

The Gift of Mr. Brood

My name is Mr. Brood, 26 years old and 199.7 cm tall (as of yesterday). This morning, when I woke up, I found that my bed had collapsed, and there were two large holes in the wall. Various items in my room were scattered around. I looked at my hands and feet, and realized I was in big trouble.

Since birth, I have had a strange superpower: It's not the kind that lets you fly, metal-bend, or shoot lasers from your eyes. My superpower is pretty useless: I grow 0.01 cm taller whenever someone praises me. My parents called it a gift from God, but I hated it. Who wants to keep growing taller uncontrollably? I tried to avoid praise, but by the time I graduated, I had reached 198 cm. I moved to Mysterious Town, where the population was only 100, hoping that fewer people meant fewer compliments.

After three years here, my height had only increased to 199.7 cm. The only problem was, the townspeople were too kind. Grandma Mary always brought snacks, Uncle Gary helped me clean the garden, and the mayor loved to chat. I wanted to help them but couldn't risk being thanked, so I secretly did things for them. I repaired Grandma Mary's fence and put books on Uncle Gary's doorstep. Last night, I used my strength to bring down a Christmas tree from The Snowy Mountains the mayor had wanted.

When I woke up this morning, I realized I had grown significantly. My bed was crushed, my legs had kicked two holes in the wall, and the townspeople were gathering outside, likely terrified. My phone, now tiny in my hand, displayed over 100 messages from my friends. A tourist in town had filmed me moving the tree last night and uploaded it to

Youtube. Overnight, the video had gotten over 27,000 likes. 27,000 likes, which converted into height, meant 270 cm, so my current height must be around 470 cm, roughly the height of a two-story building. This was terrifying. I'd definitely be kicked out of Mysterious Town.

"Welcome to Mysterious Town!" Just when I was feeling down, I heard the cheers of the townspeople outside.

I lifted the roof and went outside, where the mayor and the townspeople were cheering.

"Mr. Brood, welcome to Mysterious Town, the town of superpowered people," the mayor said with a smile. "All the residents of this town have superpowers. Ever since you came here three years ago, we've been pretending not to have powers. Now we don't have to pretend anymore. We must celebrate today!"

I watched Grandma Mary fly around in the sky, Uncle Gary metal-bending to set up a grill, and the mayor lighting wood with his laser eyes. For a moment, I was dazed. I had always thought I was different and weird, but it turned out that in Mysterious Town, I was just an ordinary person. Maybe God's gift isn't that bad.