The Simple Beauty of Peace  
"One could live in a pile of trash and somehow always find the world beautiful," he read to me.

I asked, "How can that be the case when it feels like at any moment the world can end? There's so much hate in this world, but I struggle to find the love at times."

He replied, "It's all a matter of how you look at things. You can choose to see the evil that lies within every human or see the simple beauty that lies within us all. I could be considered the ugliest person on the planet, but in the end I'm the most beautiful. It's not about looks that matter, but what's on the inside and the actions you choose to make. Everyone is beautiful in their own way. Your grandma viewed life through loving glasses. She said that all anyone had to do was just simply be themselves, respect others, help those in need, and to always be kind towards others."

Grandma was the one who would always bake you a few cookies that would always fill you from deep within with love and kindness. She could take one small glance at you and see everything good about you. She wouldn't judge you based on your past or how many things you have done wrong, instead she'd give you a place to stay, rest, and talk. It was a small little apartment, but she made everyone feel welcome and made it feel as though you belonged and that no one else could hear you. It was just you and her having a discussion without hatred and without fear of being misunderstood or left out. It was one of those places I enjoyed going to often. I never felt out of place despite the large age difference. She always knew something I didn't know, and I also brought something new to the table she didn't know. Sometimes we never saw eye to eye on certain subjects, but that's okay. Not everyone supports things such as abortion, medical marijuana legalization, and other things. But just because we had completely opposite views on those subjects, didn't stop us from talking, learning from one another, and having a friendly conversation that allowed us to both come to a more stable conclusion. I learned that over the years I had the same gift as she did. Through her kindness and wisdom, she passed the gift down to anyone that would join her for a few hours. I feel as though it made me less biased. I stopped throwing out words without thinking, and instead of spreading hate, I gave out love and advice to those who needed it and were willing to listen. Over careful observation of people, I have learned that it isn't always the hate that blinds us first, but the extreme bias that lies within us all that causes the hate, misunderstanding, and the lack of will to have a reasonable discussion.

Winter sighs as it breaths through the cracked window. You can smell the cold crisp air invading your nose and inviting the warm to come out and play. The fire crackles as a few glowing embers float upwards. You wonder what mystical journey they could be going on as they make their way towards the sky. The warmth returns to your nose and so does the sweet smell of chocolate as you raise the glass to your lips. The wonderfully sweet smell of cookies floods the air. They are done just in time. A stranger knocks at the door. His dull blue eyes look down at the ground as if to say he is lost in the past. You welcome him in for some hot coco, cookies, a place to stay, and a discussion. "I know this place isn't much, but you are always welcome here." Casually looking around he notices that the walls are barely holding the structure together and that there’s a few cracks along them, but he doesn't seem to care. He's been through worse. After all, a place to stay is a place to stay. He sits in the chair opposite of you and the two of you begin the journey.