

## Poor Little Rich Girl

When I was a little girl, I loved to play outside after school and during the summer. It didn't matter if I was tumbling in the grass or creating a fort with bushes and branches. I wasn't afraid to get dirty either. In fact, the dirtier, the better. I'm sure my momma felt otherwise, but she truly didn't mind. I was always careful not to wear my good clothes to go outside.

My forts were wonderful places for me to play. I would clear the ground of any rocks and sticks, making the floor smooth and the edges cozy with soft grass and green leaves. I brought out old pillows and blankets to make little beds and seats for me and my stuffed animals to sit on. I loved it when momma would make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and bring them out to me on a tray with a cold glass of milk and a cookie. She had a special way of cutting the sandwich to make it look like a rocket ship. She cut off two corner pieces from opposite sides, then she would take the long center and cut it in half. All she did was turn the two corner pieces to where they were butted up against the bottom of the 'rocket', so it looked like the wings. Those were the best tasting sandwiches I have ever had.

Usually by the time I was supposed to go back inside, she wouldn't have to call me because my stomach would always volunteer to let me know it was supper time. There was nothing like the smell of momma's cooking when you walked in the back door. Mm mm...Fried chicken, mashed potatoes and green beans. A perfect meal for a perfectly hungry little girl.

"Wash up! It's time to eat!" Momma would holler, as if she needed to tell me!

"Okay!" I would hurry into the bathroom to wash my hands and face as quickly as I could. I wanted to do the job right the first time, so daddy wouldn't have to send me back to try again.

The three of us would sit at our dinner table together, and daddy would say a simple prayer of thanksgiving for our food. As we sat eating momma's wonderful cooking, we would talk and laugh together. Daddy would talk about his work at the paper mill, and how someone was or wasn't pulling their end of the load, whatever that meant. Momma would smile at him and listen carefully. She would tell him a little about her day, and then they would both ask me what I was up to. I liked school okay, but I would almost always want to talk about a new discovery I made or what my plans were tomorrow. They would listen to me as tentatively as they did each other, and I felt like I mattered to them.

Sometimes momma would surprise us with a homemade chocolate cake...another one of my favorites. Add that with another cold glass of milk, and I felt like I was the richest girl in the world. Yes, I was rich. I remember there were times when momma would say we weren't going to be able to make ends meet, or we didn't have two dimes to rub together, but I know I had everything that anyone could ever want or need. I had a warm bed to sleep in when it was cold. I had cold lemonade to drink in the hot summer sun. I had a mother and father that showed me the love of the Father above, by the way they loved me with all they had. It doesn't get any better than that.