

Acupuncture ... so it goes

by Jason_Love

Acupuncture has never called me, at least no more than acuripping, aculeeching, or acu-kicking-you-in-the-groin. Besides, if acupuncture worked so well, how come porcupines get sick?

But my headaches were that bad, and Dr. Lynn, my dealer, didn't know why.

"We can't figure out what's happening, Jason, so we're just going to rub some more insurance money on it and see what happens."

Dr. Lynn may have been sharp in his prime, but now you get the feeling that when he laughs too hard, he pees his pants just a little. Sure, he pokes around in your ear like other doctors, but does he remember what he's looking for or is he just keeping up appearances?

Lynn wouldn't refer me to a specialist until he had "explored all the options," by which he meant he billed for the maximum number of office visits. Finally, mercifully, he sent me to acupuncturist Cho Han-seung, who, bless his heart, did not mind my calling him Han Solo.

Cho is a gentle man who may or may not touch the ground when he walks. He drifts to the sound of wind chimes, quick but no hurry.

Unfortunately, we faced a communication barrier: Cho is a hundred percent Korean, and Iâ€™m fifty percent moron.

He waved at me to sit.

â€œI need check your purse,â€• he said.

â€œIâ€™m sorry?â€•

â€œYour purse. I need check purse.â€•

Cho placed two fingers on my pulse, so I tossed my purse back down. We rolled over to the computer, where Cho snapped a photo of my eye. He measured my eyeball defects against a chart on the wall, making

ah-so noises as he went. This is called "iridology," a science dating back to about the same time as schizophrenia.

"You have problem with stomach?" he asked.

"No."

"How 'bout lungs? Trouble breathing?"

"No, I have migraines."

Cho smiled warmly. He had no idea what I meant.

And with that we floated to a room that smelled like the inside of a health pill. Cho laid me down and asked me to stare at a bulls-eye on the ceiling. He had a good explanation for this; I just didn't understand it.

Cho assured me that his needles were

OUCH!

Cho smiled warmly and pricked me again.

Acupuncture functions on the principle of distraction: A headache will always go away when someone is JABBING YOU WITH NEEDLES.

"Relax," said Cho, humming in Korean. "First needle worst."

Cho got to pecking pretty quickly at the language, and from what I could tell, my headaches would either disappear altogether or I would die in three weeks.

Wait â€¦ No â€¦ He wanted me to visit three times a week, which is roughly more often than I report to work. So it goes.

When Cho finished, there were spikes in my eyebrows, between my toes, and in places that I wouldnâ€™t dare look. But he was rightâ€”after that initial sting, it wasnâ€™t too bad. Staring at the big red dot in the sky, I nodded off for the most expensive nap in town.

Over the next week I started to feelâ€”and excuse the medical parlanceâ€”funkadelic. My dreams were so intense that when I woke up, it took me a minute to recall my gender. I also got mushy over music and called friends that I hadnâ€™t seen since Purple Rain.

But ultimately I couldnâ€™t maintain the schedule. Itâ€™s not that I overlook the value of Choâ€™s work; itâ€™s just that he was seriously cutting into my sittinâ€™-around time.

I just hope that Cho understands. God knows what that man could do with a voodoo doll.

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