

When a feminist platelet went to the convention of prostaglandins and thromboxanes

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Dear Sisters... and Comrades,
thank you for inviting me.
Let's start — as every good platelet does — from the marrow.
In the beginning, there were only our ancestors,
giant dinosaurs of the bloodstream called *megakaryocytes*.
They never even saw us — or pretended not to.
They called us “microscope dirt.” “Dust.” “Smudges.”
No one had written the song *The Giant and the Girl* yet,
but one slightly eccentric professor — well, *Bizzozero* —
a utopian socialist and friend of the author of the book *Cuore* —
realized that everyone had only seen the giant, the white blood cell,
and missed the tiny girl beside him, one of us.
She was too small a platelet to be noticed
But it took a crowd of us to be appreciated.
And when we finally were — oh, we were thrilled!
We mocked the white cell:
so white he could've starred in a detergent ad.
And the red cell?
We called him *the little biscuit* — perfect with coffee for tiramisù.
When we marched together, we used to chant:
“United yes, but without ADP!
No whole blood, only PRP!
Platelets together, washed and free!
Plaquettes unidas jamás serán vencidas!”
At Christmas we'd sing:
Descend from the marrow, lovely platelets, like little lambs...
A Neapolitan jester¹ even wrote us a Latin hymn:
Adeste plaquettæ, laetæ agregantes, venite, venite ad vascula!
Spolium videte vasum endotelio!
Venite agreghemus, venite rilisemus, venite adheremus ad vascula!
It sounded better after a glass of wine.
But then, sisters, came the awakening.
The birth of the Feminist Platelet Movement.
Because, you see, when they talked about us,
they only described... our *shapes*.
Oval form, shape change, spiny sphere,
first curve, second curve, reversible curve!
As if we were in some molecular beauty pageant!
And always — *always* — in relation to a male.
The *Endothelium*.
That creep was everywhere.
Always watching us flow by, always lurking, that voyeur,

pretending to be smooth and innocent — until one day, he stripped.
And some of us — alas — fell for the *naked endothelium*.
I know. Don't judge.
And he mocked us too. He bragged that he had something special
He said, “I've got a *nucleus*.”
We didn't.
But honestly? We didn't care.
Then one day he met another male —
a shady chemical type — *Acid*.
“Oh, I'm a salicylate,” he bragged.
Full of himself, like a cologne ad.
Women used to put him in tomato sauce to preserve it!
That's how macho he was.
He had an *acetyl group* —
“Look at me! I'm *acetylated!*” —
while Endothelium waved his *nucleus* and nothing changed
And we, poor nucleus-less girls,
when Acid brandished that acetyl toward us...
it slipped right in our channel.
And that was it.
We were *acetylated for life*.
It was a mass assault — a *platelet-cide* without precedent
So we turned to a Patron saint for help.
Terrible idea. Like asking a wolf to babysit sheep.
“No, no,” said the Patron, “Don't worry, acetylsalicylic acid
doesn't exist anymore — old myth!
I'll introduce you to a German noblewoman,
an aspiring benefactress of humanity — *Aspirin!*”
He said we'd meet her little by little.
Small doses, he called them.
And truly, Aspirin protected us
from our own inner demon —
the one we didn't know we carried —
born every time we met another male acid,
smelling faintly of peanuts: *Arachidonic Acid*.
We felt both excitement and fear
And what did we produce together?
A devil with a name that says it all: *Thromboxane*.
“Don't be afraid,” said another saintly man, a Salvador, a saviour.
“I'll send you another lady — *Prostacyclin*.
A woman of charity.”
And that, my friends,
is how Prostacyclin made us all...
well... *sisterly inclined*.
At the May Festival, in Florence, among the Neri and the Serneri,
everyone sang to us:

¹ Giovanni di Minno.

*Spring is here, wake up, platelets dear,
at the park, Thromboxane plays cavalier,
Prostacyclin, oh Florentine queen,
how much Aspirin has bloomed this year...*
Dear Comrades, now, many years have passed.
We're older.
But we still make people dream —
especially the young ones,
who gather each autumn in tiny villages,
in modest inns with no sponsors,
to talk about us —

when we shine, when we fail,
even when they use us as Trojan horses
to deliver precious cargo.
And in these dark times of war,
let me end with a plea:
*Load your cannons with platelets,
fill your drones with platelets.
We don't want sick molecules in the sky —
only serotonin and prostaglandins,
dancing like musical notes,
playing a Ballad of Peace. Of peace. Of peace.*