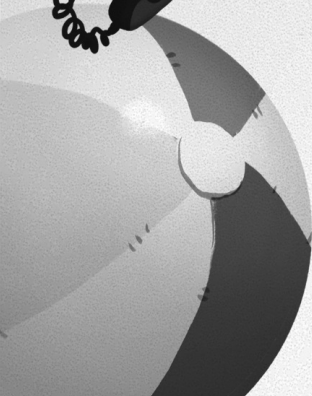


IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD AND I'M IN MY BATHING SUIT

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To every kid who ever wondered if you have what it takes—you do!

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On the third day of summer vacation, I devised **THEE** perfect three-month plan.

It all started when I lost that entire first weekend (and half a Monday!) to more chores than should even be legal.

Including **THE CHORE I HATE MOST . . .**

Also known as **The Chore That Shall Not Be Named.**

Tuh, fine. I'll spell it.

L-A-U-N-D-R-Y.

Yep, the bright red cherry atop my dirty clothes pile.

Listen, I know what you're thinking: *What's the big deal with doing a little laundry, Eddie? The washer and dryer do all the work, right?*

WRONG!

Okay, technically, you're right; the machines are a lifesaver.

Mom made me watch this boring documentary where this kid my age—twelve, if it matters to you—is hand-scrubbing clothes against a block of wood for hours, which, ugh, brutal.

And you wanna know how you determined the clothes were clean enough?

When your arm fell off.

So, yes, it could be infinitely worse.

Buuuut even still, laundry isn't simply pushing the start button and kicking back.

Nope. It's a whole process.

First, you sort—whites, colors—and if you have my mom—reds and pinks, partial whites, pastels, earth tones, delicates, etc.

Next, you load the washer, which always, *always*, *ALWAYS* leads to a trail of dropped socks and underwear along the way.

Then while you wait for the “your clothes are ready” buzzer, you try not to get too caught up playing *Basketball Ballers 3K*.

And the dryer—sheesh, you better select the right temperature.

Choose wrong and your favorite T-shirt shrinks to a washcloth.

And can someone please tell me the point of folding and

stuffing your clothes into drawers if you're only gonna wear them again the next day?

Yep, that's why I devised THE PERFECT PLAN—and here it is:

I'm only doing laundry ONCE this ENTIRE SUMMER!

But, Eddie, how is that even possible? you ask.

I'll tell you how, my friends:

I'd wear every piece of clothing I had. That's right, all of it. That ugly Christmas sweater despite the fact that it's been hot enough to fry an egg on the sidewalk? Didn't let that stop me. Nope, I rolled up those scratchy green sleeves and did what needed to be done. That awful T-shirt my uncle got me with the dancing hippo sporting a backwards Kangol hat and Adidas shell-toes that says "I'm a Hip-Hoppopotamus" in huge gold letters? Rocked it last Thursday—The Bronster's still laughing about it. Those palm-tree Bermuda shorts that I stuffed in the back of my bottom drawer because they're wide enough to be a parachute? Um, wore those Tuesday—and the wind nearly carried me away. But it would've been worth it. Seriously, I could've floated to the moon and I'd still have zero regrets. Because if the plan's gonna work, well, I've gotta do whatever it takes, wear whatever it takes, end of story.

And according to my careful wardrobe calculations, all these necessary combinations would get me halfway through summer, with one last outfit:

My swim trunks. Just in time for Beach Bash.

After that, I'd throw everything into the wash and be good until school started back up.

Kinda brilliant, right?

Feel free to borrow it.

But, you know, only if you want to minimize your chores and maximize your fun.

I know what you're thinking: *But, Eddie, why would your parents let you get away with this?*

That's easy, because we made . . .