

"Monster Speed Dating"

by

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Monster Speed Dating

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CHARACTERS

Sandra	A speed dating hostess.
Lilith	Adam's first wife.
Penny	A Malaysian vampire.
Medusa	The Gorgon of myth.
Dracula	The famous vampire.
Marvello	A Filipino centaur...of sorts.
Frankie	Frankenstein's monster.

SETTING

Cryptid Quick Date's latest location.

TIME

Now.

SCENES

ACT I

Scene 1 CQD's HQ Now

"The monsters of our childhood do not fade away,
neither are they ever wholly monstrous."

-- John le Carré

ACT I

SCENE 1

(LIGHTS UP. The STAGE is set with three cafe tables with two chairs apiece. No one is ONSTAGE except for SANDRA, who speaks into the further WING from her as much as to the AUDIENCE. She is dressed in business-esque nightwear and holds a martini glass with a Cosmopolitan in it.)

SANDRA

Hi everyone, and welcome to this very special Cryptid Quick Date event! Now it might just seem like a regular Tuesday to y'all, but it is very special; you know why? 'Cause y'all are here, silly!

(She gets nothing from the WING, takes a gulp of her Cosmo.)

SANDRA

I'm Sandra, and I'd like to thank y'all for joining CQD in this exciting adventure! Now, for those of you unfamiliar with how an event like this works, we'll go over the basics. All the ladies will take seats at the table: they have been assigned numbers one through three. When the bell rings, the men, lettered A through C, will sit down and y'all will have five minutes to have your date! When the bell rings again the men will get up and move to the next table. Easy as pie! Now, y'all got little survey cards, which you'll fill out as the date goes on. We'll collect those at the end of the night, and if you're a good match we'll give each other your contact information. Now are we ready to have fun?

(There are some murmurs from the WING. It sounds more like dissent than agreement, and there's one low rumble of a groan.)

SANDRA

(too excited for the response)

All right then! Let's begin! Ladies, if you would find a seat!

(The women comply, three of them enter. The first is LILITH, a fetching woman in a striking evening gown: she is beautiful but she has red eyes and a gaunt look about her cheeks - she takes the furthest-most table, nearest Sandra. Directly behind her is MEDUSA: green skin, snakes for hair, a toga. The last one in is PENNY, a *pengangglan* (Malaysian vampire): she is a floating head, attached to which are her lungs, her stomach, and her entrails, the last of which sparkles. Sandra shudders to look at Penny and takes a gulp of her drink.)

SANDRA

Okay, now...gentlemen...if you would sit with your first partner.

(The males oblige. First enters MARVELLO, a *tikbalang* (Filipino centaur): he is gaunt and long-limbed, with the head of a horse; his legs are extraordinarily long (actor on platforms or stilts if possible) so that his knees sit high and he looks awkward in his chair. Marvello is followed by DRACULA, who is dressed in a tuxedo and cape. Directly behind him, at over six-feet tall, is FRANKIE, Frankenstein's monster, with mottled skin, bolts to the neck, and a lumbering gait. Marvello sits with Lilith, Dracula with Medusa, and Frankie with Penny. They all wear name tags.)

SANDRA

Is everybody comfortable? (waits a moment for a response that never comes) Good. But don't get too comfortable - remember: you only get five minutes. Ready? Go.

(A bell rings. Sandra exits. In unison, they all say:)

ALL

Hello.

(The conversations break off,
overlapping.)

LILITH

So what the hell are you?

MARVELLO

I am Marvello, Lil-ith.

LILITH

I can read your name tag, stupid. I mean what are you? You're not one of my kids are you? Because that would be creepy, even for me. (beat) Might be interesting though...

DRACULA

...Pleasure to meet you, Medusa. I have always wanted to visit Rome...

MEDUSA

I'm Grecian, actually. (uncomfortable beat) Can I just say that it is so nice to meet someone that doesn't turn to stone at the sight of me. (beat) What do you think of kids, Dracula?

PENNY

Do...do you talk? I'm Penny.

FRANKIE

(struggling)

Pen...ny. Fran...kie.

PENNY

Hi, Frankie. (uncomfortable beat) I'm Malaysian. Where are you from?

FRANKIE

Aus...Aust....

PENNY

Australia? That's funny, you don't have an accent...

