

AT THE CLOTHESLINE

Millie was in the backyard hanging the laundry. I was watching her from the kitchen window. Why does this give me so much pleasure? Because I love her in a million ways, and because I love the idea of clean laundry flapping in the wind. It's timeless, a new beginning, a promise of tomorrow. Clothespins! God, I love clothespins. We should stock up on them. Some day they may stop making them, and then what? If I were a painter, I would paint Millie hanging the laundry. That would be a painting that would make you happy, and break your heart. You would never know what was in her mind, big thoughts, little thoughts, no thoughts. Did she see the hawk circling overhead? Did she hate hanging laundry? Was she going to run away with a sailor? The sheets billowing like sails on an ancient skiff, the socks waving goodbye. Millie, O Millie, do you remember me? The man who traveled with cloth napkins and loved you in the great storm.

This is a perfect poem, whatever that means.

- Kate Lindroos