

# Shootin' the Breeze



*by Bummer*

[Please note that I've changed my Email address to [Abatebummer@earthlink.net](mailto:Abatebummer@earthlink.net)]

The other day I rode over to a friend's house to see if he could accompany me on an afternoon ride to take care of a little job that I've been putting off for a while. Ya see, a long time lady friend needed to move a piano from her aunt's house to hers. She had a truck, but nobody to help her since she had only been living there for a few months. My buddy Wayne had agreed to help [Actually he lost a game of pool....If I had lost I would have had to DJ for his hip hopping daughter's graduation party!]. So I hooked up with him at his place and we rode to Brandy's [the lady friend].

Now, Brandy is a retired dancer who worked steadily until last year when she decided that she was ready to stop. At 45 years old she was still putting a lot of the younger dancers to shame and was in high demand by club owners. Going against the norm she banked most of her money for 25 years and retired with a better retirement package than most people I know, as well as having enough bucks to buy her new home for cash. Her only major purchases in all the time she was workin' was her truck and a butterscotch, mint '76 Jaguar XKE convertible she's worshipped for 25 years.

We got to her house about 2:00 in the afternoon and put our bikes in her garage, then the three of us piled into her truck and left to drive the 20 miles to her aunt Dora's. We stopped for a late lunch at a truck stop on the interstate on the way there and amused Wayne with stories of old times.

"Bummer, remember the time I was dancing at the Shady Lady and you picked me up after work one day to go riding?" She then turned to Wayne and explained, "I told everyone that Bummer was my old man and they let him in the dancer's changing room. All of a sudden he didn't want to go riding anymore!" Then she laughed.

I just smiled and replied, "Watching 'em put their costumes ON is even better than watching them take 'em off!"

After lunch we proceeded to her aunt's and got there just as she was getting home from work. The piano was sitting in a music room of sorts and when I saw it I exclaimed, "Hell Brandy! No wonder you've been excited about getting this! It's like new!" as I gazed at a beautiful, dark mahogany baby grande Steinway. Brandy has played since she was a kid and reminded me of Joni Mitchell in both her looks AND her musical skill. She even SINGS like Joni Mitchell. I could picture her sitting at that piano

on a sunny morning playing and singing “Wooden Ships”.. Helping her get it home just seemed SO right. Some things just seem to fit, and this piano fit Brandy. But getting it to where it belonged wasn’t gonna be easy!

After we measured the doorways and the bed of the truck we found that it would JUST fit, but we also agreed that we’d need to use a support under the body of the piano so the legs wouldn’t break from the weight when it came to bumps and turns. Taking off the legs and turning it on its side to maneuver through the doorways we found out just how heavy a piano could be! It’s been a long time since I’ve moved a piano [and you can bet yer asses it will be a longer time before I do it again!]. As we loaded it onto the bed of the truck we set it on a short, wheeled tool chest for the support we’d need. When finished we closed the tailgate, said goodbye to her aunt and hit the road for Brandy’s.

In a short time we were back on the interstate and at one point we found ourselves behind an 18 wheeler. The truck was a flatbed carrying huge rolls of steel. Suddenly one of the trailer’s right tires lost its outer circle of tread. This often happens since those huge tires cost so much and retreads are so much cheaper for the trucking companies to use. That’s why ya see giant circles of tire tread layin’ on the side of the interstates so often. They simply come off and get kicked to the side.

Brandy jerked the wheel and went onto the berm of the highway to avoid the tread and the damned thing ended up rolling right in front of us! We hit it goin’ about 75 MPH and just then Brandy’s tailgate flew open! I turned to see her beautiful piano actually slide out of the truck, hit the pavement and begin rolling across three lanes of interstate at 75 MPH!!! All we could do was watch in horror.

Meanwhile, a Honda Goldwing who was riding to the rear and to our left appeared to be following the piano. Every time he changed lanes, so would the piano! Of course he applied his brakes as the piano slowed down and so did we. A state trooper who just happened to be sitting in the middle of the median drinking coffee watched the whole incredible incident pass by him and immediately put on his lights and pulled out into the flow of traffic preventing any other vehicles from getting involved.

Now, this whole thing just seemed to go on and on, but finally everyone was stopped. The Honda rider just sat on his bike staring at the piano and I swear his eyes were twice the size they shoulda been! The cop stopped behind the Honda and when he got out of his cruiser I could see a huge coffee stain covering his lap. The three of us in the pickup pulled to the side and Brandy began screaming as we poured out.

“MY PIANO!! IS IT ALRIGHT?? MY GOD!!!”

The officer immediately got everything under control and began to direct traffic around us as we rolled the piano to the side. The biker just stayed where he was for a long minute with the weirdest look on his face and as I started to walk to him he snapped out of it and pulled over to where we were.

During a break in traffic the trooper walked to us and casually remarked, “Well, THAT’S something ya don’t see everyday. Ya think I should give the piano a ticket? I do believe it was speeding.” Then to make sure nothing was damaged Brandy lifted the top and inspected it, before she then lifted the keyboard cover and began playing a song right there in the median in the middle of the interstate! I have no idea what passing motorists were thinking when they saw that.

Since the pickup was parked on the other side of the road, Brandy fetched it as everyone including the Honda rider and the cop carefully stood the piano on its side on a

blanket the cop got from his car. Then we replaced the chest back onto the bed and they helped load the piano [which didn't get a SCRATCH on it!], back onto the truck. You can be sure we latched the tailgate securely and tied a few bungee cords to it that the Winger gave us before we hit the road laughing and shaking our heads.

We finally got to Brandy's and as we brought in and set up her new piano she grilled up some steaks for us. Then she sang and played sweet music into the evening as me and Wayne kicked back and drank wine. The recurring question we each asked a FEW times was, "Did you see the look on his face??!"

Well, ya'll watch out for truck tires, pianos, cows, gravel, pot holes, slippery roadkill and anything else ya might find on the road. What turned out to be just another episode in the 'Life of Bummer' could have been something a Hellofa lot worse. Remember when it comes to riding, anything can happen anytime!

.See ya next month,

***Bummer***