

# Better Late Than Never

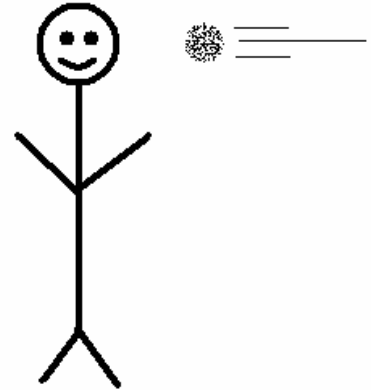
*A tale of life, death and one man's immune system*

*Written, drawn and published by Geoffrey Campey*

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Toronto, Canada, February 2009. Our (still) young(ish) hero, Geoffrey, is enjoying his move to a new continent.

Toronto is cool. I could get to like Canada. And I've managed to avoid a cold so far. It looks like Spring has come so I might be safe.



Little did our hero know, but a phalanx of particularly egregious Canuck Rhinoviruses was headed straight for him.

Come on boys! This suckers only just arrived! Virgin sinuses to infect!

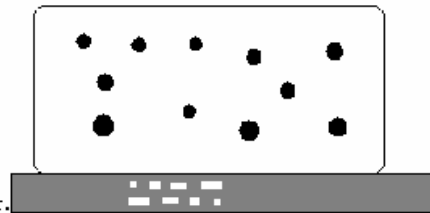


I do love deflowering an Antipodean.



Meanwhile in the secret headquarters of Geoffrey's Immune System

What's this then? Report in from a Helper T Cell in the Frontal Sinus Commander. We've got large numbers of bogeys inbound, indentified as rhinoviruses.



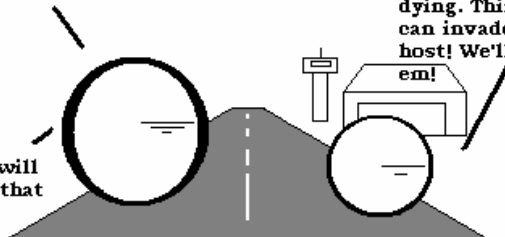
Thank you Lieutenant. Scramble the Killer T Cells in the Sinuses, place the Killer T's in the Pharynx on standby to assist. This shouldn't be an issue.



Aye Aye Commander

At Frontal Sinus Killer T Cell Base (FroSin), Captain Maverick readies his newest recruit for his first engagement.

Come on lad, this is your first run out. Now remember your training, stay with your wingman, pick your targets carefully and don't release your payload until your got a good contact on the target cell.

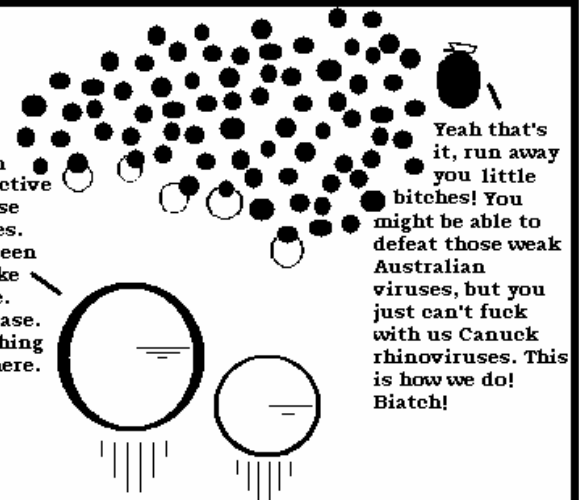


That we will Iceman, that we will.

Yes Sir, Maverick Sir. Gee, I can't wait to see those damn viruses dying. Think they can invade our host! We'll show em!

The Battle of the Sinuses (Toronto) begins.....and ends very quickly.

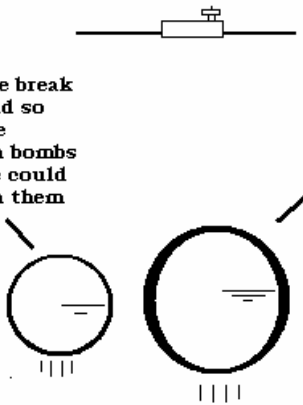
Break off attack! Break off! Our granulysin bombs seem to be ineffective against these rhinoviruses. I've never seen anything like them before. Return to base. There's nothing we can do here.



Yeah that's it, run away you little bitches! You might be able to defeat those weak Australian viruses, but you just can't fuck with us Canuck rhinoviruses. This is how we do! Biatch!

