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GUY WALKS INTO A BAR

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So a guy walks into a bar one day and he can't believe his eyes. There, in the corner, there's this one-foot-tall man, in a little tuxedo, playing a tiny grand piano.



So the guy asks the bartender, "Where'd he come from?"

And the bartender's, like, "There's a genie in the men's room who grants wishes."

So the guy runs into the men's room and, sure enough, there's this genie. And the genie's, like, "Your wish is my command." So the guy's, like, "O.K., I wish for world peace." And there's this big cloud of smoke—and then the room fills up with *geese*.

So the guy walks out of the men's room and he's, like, "Hey, bartender, I think your genie might be hard of hearing."

And the bartender's, like, "No kidding. You think I wished for a twelve-inch *pianist*?"

So the guy processes this. And he's, like, "Does that mean you wished for a twelve-inch penis?"

And the bartender's, like, "Yeah. Why, what did you wish for?"

And the guy's, like, "World peace."

So the bartender is understandably ashamed.

And the guy orders a beer, like everything is normal, but it's obvious that something has changed between him and the bartender.

And the bartender's, like, "I feel like I should explain myself further."

And the guy's, like, "You don't have to."

But the bartender continues, in a hushed tone. And he's, like, "I have what's known as penile dysmorphic disorder. Basically, what that means is I fixate on my size. It's not that I'm small down there. I'm actually within the normal range. Whenever I see it, though, I feel inadequate."

And the guy feels sorry for him. So he's, like, "Where do you think that comes from?"

And the bartender's, like, "I don't know. My dad and I had a tense relationship. He used to cheat on my mom, and I knew it was going on, but I didn't tell her. I think it's wrapped up in that somehow."

And the guy's, like, "Have you ever seen anyone about this?"

And the bartender's, like, "Oh, yeah, I started seeing a therapist four years ago. But she says we've barely scratched the surface."

So, at around this point, the twelve-inch pianist finishes up his sonata. And he walks over to the bar and climbs onto one of the stools. And he's, like, "Listen, I couldn't help but overhear the end of your conversation. I never told anyone this before, but my dad and I didn't speak the last ten years of his life."

And the bartender's, like, "Tell me more about that." And he pours the pianist a tiny glass of whiskey.

And the twelve-inch pianist is, like, "He was a total monster. Beat us all. Told me once I was an accident."

And the bartender's, like, "That's horrible."

And the twelve-inch pianist shrugs. And he's, like, "You know what? I'm over it. He always said I wouldn't amount to anything, because of my height? Well, now look at me. I'm a professional musician!"

And the pianist starts to laugh, but it's a forced kind of laughter, and you can see the pain behind it. And then he's, like, "When he was in the hospital, he had one of the nurses call me. I was going to go see him. Bought a plane ticket and everything. But before I could make it back to Tampa . . ."

And then he starts to cry. And he's, like, "I just wish I'd had a chance to say goodbye to my old man."

And all of a sudden there's this big cloud of smoke—and a beat-up Plymouth Voyager appears!

And the pianist is, like, "I said 'old man,' not 'old van!'"

And everybody laughs. And the pianist is, like, "Your genie's hard of hearing."

And the bartender says, “No kidding. You think I wished for a twelve-inch *pianist*?”

And as soon as the words leave his lips he regrets them. Because the pianist is, like, “Oh, my God. You didn’t really want me.”

And the bartender’s, like, “No, it’s not like that.” You know, trying to backpedal.

And the pianist smiles ruefully and says, “Once an accident, always an accident.” And he drinks all of his whiskey.

And the bartender’s, like, “Brian, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean that.”

And the pianist smashes his whiskey glass against the wall and says, “Well, I didn’t mean *that*.”

And the bartender’s, like, “Whoa, calm down.”

And the pianist is, like, “Fuck you!” And he’s really drunk, because he’s only one foot tall and so his tolerance for alcohol is extremely low. And he’s, like, “Fuck you, asshole! Fuck you!”

And he starts throwing punches, but he’s too small to do any real damage, and eventually he just collapses in the bartender’s arms.

And suddenly he has this revelation. And he’s, like, “My God, I’m just like him. I’m just like him.” And he starts weeping.

And the bartender’s, like, “No, you’re not. You’re better than he was.”

And the pianist is, like, “That’s not true. I’m worthless!”

And the bartender grabs the pianist by the shoulders and says, “Damn it, Brian, listen to me! My life was hell before you entered it. Now I look forward to every day. You’re so talented and kind and you light up this whole bar. Hell, you light up my whole life. If I had a second wish, you know what it would be? It would be for you to realize how beautiful you are.”

And the bartender kisses the pianist on the lips.

So the guy, who’s been watching all this, is surprised, because he didn’t know the bartender was gay. It doesn’t bother him; it just catches him off guard, you know? So he goes to the bathroom, to give them a little privacy. And there’s the genie.

So the guy’s, like, “Hey, genie, you need to get your ears fixed.”

And the genie’s, like, “Who says they’re broken?” And he opens the door, revealing the happy couple, who are kissing and gaining strength from each other.

And the guy's, like, "Well done."

And then the genie says, "That bartender's tiny penis is going to seem huge from the perspective of his one-foot-tall boyfriend."

And the graphic nature of the comment kind of kills the moment.

And the genie's, like, "I'm sorry. I should've left that part unsaid. I always do that. I take things too far."

And the guy's, like, "Don't worry about it. Let's just grab a beer. It's on me." ♦

SIMON RICH
