

Test Tube Yankee

By John Cospers

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Dedicated to Lydia and Sam, who can be whatever they want when they grow up... except Green Bay Packer fans.

CHARACTERS

Announcer

Kurt- A sports fan

Marjie- Kurt's wife, also a fan

Bart- Their son, genetically engineered for baseball

Kendra- Their daughter, a tennis player

Dramatic, patriotic sounding music plays, like something from an old news reel.

ANNOUNCER: A brave new world is on the horizon! After years of genetic research, mankind has finally taken control of his own reproductive destiny! No longer will men and women be forced to roll the chromosomal dice when it comes to their children. Eye color, hair color, intelligence, and even athletic ability are available for all... at the right price. But one question remains: will future generations be wise enough to appreciate the decisions we have made for them?

Music fades out. The stage is set like a nice family kitchen. Kurt enters. He wears a ball cap and baseball jersey.

KURT: Well, Marjie, this is the big day! Our little blue eyed, blonde haired slugger is going to take his first step toward joining the Bronx Bombers!

MARJIE: Now dear, let's not get ahead of ourselves.

KURT: I'm sorry, Marjie, I just get so excited. I've been looking at that genetic profile all these years, just waiting to see our boy blossom into the next Mickey Mantle. You saw how hard he hit the ball his first day at Tee Ball.

MARJIE: I know, but just because we bought a genetic freak finely tuned to play baseball doesn't mean he'll be a Yankee. He might wind up playing for the Sox.

KURT: Marjie, I told you never to say that word in this house.

MARJIE: Oh, I'm just kidding. Don't be so sensitive.

KURT: New York would be crazy not to draft my boy. With his reflexes, the kid's a natural shortstop.

MARJIE: I know, dear. I've watched him do the drills for thirteen years now.

KURT: Shh. Here he comes.

Bart enters. He is a buff, athletic looking kid, wearing a shirt sleeve button up shirt and slacks. He carries a science book, which he reads as he enters.

KURT: There he is! My baseball hero!

MARJIE: Happy first day of spring training!

BART: Uh, thanks?

KURT: Have a seat, slugger. Mom's got breakfast and a protein shake all ready for you.

BART: Aww, do I have to do the protein shake?

KURT: Yes, you have to do the protein shake.

BART: I have a test in trigonometry first period! Protein shakes make me jittery, and I can't concentrate.

KURT: Who cares about trigonometry?

MARJIE: Shhh, Dad, don't give him a hard time. He knows he has to keep his grades up if he wants to play college ball.

KURT: College ball? My son's not a football player. He can go straight to Triple A right after graduation.

BART: Unless I want to go to college.

KURT: College is for nerds, Bart. You're not a nerd. You were made to play baseball.

BART: I know, Dad. You've been telling me that since I was one.

KURT: *(takes the science book away)* Right. So enough of the studying, and let's carbo load!

BART: Actually, Dad, if you wanted me to carbo-load, you should have done it at dinner last night. A big plate of pasta the night before a major athletic event is the way to go, but if you wait 'til breakfast, you're just asking for a breakdown.

KURT: Well, well, well, check out the fitness expert, huh? I guess you have been doing your homework.

BART: I always do my homework, Dad.

KURT: Yeah? How come I never hear that Bowflex humming downstairs?

BART: Dad, I was pre-engineered for muscle mass. I don't need to lift. Besides... if I want to get in the advanced med track, I need to have straight A's.

KURT: What was that? Advanced what?

BART: Med track?

KURT: Track? No, no, son, not track. Baseball. Track and field's a dead end career. You have one shot of glory every four years, and the most you get out of that is a Wheaties box.

BART: Not track and field, Dad. The med track. As in pre-med.

MARJIE: As in... med school?

BART: Yeah.

Kurt sets down his silverware, taking deep breaths.

KURT: Med school?

BART: Yuh huh.

KURT: Am I to understand that my son, the one I designed to be the best ball player in the world, wants to be a doctor?

BART: Yeah.

KURT: Okay. If that's what you want. When you retire from the game, somewhere around age 40, you should have plenty money to put yourself through school. You can be practicing medicine by the time you hit Cooperstown.

BART: No, Dad, you don't get it. I want to be a doctor... not a... a baseball player.

KURT: You what??

BART: Look, I've been trying to find a way to tell you both, but you just make it so hard. I love science. I love biology, and chemistry, and physics, and... and I want to work in medicine.

KURT: No, son, that's not possible. You were made for baseball. You love baseball.

BART: *(loses it)* I hate baseball, Dad!

KURT: What did you say?

BART: I hate baseball. It's a stupid game, the season's too long, and it lacks the aggression, speed, and the sense of team work of a sport like football.

KURT: Well you're in a tough spot here, Bart, because we made you to play baseball.

BART: Yeah, well, it's my life, and I want to be a doctor. And you can't stop me because my guidance counselor said my grades are good enough to get a full ride where ever I want to go!

KURT: I don't want to hear this! I didn't spend half a million dollars rearranging your genes so you could be a doctor!

BART: I hate you, Dad! I wish I'd never been implanted!

KURT: You go to your room! And don't forget to take your HGH!!

Bart storms off. Kurt takes off his hat and throws it down, angry.

KURT: Well, I never saw that coming. What's the point of pre-engineering your kids if they won't listen to you when you tell them how to live their lives?

MARJIE: You're pushing him too hard. Give him some space, and maybe he'll come around.

KURT: Ah, let him go. Let him be a doctor. When he's on his own and has his own practice, we can sue him for breach of genetic contract.

MARJIE: We will not sue our son. Besides, it's not like we struck out with the kids. We've still got Kendra.

KURT: Yes, we do.

MARJIE: Thirteen years old, and she's already the number one singles player in the state.

KURT: Yep. Our little Kendra will be the Wimbledon champion in no time.

Kurt sips his coffee. Kendra enters carrying a pregnancy test.

KENDRA: Mom, Dad, I'm pregnant.

Kurt spits his coffee out. Blackout.