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Just Not Fast Enough

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I tied a league ball in it, roped it around twice with jute twine and greased it with Vaseline before putting it between my mattress and box spring each fall. By April, my baseball glove molded for another season.

When spring came, the days rang: "Hey, batter, batter; swing, batter, swing!"

I swung a Duke Snyder Adirondack, but I was Louis Aparicio at the plate—a singles hitter and fast, a sure steal on the base paths.

In one game, the rain fouled-up my fifth stealing attempt, and second base became a buoy. My father and I navigated out of the bog in our new '64 Oldsmobile, until he asked about my muddy spikes...

We torpedoed across traffic and slid across shoals. He popped the trunk, hurled my spikes high in the air. I watched them descend, the long, white laces twisting in slow motion, my mitt tied to them.

They hit the street with a dull splash, and I held my breath an instant, an eternity; as if dreaming, I dodged the gloom of headlights bearing down in an attempt to swipe. The whole season disappeared beneath a semi-trailer five times.