

# War & Peace

*by* Jake Barnes

In the morning the fog boils up from the ground as I pad down the steps to the lake in bare feet. I stand at the edge of the water naked as a newborn. Tiny ripples lick my toes. I walk into the water until it is waist deep. Then I scrub myself with a bar of Ivory soap.

In the evening I sit in my dad's old leather recliner and watch the sunset. The color of the water changes from blue to black. The sky turns from pink to star-spangled ebony. There is no moon.

In the wee small hours, I get up and sit in the dark in the recliner by the window and watch the reflection of the moon bobbing on the inky surface of the lake, and I think about my dead father and my wayward wife.

Later I lie in bed and think about my past life with more relief than regret, happy to have survived the train wreck, glad to be alive. I fall asleep listening to the shrill lullaby of crickets.

