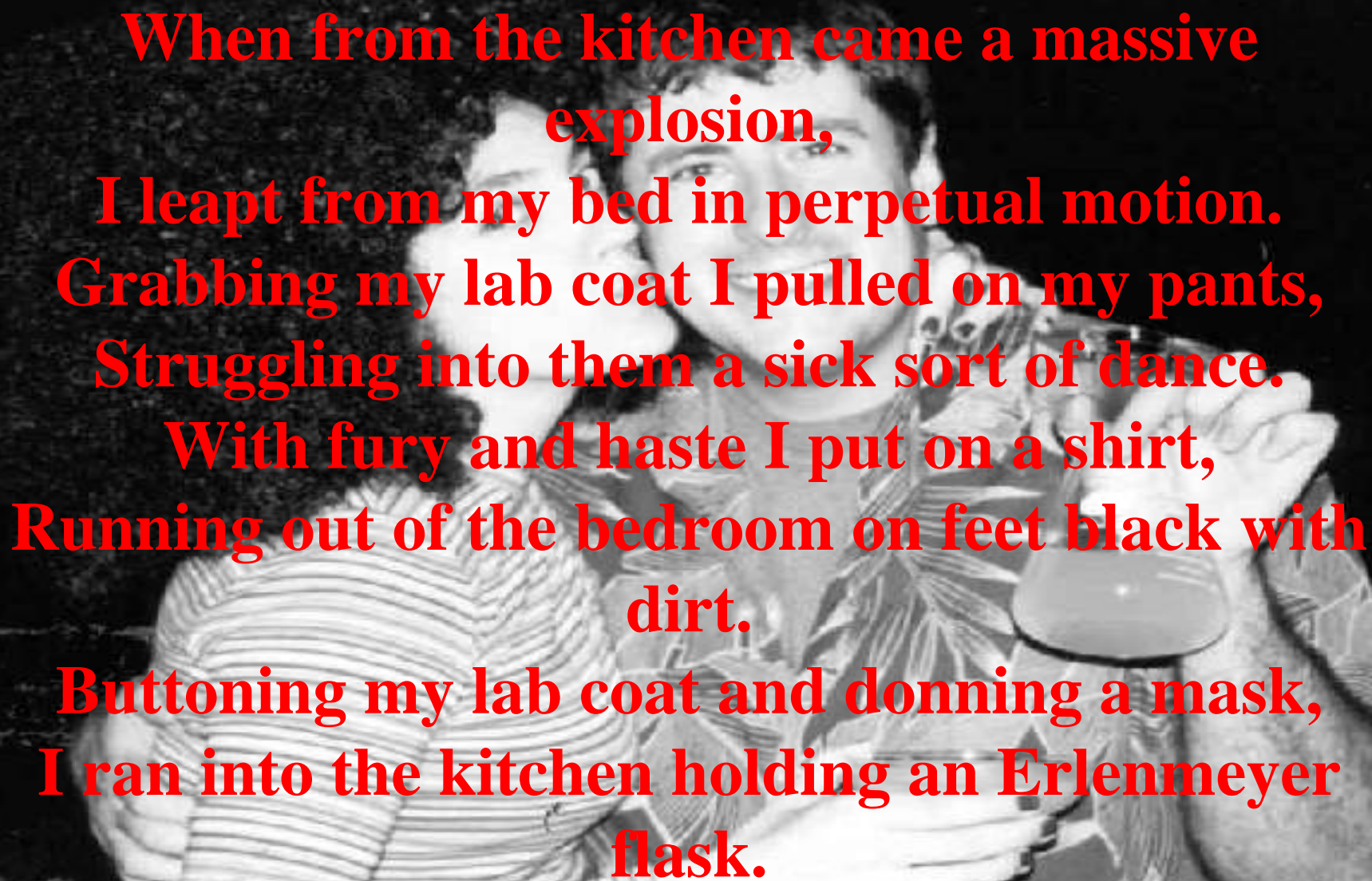


From: Dobbins, Dr. Joanne

A Mad Scientist Christmas

Twas the night before Christmas and all thru my house,
Not a specimen was stirring, not even a louse.
The test tubes were capped and the rat cages closed,
The mold cultures fuzzy, the mice in repose.
The oven kept warm the ebola and pox,
I still need to locate my husband's clean socks...
But that has to wait till tomorrow, I know;
My buggies still need that much more time to grow.



**When from the kitchen came a massive
explosion,
I leapt from my bed in perpetual motion.
Grabbing my lab coat I pulled on my pants,
Struggling into them a sick sort of dance.
With fury and haste I put on a shirt,
Running out of the bedroom on feet black with
dirt.
Buttoning my lab coat and donning a mask,
I ran into the kitchen holding an Erlenmeyer
flask.**

Through the mike from his suit he said
without pause,
"Ho Ho Ho, Merry Christmas, I'm Hanta
Claus!"

Over his shoulder he hefted the sack,
We walked into the living room, I offered
a snack.

He took it and smiled, placed the sack by
my bench,
Instantly I noticed the Clostridium stench.

A black and white electron micrograph showing various cellular structures, including numerous circular organelles (possibly mitochondria or vesicles) and elongated, thread-like structures (possibly cilia or flagella). The background is a complex, granular texture.

