

Sophomore Zach Thompson came dressed to impress as the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man for Michigan State's annual Halloween frat party circuit, a choice he now regrets more than a final exam he didn't study for. After downing a few drinks, Zach soon found himself on a mission that would test his endurance, patience, and bladder control.

"I don't know what I was thinking," Zach told us, shifting uncomfortably from foot to foot. "Turns out, the Marshmallow Man has zero mobility. None." His costume choice, originally planned as a homage to Ghostbusters, quickly became a walking, puffy prison—especially as his need for a restroom began to outweigh his need for social acceptance.

As Zach soon discovered, East Lansing on Halloween is less "trick-or-treat" and more "trick-or-try to find a bathroom." As he made his way down Grand River Avenue, he quickly learned that most establishments wouldn't allow him to use their bathroom, even as a paying customer. The clock was ticking, and Zach's options were shrinking.

Finally, he spotted a glimmer of hope in the form of the Raising Cane's on MAC Avenue. Unfortunately, the line was out the door, packed with other costumed college students who had clearly overestimated both their alcohol tolerance and their personal space. He guessed it would take at least an hour to get through. He tried to cut the line just to use the bathroom but the security at the door was not sympathetic. "I tried to explain that I'd be in and out, but apparently that's against company policy," he said, grimacing.

At this point, Zach was too far gone to be deterred. He shuffled awkwardly to the back of the line, surrounded by an eclectic cast of characters: a vampire complaining about his fangs cutting into his lip, a Grim Reaper struggling to keep his scythe upright, and a cat who'd long lost one of her ears. As he inched forward, Zach's vision began to blur—whether from the intensity of his situation or the side effects of several neon-colored cocktails, he couldn't say.

At 2 a.m, Zach finally stumbled into a small, barely-functional bathroom stall. However, this victory was short-lived, as he soon realized a new, greater challenge awaited him: the Marshmallow Man costume. The back velcro flap he'd tested at home was now stubbornly sticking like a bad memory. He wrestled with it, but every tug seemed to only wedge him deeper into his puffy nightmare.

As we left him, Zach was still fumbling in the stall, every fiber of his willpower bent on escaping his synthetic prison, hoping his situation would end before morning—though his dignity might not make it through the night.