



THE GOONIES

By Katherine Alex Beaven

I'm not going to lie, I have carried around decades of resentment for *The Goonies*. A lifetime of *Goonies* fans fawning over the most beloved movie of their childhoods has done me in. Just a mere mention of the film incites flailing arms, nostalgic smiles and a far-off look in someone's eyes as they focus on the memories of their crusades with pals Chunk and Sloth. When fist-pumping chants of "Goonies never say die!" aren't met with equal enthusiasm or even an inkling of recognition, those same hands fly palms-up into the air, eyes and mouths widen and the angry tirades of disbelief begin. Like I've broken some law regarding being a kid. Whatever.

Secretly proud to have never seen the 1985 classic, I push play with a sour attitude. Within seconds, I am reprimanding producer Steven Spielberg for kicking off a children's movie with a jail cell suicide. (Oh nevermind, it was a clever, albeit improbable, escape plan.) Then there is the male-but-female villainous mother. (Is this actually a male or female? Why is it wearing a beret if s/he's Italian?). Watching as an adult, my ears began to bleed from the prepubescent voices of the main characters—all greasy children save the teen brother character, Brand, played by Josh Brolin. (Wait, Josh Brolin is in this?) There's also a lot of cursing, and surprising sexual references coming from kids who don't even have the first sprouts of armpit hair (Would this still pass as PG nowadays?). But what I find most annoying, are the myriad, dirty fistfuls of unrealistic situations. Plus, I can't figure out what-the-hell is going on. The incessant quipping from squeaking kids is too much to tolerate. I just don't care.

As they break the rules and begin exploring the Walsh attic's treasure trove of priceless antiques, I wonder if they couldn't just save their houses from foreclosure by selling a few of the items on the sly. Mikey even says the painting Mouth defiles with his tongue is worth cash money. And then, Chunk just shatters the glass of some antiquated frame. (Oh wait, is that a pirate treasure map? O.K., I'm listening.) I still don't know what they are saying, but I am starting to want to speak squeak. Finally, after painfully sitting through and vocalizing a few more improbabilities, I find myself shutting up. Somewhere between the terrifying cries of a chained up monster and finding a dead corpse inside the ice cream freezer, my brain adjusts. It reaches far inside itself, and digs deep, dusting off whichever cortex or nodes are responsible for childhood wonder. And, although it never quite manages to quiet the voice of reason—Am I really supposed to believe these vast caverns are a secret? I mean, come on, there are pipes here!—I push these ar-

guments aside in an effort to escape into the movie until I find myself squeezing through the improbably small space under the fireplace, following the Goonies.

Then, something magical happens. I start rooting for Andy and Stef, Mouth and Data, the Walsh brothers, and of course, my new pals, Chunk and Sloth. I laugh when criminally corrupt He-Mama and her boys, the Fratelli Brothers, fall victim to Data's ridiculous-but-genius belt of defense. I want to high-five Andy when she returns stupid jerk-face, Troy's preppy ass blazer to him from inside the wishing well. And I'm happy for Mikey when he locks lips with his first kiss—yet giggle inside because Andy thinks she's smooching with older brother, Brand. My palms are sweaty as the floor collapses beneath our heroes, just a few notes away from certain demise. Instead of being judgmental over the practicality and construction of the booby traps, I'm impressed with One-Eyed Willie's creativity and dedication to protect his fortune. (Although, the double entendre of the crafty pirate's name is not lost on me.)

I'm with them as they stuff their pockets and bags full of hard-earned jewels, and start to feel a bit jealous of my friends who met this band of fearless crusaders at such a young age. A tiny speck of green ignites toward everyone who knew that Goonies never say die or that Corey Haim wasn't even in this movie. But then, I recognize something from the film, something I've quoted for as long as I can remember, without even knowing its cinematic origin. It happens just after Super Sloth has tied up his brothers to help the Goonies escape. He shouts, "Heeey, yooou guuuuuys!"

It's stupid, but through this, I feel a slight childhood connection to the movie. I feel less like I missed out on some milestone of my childhood. I feel like part of the club, even if only an honorary member. There is no longer doubt in me of what a powerful movie this could be to a kid, and I wish I was one of those kids, but, as our victorious crew of misfits bound along the beach, safely toward their parents, I can't help but connect more with their parents than the children. I think about how relieved their parents must be, grateful their beloved children are alive, unharmed and safe. And, then, when asked by a newscaster if their lives were in danger, I hear one of the Goonies respond, "The octopus was very scary...yeah, it was very dangerous!" And I think, Did he just say octopus? What octopus? There was no octopus? That's a huge continuity error.