

To me shelter means something that protects you and makes you forget all of the cruelty in the world. And that is really important.

There are a few things that fall under this category for me. First I'll give you a list of all these things and then describe them in greater detail as we move on.

1. Light
2. People
3. Nature

All of these things coexist in my mind when I think about shelter. None of these by itself makes me feel fully and completely safe. For me to be completely at ease, I need all three factors to envelop me. Let's start with light.

To me light makes me feel comfortable and safe because it (and I know this is silly for an eleven year old) shows me there really isn't anything lurking in those shadows. And that's not all, I also love the way light can really reveal things as they are. When things are dark and murky, it can just feel depressing and shadows always distort reality in a way that makes me fear even everyday things.

Humans have always imagined horrible creatures of the darkness but most of these creatures are never that scary when light is shed on them. This can be taken figuratively as well. Lightbulbs are usually associated with knowledge. I think knowledge, like light, repels fear. When we don't know about something, we are usually scared of it. At the root of every fear there is ignorance. So when we put the lightbulb to the fear, we understand things and then things are not that bad.

Humans are social and friendly creatures. We depend on others. Something that my mom always says is, "For every one bad person there is in the World, there are ten good ones." This shows me that there are always people to help you if something goes wrong. And so, I surround myself with ones that I can trust. When there are good people around me, I feel sheltered. Because if there is someone to help, why worry about pointless things that I can't control. I saw this in action when my family was out on a walk when we heard a crash and a scream. Immediately my dad rushed forward and around the corner through a bunch of people where there was a man on the road bloodied. My dad helped him up while another person picked up his bike. And still another person called 911 for help. In the end the man was okay. What I thought about this after, (other than the admiration for my dad) was that if the man was biking on his own in the woods and he fell, would he be okay? Probably not. These are the reasons that people make me feel sheltered. And now on to the final thing that makes me feel sheltered. Nature.

I know nature can be disastrous (natural disasters) but then again, so can people. Anyway, Nature really makes me feel safe because of the sense of calmness it gives. And it can be literally a shelter. It has provided for animals and us since the dawn of times. Nature gives us essentials like food, water, air, raw materials even medicine. It also has a spiritual connection to people since ancient times. Nature is important to almost everybody. Nature makes me feel sheltered too. Just taking a walk under a canopy of green tranquility while little animals go about their day and birds sing and swoop in front of you. You can almost **feel** everything growing around you. The sheer magic in the air can make me forget all of the cruelty in the world. That is exactly my definition of shelter.

In conclusion, shelter to me is something that protects you and makes you forget all of the cruelty in the world. For me, it has always been these three things together. If you are in

nature alone, it could be dangerous. Same if there isn't any light. And not being in nature at all makes people forget their humanity. Thus, all of these things to me, work together to create my perfect definition of safety and shelter.

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