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Instructor's Name

ENGL 1013

Date

Footsteps

On a cold, dry night, my mother softly shook my shoulders and woke me by saying, “Eva . . . Eva . . . I am going to pull a calf at Bill Bowden’s. Do you want to go and help me?” I rolled over and mumbled grumpily to myself, not fully comprehending what she had just said. She shook me once more, and I slowly crawled out of my warm bed and got dressed. I walked into the kitchen, and she had a cup of hot chocolate waiting for me. I smiled as I sipped my hot drink. She finished her coffee and stood. As we headed out the front door, she turned and said, “Thank you for coming.”

As we drove to our neighbor’s field, we talked about the plans for my future. At the time, I had already chosen several things that I thought that I wanted to do, but each time they fell through. I told her this, and she just nodded and said, “Well, you still have time to decide.” She asked what was interesting to me. That made me think. Then I laughed as I realized that I had helped my mom all of my life, and I knew how to be a veterinarian, so my career choice suddenly became very clear. I have always admired my mom. She is a very strong-willed woman. I always enjoy watching her perform her job, and when she asked what interested me, the answer was obvious.

As we arrived at our neighbor’s house, my mom quickly became “super woman.” While we followed Mr. Bowden through his field to find his cow, my mother was asking questions about the cow’s history with pregnancy. After we had walked a long way, we still had not found

the cow. She had apparently gotten spooked and moved to a different location, according to the elderly owner. My mother and I exchanged a glance and giggled. We tried to track her, as he put it, but we did a poor job. It was kind of turning into a game as we tromped through the giant field. Suddenly, my mother spotted her behind a big boulder, so we started toward her.

As we approached the straining cow, my mother and I could see how difficult this birth was going to be. She got her things set up and began to work. All of my life, I had never realized how incredibly detailed her job was. She was delicate with the highly stressed animal, and her gentle voice calmed even me. She slowly began to pull the calf, but it was apparent that the calf was turned the wrong way. Its head was positioned wrong. My mother, not bothered by this problem, used her extensive training to reposition the baby. The calf was quite easily pulled after that. She stood there for a minute to make sure that the baby was breathing, and suddenly, she looked up at me. She gave me a humble, shy smile as if she just realized how much talent and ability that she had. I returned her smile and said, "Mama, that was amazing."

She laughed and replied, "You are just now realizing that?" Then we both laughed as the calf stood to drink.

My decision on my career was heavily influenced by my mother when I realized that her talent and ability are very impressive. It is hard to think that up until this moment in my life that I took her job for granted. But as I saw how her job affected the lives of animals, I knew that I had to follow in her footsteps and become a veterinarian.