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Remembrance of a Summer Past

As I lay in bed awakened by the loose paddle on my ceiling fan, I glance over at my alarm clock; its only six thirty in the morning but I am already soaked in sweat, yet another humid August morning. Six thirty “Oh my God I’m late” I quickly get dressed splash some water on my face, trip over my cat, wave goodbye to my Mom, and head down to my father’s plumbing shop.

With school a distant memory, I have better things on my mind. While my friends continued to enjoy their summers swimming at the quarries, riding their bikes, or just hanging around, I, on the other hand, am spending my time rummaging through the metal pile at the local dump. Amidst the broken down washing machines, dryers, rusty water heaters, baby carriages, broken glass, and motor oil was a vast array of parts needed to complete our project.

Once back at my father’s shop with two months’ worth of dump picking under our belts, the moment has come for the construction of my soapbox racer to be entered in the local soapbox derby, first place, a new bicycle. My father and I wasted no time cutting and bending the steel pipe, and welding it together to construct the frame. The shop filled with sparks some occasionally hitting my arms and legs. My job consisted of sanding the rusty pipe used for the frame to ready it for paint. After all I was only ten years old at the time, but I sanded until I thought my arms would fall off. We connected

the steering wheel with aircraft cable, and pulley's, and then installed the wheels. Things really started to take shape; and before we knew it, our black steel beauty was ready for racing, complete with tool box, cell phone, and of course my lucky number seven. Although it was home made and not a fancy kit car like some of my competition, it turned people's heads.

I remember my Dad pushing me up the ramp at the top of the hill. Overlooking the crowd I glanced over at my opponent, and threw a wave out to my mother. I was on top of the world. Well race day came and went and the bicycle found its home with someone else. Before I knew it I was back in school; and as the years passed by, I reflect on those times working side by side with my Dad and the fun I had. But now the soapbox racer sits idle in the corner of his plumbing shop, covered in dust, and waiting for the day when I will resurrect it with my son.