



World Organisation
for Animal Health

SKETCHING CHANGE

TALES FROM VETERINARIANS ACROSS ASIA-PACIFIC



ZOOEYIA

Pawsitive effect of Human - Animal Bonding



Scan the QR code to access the comic stories in this publication in digital format, and to read several others.

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ABOUT THIS VOLUME

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) is committed to strengthening gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) within the veterinary sector. Our recent work in Asia and the Pacific has shown that, while there is a growing number of qualified women and diverse professionals in the sector, many still face barriers shaped by longstanding norms, insufficient adjustments and unequal opportunities.

As noted in regional studies conducted by WOAH in Asia-Pacific, gender stereotypes influence perceptions within the veterinary sector, and the absence of reasonable accommodations reinforces the exclusion of persons with disabilities. These findings highlight the need for continued awareness and action across institutions, training systems, and professional communities.

To foster this change, WOAH has expanded its GEDSI initiatives, including awareness raising events and partnerships with veterinary associations and networks in Asia and the Pacific region, in particular the Federation of Asian Veterinary Associations (FAVA), the Asian Association of Veterinary Schools (AAVS) and the International Veterinary Students' Association (IVSA). The Comics Competition Promoting GEDSI in the Veterinary Sector, organised between December 2025 and January 2026, invited veterinary students and professionals to reflect creatively on what an inclusive profession looks like.

The competition aimed to celebrate storytelling, artistic talent, veterinary commitment and GEDSI values, and to inspire dialogue through accessible and engaging narratives. Among the winning submissions, the comic presented here captures the imagination, concerns, and aspirations of veterinarians in different parts of the Asia and the Pacific region. The story reminds us that inclusion is not only a policy goal—it is a shared cultural commitment that strengthens the profession and the communities it serves. While we could not award all participants with prizes, we appreciated all entries and will be sharing additional comic stories of note on our website (see QR code on the cover inner page).

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the winners of this competition, and thank all participants for adding their voices to this important conversation. This comic enriches WOAH's ongoing efforts to promote a veterinary sector where everyone can thrive, advancing our mission to improve animal health and welfare globally and ensure a better future for all.



Dr Tomoko Ishibashi
WOAH Regional
Representative for Asia and
the Pacific



Dr Naree Ketusing
WOAH Sub-Regional
Representative for South-East Asia

ACT I: THE BLIND SPOT

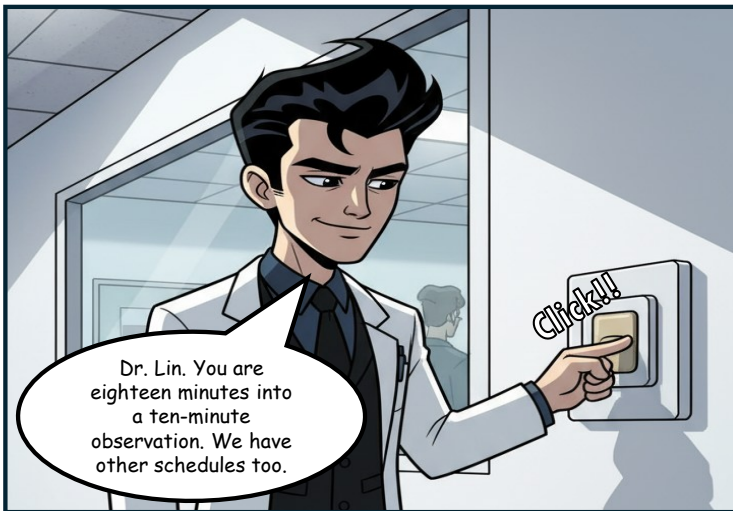
The False Metric



Walk fast, write faster. The symptoms aren't going to wait for you to find your pens.

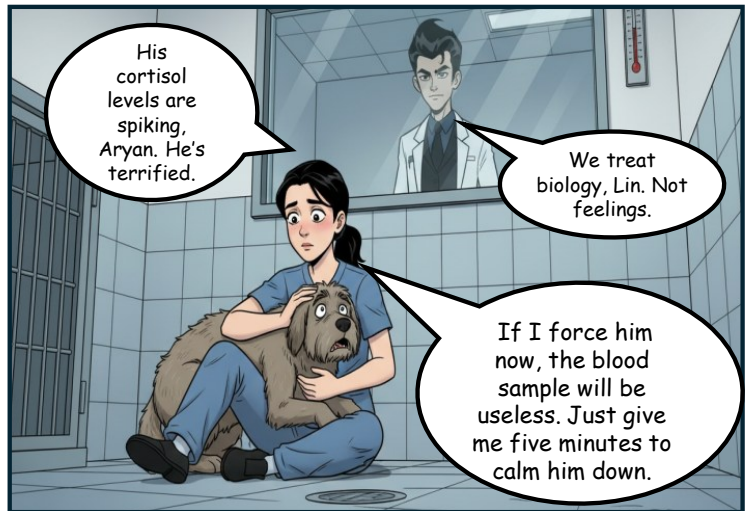
S-sorry, doctor!!

