

John Mayer and Jessica Simpson? Yeah – I Totally Get It.

Call him Pic ‘n’ Save.

It’s embarrassing. I can’t even remember his real name. Maybe Jeff. Was his name Jeff?

The legend was born one fateful morning in an elementary school in Pasadena, California. It was probably hot. It’s always hot. Some girl squealed that she’d seen him pick his nose and wipe it on his desk – ostensibly, to save for later. That’s how his moniker was born. Pic ‘n’ Save - which also happened to be the name of a local bargain basement store. Neither reference was complimentary.

Come to think of it, I never saw him actually pick...or save. Some yelping girl said she saw it and everyone took her word for it. Now decades later, I only remember him by the cruel name given to him by a girl who probably *liked* him. And he never lived it down. Ever. You’d think with age and maturity he would have grown out of the shackles of Pic ‘n’ Save. But he never did.

It makes me think about what school does to us.

How we never quite live down the labels and stereotypes of that time. Decades later we still identify ourselves by an insult that was thrown at us by an insecure kid who was probably more miserable than we could ever fathom. It’s how kids bond, we’re told now. Condemning some poor hapless Pic ‘n’ Save gives you a leg up into the In-Crowd. We don’t realize until years later that there was a pure, unadulterated, Darwinistic, Lord of the Flies mentality at work. Survival of the fittest. Or Survival of the Cruellest.

And no matter how far we’ve come in the years since – we can’t shake it. It’s like fucking Nerd Herpes.

The opposite is true, too. As I walked up to a Kinko’s the other day, I saw this leathery-faced man sitting out front of the Robek’s Juice-o-Rama next door. I recognized him immediately as the infamous water polo stud that every girl in high school fantasized after. And here he was. Crossing his legs like a teenage girl, dragging on the nub of a Pall Mall and picking up on some trashy woman. Outside a Robek’s? In the middle of the day? It was wholly depressing. He looked like some desperate salesman trying to coax a mark into a pyramid scheme. And yet, he had this swagger. It oozed out of him. Nothing like that has ever oozed from me. Even as I stood there mouth agape, it dawned on me...he thinks I’m checking him out right now. Awesome.

That’s why I completely understand the John Mayer/Jessica Simpson match up. Maybe I’m projecting here, but Mr. Mayer doesn’t strike me as the teenage lothario type. Quoting his own *No Such Thing*: “I just can’t wait/til my 10 year reunion/I’m gonna bust down/the double doors/And when I stand on/these tables before you/You will know what/all this time was for.”

I'm going to go out on a limb here and throw out that a compelling visual aid in Mr. Mayer's ten year reunion scenario would be Ms. Simpson herself; a woman who looks like every head cheerleader/beauty queen in the free world. What former nerd wouldn't want to live out this fantasy? I'm sure Ms. Simpson isn't a monster. But, she's made it quite clear that thought provoking debate isn't her strongsuit. I don't think I need to remind anyone of the Chicken of the Sea incident. So, why then would Mr. Mayer date her?

Because he can.

The Rise of the former Pic 'n' Saves is upon us! Hide your buxom daughters and lock up the Playboy Mansion because Karma's most certainly a bitch who was probably a nerd in high school.