patriarchal societies. Taught as a young boy in Pakistan to believe that he was inherently better than his sisters, Ziauddin rebelled against inequality at a young age. And when he had a daughter himself he vowed that Malala would have an education, something usually only given to boys, and he founded a school that Malala could attend.

Then in 2012, Malala was shot for standing up to the Taliban by continuing to go to her father's school, and Ziauddin almost lost the very person for whom his fight for equality began.

*What Love Teaches Me* is Ziauddin's journey from a stammering boy growing up in a tiny village high in the mountains of Pakistan, through to being an activist for equality and the father of the youngest ever recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, and now one of the most influential and inspiring young women on the planet.

Told through intimate portraits of each of Ziauddin's closest relationships – as a son to a traditional father; as a father to Malala and her brothers, educated and growing up in the West; as a husband to a wife finally learning to read and write; as a brother to five sisters still living in the patriarchy – *What Love Teaches Me* looks at what it means to love, to have courage and fight for what is inherently right. Personal in its detail and universal in its themes, this is a landmark book from the man behind the phenomenon, and shows why we must all keep fighting for the rights of girls and women around the world.

## Let Her Fly: A Father's Journey Details

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## **From Reader Review Let Her Fly: A Father's Journey for online ebook**

### **Tracy Wood says**

This is a fascinating book, giving insight into a lifestyle I had no idea about it. As a woman who is fortunate enough to only have to deal with first world problems the way of life in 20th century Pakistan was a shock to say the least. Although never close to the top of my class I loved school and the idea that I would have been unable to attend until I wanted to leave would have been unimaginable.

Ziauddin Yousafzai is rightly proud of his family and it is apparent throughout that he would sacrifice anything for them and the way of life he believes is essential if they are to have successful futures. Where he and consequently his daughter, Malala, differ from the masses is that they were prepared to do something about it.

I was able to read an advanced copy of this novel thanks to Netgalley in exchange for an unbiased review and recommend it not only as an insight into the story of Malala's life from a different perspective but also into life in a region where inequality is an acceptable way of life in the 20th century and how one man has fought for decades to change it.

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### **Tanya says**

I am so glad I have read this book.

We are all so aware of Malala Yousafzai and the impact she has had on raising the profile of education for girls. Here we meet the man behind Malala: the father who supported her, inspired her through his own beliefs and activism.. We grow to understand that his rejection of the patriarchy prevalent in Pakistan during her lifetime gave a solid foundation for Malala to voice her opinion that girls should have equal access to opportunities.

From his early days as a stammerer seeking to find his voice and the respect of his father, through his determination to marry his wife and his parenting of Malala and her two brothers, we see this loving and determined man both in his native Pakistan and in Birmingham, England, where his family made their home after Malala was shot. I liked the man I met on these pages.

I cannot say that the writing is perfect - like many autobiographies by non-writers (albeit co-written) there are repetitions and the occasional clumsy phrase, but this is not enough to bring my rating down from 5 stars. Many thanks to Ebury Penguin Random House for the advance e-copy for review.

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### **Greg Nybo says**

This is one of the best books about how to be a good person in your interactions. I don't think that was the intent of it, but there are so many applicable lessons.

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## Kay Lana says

For me there are not the words to express the absolute brilliance of the book and this man.. Ziauddin, Malala's father, explains how his beliefs and attitudes spur him to change the social norms of his country and his upbringing. He is an inspirational man who seeks see a world where women and men are treated as equals... Now this is usual in Western culture, but in Pakistan this goes against beliefs and traditions that have reigned for centuries. The most amazing part of Ziauddin's story for me is that initially he does not pound the streets campaigning but, but looks to his own house, treats his wife with respect and equality, and bringing up his children eith these values, he also let's his visitors see this and the joy it brings him.. But more than that he starts a school giving girls an education, not just those that can pay but also those that can't. . I must also add his wife is totally inspirational too.

This book is beautifully written, it is warm, passionate, poetic and an absolute joy to read, akin to food for the soul.. I read this in 3 days, I recommend anyone read it... it is wonderful.

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## Laurie says

Review posted on <https://lauriesbookshelf.com> Once upon a time, you stumble upon a book and you instantly know you want to read it, even though it does not fit your usual genre. This was the case for me with *Let Her Fly* by **Ziauddin Yousafzai**. I have been following Malala's work since I read her book in 2014. I even wrote a Dutch article on her book last year. Well, on to her father's book now, which has been co-written by **Louise Carpenter**. I stepped out of my Young Adult (fantasy) and New Adult bubble to read this book and I am stepping even more out of my comfort zone by reviewing a non-fiction book.

### Expectations

To be quite honest, my expectations for *Let Her Fly* were quite high and not without reason. I knew that this story would be interesting and important. Furthermore, I knew that everyone is able to learn from this wise man and his journey/story. I only wondered whether this book would surpass my usual three star rating for non-fiction. Spoiler: it did.

