

# The Best Days of My Life

## Sitcom Bible

Original Show Created by Evan Jacobs



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## The Best Days of My Life - Logline

"The Best Days of My Life" is a half hour sitcom about a young boy named Erol Jacobs and his experiences growing up in the mid 1980s.

## The Best Days of My Life - Synopsis

"The Best Days of My Life" is a half hour coming of age sitcom about an 11 year old boy named Erol Jacobs that begins in the summer of 1984. Erol is like and unlike many young kids. He loves watching movies, playing the occasional sport, reading and, especially, writing. Due to Erol's flair for putting his thoughts and ideas down on paper, he is a very keen observer of the world around him. "The Best Days of My Life" is a slice of life dramedy about Erol's experiences that will transport viewers of all ages back to the magical and not so magical moments of their youth.

Erol lives with his family in a suburban enclave of Orange County, CA known as Spring Valley. It is a mix of mid '80s conservatism and growing diversity among nationalities. With both of their parents working to make ends meet, Erol and his brother Andrew are latchkey kids. Even though Andrew is three years older than Erol and they are starting to grow apart, the boys still manage to get into their fair share of trouble together. Whether they are helping mutual friends steal things from the neighborhood supermarket or having other people talk them into doing things that they shouldn't do, Erol and Andrew always seem to find a way to bond when they need each other most. Their family practices Judaism, with their father having a bit more allegiance to the religion due to his Orthodox upbringing. Their mother is somewhat ambivalent toward the faith as her parents did not practice organized religion when she was younger. With liberal household ideals, left wing books on the shelves and a mezuzah on the front door, the Jacobs family stands out just enough in their cookie cutter neighborhood on Mt. Kirby street to be different.

Erol attends Northrout Elementary School a few blocks from his home. Gerry Guerrero and Bryan Choi are Erol's best friends. Although they are more similar to one another than they are to Erol, they seem to understand his quirkiness better than any of his other classmates. Erol may not be the coolest person in the group but he has an uncanny ability to be the one that people "tell things to" and he has a knack for making everybody laugh. Other members of Erol's group are Allen Rodriguez, Dennis O'Malley, Olga Quintana, Anne-Marie Morales, Gary Leonard and James Meier. Outside of school, Erol mainly hangs out with Gerry, Bryan and neighbors Chris Barnes and Isaac Hughes.

The first season of "The Best Days of My Life" chronicles Erol's life and growth from the summer of 1984 through his 6th grade year of elementary school. The episodes deal with Erol's growing interest in girls, writing, making choices about following or not following his friends and generally experiencing the world in a different and more unique way than the people around him.

"The Best Days of My Life" is a show that is inspired by and reverentially infused with the 1980s pop culture experience.

## Main Character Details

### The Jacobs Family

Mom - Mrs. Jacobs is a liberal woman and parent. She is a concerned mother, yet due to economics, cannot be the stay at home figure she would like to be. Mrs. Jacobs does her best to be involved in every one of her children's activities, and always encourages their creative endeavors provided it doesn't get Andrew or Erol into any trouble.

Dad - Mr. Jacobs works in Los Angeles and sadly doesn't get to spend as much time with his family as he would like. He works very hard and does his best to take an interest in his family's pursuits. He is an educated man that is liberal in his thoughts and ideals, yet retains old school, working class, conservative values.

Andrew (14) - As Erol's brother, Andrew takes on many roles: partner in crime, bully, confessor, etc.. He is three years older than Erol and while they don't hang around each other all the time, they have a number of shared friends on their block. Andrew is often Erol's gateway into to both new music and movies.

Erol (11) - The star of "The Best Days of My Life" and through whose eyes we see this world. Erol is an intelligent, insecure 11 year old who loves movies, writing and books. He is different from the other characters in the cast in that he seems to think about things more than everyone else. As someone "on the outside looking in," Erol has a keen insight into the people and situations going on around him

### Neighborhood Friends

Isaac Hughes (15) - The unspoken leader of all the kids on Mt. Kirby street. Isaac is the oldest and has the most experience and knowledge about life. His parents are divorced so he is having a different "childhood" experience than his friends. While a nice guy, Isaac has a very quick temper. He is the drummer of the neighborhood band HANDLE WITH CARE.

