

Sensible Things

by Tawnysha Greene

Thirty-seven stitches to sew your ear on, five more to close the skin above your eyebrow as nurses touch your ribs, shine light in your eyes, clean blood from your hands, face, shoulder, you telling how your bike flipped, straps of your purse caught in spokes and I watch you look from one nurse to the other, to Momma, to brother, me, hear you ask—*will you tell Daddy?*—while your helmet sits, unused in the garage, new since Christmas when we got the bike, the skateboard, the in-line skates, and when the nurses give you a bottle of medicine for your skin, Momma pays the lady behind the desk with a green card, and we drive home, you in the front seat, looking in the side view mirror and trying to touch your face when Momma tells you not to, tells you you'll make it scar, and we see the driveway, that Daddy's not home, then Momma says you were wearing the helmet—we all say you were—and you and Momma go inside and brother opens the garage, takes the helmet from Christmas, still white and shiny, and throws it down against the pavement until the plastic is cracked, paint chipped, then he picks it up and does it again.