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine,
University of India, 2002



Dr. Lin. You are eighteen minutes into a ten-minute observation. We have other schedules too.

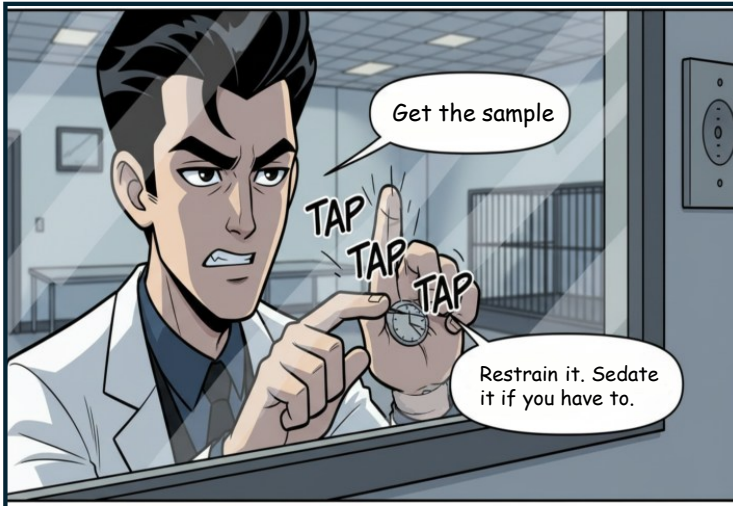
Click!!



His cortisol levels are spiking, Aryan. He's terrified.

We treat biology, Lin. Not feelings.

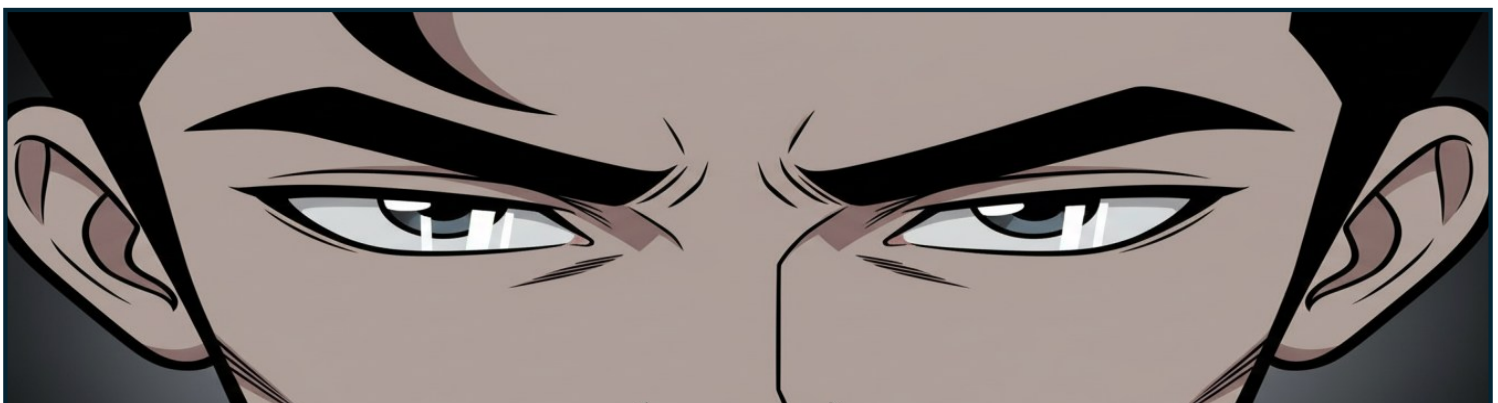
If I force him now, the blood sample will be useless. Just give me five minutes to calm him down.



Get the sample

TAP
TAP
TAP

Restrain it. Sedate it if you have to.



