

**Bourne**  
**toWrite...**  
creative writing  
workshops

## The Alibi

by Janie Reynolds

Where do you run when  
the Peril  
is in your home? When  
he  
has your keys, your  
medicine, your  
daughter?

You can run along lanes  
lined with flat, locked  
doors, cosy  
windows casting  
gold light upon the  
knife-edge pavement  
that you teeter on as you stop to  
catch a breath without  
slashing your feet.

Where do you go when  
your only alibis  
are dead or on  
the other side of the world, or a  
bus ride away and you're in your  
nightdress,  
when the police want  
bruises, and you have some  
but he has your  
daughter, your only living  
blood alibi?

When his friends think  
you're mad  
because he says you are and  
you're out in the dark  
in your nightdress to prove it?

No innocent person  
ever has an alibi.  
That's why they're  
running,  
on cold nights, hiding in  
urine shelters on  
tilted benches,  
curling their exposed  
bodies round armrests that  
cut them in half as they  
grasp for the only way out of the  
nightmare –  
sleep.

Where do you run when  
all you want is to smell your  
little daughter's breath?  
You run back into his arms again.  
That's where you run.