

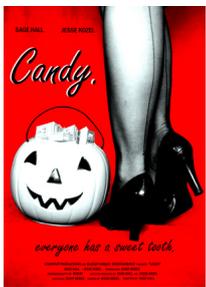
The Newborn Dead: Sweet and Sour “CANDY”

Written by Marla Newborn

Saturday, 30 October 2010 00:28



Many consider Halloween to be one of the most fun holidays of the year. Halloween means dress-up and parties and all those sweet treats. Mother's Day can be another enjoyable holiday, one where families get together and celebrate dear ol' Mom. Fun times, right?



Well, not always. CANDY, created by Jesse Kozel, directed by Sage Hall and written by Jenny Beres, is a short film that takes place on Halloween. However, in this household, it may as well be Mother's Day every day, since Mother gets what she wants. The story goes like this: It's Halloween, and Marcus (Kozel) and his mom Candy (Hall) make their traditional pastry delights. They do this together seemingly all the time, just the two of them. This dysfunctional closeness between mother and son makes Candy very happy. However, this year, Marcus decides to break the rules. He invites a date (Beres) over to their home. Having a young lady come by seems like an OK thing to do—unless your mother is there, and she's wickedly possessive on the inside despite being sugary sweet on the outside.

“Sage and I discussed this,” Kozel says, “and we agreed that having a mother and son be so close was odd, and why would she keep her son around for such a long time? Not that I'm saying there is any 'relationship' between them—but maybe in her mind, there is.”

Now that Jenny has arrived, the stage is set for a vicious triangle, with interesting twists and turns that go beyond Candy's mere fighting for Marcus' attention and affection. While the film plays out as a comedy with tremendous style (Candy is dressed as a sexy vixen pinup girl), there is a definite creepiness to this eight-minute short. At its heart, CANDY is about a dysfunctional family, and this is where the horror comes in. Jenny is Marcus' first date thanks to his relationship with his mother; he has obviously grown up with the understanding that such a family arrangement is normal. Of course, Candy's dysfunction is a result of her co-dependence

The Newborn Dead: Sweet and Sour “CANDY”

Written by Marla Newborn

Saturday, 30 October 2010 00:28

on her son, and she literally uses “candy” as the substance to keep him bound to her.

“I believe Candy has pushed Marcus his whole life to love what she loves, and he may even be good at baking,” Kozel notes. “I do feel that he knows what makes her happy, and there is no reason to piss her off. He lives to please his mother.”



Throughout the piece, the bonds between the characters go through their own dysfunctions and an aspect of the rule of three applies—meaning someone is always left out. It’s a fun story despite the darkness beneath, and Kozel’s choice to shoot in black and white gives the film a retro feeling that works. The script is clever—especially the final line, which, without giving anything away, sums up the aforementioned dysfunction. CANDY can be seen [here](#) .

{comments on}