

“CANDY HEARTS”

A Comedic “Zoom” One Act by PJ Sallans

3 F/1 M

SYNOPSIS

A mysterious dating simulator game promises to tell a man why he keeps getting dumped, but only if he manages to pass all three of his dates.

SETTING

Modern day. Online, in a “Zoom”-type setting.

CHARACTERS

JACK (M): A man down-on-his-luck after his girlfriend leaves him.

CANDY (F): A virtual girl. The host of the game.

BUNBUN (F): A virtual girl. A librarian who has a mystery for Jack to solve.

JUNE (F): A virtual girl. An athletic jock who gives Jack a challenge to pass.

JACK: (*Scrolling on his laptop*) Wedding, baby, wedding, baby... divorce. Eh, he could do better... Wedding, baby... (*Stops suddenly*) Cheryl?! My Cheryl. "In a relationship?" With who? (*Clicks*) Antonio? Fantastic. She breaks up with me and finds herself a dentist. (*Clicks*) A dentist who likes (*clicks*) horticulture and push-ups? I guess? Ugh! People getting married by the second, popping out babies like ping-pong balls, becoming "Facebook official" with *dentists*. Cheryl. (*He thinks*) You *hated* the dentist. (*Pauses*) I'm so lonely.

CANDY: (*An overly-cutesy woman pops up on the screen*) Ding-dong!

JACK: (*Groans*) No. Leave me alone.

CANDY: Jack! (*Pouts*) That's not very nice of you!

JACK: I told you not to call me by my real name.

CANDY: Oh, that's right! Silly me, *Bad Boy Jack 69!* (*Winks*)

JACK: Why did I make that profile drunk? (*To Candy*) I thought I uninstalled you.

CANDY: Now why would you do that?

JACK: Because I'm ashamed of you!

CANDY: Everyone's ashamed of me!

JACK: Look, I know I bought this stupid dating simulator game and played it for all of five minutes. But then I realized how big of a mistake it was and uninstalled it, so you really need to leave me alone.

CANDY: Hmm... I don't think so. You never completed the tutorial. And I've got plenty of lovely women here waiting to get the chance to meet you.

JACK: Not women. Robots. Lines of code- ones and zeroes. That's all they are.

CANDY: And all you are is flesh and bone. There, now we know who everybody is!

JACK: You're scary.

CANDY: And you're lonely.

JACK: (*Thinks*) Yeah. I am.

CANDY: Wonderful! Then let's get back to that tutorial, shall we? Welcome to Candy Heart's Dating Simulator! My name is Candy and I'll be your tour guide! Uwu! (*Makes a peace sign*)

JACK: Oh, God.

CANDY: It says here that you've registered for the premium subscription package-

JACK: Wait, what?

CANDY: So at the low, low cost of \$50 a month, you'll be matched with the internet's cutest girls! Yay!

JACK: \$50?! How drunk was I?!

CANDY: Very! I see here you're just about finished setting up your profile. All that's left is the personal questionnaire. Question one- where is the perfect location to go on a date?

JACK: The depths of hell.

CANDY: Spicy! Question number two-

JACK: Wait no, I didn't mean that-

CANDY: If you had to describe yourself with one word, what would it be?

JACK: (*Sarcastic*) Joyous.

CANDY: Our algorithm has detected an error and has provided a more accurate answer: depressed.

JACK: I'm not depressed! I-

CANDY: Final question- why don't you take me seriously? All I'm doing is trying to help you and you've done nothing but mock me. Is it because I'm pretty?

JACK: (*Stutters*) No, I-

CANDY: Anyways! Setting you up with your top internet wifeys now!

JACK: (*Taken aback*) Oh.. okay.. Yeah, sure...

CANDY: Have fun, and enjoy Candy Heart's Dating Simulator. Where the girls are as sweet as candy! Ta-ta! (*Logs off*)

JACK: Well, that was... jarring. (*BunBun enters*)

BUNBUN: (*Dressed like a librarian*) Good evening, Bad Boy Jack 69. My name is BunBun.

JACK: Don't call me that name. It was a mistake.

BUNBUN: You don't know your own name? (*Genuine*) Are you illiterate? Because I can help with that. I'm a librarian.

JACK: A librarian? You like to read?

BUNBUN: No. Since the animators drew me like this, all I can see when I look down to read is my own chest.

JACK: Unfortunate.

BUNBUN: Truly. (*Suddenly*) Oh no! Bunbun forgot something very important! Tomorrow is the beginning of the summer vacation book club and I've forgotten to choose what book we're reading!

JACK: Oh, I get it. This is your little side-plot. I'll bite. Just have them read my favorite book- *American Psycho*.

BUNBUN: I see. Which part should the children and I discuss first? The brutal murders or the psychological torture?

JACK: I didn't know it was for children. Why don't you have them read *your* favorite book? An instruction manual for an Easy-Bake Oven, I'm guessing?

BUNBUN: *Pride and Prejudice* might be beyond them... but it's worth a shot. Now where did my copy go? Oh no! It's not here! It's been *stolen* and you have to help me catch the book thief!

JACK: Woah, woah, there Bunbun. The only thing I *have* to do is exit this game and go to bed.