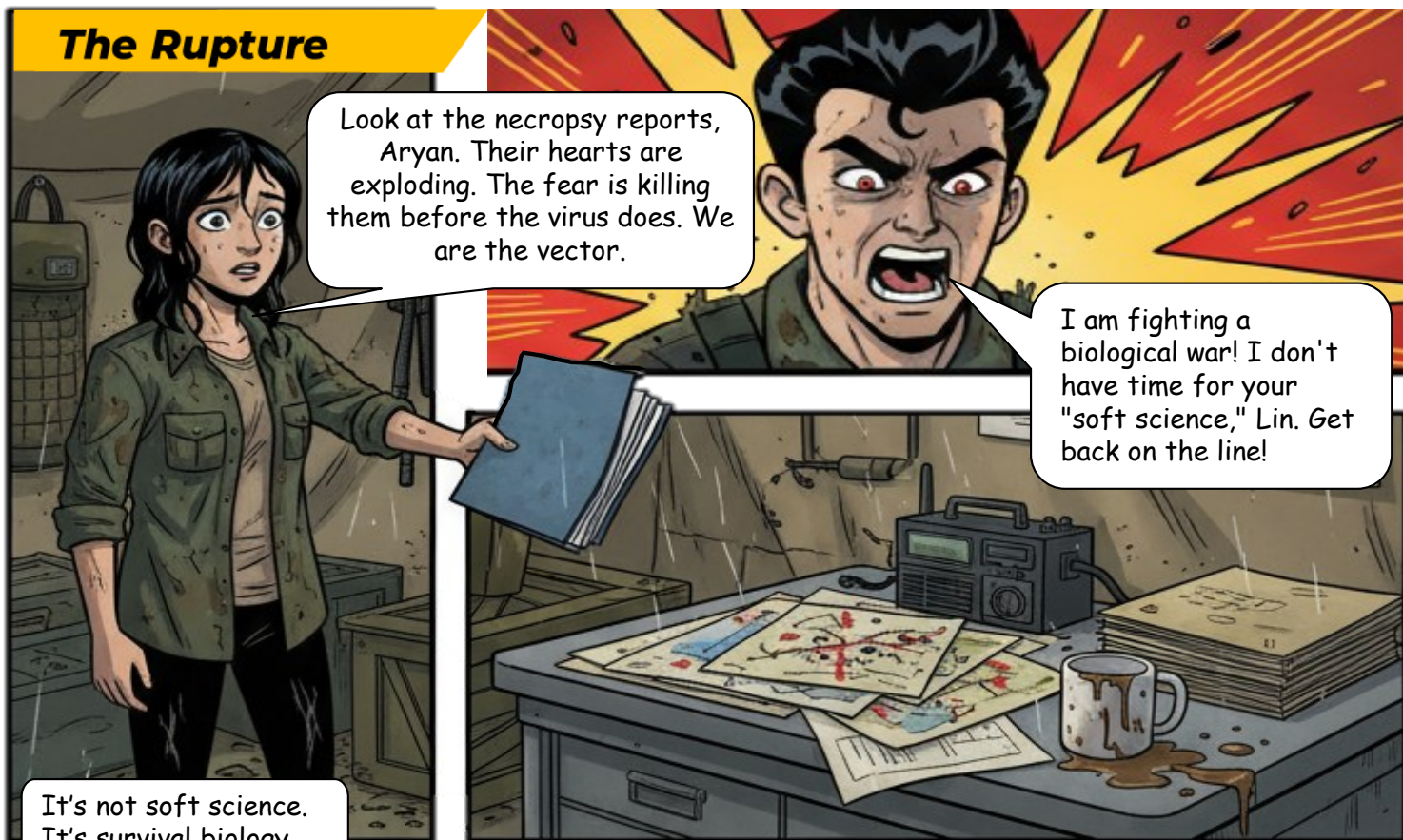
(Dr. Aryan) Emotion is just friction and friction slows us down.

The Super-Spreader

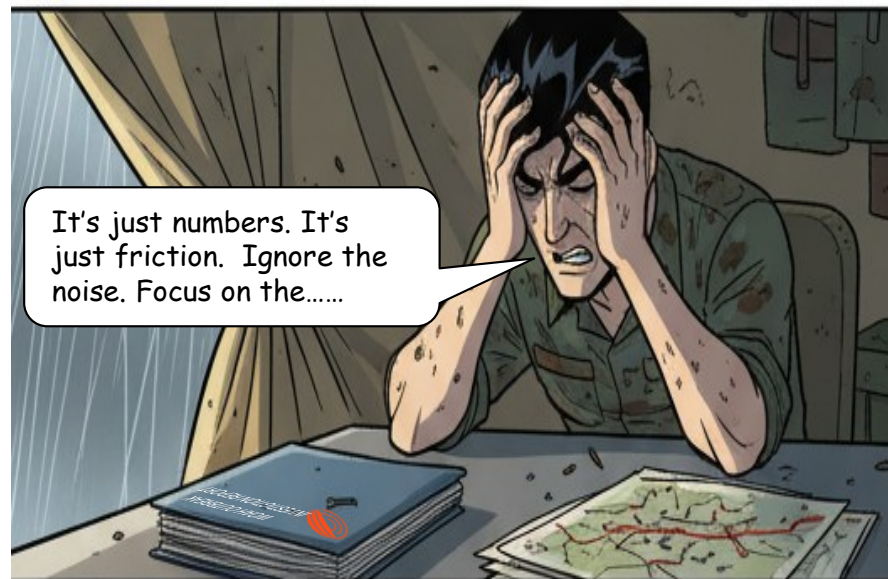
Somewhere in North-east India
Pig disease outbreak - 2007



The Rupture



It's not soft science. It's survival biology.



ACT II: THE SILENCE

The White Noise



Dr. Aryan was injured due to the high blast in the tent and became unconscious.



(Dr. Aryan) No!!! The world was screaming. But I couldn't hear a thing.

The Outlier



(Dr. Aryan): Days later. The ringing finally stopped. Now, there was only the silence. A thick, suffocating blanket.



(Dr. Aryan): Is it worth reading?



(Dr. Aryan): Outside, the dying continued. My protocols were failing. And I was useless. A commander who couldn't hear the battlefield. But on the other side of camp, something stopped my eyes.



