



MARIA SHEKHIREVA, *9 years old*

*City of Marinka,
Donetsk region*

From an early age, Maria was told that there was a war. She used to see the military with machine guns. And when February 24 came, the girl was not afraid or cried, but reassured her mother and older sister Lisa.

"It simply came to our notice then. I heard gunshots and children's screams in the street. At first, my sister and I sat in the hallway, and Mom and Dad quickly gathered things. Then, for 4 hours, we went down to the cellar. There was a lot of canning and our favorite currant compote. As they sat, they remembered how they had prepared last summer. In the evening, it became calmer and we ran to our car. Then my father was very worried and my mother was crying. On the way, we saw bright explosions in the sky, like fireworks. But Dad explained that it was phosphorus hail that could kill us. Then I was very scared of my

grandparents. They left the city later than us," says Maria.

Now the family is in the Dnieper, except for Dad. He works in another city and promised his daughters to buy brand new scooters. Maria wants him to be there. And she also wants to go home: "My mother said that our house may no longer exist. And I believe that we will have nowhere to return. Because I have everything there: school, friends, dancing, a tree house, my toys, awards, and current compote... »



For reference

Shekhirev family:

*Dad - Vladimir, a 49-year-old public figure;
mother - Catherine, engineer, 42 years old;
daughter - Maria, schoolgirl, 9 years old;
daughter - Lisa, schoolgirl, 11 years old.*

