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## Childhood Shelter

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*Olena Jennings*

## **C**HILDHOOD **S**HELTER

We rode our bikes through the tunnel.  
Parting the darkness.  
It wasn't supposed to exist there  
in the city. But there were other shelters,  
the pigeon coop and the warm garage  
with puddles of glistening oil.  
We drank the water from the hose  
after it was turned off  
and there were only drops left.

Then we hid in the basement  
from the tornado,  
trying on the old dresses  
from storage  
and clattering around  
in heeled shoes.  
Walking over the drain pipe  
our eyes bulged with the sight  
of water.

We found safety  
in the places that hid us.  
On the phone  
mother talks about war.  
We found safety  
in the darkness  
that made us invisible.  
We found safety  
from the news.

## NELLE

The wind gusted through  
the rain, rustling it  
like hair, drops parting  
against the sidewalk.  
We felt water course  
through our bodies like waves,  
our bodies the beach.  
Maybe you will find shelter  
in us.