**Brimming with joy, I cried out with glee,
"Did you bring all of these germies for
me?"**

**"Oh yes," said Hanta, "I must show
propriety;
By bringing you microbes, I'm saving
society.**

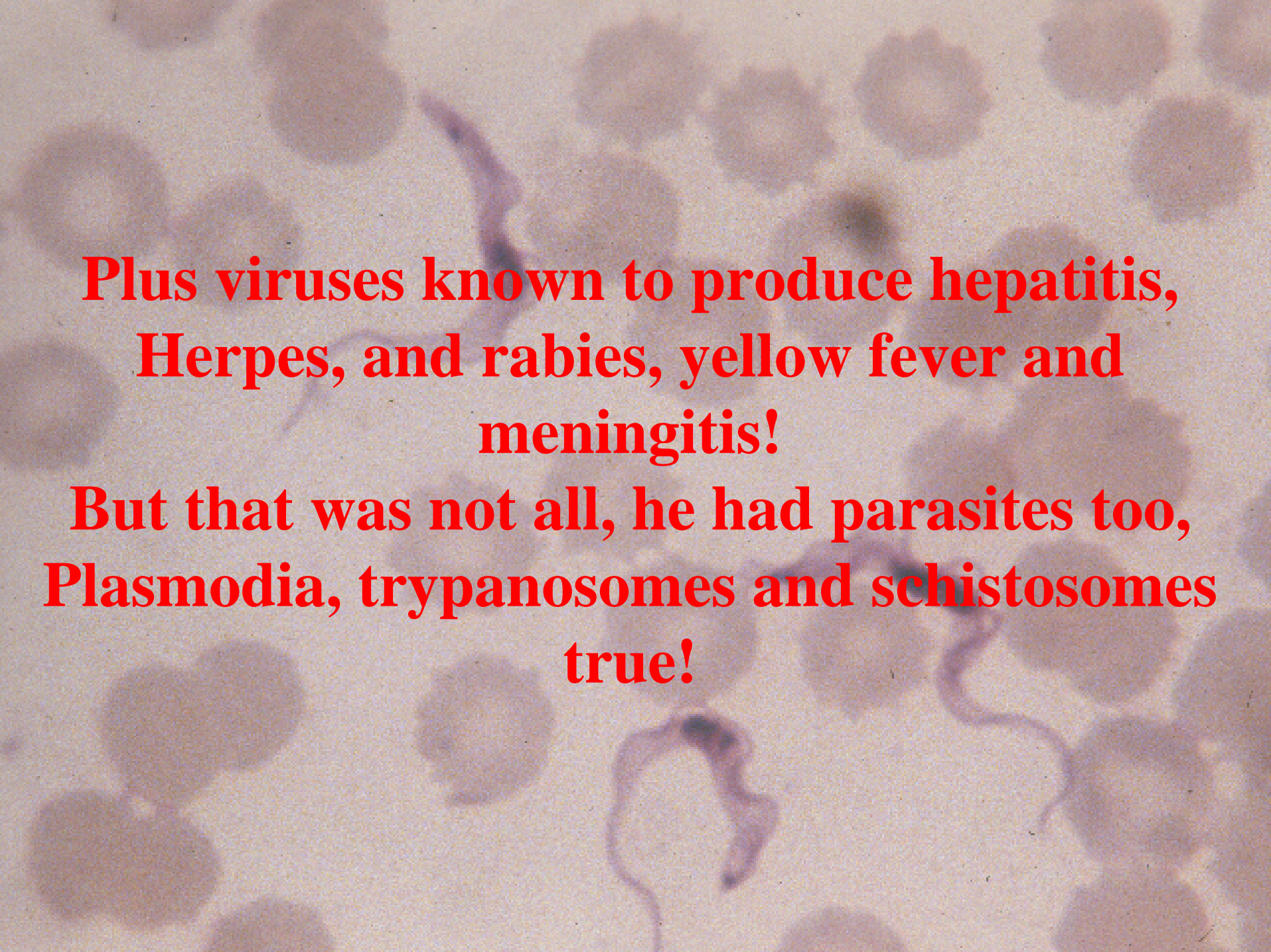
**"You are the only one who loves these
diseases.**

**Therefore I'm glad to oblige who it
pleases."**

**Delirious with excitement I sat by his
side**

**While he gave me a year's stock of
microscope slides,
And Pasteur pipettes, drug resistant
bacteria,
Such as staph, strep and cultures
from the genus Neisseria.**

**The gleam in my eyes caused the
house to be lit,
The moment he gave me a Gram-
staining kit,
Clostridium tetani, perfringens and
sporogenes,
Salmonella typhi and Streptococcus
pyogenes!**



**Plus viruses known to produce hepatitis,
Herpes, and rabies, yellow fever and
meningitis!**

**But that was not all, he had parasites too,
Plasmodia, trypanosomes and schistosomes
true!**



**Tapeworms and roundworms, plague-
carrying fleas.**

**How sincerely generous, Hanta did
aim to please!**



At long last he said he must now go away,
His sled was experiencing radioactive
decay.

"Thanks for the presents," I said, shaking
his hand,

"They'll keep me off the streets, you
understand."

Hanta Claus smiled and bid me goodnight,
Shouting "Merry Christmas to all, and to
all a good blight!"