



## Query

After 5 years spent taking care of our little girl, my wife wants to go back to school. Her education thus far is a BSc and an MSc; she put her academic career on hold to raise our daughter, and because our daughter is going to school now, the need for daytime care is no longer there. My wife has had a lot of time to think about what she wants to do, and she's finally decided: she wants to become a veterinarian.

It wasn't a surprise to me. She told me she wanted to be a vet on our second date. She liked research but wanted to do it *sans* PCR or electrophoresis gel. She wanted to touch living things. I told her that I thought it was a good idea, and I've held that opinion since. Even though she hasn't, always.

You see, she applied to get into medical school and vet school before we met, and she was shut out. This scarred her; though she had the requisite marks to get in, she did poorly on her interviews — she could be described as *too* earnest — and left the process doubting herself. Who wouldn't, after all that rejection?

And that's where I come in — at her lowest ebb. What a strategy!

Anyway, we marry and have a daughter. And my wife's natural inclination is to retire from the world for awhile, to lick her wounds and, of course, to do the necessary work of tending to our child. But now the daytime component of that work is done, and my wife has once again become interested in her dream.

Not that she didn't falter. There were many times when she wavered, thinking that she should become a teacher instead

because, vis-à-vis vet school, she'd "never get in" or that she was "too old" and that "they wouldn't want me." I never corroborated these doubts. I was steadfast in my belief that she would make a great veterinarian and that she should apply when the time was right.

I don't mean to make myself out to be a hero here, a super-husband; but it is one good thing I have done in our marriage, to believe in my wife without making that belief an expectation. I expressed quiet support, confident that it would pay dividends.

And that support culminated with an acceptance letter from vet school. My wife was overjoyed; I was proud. Now it's my turn to juggle commitments to meet her schedule, my turn to celebrate when she gets good marks and commiserate if she gets bad ones. To have food ready on those long, late nights. All the things she used to do, I will have to do; and I must admit, in this I had a good teacher.

Ask my daughter what she wants to be when she grows up, a doctor or a vet, and you can bet what answer she gives. She's so sure, so certain. We tell her to take good care of her rats (yup ... rats) and her guinea pig and maybe she'll get to be a vet one day.

Four more years of school.

Tell me there won't be a residency.

— Dr. Ursus