

Swap
By Chris Zell

You may remember in the last exciting episode of 'Weird Things Happen. All Of Them To Zell' our hapless hero was staring at an insipid moron who had the audacity to speak to him in their native tongue which, in case you have forgotten, is stupidity.

In today's spine tingling episode if life had a weirdness VU meter we would be buried deep into the red and the needle wouldn't even be shaking.

So, let's catch up with our aforementioned hero before he checks himself into the Scary Brick Building With The Soft, Soft Walls.

The phone brays it's ominous tonality. Chris jumps knowing that, unlike the calming toll of the Batphone, it's not some nefarious arch criminal that must be easily vanquished. It'll be something much more dangerous. It'll be someone who wants something from him. Probably something, unfortunately, not life threatening.

'What do you want?' He answers the phone with a deep rooted sense of dread.

Do you blame him? I thought not.

It is a man he often does work for. See, your spine is starting to tingle, huh? It seems that this man, this human, this person who should know better has contacted Chris to ask him to write an advertisement for his company. Chris listens to his plea for mercy and, against his better judgment but with a sixth sense of knowing that his rent will be due soon, agrees to take on this assignment.

I know you're sitting there saying to yourself, 'Hey, Pedro, my spine has stopped tingling. Where's the weirdness, Spunky? Haven't got all minute, Zippy.'

Calm the fuck down right now, you impatient twit. Haven't you ever heard of the dramatic build-up? Sheesh. This MTV, get to the end with no regard to the middle thing is really cutting into the age old art of the slow, spooky set-up. It's not a good thing, I tell ya.

So, after Chris receives all of the information he needs the caller does the unthinkable.

He begins a non-business related conversation with Chris!!!!

Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh.

Now your spine is tingling, huh? That was quite a pay off, huh?

Huh? What's that? It didn't even make your back itch? Oh ye of little faith. Now it's time to sit back and enjoy the ride. I said sit back. Thank you.

The conversation quickly moves into the avenue of what this man and his wife have been up to lately. Now, as we know, the only thing Chris is more bored by than talking about himself is having someone else talk about themselves. But, alas, this never seems to stem the tide of personal confession.

Now, for you, gentle reader, I will give you these few words of comfort: Chris may dress predominately in black but he's no fucking priest. Keep your confessions to your own damn self. His house is no phone booth to god and all he's going to do with your heart felt unburdening is make fun of it.

Now, our PSA over, let's get back to the story.

The man begins to share just a little too much with Chris.

Oh, you're probably asking right now what does Chris consider too much sharing? But in reality you are talking to your computer and your cubicle mates think you're even more insane then the time you delivered an assignment on time so stop that. It's embarrassing.

But, nonetheless, thank you for asking because if you didn't the story would just stop here.

Well, this man said,

'And my wife and I have been going to swap parties.'

With his superhuman, Cray like mind he calculated that sentence in a millisecond and came up with the appropriate response,

'Ohhhhhhhhh. Huh. Well. What kind of snacks to you bring to something like that? Canolis?'

Man, it sure seems cool being a superhero, don't it?

So, even after his less than effusive response, Chris was now the beholder of a little too much information. But the flood of info continued unabated. Washing over our hero and dragging him down into the morass of depravity known as people who have way too much time on their hand and don't know when to just shut up.

After an indeterminable amount of time (the reason we don't know is we think Chris nodded off in the middle) the man, during an insistent prodding from his wife (insert your own joke here) asked our somnolent superhero the question that is the reason for this Jerry Springer like storyline,

'My wife wants to know if you'd like to come over one night and join us.'

Hose down the horses, call in the dogs, the weirdness has been found.

Our hero, composing himself in the manner we have come to know from this valiant warrior in the world of weird, put the man on mute and laughed his fool ass off.

After the stomach cramp subsided (to this day we are still not sure if the cramp came from laughter or internal parasites. We will keep you informed after the medical tests come back) Chris answered the request in the prescribed manner,

'Don't you remember how pissed you got at me when I went out with one of your secretaries? I don't think it would build our relationship if I banged your wife. But thanks for thinking of me.'

So, with another in a seemingly endless line of loonies beaten back and left limp and drained, our hero resumed his life as a mildmannered watcher of TV, drinker of beer and, this just added, applier of a gun permit.

Now if Jerry Springer's bookers would stop calling for leads on guests his life would settle down into a dull roar.