

Francis' Dream

Ever since the last veterinarian assistant quit her job, I was handed an assignment to recruit a new assistant. Everyday, files of applications pile on my desk, waiting to be accepted. But, even after skimming through the applications, no applications looked appealing to my eyes. Except one.

Soon, the lucky candidate's application lying at the corner of my desk was going to meet me for an interview.

The ceiling fan creaked, breaking the silence of the room; that was until I heard a small knock on the door.

"Come in, Francis," I called out.

Before I could shake her hand, the first I noticed was her face. She had a flattened face and the corners of her eyes slanted upwards; it was obvious that she had Down Syndrome.

I motioned my hands towards the chair in front of my desk, signaling Francis to sit down. Prior to the interview, her application stated how she has been dog sitting ever since she was in high school. With vague knowledge of her dog sitting experience, I asked her about the reviews she has received for taking care of dogs.

Francis hesitated while she figured out how to answer the question.

"Well, I always receive many positive reviews from my clients. I can show you recommendations," she responded confidently.

While I wrote her replies, I nodded my head to make sure she knew I understood her. Even though Francis stuttered, her confidence kept me interested in her interview.

"I've heard that Ruth Yolanda is a client here," Francis spoke. "I've taken care of her dogs multiple times this year."

"Mrs. Yolanda? Yes, she is a regular here. You must be the dog caretaker she is always talking highly about," I responded, delightfully. "It's tough taking care of six dogs."

Francis chuckled and agreed.

Then, I asked the big question: "What makes you think you are fit for this job?"

Francis sat up straight, looking directly into my eyes. She responded with such grace, "Well, ever since I first took the job of dog sitting, I realized my connection with animals. Every job that I worked with animals, I've always arrived on time. I have also completed my undergraduate degree in veterinary science. This job is my next step to make my dream come true: becoming a veterinarian. This position will prepare me for everything I may encounter when I open my own practice in the future."

"That's great, Francis," I smiled. Her response impressed me, but I was concerned for her working condition. So, I concluded the interview with one more question. "Last question, Francis. How would you handle an uncomfortable situation when a client implies that you might not understand or be capable of what they are requesting?"

Francis shares a personal moment. "Perhaps this example might prove that I am capable of handling any requests or comments about my ability. I recently went to dinner with a close

friend. When it came time to order, the waiter asked my friend what she would like to eat. The waiter quickly asked my friend what I would like to eat. I immediately spoke up and told the waiter how I was more than capable of ordering for myself. I even went so far as to ask the waiter if he understood and wrote down exactly what I wanted to eat. I'm very confident that I can be respectful and assure our clients that they will be more than satisfied with my performance."

"I've enjoyed speaking with you Francis, and I will let you know my decision by the end of the week."