

Medical Malpractice

—Jeremy Lim

Exhausted from yesterday's frantic potion-brewing, Bundy asks you to drive to Green Patch. You leave Melbourne by midnight, with Bundy seated in the passenger seat, gently falling into slumber. Good thing you're well-rested. Having cracked Blinky's codes so quickly yesterday, and spent most of ANZAC day napping.

After about seven hours, you stop at the border of Bordertown and settle down to the rigorous business of making breakfast. Some generous slices of rustic bread spread with honey does a little more than awaken your appetite, it also awakes Professor Undaberg.

"Good riddance, how long have I been asleep?" he asks while trying to comb the knots out of his morning fur. "Actually, never mind that – nature calls I'm afraid, and I must answer. I'll be right back!"

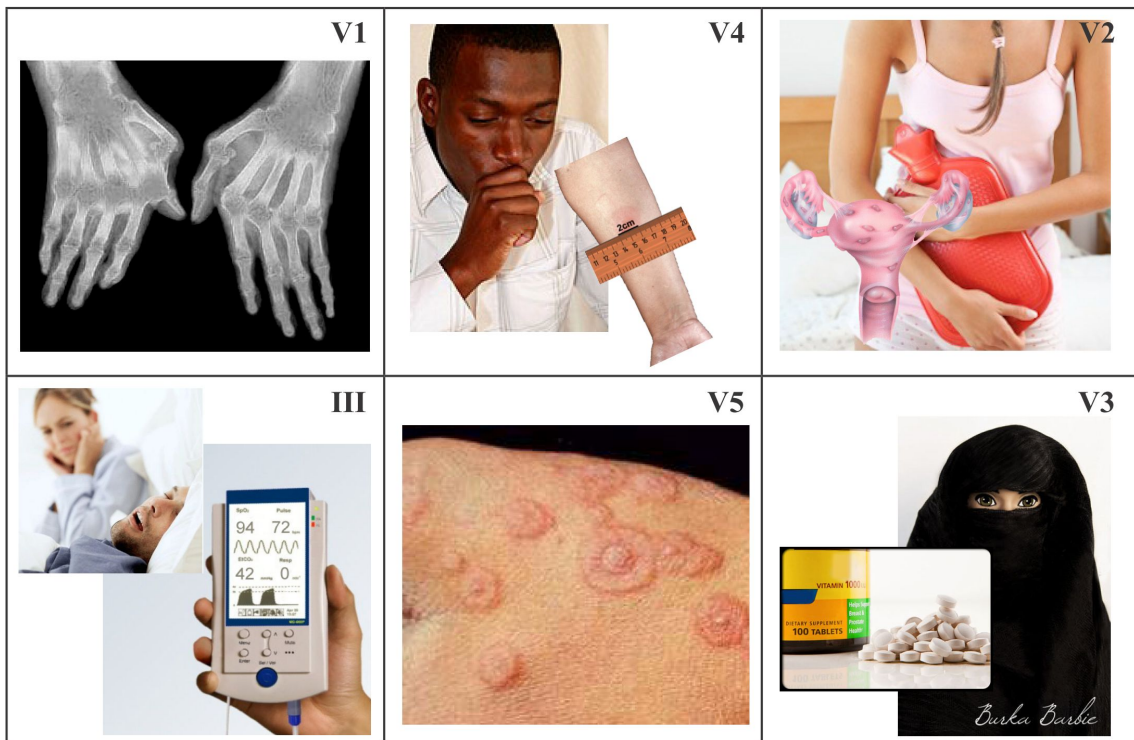
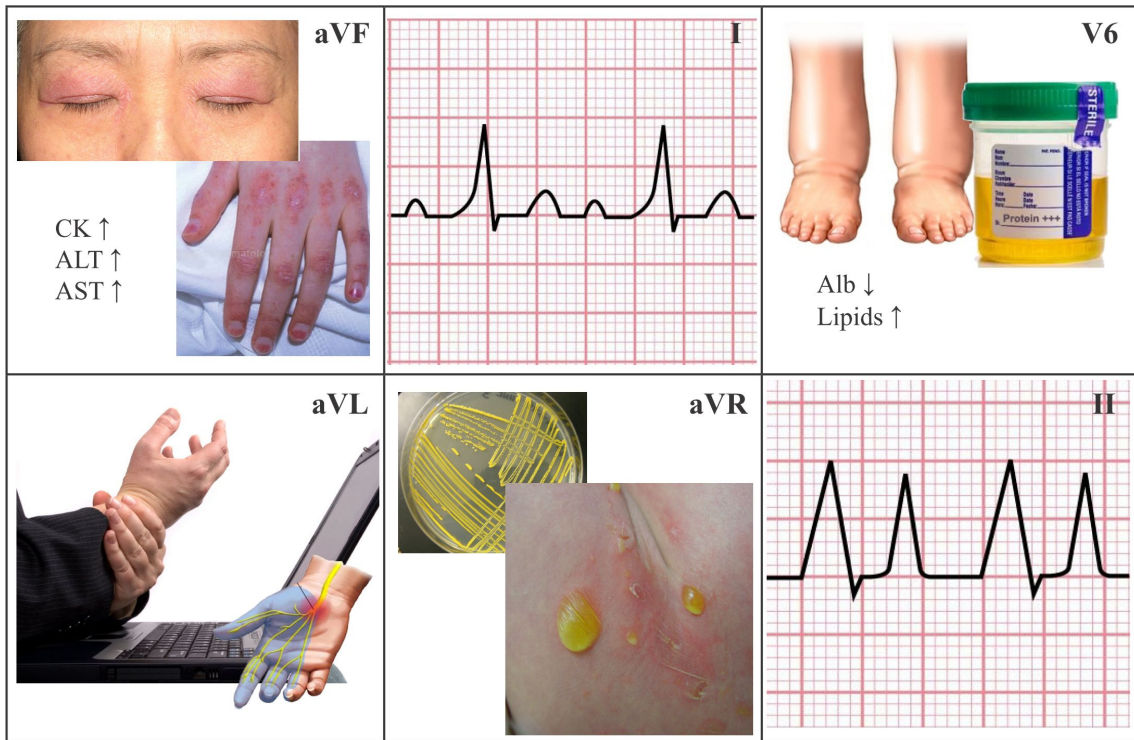
Seeing him slam the car doors shut and dash off into some distant bushes, you struggle to refocus on the task of breaking fast. You manage to chomp through a third of the loaf before hearing a disturbingly genteel roar emanating from the rustling trees.

Bundy bursts forth from the bushes and collapses by the roadside. As you run towards him, you see that patches of the fur on his head have turned red, far darker than the pink of his body. Memories of the bear crumpled in front of the tram come flooding back to you. Jerking into action, you grab whatever you can of him and shake vigorously. His eyes slowly pry open.

"Dropbears ... trees ... oh the *claws* ... the claws!"

"Come on, we'll head for town, you need a doctor," you babble, forcing him into the car.

As you approach the main street of the town, you notice a sign saying CLINIC above a small weatherboard building. You park, pull Bundy inside and stop. There is no attending staff, so you rummage through the cupboards until you find salve and bandages. Easing Bundy into a chair, you carefully dress his wounds. Satisfied that the bleeding has been stemmed and is beginning to koalagulate in the dressing, your attention is drawn by a poster on the wall..



(5-9-5 8) • (6 6 8) • (7 1 10) • (8) • (8 10) • (9 8) • (10 9) • (11 5 6) • (12) • (13) • (13) • (15)