(Dr. Aryan): I saw an anomaly. The only living thing that made sense. These pigs look normal. How?

The Invisible Variable



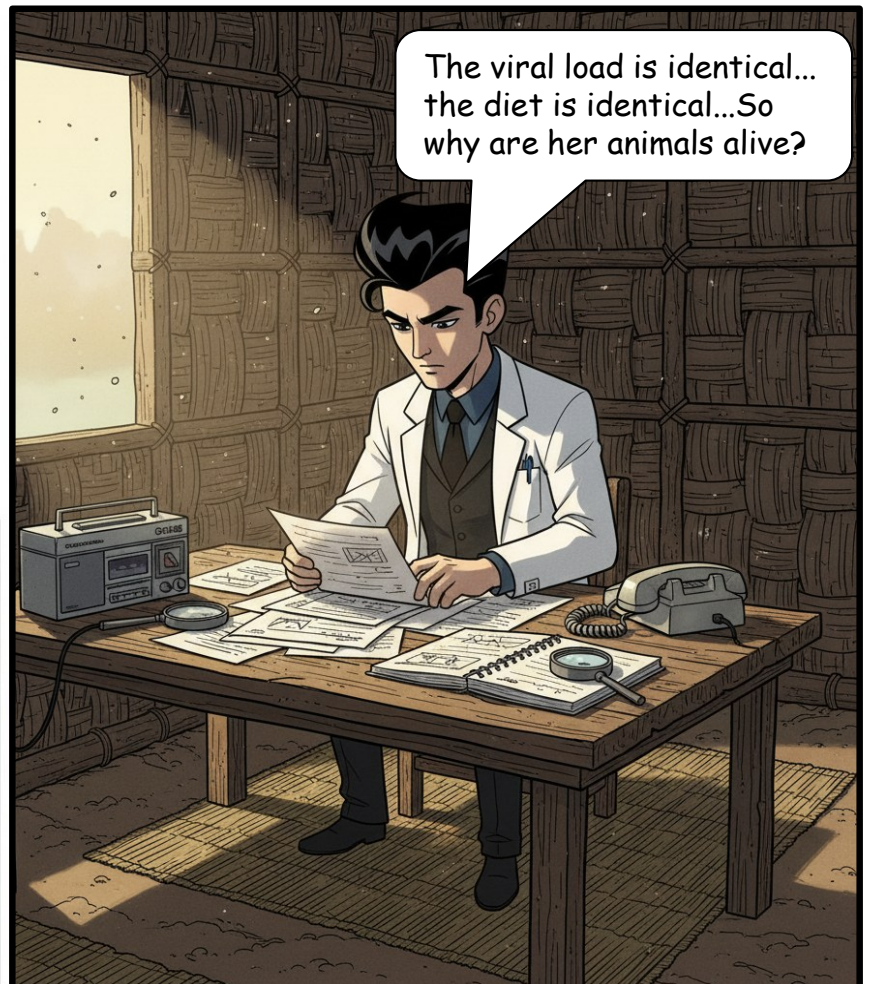
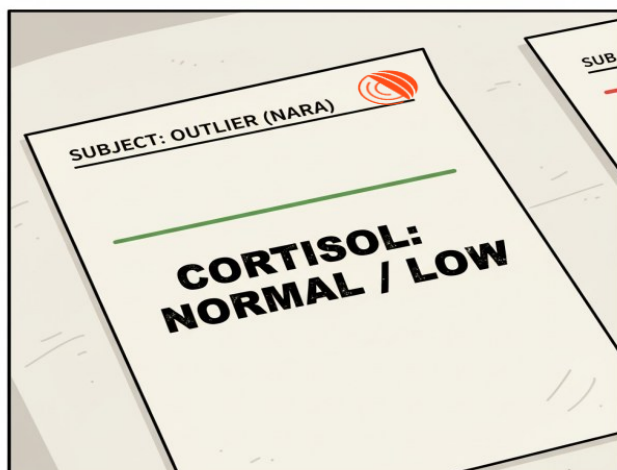
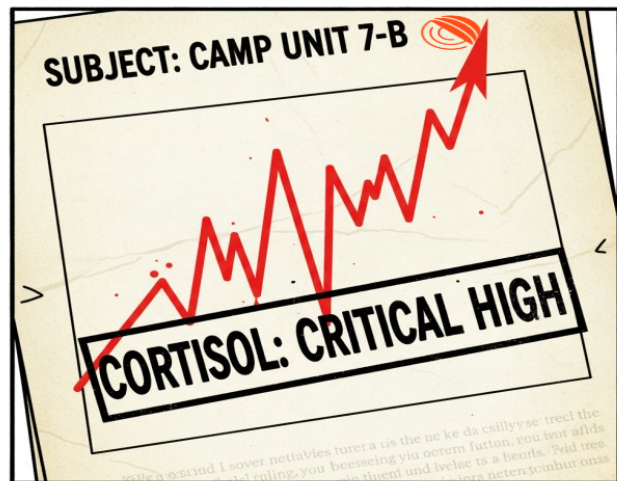
(Dr. Aryan): I watched them for three days. Group A: The Standard Protocol. Sterile. Efficient and completely failing.



