

Baby Games

by Chelsea Wood

We play Hide-and-Seek and I hide real good. When Sophie starts looking for me, I decide to stay hidden. I move quietly from hiding place to hiding place, inside the big old dog house, behind the tree, around the side of the house. Eventually she cries out, "I give up!" But I stay quiet to see what will happen. Sophie is standing in the middle of our paved back yard, looking around like a dummy. I almost laugh, but I remember hiding.

The sky is orange and red. It's getting dark out by the time Sophie goes inside to tell Mom. The colors of everything fade together and turn gray, even the grass and my pink bicycle. I am crouched down behind the big craggy tree on our front lawn. My back is to the street and I peak my face out to watch as my Mom and Dad and big brother go outside with flashlights.

First they knock on Marie's door. Marie lives next door to our house. We have the same driveway and we play together sometimes. Sophie and I don't like Marie that much because she always wants to play baby games like Cats and Dogs and we like to play Hide-and-Seek and Jail with the boys down the street. I see the thin rectangle of light from Marie's front door and her dad standing there talking to my parents. Then he and some other people in Marie's family come out and everyone is calling my name. It's funny, I can't tell their voices from the echoes of their voices. The street is filled with Emmie! Emmie!

I'm starting to feel a little sad and sorry, but I can't come out now because of that, so I stay put until they finish. My parents are going back inside and I hear Marie's father say, "Good luck."

The gray is getting darker, turning into black shadows. I can't even see my pink bike anymore. Marie's family has gone back to their house and I'm still squatting down behind the tree. After a couple seconds of waiting and holding my breath I stretch back up and run to the front door, bursting inside. The light inside is orange and warm. My eyes feel funny after being in the dark for so long. I

look around at the living room with the green leather couches and T.V. and pictures on the wall. It's my same old living room but my eyes make it look new, almost like a stranger's house or a movie.

My mom immediately runs to me from the kitchen and grabs me in the kind of hug that hurts. I think she knows that I wasn't kidnapped or lost or trapped because she says right away, "What were you thinking? Why didn't you come out when you saw us looking for you?"

I just say, "I don't know."

I feel real bad. I can't wait to go to the play room and see Sophie and not have grown up eyes watching me. My mom is still holding me in her hands and looking at me but I am just watching the carpet. She makes a loud sigh that's also a little cry and says, "Don't do that ever again!"

Then she is going back to the kitchen to finish dinner and I'm running down the hall to the play room.

