

W's and a curved Bat

The morning light coming in through the warped blinds was gray; it was still early hours. Laramer reached over to the nightstand next to his bed and grabbed his jockeys. He couldn't eyeball them so he brought them closer to his nose. Still half-asleep, he decided it passed the sniff test and swung his legs over the side of the bed. He struggled, twice finding his second leg in alongside the first. He frowned since he didn't think the opening was stretched *that* much.

He muttered to the empty room, "Bad enough they're not reversible. Should be for people with flat butts like me. I guess you could wear them inside-out but that would be gross."

He scratched under his arm and went down the hall to the bathroom. Once relieved, he splashed water on his face, rubbed his chin and cheek – *I'll need to shave soon.*

Returning to the bedroom for his shirt and pants, looking in the full-length mirror he confirmed what he had known for years: jockey "Ys" did not make it – big time. They chafed and moved *everything* around in the wrong way and this was true even before you put your pants on. Sitting down only compounded a bad situation. Everything got pushed up and away and *always* in the world's worst possible position.

Laramer liked to think in *italics*.

He muttered to his dim reflection in the bureau mirror, "Shit, even in *impolite* company chances are you weren't going to reach down and move things around." He went over the window, pulled up the shade, and posed again in front of the bureau.

"Darn, Laramer Y. Wetty, you probably got to shave soon."

He remembered the first time his mother had warned him about cursing. It was after his *first* day in *first* grade. In kindergarten everyone called him Larry. His mother had found out over

the summer and spoke to the principal before school started that September. “My son’s name is Laramer and he is not to be called Larry! His full name is Laramer Y Wetty! I do not want anyone using a nickname!”

His mother liked to use exclamations!

“Mom, what the *hell* did you have in mind naming me *Laramer* and *just* the letter *Y*?”

She had dragged him by the ear to the bathroom sink for the soap. “Never, never swear, Laramer! Never!”

He was crying, “The kids made a rhyme about Y, ‘crooked letter, crooked letter/don’t you know any better?’ Mom, *why’d* you do it?”

Laramer *talked* in italics before he *thought* in italics.

Mrs. Wetty had stopped three feet from the bathroom, releasing her hold on his ear and remembering how she and Mr. Wetty had just run out of steam thinking about middle names by the time they got to the Y’s. They had liked Lawrence and were enchanted by Ailemar, an old English name they remembered as being associated with famous nobles. They had combined the two, long on the middle A. Laramer wisely scurried back to his room and closed the door. She yelled after him, “It’s a beautiful name!”

Laramer shook off the memory and returned to the problem at hand, reaching down to fix things once again. He stared at himself in the mirror. He was *thinking*.

The baseball All-Star game was in three days. He blinked and pictured a bat and two balls. Again, he had to reach down – the Y was squashing his things once more. *Dumb, dumb, dumb!* An inverted pouch – how dumb *is* that?

He decided to shave after all. Returning to the bathroom, he ran hot water in the sink. The mirror fogged and as he reached over to wipe the moisture, he had an idea. First, he drew a large

Y towards the top of the mirror and then underneath, a capital W. Small drops of water enlarged the channels his fingers had drawn. *Ah*. He smiled at his reflection in the mirror or at least what he could make out in the open Y and W. *Ah, ah*. Things were coming into focus. He enlarged the pockets in the W and wiped away the point in the middle. He smirked at the Y and announced his plan: “If you make that a big “W” with the middle peak coming up only partway – then you got yourself *really dynamite* underpants: the two balls can drop one on each side and the bat can rest in the middle.”

He went directly to the study and sat down at his desk. He moved his Ys down to his knees and, taking out a pair of scissors, cut two holes, one in each side of center. Nodding to himself, he stood and pulled up his underwear. His testicles hung out on each side. Laramer pronounced his verdict. “*Hmm*, it looks good. I can always sew in the pouches later. Time to give this a test ride.”

He went back to his bedroom and grabbed a t-shirt. He saluted himself in the mirror. “It’s still early. No one will be out on the street.”

He clomped down stairs and yelled into the kitchen. “Hey, Mom, I gotta take a quick bike ride around the block, testing something. I’ll be right back.” He figured a bike ride was a good road test for his latest invention. If it was successful, he’d change his middle name to W!

An hour later he zoomed down the driveway thinking how a *curved* bat and *lopsided* ball could perk up the national pastime.