

I Don't Like the Dark

I don't like the dark. Dark is when bad stuff happens. Like when the men were shouting outside my window. They looked red and green and blue where it flashed from the signs below. One of them was screaming; rotten old drunks my mum calls them. I hate them because they smell. The stinky one had walked in front of a taxi. So him and the taxi man were shouting at each other and then the shouting started inside as well.

I heard Gary slam the door and he started shouting at my mum and she was shouting back, and then I heard that noise. The nasty thuddy one that meant he'd used his fist. I knew to run when that happened, and if I didn't run fast enough he'd get me too. It's hard to reach the knob thing on the door because it's so high, but I can do it standing on tip toe.

I left the door open 'cos he caught me once when I tried to pull it shut. I ran down the smelly stairs and out into the dark. You could see the colours of the signs on the ground because it was so wet, but I ran fast through the rain and into my doorway. The stinky men like the dark doors, but my one has lots of lights around it, those really bright ones at the edges of the windows, only one of them is broke. It's the one right by the door, so if I get rolled up tight into a little ball there's enough dark to hide me.

Then I heard the screaming start, but it wasn't like shouting. It made my ears hurt and it got louder and louder. Then I saw my mum in the street and it was her that was screaming and there was something sticking out of the back of her head and she was making this awful noise. I wanted to run to her but I couldn't move so I put my hands over my ears and even then I could still hear her.

The men in the street stopped shouting and they were staring at my mum.

"Christ almighty. She's got a knife stuck in the back of her head." I heard the taxi man say.

He had one of those little mobiles, it looked silly in his big hands but I kept watching because I couldn't look at my mum. I heard him shout at the phone that he wanted an ambulance. Then mum kind of fell into him and they disappeared behind the car so I couldn't see any more.

An ambulance came and a police car, and the lights went off and on very fast and I kept watching them. I saw the old drunk point at me when the policeman spoke to him.

"Come on sweetheart, this is no place for you to be." The lights made the white bits on his coat shine really bright. I put my hand in his and whispered,

"I don't like the dark."