

Bring Your Own Lampshade

Scott Beal

Look here, I'm handier than a Swiss army knife
and twice as reasonable
as a Taiwanese potato peeler. Here's my card--
we aim to please,
as they say, the "we" being me

and my alligator skin
bag o' tricks (spit-polished the zippers myself),
I'll be your barkeep,
vintner, tapster, over-the-counter fluid pharmacologist
and certified mixologist,

here's my blender, my icepick, my corkscrew,
my PhD in chemistry,
I'll whip up the wildest slow-screw-against-the-wall-
with-grandma you ever had,
headhunters to die for, and plenty, Bub,

you never heard of,
since I'm inventing new ones all the time.
Why I've got
this concoction that'll make your brain glow
like hell's soup kitchen,

put garnets in your eyes, and it tastes
sweeter than honey
from the Greek goddess of orgasm's personal beehive--
and I can do you up
a dozen in a blink with one hand

SCOTT BEAL

on the turntable,
hooking up the sizzlin' est cuts ever
beheld by human ears.
That's right, I've got enough vinyl literally
to fill a trailer

park, dating back to the invention of the phonograph,
stuff the record tycoons
don't know exists: Peter, Paul, and Mary's rare jams
with Herbie Hancock,
Johnny Cash crooning a duet with Sid Vicious,

God rest his soul,
and I'm just getting warmed up. I'll give you
grooves so contagious
they'll hoist the ass out of every folding chair
and swing it into next week

on a 2000-watt wave of rafter-bowing sonic supernova
through this here state-of-the-art
solid-state 64-channel switchboard lined through six six-
foot Crate cabinets,
12-inch tweeters, 30-inch woofers, specially rewired for extra juice.

And speaking of next week,
I ain't wearing this rhinestone turban for nothing,
I'm a walking geiger counter
for psychic energy, I'll check your pulse and tell
your blood pressure

twelve lives ago. Right now I'm foreseeing
your big shindig,
faces gathered around a pulsing crystal ball (I'll need
some double-A batteries)
having their sweaty little palms read, communing with their dead

Aunt Vicky, picking up tips
on a better bean dip, and leggy blondes afterward
saying "Thanks Harry"—
can I call you Harry?—"Thanks Harry, great
Halloween, sure beats

bobbing for apples" as they slip you their motel room keys.
But what really nabs them
is the hypnosis, folks are dying to go into a trance.
Check this out. The chain's
authentic Peruvian pyrite and the ticker's

Belgian, 1880-something,
just look at how the swirling vines are etched
into the bronze,
see how it radiates in the glare from the
Bud on Tap lamp.

That's craftsmanship, that's what you'd call
an arabesque design,
and you swing it back and forth, just like that,
back and forth, back
and forth. I see you're impressed, you're thinking

why not flat-out
replace the butler with a pedigreed pleasure-center
stimulation specialist
and I'm here to tell you I can take over immediately,
and as soon as I count back from three

I'll start by fixing you up with an exotic little something
in a crystal goblet,
it's more explosive than nitro-glycerin and twice as good
for your heart,
I swear there's not a swizzle-stick

Hojo hack
on the continent can give it just the right twist,
just the right kick,
and I call it, after the great master himself,
a Stradivarius.