Chris Barnes (14) - Erol's next-door neighbor and of all the kids on the block, Erol and Andrew's closest friend. Chris's whole family is also very close with Erol's. Chris is very smart and technically inclined. If somebody has a new toy or electronic device, Chris always finds a way to become an authority on it. He is the guitarist of the band HANDLE WITH CARE.

Barry Higgins (12) - Neighbors with Chris and Mark Roman. Barry is closest in age with Erol and while they are friends, Barry is always trying to curry favor with the older boys. He's also the only kid in their circle that doesn't go to the local schools but instead attends a private Catholic School.

Mark Roman (14) - Neighbors with Barry and Johnny Puzder. Mark, like all the older boys on the block is always trying to impress Isaac. He isn't one to express an original thought and is more interested in finding out what the group is doing.

Johnny Puzder (14) - Neighbors with Mark. Johnny is waging a silent power struggle with Isaac, and when Isaac isn't around Johnny is seen as the leader. Johnny is the only one in the group who is into surfing and he spends a lot of time at the beach. While he is friends with Erol, he isn't really nice to him.

Joey Hanes (14) - Joey lives around the corner from everyone on Mt. Kirby. Aside from

Chris, he is Erol and Andrew's closest friend on the block. Joey comes from a somewhat strict Christian home, and very subtly he and his family try and push their beliefs on others. Joey shares many of the same interests as Erol and Andrew. He is the singer of the band HANDLE WITH CARE.

Shelly Barnes (12) - Chris's adopted sister and one of Erol's closest friends on the block. As she and Erol are only a year apart in age, they find that they have a lot in common. The fact that Shelly is a girl and Erol is a boy has absolutely no bearing on their relationship. She is your average twelve year old girl, who is still getting over losing her mother the year before.

Todd Johnson (14) - Todd doesn't live on Mt. Kirby street but with the amount of time he spends there, he might as well. He is the bass player of HANDLE WITH CARE, and is also a technical chameleon. When he first started coming around it was because he and Chris were into computers. Now, Todd has learned to play bass because the band is what his friends are into. He and Erol get along well.

### Erol's School Friends

Gerry Guerrero (11) - Gerry is Erol's best friend. He lives in another neighborhood that resides on the border between Spring Valley and the city of Vista Lana. Gerry is very fashion conscious. He listens to a mix of popular and dance music and he often introduces Erol to things that he wouldn't find on his own.

Bryan Choi (11) - Bryan is Erol's second best friend. He sets the trends amongst Erol's group in terms of style and musical taste. Bryan is very intelligent and is often the first person in Erol's circle to try something. The girls love this guy.

Jesse McGuinness (12) - Jesse is Erol's best friend outside of his normal circle. In fact, the people in Erol's circle look down on Jesse because he doesn't dress how they do, or listen to the same kinds of music. Jesse is completely self possessed and very hands on. He's like a pint sized Marlboro man.

Allen Rodriguez (11) - Allen, like Gerry and Bryan, is very much into style and music. He is also the first person to point out people's flaws, and the first to laugh at someone when something bad happens to them. While he may not be very nice, he does have some redeeming qualities.

Dennis O'Malley (11) - Out of all his friends, Dennis has the most in common with Erol. He loves writing and movies, and he's very inspired by Erol's ability to sit down and put words on the page. Interestingly, Dennis changes during the year when he and Raymond become better friends.

Raymond Garcia (11) - Raymond is different from all the boys simply because he is more effeminate than them. He has a sharp sense of style, fashion and musical taste, which he uses to elevate himself among Erol and his friends. He and Erol connect because they both see the world differently.

