

FROM “CHOPS”

VINCE tells a story in a story-telling contest.

VINCE

I get a temp job up at this North Shore country club. Very exclusive. I don't like these gigs but I need the dough. Driving to work. 10 AM. I got this Opal Cadet. Real shit box. It's pouring rain. Windshield wipers don't work. Fucking driver's window doesn't even roll up. I'm on the Edens. Got one hand on the steering wheel and the other out the window with a squeegee. I get off; I go under a viaduct. The water is like this high. I step on the gas. I can make this. Here comes an eighteen-wheeler the other way. And when I say eighteen wheels, I wanna tell ya every fucking wheel was there! *(They laugh.)* Waves! All I needed was a surfboard. I pull into a gas station. Attendant comes out. I open the door. Water pours out. Now the car won't fucking start. "Hey you got a blow dryer or something so I can dry the engine?" "No...but I got an electric toothbrush." *(They laugh.)* I call the joint. "What do you mean you can't make it!? I have three hundred women coming for a luncheon in one hour." I'm thinking 300 North Shore broads. That's what? 900 Brandy Alexanders? He is fucked. *(They laugh.)* Sends somebody to pick me up I do the gig. General manager sees me, likes my style. Offers me a permanent job. I need the money. Okay. Drive up the next day. It was sunny, thank God. Coming to the club I drive all over this shiny shit in the road. I get a flat! My tires are bald. I mean, a bent paper clip I get a flat. Fuck! I pull over. I get out. Knives and forks! All over the road! Sterling fucking silver! What the fuck?! *(looks down at the "road", shrugs)* What the fuck. I start stuffing 'em in my pockets. Mercedes and Lincolns are slowing down to look at me. "It's okay. I just dropped my fork." *(They laugh.)* So I'm working there a week. Every day we're getting fed the same thing. Chicken necks and rice. I don't say anything. I'm new. Here it is again. Chicken necks and rice. Fuck this! I walk out with my plate past this humungous display of food—salmon, shrimp, lobster—forty feet long. Right up to the general manager. "Mr. Silverman, would you eat this?" "No. What is it?" "It's chicken necks and rice. That's all they been feeding us all week. I've eaten so much rice, I'm starting to do my own laundry." *(They laugh.)* I got the maitre d' fired on the spot. He was ripping off the place. Food. Booze. The knives and forks out on the highway? Mexican busboys. Grown men. With families. Treated like shit. They were grabbing fistfuls and throwing it out on the highway. Only way they could get back. True story.