On the return to FroSin, Iceman vents his youthful exuberance.

Why did we break off? We had so many more granulysin bombs to use! We could have taken them out!

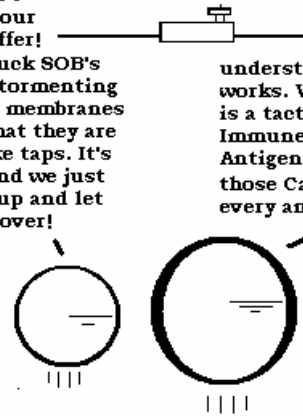


Sorry kid, that's not how it works. Our bombs only work against particular strains of viruses. We haven't seen those Canuck bastards before so our weapons are ineffective against them. It's like those useless sperm down in our hosts' balls. He can shoot unload them in as many filopian tubes as he wants, but they ain't going to do anything.

The War Plan is explained....

But we can't just leave our host to suffer!

Those Canuck SOB's have been tormenting the mucus membranes so much that they are flowing like taps. It's horrible, and we just can't give up and let them take over!



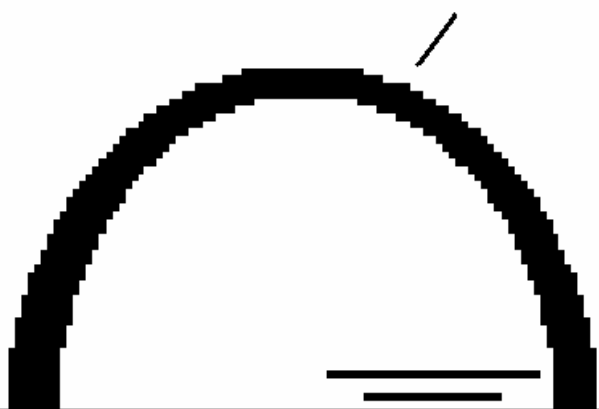
Easy there kid, I like your enthusiasm, but you have to

understand the way this war works. We haven't given up. This is a tactical retreat. Right now Immune Command is holding an Antigen Presentation, examining those Canuck bastards from every angle, looking for their

weakness. And when they find it, they'll give us a new bomb. And then, my son, we'll go back to those Sinuses. And we'll make those bastards pay.

EXTREME CLOSEUP FOR DRAMATIC EFFECT!!

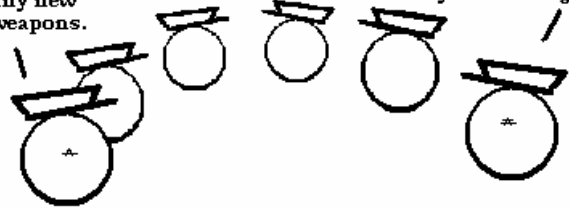
Oh yes, we'll make those bastards pay.



Meanwhile at the Antigen Presentation...

So to conclude. We've never seen anything like these Canuck rhinoviruses before. Our current arsenal of granulysin bombs are ineffective, and given current budget restraints, we can't afford to pay our researchers to develop any new weapons.

WHAT! You've spent your budget already this year? We're only a month into the fourth quarter! Where did all your funds go?



...

We've had increased operational costs and once-only exception payments in the previous fiscal year. I must remind you Commander that I requested an increased operational budget for this year but it was rejected as being 'unnecessary in the current climate.' I can only work with what I'm given.

So what am I supposed to tell our host. 'Sorry, you're going to have to suffer this infection for the next two months because the White Blood Cells decided to have a Team Bonding Exercise in the Femur bone marrow in August?'



Tension rises as Macrophage plays his cards for supplementary funds...

It was the clavical this year actually, and it is a necessary event to ensure that all the cells on my team are focused on core functionality goals, and to allow for some blue-sky thinking to develop going-forward policies to synergise our current state-of-play with industry best practice models.

Oh that's management-speak horse shit!! It's a corporate skin-fest, and you and I both know it.



**A full house for Macrophage!!**

Look, we can't just leave those Canucks to roam freely in the nasal cavity of our host. Put two researchers on the case and I'll find some funds in the budget to cover it.

Two? It will take at least a week, more likely two before any effective response can be developed with only two researchers on it.

**Flawless Victory!**

Don't try me Macrophage! There are millions of replacements for you sitting down in the bone marrow at my command.

You've been making the same threat for years now Commander. I know you couldn't live without me. See that I get those funds by weeks end. I'll get my two best researchers on it right away.