Olga Quintana (11) - Olga hangs around with this group of guys but she's also friends with a lot of other people. She is very wise for her age and she seems to be more mature than Erol and all his friends combined.

James Meier (10) - James is very smart but he also has an ego. Being the youngest and smallest out of the group has made him have to overcompensate in other ways. Still,

James is a very nice guy and someone who often breaks things down simply for Erol.

Gary Leonard (11) - After Gerry, Bryan and Jesse, Gary is probably Erol's best friend. He and Erol hang out after school and often trade secrets with one another. Gary naturally seems to have himself together. As he is somewhat quiet (especially when he and Erol are around people Gary doesn't know), he makes Erol seem overly loud by comparison.

Kim Swanson (11) - Kim is a girl that Erol secretly harbors a crush on after a chance meeting at a movie theater. She is very outgoing and enthusiastic toward Erol, but sadly her heart lies with Gary. She is very good with animals.

Anne-Marie Morales (11) - Anne-Marie is someone that Erol seems to have always been good friends with. While they aren't super close, they both have very high opinions of each other and with a little prodding could possibly have a relationship. Anne-Marie seems to accept Erol exactly as he is.

#### Andrew's Friends

Derrick Garrison (14) - Andrew's clever friend who really knows how to manipulate people. Derrick is very big on fashion, ahead of the curve with music, and is also quite well spoken. He dreams very big even if he doesn't pursue any of them.

Joe Nichols (14) - Joe is fearless and untouchable. He is highly antiauthority and since he doesn't like Erol, all of Andrew's friends don't like him. Joe is into punk music and his style of dress reflects that.

Mike Sapner (14) - Mike doesn't really interact with Erol and essentially treats him as if he doesn't exist. He takes nothing Erol says seriously and even inflicts physical pain on him from time to time. Erol considers Mike a "goon" of Derrick and Joe.

## Character Environment

### Home

Erol's home on Mt. Kirby street is where the majority of "The Best Days of My Life" takes place. There seems to always be something going on. The kids play sports in the street, they have bike races, they go to HANDLE WITH CARE practice, and some days they just sit around and talk. Erol spends a lot of his time outside but he also stays inside reading, writing and watching as many movies as possible.

### Northroute Elementary School

Erol attends Northroute Elementary school which is about a half a mile from his house. As most of the kids on Mt. Kirby street are a few years older than Erol, they stopped attending Northroute awhile ago. The school is predominantly white with a growing mix of Latinos and Asians. While Erol used to not enjoy going to school (and was even called "quiet" by some of his teachers), as he has moved up to the higher grade levels he's loved it. Going into his sixth grade year at Northroute, almost all his friends are with him in Mr. Lawrence's class. Northroute and Erol's neighborhood as a whole, is an idyllic place for a youth to come of age.

### Hang Outs

#### Pepper Pete's

Pepper Pete's is a local hang out that serves a lot of fried seafood and sandwiches. Erol and his friends usually go there just to order a big helping of fries that they share. The owners of Pepper Pete's are nice and will even give Erol and his friends free sodas if they don't have enough to order one with their meal.

#### BC's Liquor Store

BC's Liquor Store is a place Erol goes to a few times a week. Whether he and his friends are buying candy, looking at magazines or playing the Pac-Man or Tempest video game, Erol can usually count on seeing somebody that he knows when he goes in there. BC, the owner, is familiar with all the kids even though he doesn't really talk to them. Sadly, in a year, BC's is going to be turned into Square Top Pizza.

#### Spring Valley Fun Center

For Erol and all his friends this place is paradise. It is packed with video games and girls. There is a huge miniature golf course attached to it, as well as a place to ride go-carts and bumper cars on the water. Usually, the kids have to be driven to the Spring Valley Fun Center but sometimes (without their parents permission of course) they ride their bikes there.

