

Avoiding the rubble in the hallway  
of broken bricks throwing stones at each other,  
I hide away  
in fragments.

A toddler sits on a borrowed trike.  
“You’re a bastard!” He shouts,  
as a little girl eyes his toy,  
looking for a friend to play with.

We’d come here for safety—  
Hoping for quiet.  
But there is smashed glass in the garden  
and the blue lights still flash at night.

The second time we came, a trolley,  
now sitting abandoned in the hallway.

“Don’t worry, you can take whatever you need  
from there.”

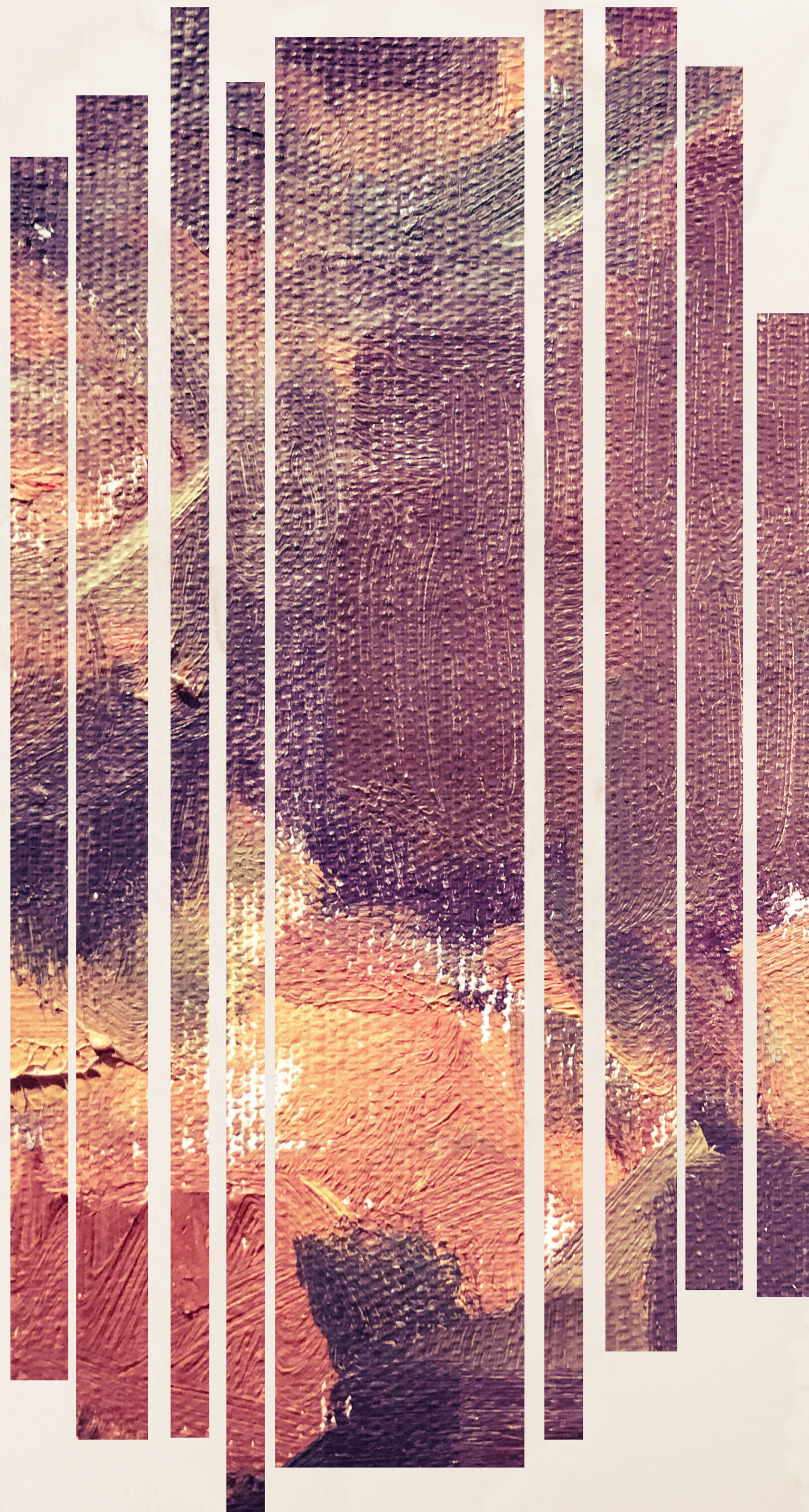
They pointed to an unloved corner,  
A room of odd shoes,  
of heaped clothes on their way to the bins.

A trip to the supermarket, 3 am  
For milk and underwear,  
I stop to try on shoes I won’t buy.

My daughter sprawled asleep  
on a coat seeping through metal squares,  
I look around.  
Could HE be here?

In haste, I leave the essentials behind.  
But really, I know they were taken from me.

A memory caged in metal,  
I don’t need toothpaste.  
A good mum, I deserved those shoes.



## BRICKS RENDERED WITH SHAMPOO AND SHOES

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