This is me... excited and overly eager medical student starting my clinical rotations.

One afternoon as I returned from a lunch lecture...

Sasha, are you ready to get your feet wet?

I sure am!

What did I just agree to?

Hi Cheryl.

Your patient isn't improving. We need to make sure she doesn't have meningitis.
So, you're going to do a LP. Let's get you all set up.

LP = Lumbar Puncture
stick a 6" needle in the back to collect fluid from the spinal canal that bathes the brain and spinal cord.

What did that powerpoint during island week say...

A stepwise approach to the LP:
- drape the patient
- hold the needle at 90° angle to spine
- palpate the iliac crests and draw an imaginary straight line to the spine
- palpate for the space between the vertebrae
- advance the needle until you feel the "pop"
Breathe. Do a good job. Please don't screw up.
Sasha, did you feel the "pop"?

Does it look like I felt the "pop"?!

And then, clear fluid...

Great job, Dr. Svendsen.

And the fluid is clear. Your first LP just may be a champagne tap!

CHAMPAGNE TAP:
when there are NO red blood cells (RBCs) in the first tube of cerebrospinal fluid you collect while doing a lumbar puncture

... a perfectly executed LP 😊
After coming back down to earth and an hour later...

The lab results on your patient are back.

RESULTS:

No champagne tap for you. That one red cell must have been hiding. You were close, though.
When Cheryl came in the next morning...

I brought you a little present, Sasha.

Thanks, Cheryl. Gotta keep practicing... Maybe next time!

Back to the books... and waiting for the next opportunity.