

# Laundry Day

by Elizabeth Trach

Cameron lived in the city. His apartment was in a tall building. It was small, but there was a playground and a game room for sharing.

There was also a laundry room with washing machines and clothes dryers. Cameron liked helping his mother because it always smelled very clean in the laundry room. People used different kinds of soap, but they all smelled nice.

In the summer, Cameron went to spend a week with his grandmother. She lived in the country. Cameron liked being surrounded by trees and grass in the summer. It felt much cooler there.

On Monday morning, Grandma woke Cameron up early. "Today is laundry day!" she said.

"On a Monday?" Cameron asked. "Mom usually does the wash on the weekend."

"Well," said Grandma, "Washing on Monday is a farm tradition. That's how my grandmother always did it, and she taught my mother. And I taught your mother, but she doesn't have a washtub in the city."

"A washtub?" asked Cameron. "Don't you have a machine?"

"I do, but I like to do laundry the old fashioned way in the summer. Come down and see."

Cameron got dressed and went into the back yard, where Grandma has a large tub of water. She sat facing the vegetable garden in a shady spot under a tree. Cameron watched as Grandma lifted a pillowcase out of the laundry basket and dunked it into the water.

Then she took a bar of soap and scrubbed it over the wet pillowcase. Finally, she rubbed the pillowcase up and down over a piece of metal.

"What's that?" asked Cameron.

"That's my washboard," said Grandma. "The ridges help scrub out the dirt." Grandma used a large pitcher to pour some fresh water over the pillowcase. Then she squeezed it hard and handed it to Cameron. "Your job can be to hang the wash on the line."

Cameron used the little wooden clothespins to clip the pillowcase to a long piece of rope that stretched from the tree to the fence post. He ran back and forth from Grandma to the rope until she was all finished. Now all the laundry waved in the breeze. Cameron thought it was very pretty.

"Wait until you get to sleep on those sheets," said Grandma. "They'll smell like the good, fresh air."

Cameron smiled. Even though it took longer, he liked the traditional way of doing laundry.

