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by JESSE



### The Great Kefir CleanUp

When we planned our ad spot for Lifeway Kefir, we expected to find some clothes for me to wear at a thrift shop, or *maybe* at Uniqlo. We figured we could afford to drop a hundred bucks, maybe two hundred, to make the commercial memorable, then discard the ruined clothes afterward. It was a decent plan.

It turned out that we were so busy shooting, we didn't have time to buy me a set of clothes, and I couldn't bear to pour kefir over one of the three coats I'd brought with me on the trip. Luckily, I'm the same size as our director, Ben, and he swore up and down that this blue Dolce & Gabbana suit was one he basically never wore.

He even brought his girlfriend in as a witness to confirm that he never wore it. So I suited up, and doused myself in kefir. We only got one shot, but we made it count, and then we got a bunch of towels and cleaned up Ben's apartment's floor.

When we were done, the suit was soaked in kefir. Like a wet rag.

That's when I had an idea. Stu Bloom runs [RAVE FabriCARE](#), which I guess you might call an artisanal dry cleaner. My friend Will from A Suitable Wardrobe had recommended them, and Stu's always inserting himself into conversations about cleaning on the big menswear boards. A few months ago, my mom bought some Hermes scarves with some nasty soil, and I sent her to Stu who got them clean posthaste. My mom considered it a miracle, and she made good money on the scarves. I emailed Stu: was he up to the challenge of a kefirsoaked suit?

His answer was: "Absolutely."

We put the suit in a garbage bag, and stuffed it in a Priority Mail box, and sent it off to Arizona. Well, to be honest, we let it sit on Ben's kitchen floor for a week, because we forgot to give Ben's girlfriend [RAVE's](#) address. Then she sent it off to Arizona.

By the time it got there, as you can see, it was absolutely foul. Since it had been balled up in a garbage bag in a cool dark place for a week, it was rife with fungus. Absolutely rank and nasty. Even Stu wasn't sure if there was anything he could do, but he got to work.

Then, about a week ago, a package showed up at Ben's door. He emailed me immediately: "HOLY COW! JESSE! IT LOOKS BETTER THAN IT DID BEFORE WE RUINED IT!"

Stu's service is expensive he took this one as a personal challenge, but the average price for a dry cleaned item using their highest level of service is about \$20, so I'm guessing he might have charged us \$40 or \$50 for what he did for Ben's suit. A Hand finished laundered shirt is \$6.75. That said, the dry cleaning business is such a disaster that I dry clean my suits and coats about once a season at most. It's nearly impossible to find someone who will do it with any care at all. Stu's passionate about cleaning, and in many circumstances (like when \$300 worth of suit is on the line) that's worth the cost.

You can check out even more pictures of the grizzly situation and the remarkable result at [RAVE's](#) blog.