(Dr. Aryan): Group B: The Outlier. No fences. No bleach. No fear.



(Dr. Aryan): In the camp, we treated them like biological hazards. We created a panic loop.



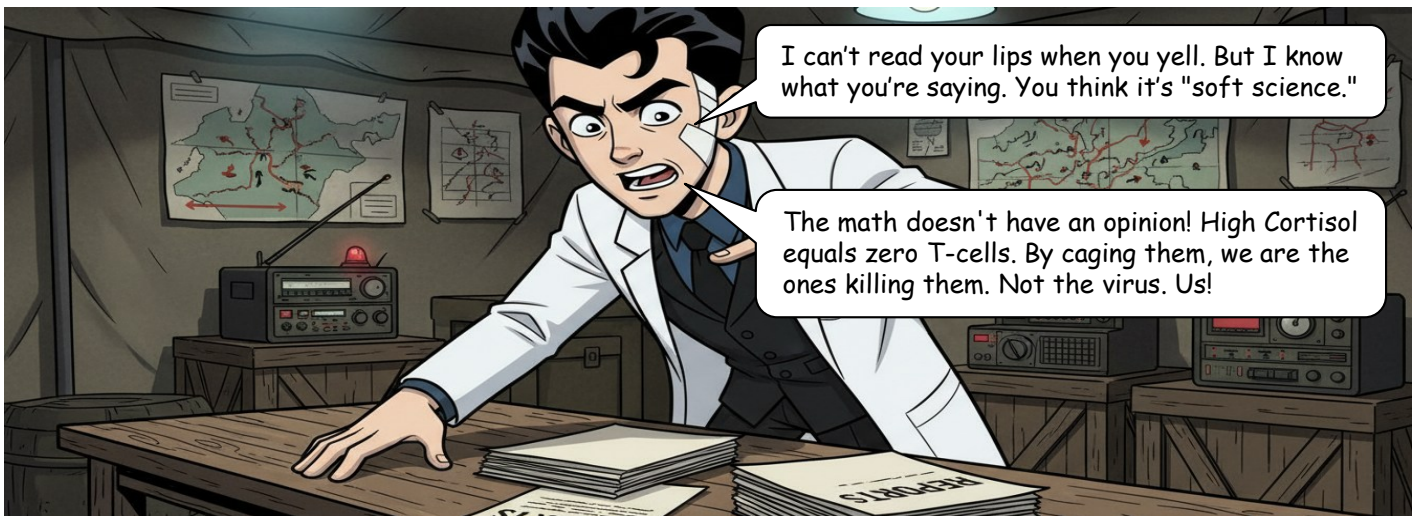
ACT III: THE VISION

Hindsight



Don't bother shouting, Commander. My eardrums are gone. Just look at the paper. The animals in the cages are dying because the fear is killing their immune systems.

.....!

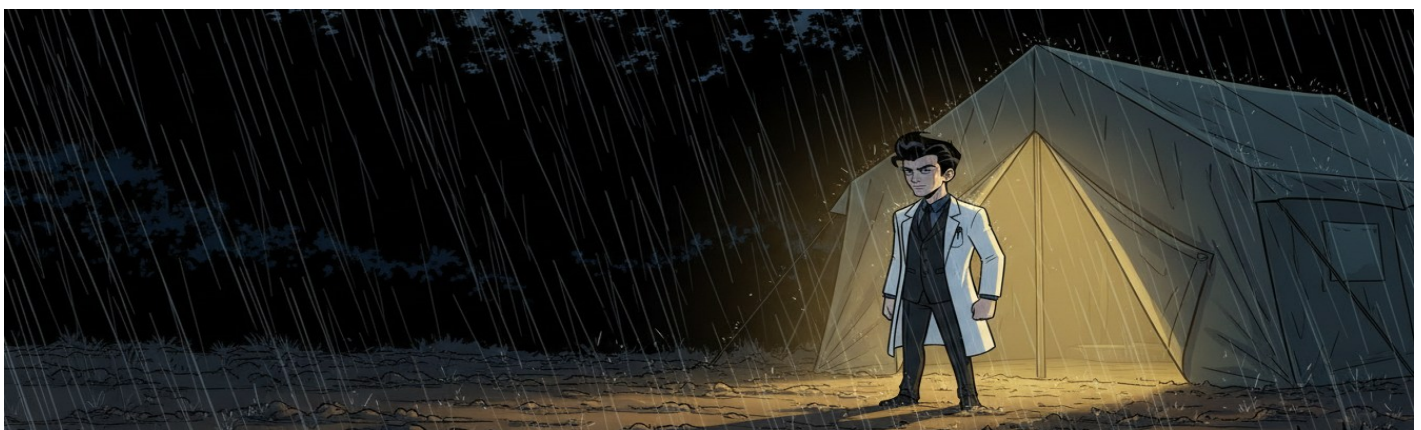


I can't read your lips when you yell. But I know what you're saying. You think it's "soft science."