### Story

Since *Let Her Fly* is non-fiction, there is not much to analyse about storyline, plot development, character development and world building. However, I can honestly say that this book was a fast-paced, well-written and interesting read. Thank goodness it was not dwelling and heavy, because that is exactly what usually keeps me far far away from reading non-fiction.

No, *Let Her Fly* is a book that will indirectly educate you about equality (between men and women, and about equal rights and treatment for women) and diversity, but in such a way that it doesn't sound like you are being educated. I hope that this makes any sense, but I assume you guys understand what I mean. Ziauddin Yousafzai - and therefore Louise Carpenter - has such an interesting way of telling his story. Before I knew it I was more than halfway through the book and really had to put it down because I really had to leave. I finished this book in two sittings, because it was too interesting and hard to put down. And what about the laughs in this story, are they present? Oh definitely. There were times that I nearly burst out

laughing whilst reading. I will spoiler one paragraph for you: the Burito/Burita one. In fact, I'm chuckling again whilst writing this. I won't spoiler more for you guys, because I think it is save to say that you should read this book. Yes, this is a - very rare - five star non-fiction book.

Dutch readers: I honestly have no clue whether this book will be translated, but this book is not too difficult to read in English.

Did you plan to buy/read *Let Her Fly* beforehand or are you planning to do so after reading this review? This review was originally posted on Laurie's Bookshelf

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### **Suzanne McLean says**

I love Malala's dad.

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### **Madeleine Black says**

This book will warm your heart! Ziauddin Yousafzi is an amazing man with great morals, principles and determination. At a young age he is appalled in the gender inequality that he witnesses growing up in Pakistan and is determined that his wife and daughter will be treated equally. It takes a lot of courage and heart to break out of his conditioning, but he did encouraging Malala to be herself and to never hold her back in anyway.

Whenever anybody asked me how Malala became who she is, I have often used the phrase, "Ask me not what I did but what I did not do. I did not clip her wings"

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### **Lesley says**

Love of Family.

Have recently finished reading the book "I Am Malala" which I highly recommend, I was delighted to have the opportunity to read about the man who instilled a love of learning, who inspired and supported his daughter, in a culture when women are second class citizens. In many ways he is even more inspirational than his daughter, he had to realise that there were inequalities in the society he lived in and to choose to change his views, whereas Malala was brought up by her parents to believe that education was her right. Malala's book reflects her interest in politics but I found Ziauddin's book to be an easier read, though inevitably there were overlaps in the story. The overriding impression left by this book is that of his love and pride in his wife and all three of his children.

This book is written in American English and my advanced copy did have editing issues which hopefully will be resolved prior to publication eg. sentences where all the words ran into each other and Malala's foreword bounced constantly from past to present tense. Having said that, I still feel this was a 5\* read. I voluntarily read and reviewed an advanced copy of this book from NetGalley. All thoughts and opinions are my own.

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## **Eleanor says**

Ziauddin Yousafzai is a proud father with a lot to be proud of – his daughter is the renowned activist and youngest-ever Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala. This memoir tells of a man brought up in a patriarchal society, where women's role was to be subservient to men. Ziauddin talks of the awakening he experienced at a young age that made him realise that something was not right, that women should not be treated as lesser. He became a champion of women's rights, not least those of his beloved wife and daughter, and of the importance of education for girls.

This is a heartfelt telling of his life's story, with the many trials his family have faced – the attack on his daughter by the Taliban being the most heartrending. Ziauddin is passionate in his belief that anyone of us can change the world for the good and that even the smallest good deed is worth doing. This is an inspirational work and extremely moving. Ziauddin can teach us all a lot about love and equality.

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## **Donna Hines says**

Fight for Equality. Fight for Justice. Fight for Peace. Fight for World Order.

This fight lives on & is beautifully displayed for the world to see by the loving words of a father, son, husband, and a truly humble man.

He refused to go along with the 'norm' that he was 'superior' above women he decided to rebel against inequality.

This novel will warm your heart as a father he was what the bible says to be - a provider-a protector- for his family.

What I love about this is the compassion expressed for his family , his loved ones, his community, his nation. All my life I sought after the concept of love, protection, support from family and friends and to this day I still seek that validation much into adulthood.

It's an innate lack that I was left with not having felt loved , nurtured, cherished, as a young lady.

The comparison to being like 'brothers' was a constant which led to feelings of inadequacy and separation from family as a 'black sheep.'

My parents always felt the boys were better and it showed and they attempted to portray the same to my own two teen daughters to which this present day they will both leave the room if my parents arrive as they are bombarded by the ignorance of superiority complex they provide.

Sadly narcissism is alive and well in families and what a pleasant joy to see such love being shown in your family and for which it sets the stage of how many young women should be treated with respect, dignity, and upmost of support.

I always told my parents I would never treat my children the way I was treated because the pain is unbearable. Back then discipline was not what it was today and what I experienced would not be tolerated today in society's new norms.

This book is a must read as it shows that equality can be provided to both sexes and that you need not wait to create change.

