

BORDOM STRIKES – WIFE INSISTS I BUY ANOTHER CAR

It was early November 2020, and all the cars in the barn were running well. Tom Link and I had just gotten his SPARE 1953 218 CID Plymouth Flat Head 6 cylinder running after it had sat in his garage for close to 30 years. I was running out of things to do and my wife Pat kept urging me to buy another car to help maintain our sanity. Being mindful of the fact that I had just purchased a 1964 Plymouth Valiant in the spring, I started looking for another project, possibly one that the 218 engine could fit in. As luck would have it I found a 1948 Plymouth 2 Door Special Coupe on-line and so the story begins.

I called the seller and found out that the engine in the car was stuck. It had been in storage for the last 20 years. The ad claimed the car had been at a car show and won cruiser of the night. It was driven home and pulled into his storage warehouse where it sat for the next 20 years. The story continues that they decided to sell the car, but when they went to get it started, it wouldn't turn over. Photos showed the interior and undercarriage to be very good, with a lot of recently replaced items like springs, shocks, and carburetor rebuild, and the owner claims to have rebuilt the engine a short time before he parked it. Oh, did I mention it has an overdrive worth \$\$\$\$. Chrome looked very good and the price was in the ballpark for a project. The only real downside besides the engine was the car was painted PINK. Negotiations continued for about 2 weeks and eventually I was able to purchase the car for 80% of asking, which was low to begin with.

On November 27, 2020, Tom Link, Merrill Moone and I began our journey to Maple Shade, NJ, with car trailer in tow to pick up the car. We left at 4:00 AM and arrived in NJ by 10:00 AM. An hour or so to pay for and load the car (lot of pushing) onto the trailer, we were back on the road again. Little slower driving home, but we arrived in Green Hill before dark. With a little help from a neighbor, we were able to roll Pinky into the garage.

Tom had been pretty confident that we could break the engine free, if everything we were told was true. Unfortunately that was not the case. After 2 weeks of soaking the engine with everything from Kroil to Marvel Mystery Oil, and rocking the car to no avail, we decided that we had to pull the head. Once the head was off, we discovered that there were marks in the pistons from a star washer, and one piston was cracked down to the ring. We pulled the pan down and disconnected the rod bearings. The oil was so black and thick that I had to use a putty knife to remove the oil. The crank turned freely and the head itself looked good. Then the tapping of the pistons began. More soaking including the secret ingredient Home Made Vinegar and tapping!! Eventually we were able to get a 5 of the 6 pistons out, but the last piston took a 10 pound sledge hammer to remove.

Fortunately all the piston walls were still in original spec, so a new set of pistons, new rings and push rod bearings and one new valve, and we were able to put the engine back together without taking it out of the car. We pushed it out to the door, and turned over the engine. After 3 or 4 tries, it started. Billowing smoke from all the fluids we put down the exhaust pipes, it took about 5 or 10 minutes, and it cleared up, purring like a kitten.

We since have gotten all the minor issues corrected, including wiring the overdrive, universal joint boots, new seat tracks, and RF brake backing plate. The car is ready for summer cruising.

1 The Arrival



2 Rolling into the Garage



3

4 Nice interior



5 engine upon arrival - STUCK



6 FIRST STARTUP



7 FINISHED ENGINE



8 READY FOR CRUISING