MARVELLO

...tikbalang. It is Filipino centaur...of sorts.

LILITH

Honey, I dated Nessus, and let me tell you, you ain't no centaur.

MARVELLO

That is why I use modifier, "of sorts".

DRACULA

...the sweetness of the candies they eat is too much for me. My palate is not what it used to be. I prefer the fuller bouquet of a nice, aged woman, preferably twenty-five years of a French persuasion.

MEDUSA

(staring at Dracula blankly)

I meant to rear, not devour.

DRACULA

Oh.

PENNY

...you're not very talkative, are you?

FRANKIE

Try...be...Pen...ny. What...is...smell?

PENNY

(angrily, ignoring the question)

It's just that this conversation just started and I already seem to be carrying it.

FRANKIE

How...carry? Where...body?

DRACULA

Even if I were capable of (disgusted) breeding, I would not have spawn. They are degenerate, whining cretinous creatures, more trouble than they are worth.

MEDUSA

(beat)

Why don't you tell me how you really feel?

LILITH

So is the horse head the only equine part of you or is there something else I'm not seeing?

MARVELLO

You tread a dangerous path, Lil-ith. And the confusion of paths are my forte. You should be careful.

LILITH

You have the right dimensions I might just let you confuse me all you like, big boy.

DRACULA

You ask me question, I give you an honest answer; no need to hiss at me.

MEDUSA

Hiss at you! Are you mocking my hair?

(Sandra enters and stands helplessly watching the escalation.)

PENNY

...you'd be so insensitive as to say something like that!

FRANKIE

You...start...it.

MARVELLO

Listen woman, I do not think this sort of conversation is appropriate considering we have only just met.

LILITH

You listen, Seabiscuit, the last man to speak to me that way ended up running back to his daddy emasculated. He didn't want to be "dominated" either, that pussy, Adam. You take that tone with me...

(They all write furiously on their surveys, Penny using her mouth.)

SANDRA

(having watched in abject horror, to AUDIENCE)

Oh mah God, they're at each others' throats already! Ring the bell! (beat) I know it hasn't been five minutes yet - we're not going to make it through the night at this rate! (beat) JUST RING THE GODDAMN BELL!

(The bell rings.)

SANDRA

(bright and cheery)

Okay, everyone, time's up! Hope you had an...er...fantastic time with your first date! (indicating Lilith and Marvello) There might already be a love connection, but we'll only find out at the end of the night for certain, won't we? Now, would the gentlemen kindly rotate to the next table?

(The males stand and rotate between the tables. Marvello now sits with Medusa, Frankie is with Lilith, and Dracula is with Penny.)

SANDRA

Excellent. Now, if we could get five minutes on the clock please? And...go!

(Sandra exits hurriedly, finishing her Cosmo.)

LILITH

Well, aren't you, tall, dark and...well...tall at any rate.

MARVELLO

Perhaps I should make it apparent up-front that I am not interested in our conversation having a sexual tone.

MEDUSA

You're not interested in sex? With a horse brain between those ears?

MARVELLO

That is unspeakably racist!

DRACULA

What the hell are you?

PENNY

I am a pengangglan. I'm a vampire. Like you!

DRACULA

Lady...Penny...there is many a difference between your sort and mine. The least of which being: what is that smell? Why do you have fragrance of salt and vinegar potato chips? Surely you are not douching your intestines, are you?

PENNY

(morbidly embarrassed)

That's...uhm...my organs. I have to soak them in vinegar each night to get them back in my body.

DRACULA

Oh. So you do have a body?

MEDUSA

Do you know how much profiling I've been through in my life? I am NOT racist!

MARVELLO

Just because you have been prejudiced against does not mean you are not bigoted! You should know better than to make such statements based on appearance!

LILITH

So, not much of a conversationalist? I like that in a man.

FRANKIE

Tongue...father gave...rotten.

LILITH

Well then, I suppose we know what we WON'T be letting you do to me.

DRACULA

...drink blood though?

PENNY

Oh yes, most definitely. I drink from pregnant women, with my prehensile and pointed tongue. And from infants...fetuses in-utero when I can. Sometimes I'll suck placentas if I get to them before they're buried.

DRACULA

That...really? That is sort of...twisted. In a sexy sort of way. And you did say "prehensile tongue," did you not?