The math doesn't have an opinion! High Cortisol equals zero T-cells. By caging them, we are the ones killing them. Not the virus. Us!



(Dr. Aryan) : By looking the body language of commander , I am sure that she will not believe me, but I will prove it.

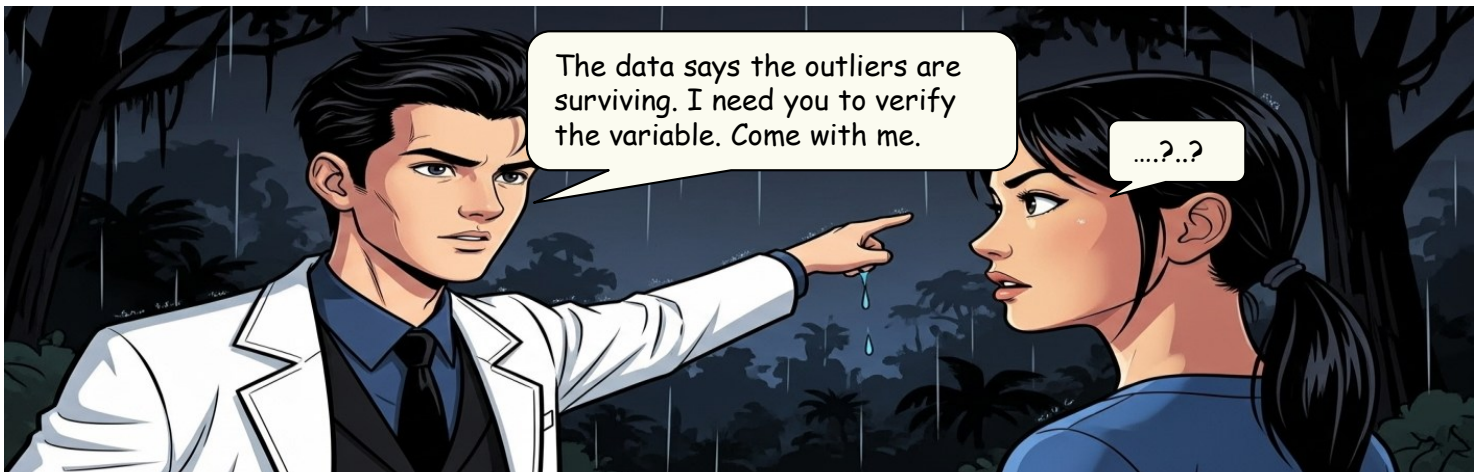


(Dr. Aryan) : She thinks the fence is safety. But the data says the fence is a coffin. I have to talk with Lin.

The Root Cause



I can't hear you, Lin. So just listen. You said the containment was failing. You were right. I apologize that I didn't trust on you.



The data says the outliers are surviving. I need you to verify the variable. Come with me.

....?..?

(Dr. Aryan) : That day I refused to understand her theory, and today I'm trying to prove it, but without her help, I can't tell chief officer.



DR. LIN (Whispering/Muffled): What is she doing?
(DR. ARYAN): Watch the feeding protocol.



That's not ration feed. It's *Justicia adhatoda*... but a sub-species I've never seen.



Ohh, Its just plant, we used it for cough and cold. Do you need this? I know where this plant grows.



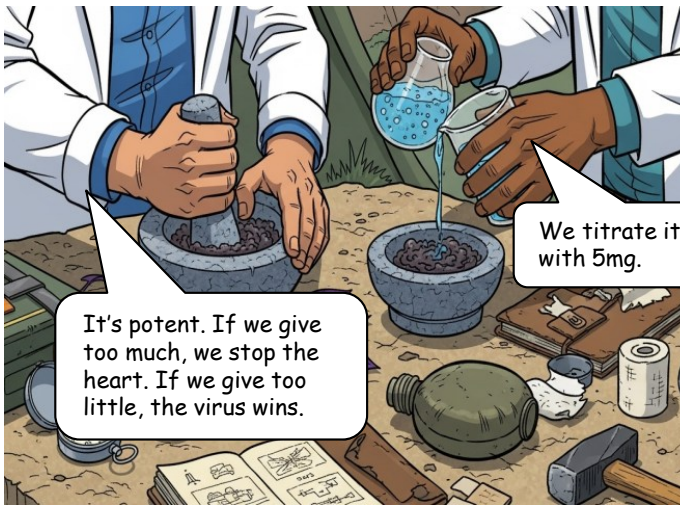
It wasn't magic. And it wasn't just "calm." It was a cure we were too arrogant to see. It is our 16th day here, but we never talk with them once. It's our fault.

(Dr. Aryan) : Today, I have so many thing to talk with her, but unfortunately I cant hear a single word from her.

The Nora Protocol



(Dr. Aryan) : We stopped acting like soldiers. We started acting like students. We found that plant with help of Nora



We titrate it. Start with 5mg.