#### Good Times Movie Theater

Erol and Andrew have spent more time at this movie theater than any other kid they know. This place is a moviegoers fantasy. Costing only one dollar to get in, Erol, Andrew and their friends are known to go into the theater in the afternoon and then ride their bikes home in the evening. They constantly sneak around to different movies all while subsisting on sodas, popcorn and hot dogs. Of all the kids, Erol discriminates the least seeing as many movies

as he can regardless of the genre. The Good Times Movie Theater also shows a double feature in every theater.

### Spring Bowl

Erol and his friends don't really go to Spring Bowling Alley (called "Spring Bowl" for short) for any other reason that it has an arcade. Spring Bowl is an enormous place and it's almost cavernous in the amount of space it provides. It's arcade is packed with all the newest video games, and it seems like every day kids are figuring out new ways to have the machines give them "free plays." Andrew goes to Spring Bowl a lot more than Erol.

### Round Tree Park

Round Tree Park is one square mile located about five blocks from Erol's house. It has a golf course, walking and bicycle trails, a "nature trail" where students from Northroute go to examine things, and a wide open area that Erol and others use to launch rockets. Erol used to spend a lot more time here when he was younger, now he mainly just sees those places when he's walking through the park.

### Bouldercreek Park

Erol walks through this park almost everyday on his way to school. It is a small neighborhood park with two sets of swings, monkey bars and other things to crawl on, a slide, a sandbox and a basketball court. When he was younger, he used to play there all the time. Now when he goes there with his friends they mainly sit on the swings, or hang out on the monkey bars talking. Sometimes Erol will watch some of the bigger kids play basketball.

### Spring Valley Center

A decent sized strip mall, the main places Erol goes to at the Spring Valley Center are the Two Screen Movie Theater, the Furry Animals Pet Shop, the Out of the Park Baseball Card Store, the All-In-One Drug Store and the local food hangout, Burgers. As Erol starts to write more, he often goes to the All-In-One Drug Store to buy his notebooks. Throughout Season 1, he also takes more of an interest in certain animals at the pet shop, and he starts to frequent the trading card store more (even though he really doesn't follow any sports).

### Hartford Plaza

Located in the city of Vista Lana, Hartford Plaza is a medium sized strip mall. Some of the stores there are Mr. Lee's Pet Shop, Rollo's Donuts, Clark's Stationary, ABC Video, and Paula's Fashion Outlet. Erol usually only goes to Hartford Plaza with Gerry and Bryan, and this place figures more prominently into Erol's life when he starts Vince Junior High School in Season 2.

### Music of the Time...

Erol and his friends listen to a variety of music such as Madonna, Wham, Duran Duran, Oingo Boingo, The Police, Depeche Mode, Journey, Howard Jones and A-HA among others. Every so often Erol listens to metal like Motley Crue and Def Leppard, which are remnants from when Erol was a fan of them in the Fifth grade. His friends such as Gerry and Bryan like some of the same music as Erol but they mainly listen to dance music like New Order, L.A. Dream Team and Nucleus. As Erol gets musical influences from his friends and

family, he is just as likely to listen to The Doors as he is to Daryl Hall & John Oates or Big Country.

## Series Arc over Eight Seasons\*

### Season 1 - Sixth Grade - 1984-1985

This is the year that the main character Erol has his world opened up considerably. As 6th Graders he and his friends rule Northroute Elementary School. They listen to all the cool music of the day, and Erol's "friendships" with girls go farther than they ever have before. Erol's 6th Grade teacher Mr. Lawrence is unlike any he has ever had as he introduces Erol to nature, different aspects of the world, and encourages his flair for writing. There are many ups and downs this season but Erol always manages to learn something in the end.

### Season 2 - Seventh Grade - 1985-1986

Transitioning from Northroute Elementary School to Vince Middle School, Erol goes through the biggest period of adjustment in his young life. Vince is located in a rough neighborhood which is different from the safety of the suburbs Erol has always known. He falls in with a bad crowd and is introduced to a world of smoking, alcohol, drugs and punk rock. Ultimately, Erol realizes that the best person he can be is himself.