FRANKIE

You...pretty...but...bitch.

LILITH

Thanks! I'm pretty keen on you too.

MEDUSA

You know, you're right, I'm sorry. I should not have said that about you.

MARVELLO

(beat)

Thank you. It takes a very wise and strong person to admit when they're wrong.

MEDUSA

You're welcome. (beat) Truth be told, that might have been a bit of a projection.

MARVELLO

Oh? How so?

MEDUSA

It's just that I'm so horny; men turn to stone at the sight of me, you see; and I just got to thinking that you've probably got a great, fat horse co...

MARVELLO

(pointing at Medusa)

Racist! Gah! And sexual! Just because I have a horse head does not mean...

PENNY

I do indeed.

DRACULA

You must have some pretty spectacular party tricks.

PENNY

I would...except I don't get invited to many parties.

FRANKIE

Have...children?

LILITH

Just a few...hundred...thousand. Demons, ghouls, succubi and incubi, you know; once you start popping them out it's kind of hard to stop. You?

FRANKIE

Father...not give...penis...

MARVELLO

...It is so frustrating that no one even tries to see what's underneath. I mean, no one has any idea that I'm an artist.

MEDUSA

You're an artist? Really? What medium do you work in?

MARVELLO

(begrudgingly)

Paints right now, and ceramics. (excitedly) But I just started getting into statue work!

LILITH

You mean you don't have a dick? How terrible!

FRANKIE

It...frustrating. Been...saving...for graft. Need...donor still.

LILITH

Not terrible for you! I meant for this date! This means the whole conversation has been pointless. Hey...speed-dating-lady!

(Sandra enters, with a new Cosmo.)

SANDRA

...Ah...Ah have a name. It's...

LILITH

Yeah, whatever. Listen, can we move this along? This guy you sat across from me doesn't have a dick - I kind of need someone who was a dick. Or a vagina...cloaca, whatever. Any sexual organ will do, really, so long as it's present.

DRACULA

Vell, the whole...hanging organs thing is a little...unsettling. You say you have a body: why do you not remain within it?

PENNY

Well, first off, for some reason I can't feed in it. Chalk that up to magic, I guess. And secondly: this is me, this is who I am. I don't want to have to hide myself from anyone, especially my significant other.

SANDRA

(indicating Dracula and Penny)

Well, they seem to be having a good time.

MEDUSA

...you're just fucking with me, aren't you! Just like my sisters, playing pranks to make me cry! You asshole! That bell better ring before you get an asp whooping!

SANDRA

(to AUDIENCE)

Ring the bell! Quickly! Ring the bell! Ring the bell before I shove it up your....

(The bell rings. A wave of relief washes quickly over Sandra's face.)

SANDRA

Well, looks like that date's done, (under her breath) thank God. (chipper) We'll be moving on to our next, and final (under breath) hallelujah!, (chipper) date in just a moment. But first, (under breath) and please don't kill me for this you goddamn monsters, (normal) protocol dictates that I ask you to please fill out the survey cards for your current date.

(Everyone does so hurriedly except for Dracula and Penny who carefully consider their answers.)

LILITH

Oh, please, would you two just fuck already and hurry up so we can finish this night?

(Dracula glares at Lilith but finishes, as does Penny.)

SANDRA

Okay then. Now, if the gentlemen would please find their last partners.

(The men change seats. Dracula now sits with Lilith, Frankie sits with Medusa, and Marvello sits with Penny.)

SANDRA

Great! Now, last five minutes on the clock! And...go!

(Sandra exits.)

DRACULA

That was not nice, what you said. You should not speak such, in front of ladies.

LILITH

You saying I'm not a lady?

MEDUSA

Sorry. About that last outburst. It was uncalled for. (beat, stewing in the silence then changing topic) I just love your skin: what lovely shades of green.

FRANKIE

Thank...you. Like...yours...too.

PENNY

You're a tikbalang.

MARVELLO

And you are a penganglan.

(They look at each other. They turn and look at the others.)

PENNY, MARVELLO

Westerners.

DRACULA

...there is just a sense of decorum, particularly in this sort of scenario...

LILITH

Well you didn't have to sit across from someone without sexual organs.

DRACULA

What do you call that peng...pengga...that floating head thing?