Two weeks, 4 boxes of tissues, \$33.46 worth of assorted cold medications, and countless mucus inspections later.

Hi Geoffrey, you look terrible! Have you still got that cold?

Hi Sarah. And thanks, it's taken a while to perfect the look. And yes, two weeks now and counting. I think my immune system has just given up. They saw these big bad scary Canadian cold viruses and went "Fuck it, looks too much like hard work to deal with that." My T-Cells are a bunch of pussys.'

**Meanwhile at the FroSin Officers Club....**

Did you hear that? Did you hear what our host just called us? I am so ashamed. I didn't go through all that specialisation to become a Killer T just to float around in this damn cell. It's shameful!

Right there with you kiddo!

....

I don't know what those dame White Blood Cells are doing but they are taking their sweet fucking time in doing it. I remember when I first started out as a Killer T, we would have a new weapon in a matter of days. This is fucking embarrassing.

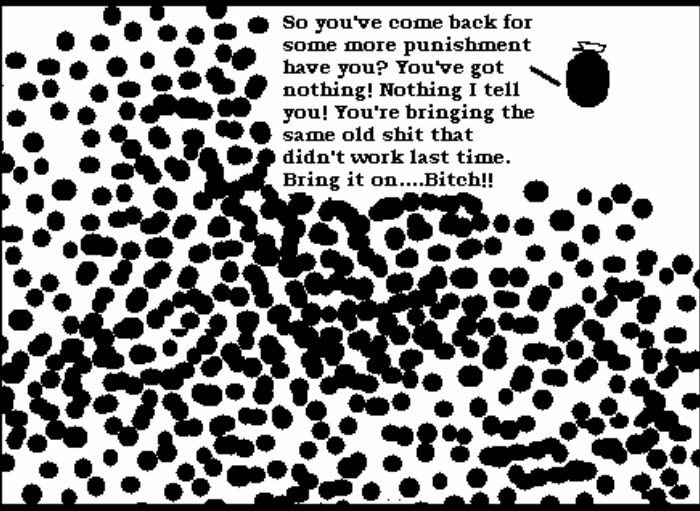
SCRAMBLE!  
SCRAMBLE!

**Macrophage has finally delivered the goods.**

Well it's about bloody time! Now my young wingman, it's time to go and kick some mouthy Cannuck ass.

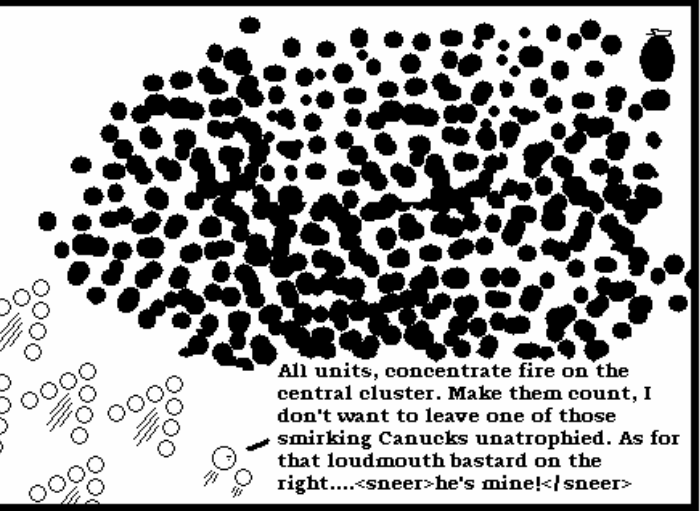
YEAH! But these new bombs better do the trick or I'm going to shove them up those White Blood Cells membranes so hard....

The Battle of the Sinuses (Toronto) II begins in a very different fashion....



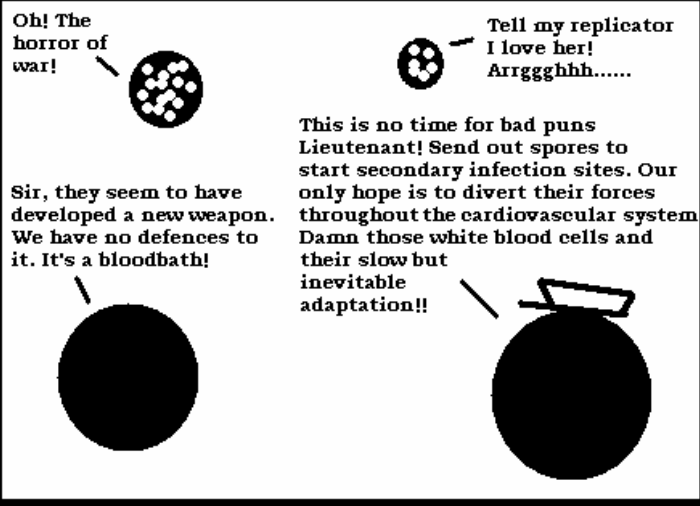
So you've come back for some more punishment have you? You've got nothing! Nothing I tell you! You're bringing the same old shit that didn't work last time. Bring it on....Bitch!!