### Season 3 - Seventh Grade at the Chabad Academy - 1986-1987

Realizing that he needs to change his environment, Erol persuades his parents to enroll him in the Chabad Academy. The school is located in Hunter Beach and actually doubles as a summer camp that Erol has attended for the past four years. With his environment changed considerably (the Chabad Academy is an Orthodox Jewish School), Erol goes back to being a solid student and even gets more into the Jewish religion. Eventually, he becomes somewhat estranged from his old friends like Gerry and Bryan. Erol soon realizes that there are just as many cliques in private school as there are in the public one that he left. Aside from getting even more heavily into movies, Erol's relationships with girls continue, even though the Chabad Academy separates them from the boys.

### Season 4 - Eighth Grade at the Chabad Academy - 1987-1988

Erol's flair for writing kicks into high gear as he writes a 400 page book of short stories. He also watches more movies than he ever has before, and he gets a new best friend in Ian Zeller. More so than any other season, we see Erol's fantasies blend in and out of the real world. Amidst all this, Erol continues his burgeoning curiosity in girls, develops a crush on his English teacher, and gets heavily into punk and classic rock music. Towards the end of the season, Erol realizes he is going to be leaving the Chabad Academy and rejoining his old friends at Wolf High School. This is a public school located around the corner from Erol's house.

### Season 5 - Ninth Grade - 1988-1989

Reentering public school is a bit of an adjustment at first. Shortly after the year starts, Erol decides that he can no longer hang around with Gerry and the old gang. After being tormented by some bullies in PE class, Erol decides to play basketball where he feels there are more instructors around to protect him in case other kids try and beat him up. Erol also excels in drama and between doing these two activities, he makes a bunch of new friends very quickly. After getting a large role in the school production of *Big Top of Terrors*, Erol sees his stock amongst the people in the Drama Club "soar" even higher. However, he gets a harsh reality check when he accompanies some members of the Drama Club to their Junior and Senior prom.

## Season 6 - Tenth Grade - 1989-1990

This is the year where Erol learns that the birds and the bees are told to young people for a reason. Over the Summer, Erol begins to hang out with Andrew and his friends more (specifically, Mike Sapner) and gets his first job. When school starts, Erol is now doing drama exclusively for his main elective. As he spends more time in the drama theater, he is also around a lot more girls and this is when he realizes that movies aren't the only places where men and women hook up. Also during his sophomore year he gets his driver's license and Andrew takes him to his first hardcore punk show. Erol gets heavily involved in this scene, and even forms a band with Mike which makes him even more independent from the "he said, she said" business of high school. Erol closes out the year becoming the Junior Class Representative and the Drama Club President for the following year.

## Season 7 - Eleventh Grade - 1990-1991

Erol begins the school year by quitting as drama club president. All he wants to do is play in his band and go to hardcore shows, but the demands of school don't make that easy. Aside from taking seven classes (as Erol is beginning to think about going to college), he's also made the lead in two school plays, and he takes on a part-time job. It is a tough year as members drop in and out his band, the workload in school continues to increase, and Erol even inadvertently bribes his Algebra teacher into giving him an C-. This year ends with Erol counting the minutes of the Prom, because this signals the end to his involvement in student government, as well as a huge lightening of his class load for Senior year.

## Season 8 - Twelfth Grade - 1991-1992

The Final Season begins after an aborted attempt at Summer school. Erol then spends his time going to shows and working with his brother at a bakery. His band finally gets a solid lineup and they play their first house party with Joe's band. In school, Erol is only in 5 classes, so he begins the day later at 9AM. Erol also chooses to take one of the "hardest" English teachers, while most of his friends are opting for an easier one. He also gets accepted to a few Universities, but instead chooses to go to Community College. After being forced to take another lead role in a play, Erol basically sits out the final musical of his Senior year. Outside of school, Erol realizes that he's now hanging out with all the people in the hardcore music scene that he admires. His band plays some important shows, and his final days of High School wind down with Erol watching the 1992 L.A. Riots on TV.