LILITH

She has sexual organs, she just didn't bring them with her.

FRANKIE

You...pretty. Like...snakes. Shampoo?

MEDUSA

Oh no, no shampoo. I just give them a light oiling around molting season. Only olive oil of course. You know that canola oil is really made from rapeseed?

FRANKIE

(beat, shocked)

Rape...bad!

MARVELLO

I like how your entrails sparkle. Is that glitter?

PENNY

No, just a side effect of the curse.

MARVELLO

You're cursed?

PENNY

Yeah. I had a piece of jerky when I was supposed to be abstinent from meat. Part of Malaysian midwifery ritual. I didn't even think about it. I mean jerky barely qualifies as meat!

MARVELLO

You're a midwife?

PENNY

(somewhat embarrassed)

Well, I was. Now I feed on pregnant women. And babies.

MARVELLO

That's so strange! I'm an abortion!

PENNY

(perking up)

Really? (beat) I bet you're delicious.

LILITH

...after six-thousand years, I'm not as patient as I used to be. I mean, why waste my time?

DRACULA

You are six-thousand years old?

LILITH

(defensively)

Yeah. Is that a problem?

DRACULA

No, no, not at all. I have always had a thing for older women. Since I was turned a thousand years ago though I have not met a single one.

LILITH

As in one that is older than you or one that's willing to fuck?

DRACULA

Both. (beat) My, aren't you the sexy cougar?

LILITH

Cougar? Please, at my age I'm a sabretooth tiger.

DRACULA

You are very fetching still. Adam was a fool to let you go.

LILITH

(blushing)

Silver-tongued devil...

DRACULA

(jumping up frightened)

Silver? Where?

LILITH

(calming him and sitting him down)

Figure of speech! Figure of speech!

FRANKIE

Like...cuddle?

MEDUSA

I do, but my snakes can get kind of frisky. And by "frisky" I mean they'll bite the hell out of your face.

FRANKIE

Not...problem...father not...give nerves.

MEDUSA

That so? (beat) You want to come over after this? I just got Armageddon on Blu-Ray...

FRANKIE

(jumping up frightened)

Fire! Fire...bad!

MEDUSA

(calming him and sitting him down)

It's okay, it's okay, we can watch something else. I also just bought Bridesmaids.

FRANKIE

Like...Maya Rudolph.

PENNY

(jumping up)

Oh, I shouldn't have said that, should I have? You probably think the worst of me! You probably think I want to eat you.

MARVELLO

(starting angrily then calming her and sitting her down)

Yes, that is despic...! No. No, not really. I am...this is difficult. I am a trickster, a blocker of roads, a confuser by nature. But...there is something about you. I do not want to be an obstacle to this.

PENNY

You...you don't?

MARVELLO

No, I don't. I feel like I know you. And I want to get to know you better. Much better.

(Penny shimmies giddily in her seat. Her organs quiver and sway with delight.)

(The bell rings.)

SANDRA

Well, that sounds like the end! If everyone could please just fill out...

LILITH

(rising)

Fuck that! Is everyone happy with who they ended up with?

(All the couples look at their partners.)

ALL

Yeah!

LILITH

Then let's go out and get a drink and scare the hell out of some townspeople! How's about it? All in favor?

ALL

Aye!

LILITH

Good! Then as I said when I got expelled from The Garden: 'Let's blow this apple orchard!'

(The monster couples begin to exit holding hands, or with the armed wrapping an arm around the armless. Sandra enters.)

SANDRA

Wait a minute! This is against regulation! I need you to fill out those surveys!

(The monsters turn and hiss or growl at Sandra, who jumps back fearfully. They laugh and exit.)

SANDRA

(to the AUDIENCE)

That...that's it! I quit!

(The LIGHTS begin to FADE.)

SANDRA

I will not be threatened by a bunch of abominations before the eyes of God again! I thought I could live in this city and be liberal and progressive. As though gays, blacks, and Jews weren't bad enough - I have to deal with honest-to-God monsters too? No. No. I quit. I'm done, I'm through.

(She begins storming off, opposite the
monsters.)

SANDRA

I'm getting my things and I'm out of here. I never want
to hear from Cryptids Quick Date ever again, you
hear...?

(BLACKOUT. END.)