Thank you for this lovely and moving tribute to all that America should be today!

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## **Sheri says**

“I knew what kind of father I was going to be if I was ever lucky enough to have a daughter. I was completely clear about it. I was going to be a father who believed in equality, and believed in a girl as she grows into a woman, and who raises her so that she believes in herself, so that in her life she can be as free as a bird.”

Malala is a household name and someone we all know to be a brave, remarkable and inspirational young woman. Her father Ziauddin, whose story is told here, is also a remarkable person and sadly (because his views should be the norm, not the exception) an unusual one.

Ziauddin’s voice comes through strongly and we hear about his own formative experiences, his beliefs, his life in Pakistan and later, after the Taliban attack on Malala, in the UK. As he comments “for me as a middle aged man from a patriarchal society in Pakistan, it has been a journey”. While acknowledging his role in Malala’s life though he never remotely seeks to take credit for her achievements. The love and respect he has for his wife Toor Pekai and children (Malala and her two brothers) always shines through.

I loved the anecdote near the beginning - the Oxford college principal and the cup of tea - which Ziauddin describes as his proudest moment to date.

An important, insightful and always very readable book from a man described by his daughter in a foreword as “the personification of love, compassion and humility”.

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## **Mabel says**

A well written account of a remarkable girl and her family. Malala and her family have been through so many heart rendering circumstances, its good to know life is better for all concerned. What a courageous girl Malala has been and still is. I really enjoyed reading this book.

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## **Val Robson says**

I haven’t read Malala’s book yet, partly as I think I might find it too upsetting despite knowing what a remarkable young lady she is. So I came to read her father's book with a little trepidation in case that was also going to be upsetting. But quite the opposite – he does not dwell on the dark side of life with the Taliban or the shooting and aftermath but on his life, his upbringing and his family.

Ziauddin Yousafza tells us about his background, his marriage and his children but mostly he tells of his moral principles and family values. His writing is very clear and readable. He is an educator who was running a school for many years before the family fled Pakistan in 2012 after Malala’s shooting. He constantly emphasises how important education is for all and his commitment to providing that is admirable. I would have loved to know more about what happened with his school after he left and how life in the school and that community is now in 2018.

Ziauddin is the perfect example of someone who does not preach or force opinions on others but simply lives his life in accordance with his values and beliefs. I love the stories in the book where members of his family



are treating their womenfolk as inferior and expecting them to hide their faces and/or bodies but then some change their thinking after they see Ziauddin respect the women in his life without imposing restrictions on their clothing, education or lifestyle.

I hope to read more from Ziauddin and will also be reading Malala's book soon. They are the most incredible family and I wish them all well as I am sure it cannot have been easy being Ziauddin's wife or Malala's two brothers who haven't enjoyed the limelight and have had tougher lives in many ways than Malala and her father who are busy touring and speaking. One day maybe we will hear the voice of Malala's mother in a book. She is obviously an incredible person too as she fought hard to have children educated at her husband's school even when their parents could not afford the fees. I am sure there is much more she could tell us too.

Ziauddin is a very remarkable person and if it wasn't for him on so many levels the world would not be benefiting from all the immense good that his daughter is doing to make it a better place in the face of extreme adversity.

Please do read this book and encourage your young people to do so. It is completely inspirational, even more so when you consider the culture they were living in where speaking out against those in power could have such terrible consequences.

With thanks to NetGalley and Penguin Random House UK, Ebury Publishing for a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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## **Mani says**

Having read the book "I Am Malala" a few years ago and really enjoying it I was really looking forward to reading this one when I saw it on NetGalley. I'm really glad that I requested it on NetGalley now, as I found it a very interesting and enjoyable read.

I managed to finish this book in one day. I thought it was an easy read in terms of the language used, I didn't have to concentrate too hard on what was written.

I found the story that Malala's father told so moving and interesting that I couldn't put the book down. I enjoyed reading about and learning about the struggles the Yousafzai family went through and learning about their journey from Pakistan to Birmingham as well as reading about the fight for equality by both father and daughter.

I highly recommend this book, especially if you have already read "I Am Malala". If you haven't read the book then I personally don't think it matters. But I would say read it as both books are interesting reads and thought provoking.

I would like to thank NetGalley and Penguin Random House UK, Ebury Publishing for my eARC in return for a honest and unbiased review.

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## **Shereen Rafea says**

Such a compelling story , filled with little gems of wisdom from a man who truly broke free from the shackles of societal norms in Pakistan and is unapologetic in expressing how he went about it and the sacrifices it took. Who among us doesn't know the name Malala these days? After reading her book , I was super intrigued by her father, a character she idolizes and a liberal Pashtun who decided to raise her differently than what was expected of him. Therefore as soon as I saw that he published his own story, I had to pick it up. It truly is a father's memoir, which gives clips of his relationship with his parents, wife, sons and daughter and the beauty of it is that it is relatable to sons, daughters, mothers and fathers! That is a good accomplishment for a book.

Definitely a worthwhile read.

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