

ON THE DOTTED LINE

written & created by

John Stone

Chuck Spunt (Under Pressure) Series

(c) 2025

INT. BANK - DAY

Bespectacled, bald headed CHUCK SPUNT 50s enters and waits to be seen by a member of staff.

He checks his wristwatch in irritation as he does so.

CHUCK SPUNT

C'mon, c'mon. I haven't got all day.

A pale skinned ASSISTANT 20s approaches.

ASSISTANT

Sorry to keep you waiting, sir.
How may I help you today?

He clears his throat several times before answering.

CHUCK SPUNT

I made the mistake of attempting to use your ATM to make a cash withdrawal last night. It swallowed my card without accepting the transaction.

ASSISTANT

Oh, I am so sorry to hear that, sir. And when did this happen, did you say?

CHUCK SPUNT

Last night. It printed the receipt for the transaction, but failed to release the cash.

ASSISTANT

Oh. How awful. You must have felt quite pushed.

CHUCK SPUNT

(abruptly)

Pushed is not quite the word, but I get your gist- so yes.

ASSISTANT

Oh. Do you have the transaction receipt with you?

CHUCK SPUNT

Yes, I do in fact.

ASSISTANT

Great. May I see it please?

He hands her the transaction receipt.

She brings it closer to her eyes and studies it carefully for a bit.

He sighs his disdain as he waits for her confirmation.

ASSISTANT (CONT'D)

Is it just the one account you have with us here, sir?

CHUCK SPUNT

Yes. I'm not Elon Musk.

ASSISTANT

Do you have any proof of ID on you at all?

He hands her his driving licence from his wallet.

She studies it closely for a bit.

He shakes his head and tuts his dismay.

ASSISTANT (CONT'D)

So, can you tell me exactly what happened when you slipped your card into the ATM, Mr Skunk?

CHUCK SPUNT

It's Spunt. It says Spunt.

ASSISTANT

Oh. Aww, so it does. I am sorry. But it is a bit scratched, isn't it?

CHUCK SPUNT

If you say so.

ASSISTANT

Carry on, then, sir. You were saying?

CHUCK SPUNT

Well, I tapped in my pin number like you do, and then the amount that I wanted to withdraw. I whistled a tune while I waited before it printed me a receipt without actually delivering the cash requested. It then duly swallowed my card and told me to seek assistance.

ASSISTANT

Literally?

CHUCK SPUNT

(intolerantly)

What? Yes, literally. It said so on the screen.

ASSISTANT

Oh, that's awful. Just wait here a moment and I'll be right back.

She hands him back his driving licence and walks off with the receipt in hand.

CHUCK SPUNT (ASIDE)

I've got better things to do with my time than to stand here begging for my fifty quid back.

He whistles as he looks down at his furry slippers and gasps.

Beat.

She returns with an A4 folder.

ASSISTANT

Sorry to have kept you waiting, Mr Skunk. But I just need to run through this claim form with you. It should only take a matter of minutes.

CHUCK SPUNT

(irksomely)

I told you, my name is Spunt!

ASSISTANT

Oh, I am sorry. But please don't shout at me, sir.

CHUCK SPUNT

Well get it right and I won't
have to, will I?

She opens the folder and takes out the claim form.

ASSISTANT

Right then. This is the claim
form. There's a short
questionnaire in case of any
fraudulent claim, arising from a
disputed transaction. Is it okay
with you to proceed?

CHUCK SPUNT

Not really. I've told you what
happened. You have the receipt in
your hand for heaven's sake!
Dontcha believe me? D' you think
I'm making this all up, or
something?

ASSISTANT

It's just policy, I'm afraid,
sir. You never know what people
might try and pull these days.
For all we know you might have
forgotten that you went and spent
the money.

CHUCK SPUNT

Well. I'm sure I'm not the only
person this must have happened
to. You just watch, there'll be
an army of people coming right
through that door claiming the
same thing happened to them, you
just wait and see.

She ignores him and scrutinises the claim form.

ASSISTANT

OK. Sorry. I've not actually done
one of these forms before, so
bear with-bear with...

CHUCK SPUNT

Bear with? Look, how long is this
going to take for heaven's sake?

ASSISTANT

Not too long I hope. Please
remain calm, sir.

She looks up at him and shakes her head in dismay.

CHUCK SPUNT

Then get on with it then, will
you?

ASSISTANT

So, what was the date of your
last eye test?

CHUCK SPUNT

I have no idea.

ASSISTANT

You do wear spectacles, so you
should know when you last visited
the optician, sir.

CHUCK SPUNT

(scratches chin)

Er, now let me think.

(reflects)

Yes, I do remember now. It was
last August, in fact.

ASSISTANT

Can you supply the name and
address of your optician, so we
can arrange for you to take a
random eye test in the event that
we require you to do so?

CHUCK SPUNT

This is completely outrageous!

ASSISTANT

Is that a no then, sir?

CHUCK SPUNT

(insanely)

Hahahaha... Yes. No-no-no!

ASSISTANT

Have you ever held a criminal
record?

CHUCK SPUNT

What?!

ASSISTANT

And if so, what was it in relation to?

CHUCK SPUNT

No, but I'm still working on it.

ASSISTANT

How long have you been banking with us, Mr Skunk?

CHUCK SPUNT

Look, if you call me that one more time, I'll-I'll...

He raises a clenched fist and grits his teeth.

ASSISTANT

Oh sorry, sir. I keep forgetting. And finally- are you happy with the service we offer our customers at this branch?

CHUCK SPUNT

Ha! You must be joking.

ASSISTANT

Oh, I am very sorry to hear that. Can you explain why that is?

CHUCK SPUNT

I've never been so humiliated in my entire life.

(pauses)

Apart from when I was...

ASSISTANT

No one is accusing you of anything, sir. It's just a claim form.

CHUCK SPUNT

Not yet, maybe. But once you've gathered all the required information who knows what I'll be inundated with?

ASSISTANT

Just sign on the dotted line then, please, sir.

She hands him the claim form along with a pen.

He leans over the counter to sign his name.

ASSISTANT (CONT'D)
And we will need the name and
address of your optician, so we
can arrange for you to take
another eye test, without delay.

He bears a look of confused torment.

CHUCK SPUNT
What?

He freezes in horror when she hands him back his TESCO POINTS
CARD.

ASSISTANT
Here is your Tesco Clubcard that
the ATM swallowed last night, Mr
Sku-

CHUCK SPUNT
(interjects)
Don't you dare!

END