

THE CHORE LIST

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CHARACTERS

RYAN	Male	Pre-Teen/Teen	The oldest
ELLEN	Female	Pre-Teen/Teen	The middle child
HALEY	Female	Pre-Teen/Teen	The youngest

SETTING

Their living room and kitchen.

TIME

The first day of summer vacation.

RYAN sits, playing video games. ELLEN enters the living room, yawning and stretching. Then, she spots something on the kitchen counter.

ELLEN

How long have you been up?

RYAN

I'm on level fifteen, so probably like, an hour and a half, two hours?

ELLEN

(sarcastic)

A very productive first day of summer vacation.

RYAN

I'll say!

ELLEN

And how many bowls of cereal?

RYAN

Only three, so far. But there's still time.

ELLEN

So that means that you've been in and out of the kitchen three times and have yet to see this note from Mom?

RYAN

What note?

HALEY enters and sees the piece of paper in ELLEN's hand.

HALEY

Mom left us a note?

ELLEN

That was literally the first thing she saw.

RYAN

You wouldn't understand. Neither of you set lofty summer goals like I did.

ELLEN

That's not true. I have three different summer projects that I need to get started on.

RYAN
Nerd alert!

HALEY
Yeah, and I was going to meet some friends at the mall this afternoon.

ELLEN
What friends?

RYAN
You mean your boyfriend?

HALEY
Todd is not my boyfriend!

RYAN
I never mentioned the name Todd. Did I mention the name Todd?

ELLEN
You're the one who said Todd.

HALEY
Well he's not!

RYAN
Okay. Calm down!

HALEY
What does the note say?

ELLEN
It's a list. A chore list.

HALEY
But it's the first day of summer!

RYAN
If you don't see the list, then you don't have to do the chores.

ELLEN
The list is for all three of us.

HALEY
But it's the first day of summer!

ELLEN

(reading)

Good Morning, Ryan, Ellen and Haley! Happy First Day of Summer. Since I'm at work today, here are some things you can do to help around the house. One- dust shelves. Two- unload dishwasher. Three- load dishwasher. Four- vacuum living room.

RYAN

All of those things?

ELLEN

There's more.

HALEY

There's more?

ELLEN

Five- mop kitchen floor. Six- walk dog. Seven- pick up dog poop. Eight- wash/dry/put away towels.

HALEY

That's crazy!

ELLEN

There's still more.

RYAN

Mom is in rare form this summer.

ELLEN

Maybe she just needs extra help around the house?

The three look at one another, contemplating this notion. Then, they all burst into laughter.

RYAN

Yeah, right!

(beat)

Okay, read the rest.

ELLEN

Nine- clean toilets. Ten- windex bathroom mirrors. Eleven- empty all trashes. Twelve- make beds. Thirteen- sweep leaves on back porch. Fourteen- move large trash and recycling bins out to the curb. Fifteen- scrub baseboards.

(beat)

Where does she come up with some of this stuff? Scrub baseboards? That's really scraping the bottom of the chore list barrel.

RYAN

She does this every year.

ELLEN

It's true. The last few years, you've been at camp, so you didn't have to do any chores.

HALEY

You can't be serious.

ELLEN

Mom doesn't kid about chores.

RYAN

Which is why if you don't *see* the list, then you aren't responsible for the things *written* on the list.

ELLEN

Because that tactic has worked so well in the past.

RYAN

I didn't want to go to the movies that badly that time, anyways.

HALEY

Fine. I'll walk Ollie!

ELLEN

And I guess I'll work on the dishwasher.

RYAN continues to play his video games, ignoring HALEY and ELLEN. They stare at him.

ELLEN

And? What will you be doing?

RYAN

I already told you. I have some very challenging pursuits that I need to tackle this summer.

ELLEN

You are NOT leaving the entire list for Haley and me to do!

RYAN

And why not?

HALEY

I'll call Mom.

Oooh. I'm so scared!

RYAN

You won't be able to go to the movies this summer.

HALEY

There's nothing out that I want to see.

RYAN

She'll take away your video games.

ELLEN

I know where she hides them. All I have to do is wait for her to leave in the morning and get them out.

RYAN

Ugh! You're so annoying!

ELLEN

Love ya, sis.

RYAN

A Cleaning Montage: ELLEN and HALEY clean around RYAN, as he sits and plays his video games. ELLEN attempts to read a book while doing her chores. HALEY keeps checking the clock to make sure she doesn't miss going to the mall. Maybe the two of them have a pretend mop/broom fight. When the two finish, they're exhausted.

I hope you're satisfied with yourself.

HALEY

I'm almost on level twenty-five!

RYAN

We left one thing for you to do, so you can at least say that you helped. You can take out the trash.

ELLEN

Oh, how generous of you.

RYAN

ELLEN

Luckily, I was able to get through the first two chapters of my summer reading, while I was doing all of YOUR chores.

HALEY

And I can still catch the bus to take me to the mall.

RYAN

See? You didn't even need my help. Good work, team!

ELLEN

So, are you going to do it?

RYAN

Am I going to do what?

ELLEN

Are you going to take out the trash?

RYAN

I'll think about it.

HALEY stands in front of the T.V.

HALEY

You'll think about it?!

ELLEN

After all you made us do?

RYAN

You're blocking the T.V.

ELLEN rips the power cord to the video game out of the wall.

RYAN

Hey! I was almost on level twenty-five.

ELLEN takes the controller out of his hand and drops it in the trash.

ELLEN

There. Now you can take out the trash.

RYAN stares at the both of them, dumbfounded.

ELLEN

Still no? I guess we have to do everything, Haley.

ELLEN hands HALEY the trash bin. They both exit.

RYAN sits, in shock.

RYAN

Level twenty-five was my summer goal.

(sighs)

But I guess there's always next year.