

That Joke Isn't Funny Anymore – Chapter 2

By Matt Fishwick (matt@ilovemattfishwick.com)

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CHAPTER 2

The pizza van rattled as it headed west, veering in and out of its lane as it strained to 80 miles per hour on the rain soaked highway, a mere 18 minutes after it all went down. Larry pushed on harder, his pulse pounding in his ear.

His hands were slick with blood.

His blood.

Riding shotgun was an actual 12 gauge shotgun, one shell gone.

Finding a parked car had been more stressful than he'd imagined. Especially with all the running and screaming going on, but the "owner" of this one wasn't being paid enough to care. He's just left the keys in the ignition and walked away when he saw Larry coming slowly coming towards him. The pizza boy just gave it up. If only the store owner had been as compliant.

"Just got to get the fuck outta Dodge," Larry muttered to himself as he dragged himself behind the wheel and tuned the engine over. "Just gotta get out." He pulled out from curb into the traffic setting of a cacophony of car horns. He pulled the mask from his face, making him a little less conspicuous in his current mode of transport. A lot of people would remember a clown with a chest wound delivering pizza.

No-one had followed him out of the store, not even Pete. Definitely not Pete. Pete was dead if he was lucky or he'd be caught if he wasn't. The owner hadn't followed him, not after he'd Cheneyed the owner in the face.

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Larry shook his head and he could hear screaming. Checking the rear-view mirror he realised that it was him. Perhaps it has to do with that gaping hole in his chest or maybe he was practicing his scales, though that seemed unlikely, as he couldn't sing – though maybe if he got through this ordeal he'd ask Becky to give him lessons.

The morning had started out bad, with Amii locking herself in the bathroom and got worse from there on out. Though looking back at the bathroom incident it couldn't really be described as bad compared to being shot in the chest.

"It wasn't as bad as it could've been," Larry chucked to the shotgun as though it were a sentient being. "I could be lying face down with that clerk, or that pizza guy could have been riding a scooter, then you'd've had to stay behind."

Larry felt dizzy as he pushed the gas to the floor, making the van shudder. The van swerved as Larry's vision became blurred. He looked in the rear view mirror again and saw that no-one was following. Actually that was false. There was a Buick, a Honda and what looked like a 1985 Jetta, but they stayed well back and didn't look like they were deliberately following him, especially the way he was driving.

"I hope you got your licence" he chided the shotgun, "'cause you're gonna have to take over driving duties."

The pain attacked his body as the adrenaline rush subsided. He let out a cough that sounded like a baby's rattle. There was something loose in there. The pizza van began to slow and Larry almost successfully guided it to the exit, bar

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bouncing of a couple of barriers and leaving a couple of layers of paint behind on an old pickup.

“Get outta the way.” Larry yelled out of the window.

The pickup's driver was going to argue until he saw the crimson mess that used to be Larry's chest. “Shit, son.”

The pizza van ploughed through the intersection at the end of the off ramp at a middling speed, but the force of the impact that the yellow taxi cab clipped the rear bumper with, was enough to send the van spinning out of control, separating the rear axel from the body causing sparks to fly. The van bounced off a stop sign crashing over its side and coming to rest on a grassy slope.

With all the blood loss, Larry was only minutely aware of the accident, though he did vaguely wonder why he was covered in melted cheese and pepperoni. Despite the pain, the pizza did smell good.

When the world stopped spinning, he would have to remember to order one. Maybe he should stop for a slice on the way home. Then Larry remembered he was in a pizza truck. Larry chuckled to himself, to the shotgun, to anyone who'd listen. God, maybe. He wondered if it was too late.

“Unless they find me within the next few minutes or so there's going to be a lot of people eating free pies tonight.”

Larry closed his eyes.

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