S-foils locked to attack position



All units, concentrate fire on the central cluster. Make them count, I don't want to leave one of those smirking Canucks unatrophied. As for that loudmouth bastard on the right....<sneer>he's mine!</sneer>

More Trafalgar than Jutland (the deaths portrayed in this cell were badly overacted. The author takes no responsibility for said overacting)



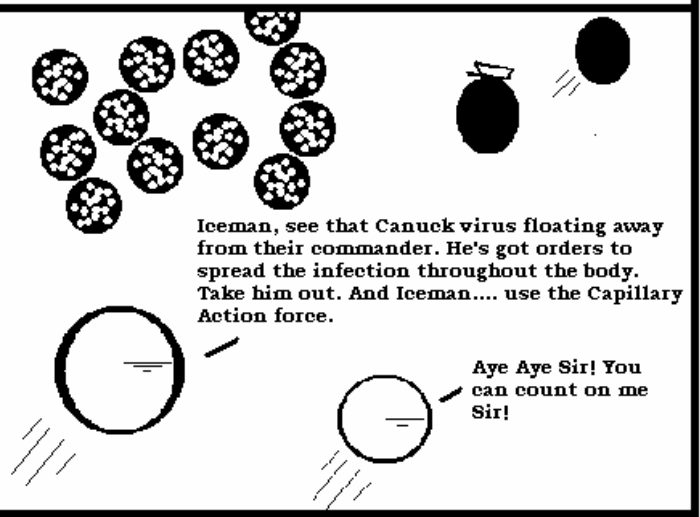
Oh! The horror of war!

Tell my replicator I love her! Arrggghh.....

Sir, they seem to have developed a new weapon. We have no defences to it. It's a bloodbath!

This is no time for bad puns Lieutenant! Send out spores to start secondary infection sites. Our only hope is to divert their forces throughout the cardiovascular system. Damn those white blood cells and their slow but inevitable adaptation!!

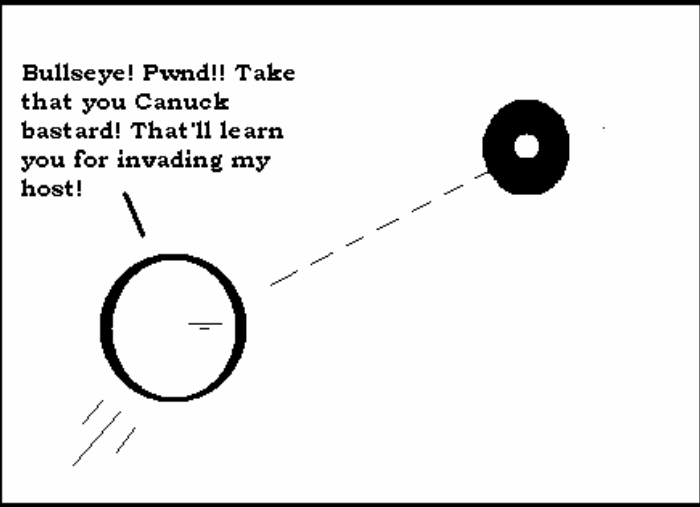
The final showdown looms....



Iceman, see that Canuck virus floating away from their commander. He's got orders to spread the infection throughout the body. Take him out. And Iceman.... use the Capillary Action force.