It's potent. If we give too much, we stop the heart. If we give too little, the virus wins.



Nara, keep him steady.

(DR. LIN): Heart rate stabilizing. O2 saturation is climbing. Aryan! It's working!



(DR. LIN): Just Because of you! We saved them and just because you, I just got chance to say my words. Thanks Nora...

(DR. Aryan): We can't save them all. But we can save the ones that matter.



ACT IV: THE VOICE

Herd immunity



(Dr. Aryan): It wasn't a miracle cure. It was just biology. We lowered the stress. We boosted the immunity. We let the body fight.



I'm not putting this in the official report, Doctor. As far as HQ is concerned, the containment protocol worked.

Of course, Commander. We wouldn't want to confuse them with the truth. Someday they will know that bonding between animal and human have their positive effect too. Sometimes we have to go outside the textbook to read life book.



(Dr. Aryan) The plant was the catalyst. But she was the active ingredient.

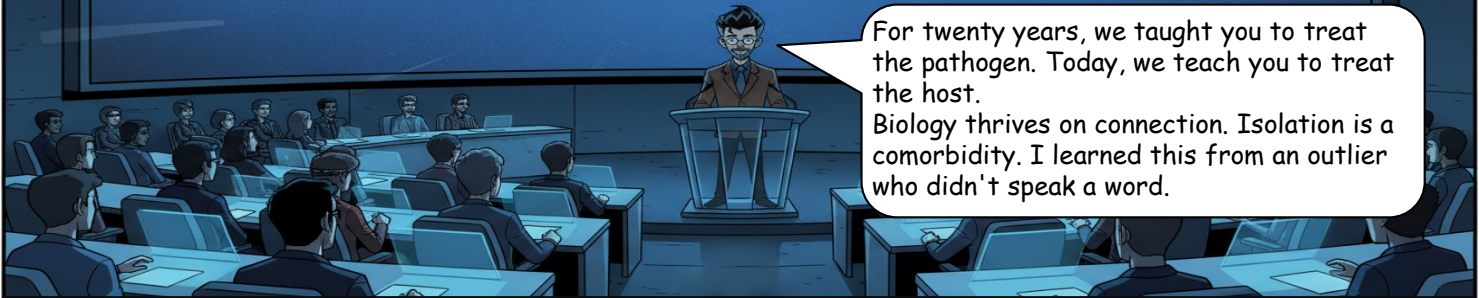


(Dr. Aryan): I couldn't hear her voice. But for the first time in four days... the silence didn't feel empty.



(Dr. Aryan): I went there to fix a rupture. I left with a whole new language. I understand that nature have its own way of healing. It's time to say goodbye to my old thought and its time to begin new life with new bonds.

ZOOEYIA



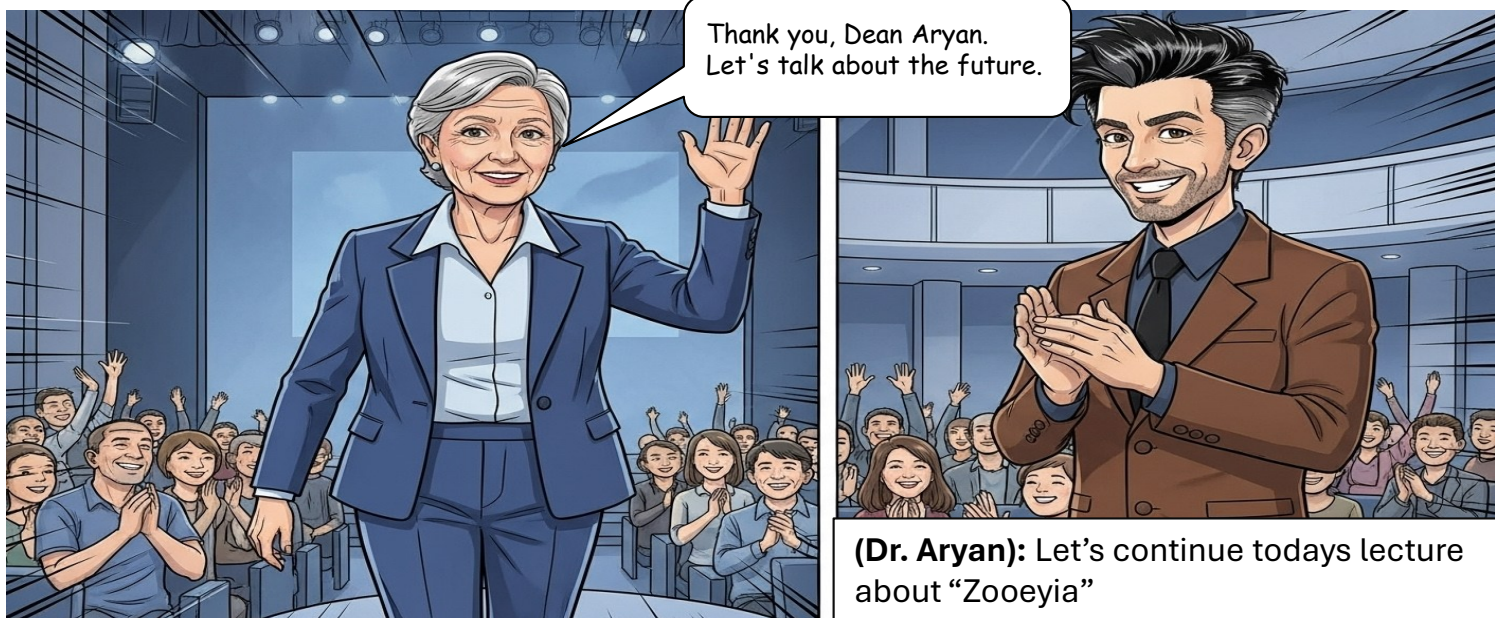
For twenty years, we taught you to treat the pathogen. Today, we teach you to treat the host. Biology thrives on connection. Isolation is a comorbidity. I learned this from an outlier who didn't speak a word.

