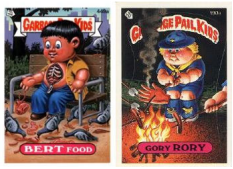
Last year I went to a sci-fi convention and bumped into McKenzie Aston. Almost like a reflex I immediately belted out, “McKenzie! I loved you in GARBAGE PAIL KIDS THE MOVIE.” McKenzie was visibly taken aback to the point of almost being frightened by this psychotic woman (me) in front of him. After a moment of awkward silence, where I’m sure he was looking for the nearest emergency exit, he sheepishly asked, “Really? Are you sure? No one liked that movie!”



So, I’ll admit to you all just as I did to a bewildered McKenzie Aston that I loved GARBAGE PAIL KIDS THE MOVIE. In fact, I loved all things Garbage Pail Kid related for much of my youth. The encounter with McKenzie (who played Dodger in the film) made me pay a quick visit to my parents’ attic. There I searched out a Herculean binder hidden behind Barbie’s pink plastic corvette and a box full of childhood literary classics like EVERYONE POOPS. Inside the binder was my carefully organized and meticulously cared for complete collection of Garbage Pail Kids trading cards. I had spoken of this once before to my then boyfriend, who I’m convinced, asked me to marry him just only to get closer to my mint First Series GPK cards. In fact, when I divulged I had a misprint Jay Decay where Jay’s left arm was smeared in printing, he immediately dropped to one knee.

Glancing through the cards for the first time in years, I remembered only one store in our town carried them. Every week on the way back from ballet class, my mother and I would stop by for a Sprite and a fresh pack of cards, if I had had my own car (and wasn’t 6) at the time I would have been stopping by daily.

Looking back on it now, I see how my morbid attractions started early with these cards. I remembered writing stories about each one and, in some cases, sending postcards and other correspondence to the characters in them. Yes, seriously, my 6-year-old self used to write fan letters to Garbage Pail Kids. My mom would pretend to mail them, but instead place them in a secluded shoebox that was only to be pulled out once I got to high school and whenever I brought a new boyfriend home. Her favorite was a letter I wrote to Messy Tessy about my visit to Mount Rushmore. The funny part? I had never and still haven't actually been to Mount Rushmore! Hopefully my lack of first-hand knowledge didn't confuse Tessy.

So I just had to take a few moments to do a short tribute to the Garbage Pial Kids.

For those of you Garbage Pail Kid fans who didn't peel the stickers and then immediately place them on your lunchbox, locker or the girl you had a crush on, but were unsure of how to express it at such a young age so you just annoyed her by putting gross stickers on her back…if you cards escaped these abuses and are still in good shape, hold onto them. They are actually worth a little bit depending on series. Plus, there are some great educational lessons there. I plan to one day pull out my pristine GPK cards and sit my child down to explain how all the topical pop culture trends of the time were represented by deformed children in card form (also with horrible gum included). I mean, what better way is there to learn about President Ronald Reagan than by studying the Ray Gun card from series two. How else can you teach pencil sharpener safety than with Sharpened Sheena? And who better to educate the youth of America not to feed their internal organs to pigeons than Bert Food? I look forward to the day I can sit down with child and share this part of my youth with them. Maybe they will think I'm crazy and disturbed. Maybe they won't get the beauty of the gore and disembowelments. Or maybe they will just tell me I'm completely lame for holding onto these cards because you can find pictures of every card ever made on the Internet. Regardless, the GPK binder full of my childhood memories will always be with me.

Snot you later, Beaky Becky…