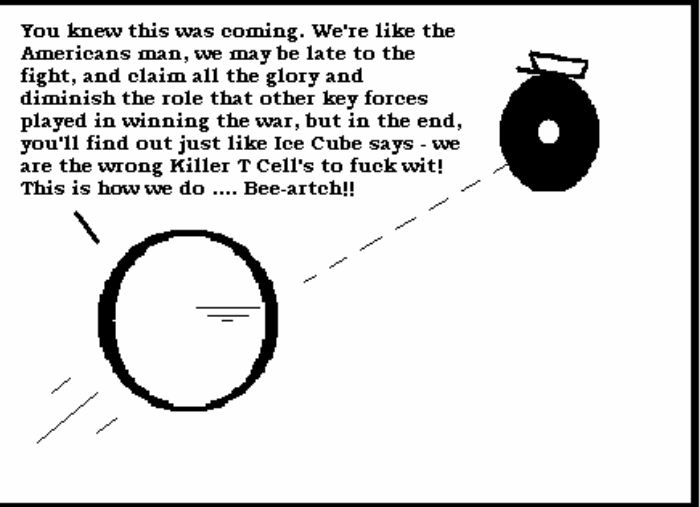
Aye Aye Sir! You can count on me Sir!

Iceman gets his first confirmed kill.



Bullseye! Pwnd!! Take that you Canuck bastard! That'll learn you for invading my host!

And the Forces of Evil are defeated by the Forces of Good once again (complete with self-righteous soliloquy)



You knew this was coming. We're like the Americans man, we may be late to the fight, and claim all the glory and diminish the role that other key forces played in winning the war, but in the end, you'll find out just like Ice Cube says - we are the wrong Killer T Cell's to fuck wit! This is how we do .... Bee-arteh!!

But we realise that in all creatures there is a shred of humanity  
(see disclaimer in Cell 20 regarding acting of death scenes).

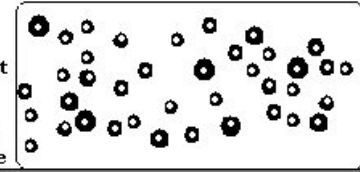
Alas, I have wagered all and lost. But know this!  
Tis better to have infected a sinus and lost,  
than to have never infected a sinus at all.



Ergh. <final death shudder>

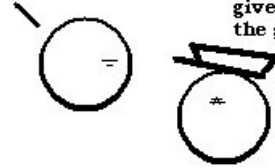
Back at Immune System Command

Reports coming in from the front Sir. The new granulysin bombs appear to be effective Sir. Reports of 98%



casualty rate on the part of the Canucks. A few have escaped into the cardiovascular system, but Killer T units are tracking them. A total victory is ours Sir!

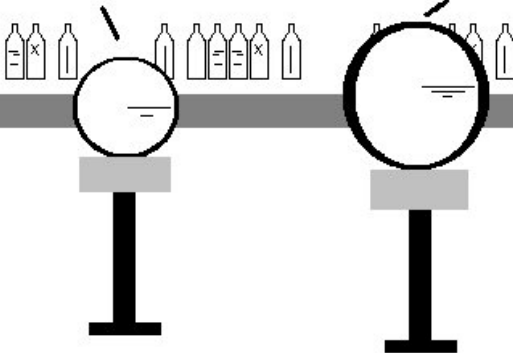
Macrophage delivered again. That cell frustrates the crap out of me, but you've gotta give it to him, he delivers the goods, time and again. He will be insufferable at the next Immune Command meeting.



Victory tastes good, particularly when washed down with a TOJL (Tequila, Orange Juice and Lemonade)

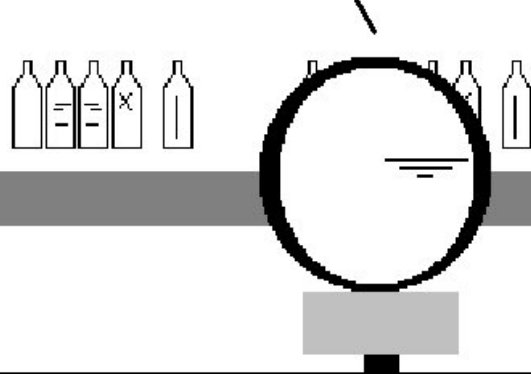
...and I was like, 'Peew! Peew! Peew!' and he was like 'Golly gee, what a fine shot sir. I believe that you have done me in.' and I was like ...

You did a good job today lad, a nice clean shot. But this is only the first of many battles you will face.



*Stage Directions: Maverick close-up, look-to-camera for poignant close*

There are countless pathogens around lad. It's a dangerous world out there, and in here. I hate to admit it, but that Canuck had it right - better to have lived and died trying, than to have never really lived at all.



*Cue sweeping orchestral movement*

Ende

To Sarah  
the sweetest muse

With thanks to XKCD  
who proved that nerds can be funny

[www.xkcd.com](http://www.xkcd.com)