

Palynology
Day 18

by
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A presentation. A man at a podium controls a Powerpoint. He wears a lab coat. The screen has a slide that says, "Welcome."

JONAH

Ladies and gentlemen. I understand that you thought you would be seeing a boring presentation about the world of Palynology. But! Instead, you will be seeing an exciting presentation from the world of Palynology! As you know, we here at the Allergy Center Headquarters of Ohio. Or A-C-H-O-O. We have been developing new ways of eliminating allergies for good. Hayfever, ragweed, kids unable to eat ice cream because of milk allergies, kids unable to eat Mounds because of the nuts. Or are Mounds the ones that don't have nuts? No matter. At first, we were simply treating allergens with pills.

Slide of pills.

JONAH

Who likes taking pills? Who can remember to take pills? I'm on an anti-psychotic and I forget to take that all the time! We thought about how to get to the source.

Slide of plants.

JONAH

Plants. These bastards are taking over the world! Encroaching into our territory. Some people even bring them in their homes!

Slide of a nose.

JONAH

Just kidding. We're not at war with plants. It's not practical. And they'd win. Trust me. They're ruthless. So, we tried the nose.

Slide of throat.

JONAH

The throat.

Slide of lungs.

JONAH

The lungs. These make up all the pieces that react most to allergens. So, we have--

Slide of Bob, a normal looking guy with five o'clock shadow.

JONAH

Bob. Can we bring out Bob please?

Two men in lab coats carry in Bob in plain clothes. Bob stares, unblinking.

JONAH

This is Bob. Our 2 and a half million dollar man. Bob's sinuses, nose, lungs, and trachea were replaced with a series of robotics. The upside? No more seasonal allergies! The downside? Bob is dead. Thank you, gentlemen.

The men cart away Bob.

JONAH

But even with the loss of Bob, we knew that robotics was the way to go. While replacing organs seemed like a good idea, it really didn't get to the heart of the problem. You see, it only affected airborne allergens. What about those that we eat? What about those that we touch? The key is this--

A blank, white slide.

JONAH

You can't see it, but there's a robot, or nanobot there. He's microscopic. I have a better picture here.

Slide of a tiny black dot.

JONAH

Our camera didn't get a good photo. The iPhone isn't perfect for microscopic snapshots. But we all love this picture of Archie, that's the code name. You know, because it is orange colored, as you can see from the photo. Like Archie? The comic book character? Betty and Veronica? So, you may ask, what does Archie do?

Slide of a question mark.

JONAH

What causes allergic reactions?

Slide of a white blood cell.

JONAH

Our immune systems. Our immune systems cause them. If you're allergic to something, that's because your immune system, your white blood cells, are going rogue and trying to eliminate the allergen and you along with it. It's the biological nuclear option. These are the bastards that must be stopped. That's where Archie comes in.

Slide of a black dot next to a silhouette of a person.

JONAH

Archie, well, thousands of Archies, if not millions of Archies get into the host body and immediately kill all your white blood cells. Then, the Archies all assume the places of these blood cells, therefore getting rid of all immune system issues, including allergies, forever! You may ask, Doctor Creighton, how do I get the Archies in my body? And I would say, first off, my name is Doctor Kramer. Second, you get the Archies into your body by inhalation. I'll demonstrate.

He takes a squirt bottle, one that looks a bit like it used to hold Febreze or something and walks toward the audience. He steps off the stage and starts spraying up into the air above people in the first row.

JONAH

Congratulations, you are all now allergy free.

He goes back to the stage.

JONAH

If you experience bleeding from your rectum, that's normal. That's just Archie "taking out the trash" as it were. Thank you all for coming, you'll all be able to breathe easier in two months when Archie will be on sale around the world. Except in Canada. Good evening.

The lights go out.