THE BEST DAYS OF MY LIFE comes to a close with Erol sitting in the drama theater waiting for the final bell to ring, signaling the end of his Senior year. When a substitute that day tells him he can leave early, Erol refuses because he's "been in Wolf High School for four years, what's a few more minutes?"

The show's final image is Erol walking home, alone, and realizing the future ahead of him.

\* - Each season is comprised of 18 episodes

## Season One - 18 Episode Outline

- 1) The Scam - Erol gets set up on his first date and realizes the girl he is seeing is just as nervous about it as he is. Most of the main characters are introduced in this first episode.
- 2) After Erol - Isaac and Erol get into an argument and Isaac threatens to beat Erol up. Erol has to hide out around the neighborhood until things blow over.
- 3) Night Before the First Day of School - Erol is nervous about the first day of school and he does everything he can to postpone the day from ending.
- 4) Erol Not Making the Cut - Erol doesn't get picked for a team and feels like he's not good at anything. Deciding to focus more on his writing ability, Erol ends up alienating himself from his friends.
- 5) Writing Flair - After reading a short Halloween story aloud in class, Erol's teacher Mr. Lawrence tells his parents that he has a real writing flair. They enroll him in a college class to develop his talent but he soon realizes he would rather hang out with his friends instead.
- 6) Halloween - Erol can't sleep because he likes a girl who doesn't like him. Slowly, he thinks he is making some headway with her but a few hours before Halloween he finds out things aren't as they appear.
- 7) Trip With Mr. Lawrence - After going on a hiking trip with Mr. Lawrence, Erol and his friends decide to all buy pets. When they can't keep theirs, Erol's bedroom ends up becoming a zoo.
- 8) Early Adopters - Technology is all the rage on Erol's block when his Dad brings home a new Apple Computer. Problems begin when other kid's parents buy different computers and fights start over which one is better.
- 9) Two Toughest Guys On The Block - Right before Christmas break Erol brags about a video game he is going to be getting for Hanukah. One of the tough kids in his class is nice to Erol because he wants to play it. After a slight misunderstanding, Erol's "friend" suddenly wants to beat him up.
- 10) The Long Good Winterbreak - Erol and Andrew get caught sneaking into the movies. While waiting for their parents to pick them up, Erol talks with Kim, a girl from his class. After being told by his brother that he should "go for her," Erol spends the weekend imagining what life would be like if Kim was his girlfriend.
- 11) Burning Down the House - Andrew brings over a friend who almost sets the house on fire.
- 12) Erol's Job - Erol gets a job folding newspapers for a kid who agrees to pay him \$5 dollars a week. When he refuses to give Erol the money, his friends decide that they are going to get it for him.
- 13) Erol's Girlfriend - Erol finds out that Lori Tran likes him. He asks her out and is a great boyfriend... for a week.
- 14) "His Best Friend" Pt. 1 - Feeling left out of the Easter Break festivities, Erol gives the

book he is writing, *His Best Friend*, to Dennis because he gets to celebrate Easter and Erol feels this will somehow allow him to celebrate as well. Problems arise when Erol wants his book back.

15) "His Best Friend" Pt. 2 - Eventually, Erol realizes his Mom is going to have to intervene and get *His Best Friend* back from Dennis. Still wondering why Jews are "so different from everybody else," Erol has a big surprise when he goes to temple for Friday night services.

16) Gary's Party - Gary is having a party and a sleepover at his house but some people decide Erol can't spend the night. He goes to the party and is having a bad time until his friends need his help.

17) Erol's Second Girlfriend - Erol steals a girl named Colleen from Jesse after tricking him into not asking her out. Now that he has her, Erol asks Jesse for advice about what he should do to impress her.

18) Alan's Party - Erol starts to play the guitar and he and Gerry form a band. Allen then asks them to play his end of the year party. Mr. Lawrence has the class bury a time capsule and Erol closes out the episode by getting in a fight and making up with Colleen.