

**LOVE WINS.**



It was quiet as the Lambert family of many generations sat in front the fireplace with great desire. Grandma Ida was now a hundred and one years old and all her relatives gathered together to hear her many stories. The stories she told always had a good lesson for any to learn and this was to be her last story to them before she left the country for her homeland. The fireplace was the only furniture that made noise as Grandma Ida throtle to her seat. She wore a smile that caught everyone's attention. It was a telling smile: she had a plan.

Minutes before the family entered the room there was a quarrel between the two siblings of the Fider family. These two were always loving to each other but something in the behavior of the younger one caused the elder to speak sternly. The others of the family had watched on as Ben, twenty, yelled at his sister Jamie, who had recently turned seventeen. He seemed displeased about something she had said some minutes before and above his screaming rebukes you could hear Jamie crying. She was very surprised that her brother responded that way to her and in agony of heart she turned from him, out the door, in her car and drove away.

Grandma Ida watched as she ran by. She heard the yells Ben threw at his sister. She heard his words of disgust and betrayal; because it was obvious that he was told what he was out of confidence and privacy. As Jamie ran by she held out her withered hands to her in a call to hug the hurting girl; but Jamie didn't see her great grandmother. It was when Jamie drove away that the family filed into the living room to await Grandma Ida's stories. Ben was still foaming with anger when he sat down, his head lowered and tears in his eyes. How could Jamie have done something so wrong? How could she have lied the way she did? His thoughts were many and he didn't realized his great grandmother had sat down until he heard:

"There lived in a home just outside, Earthquake Lane a family of four. This was a good family. They were always happy and friendly with each other and even when they did wrongs they never dealt harshly with each other. Do not take this last bit to mean that they covered each other's wrongs because they did not. What they did though was talk kindly to each other when there was trouble." Ben looked up to see his great grandmother and saw her talking to the little faces that looked up at her. He remembered this story. He remembered it was told him when he was as young as those seated on the floor before Grandma Ida. He knew how it would end and his heart sank when he remembered how he shouted at his sister. They both had heard the story together ten years ago and had decided to treat each other like the story said. They had done well at that decision, until today. Today was the first time they lived outside of that story and Ben felt it was his fault. The tears stood in his face as the story continued:

"Many in the community they lived in wondered at the way they interacted with each other, especially were they amazed at the children. Michael and Abigail were three years apart but they behaved like they were equals. They shared with each other, they protected each other, and they corrected each other and loved each other. One day Abigail did something that really hurt Michael. She never meant to hurt him and he knew that. She was afraid at first to tell him about it but she overcame the fear because of how they were with each other. All in Michael's class watched as his little sister approached him, sadness in her eyes. He knew something was wrong and he knew his entire class thought the same as he did. "I'm so sorry Michael but I got you into trouble with our principal. I brought your pocket knife to school and he found me with it and told me I was going to be suspended. In fear I screamed that the knife was yours and not mine and now you are the one that's suspended. He's coming to get you Michael. I'm so sorry!" At her last apology her voice broke and Michael, not sure what he heard, hugged and kissed her cheeks. "It's okay Abigail. I should have put the knife away from your reach and not tempt you like I did with it." The class gasped as they heard his response. He was suspended and that would cause him to lose the scholarship he got for his good behavior. "Did he even understand what this all meant?" asked his classmates among themselves. Michael couldn't hear their talks, however, because his sister was crying loudly and he was made sad by her tears. "Abigail? Please don't cry anymore. It will be ok. Your only worry shouldn't be my suspension. It should be that you blamed another for the trouble you put yourself in. I'll accept the suspension but you have to not cry because you believe you hurt me, you have to be sad because you've hurt God. That's what we were taught last evening at worship when we looked at the reform line of creation. Blaming others for the wrongs we've done is sinful and that alone is worthy of your tears, little sister."

Ben felt stabbed at the heart. He did wrong in his response to Jamie. He shouldn't have yelled at her. He should have loved her because only then could his counsels have been received. He wish he could undo the words he spoke in hurt to her. As he replayed the scene in his mind, he screamed a cry that got all in the room startled. Grandma Ida registered conviction and watched as Ben buried his face in his palm. "Kindness is the way to any heart no matter how cold," said his great grandmother with a smile as Jamie entered the room and with teary eyes ran over to Ben in an act of love.