

My Dad (2010) by Steve Manick

Dad, when I look back on my years as a child,
The thoughts that I have are all warm, safe and mild.

In our backyard you built cars and trucks made of wood,
I was always the envy of the kids in the 'hood.

We'd wrestle on the grass and I'd be in a pin,
Yet I always seemed able to come back and win.

Our garage had the largest train set on the street,
Building models with you was always a treat.

You gave us traditions, for you weren't a gambler,
The weekend was Dinahs, then a drive in the Rambler.

With cigar-box gas stations and miniature cars,
We'd play there for hours, until we saw stars.

If I did something wrong I'd get a lecture or three,
But spanking was rare— it hurt you more than me.

You taught me 'bout work, and devotion and trust,
And of frequent vacations, it was Palm Springs or bust.

On weekdays you'd come home and talk of your clients,
But Sunday was hot dogs and Land of the Giants.

I'd help you paint houses, making sure there's no drips,
The best part was starting— eating breakfast at Ships.

My hobby was slot cars, you'd take me to the track,
You helped me with scouting, you just had that knack.

You taught me to fix things and to keep up a home,
How to maintain a car and to polish the chrome.

With your thundering voice you'd make others turn white,
But to your family your bark was worse than your bite.

We'd drive up the coast, for there was so much to see,
You showed us how to hang a houseboat in a tree.

My best memory though, and it makes me feel proud,
Is when we'd lay on the grass and just stare at a cloud.

And now I'm a dad I can look back and swallow,
My work is cut out, you're a hard act to follow.

You met my Darlene on a Father's Day night,
From the time she had met you she felt you were right.

When Adam was born I could tell you were proud
Then Julia came and you had quite a crowd.

My kids cannot wait to see Grandpa once more,
And they frown at the time that you walk out the door.

And Adam's inventions are brilliant you know,
But when you come over he'll bring them to show.

And Julia sings and she dances so free,
She'll play the piano, with all 'round her to see.

You're loved by our family, from my kids and my mate,
But as my dad you're tops and I think you are great.