(Dr. Aryan): Silence isn't empty. It's just a frequency you haven't tuned into yet.



She taught me that safety is a biological signal....and she wasn't alone.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Surgeon General... Dr. Lin.



Thank you, Dean Aryan. Let's talk about the future.

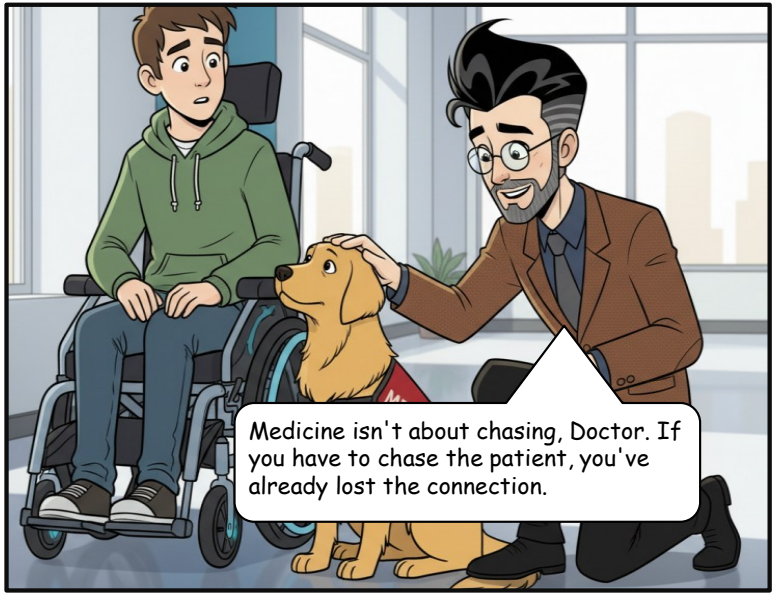
(Dr. Aryan): Let's continue today's lecture about "Zooeyia"

Symbiosis

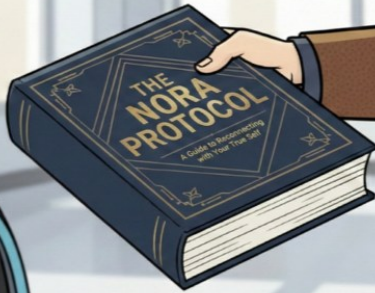
Dean Sir? I... I'm worried about the field placement. The Board says I can't "chase" the herd.



Medicine isn't about chasing, Doctor. If you have to chase the patient, you've already lost the connection.



Read Chapter One. It's about how stillness is the loudest signal in the room.



Trust your dog. He knows the science better than we do.



Zoonosis is the disease we share
Zooeyia is the cure we share



THE END

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jayesh Ramani

Dr Jayesh Ramani is a Master of Veterinary Science (MVSc) Scholar at the Centre for One Health, Guru Angad Dev Veterinary & Animal Sciences University, India. He is working in the area of Epidemiology and Veterinary Public Health. He is academically focused, with a solid foundation in research and analytical thinking. Dr Ramani combines scholarly discipline with creativity to communicate ideas clearly and effectively, aiming for meaningful outcomes in both academic and creative work. He believes that creativity & curiosity are the true essence of life.

Comic description

Zooeyia: The Pawsitive Effect of Human-Animal Bonding is a life-changing medical drama that promotes Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) in the veterinary field. The story follows Dr Aryan, who begins his career as a rigid epidemiologist in 2007, sent to cure a herd during a zoonotic outbreak in a remote jungle, when a traumatic accident leaves him deaf and isolated.

Forced into a world of silence, he learns to value the "soft science" he once dismissed, finding redemption by validating the previously ignored insights of his female colleague, Dr Lin, and the indigenous wisdom of a local girl, Nora. The story highlights the synergy between traditional wisdom, modern science, and gender equality.


By integrating traditional plant knowledge with modern medicine and showcasing that physical limitations from deafness to mobility challenges are not barriers to excellence, the narrative proves that true healing requires diversity, teaching us the true essence of the human-animal relationship.


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