The Final Round (B2 · English B2)

Tekst / Transcript

Marta had been unemployed for seven months, and she had begun to feel like a permanent job seeker. Every morning she made coffee, opened her laptop and read the same job boards. Most advertisements asked for experience she did not yet have. Still, she refused to give up, because she knew the health sector was still hiring in her city. On Monday a message arrived that changed the week completely.

A private clinic wanted to interview her. They asked her to send an updated résumé before Friday, together with two references. Marta spent an entire evening rewriting hers, cutting out old summer jobs and adding her volunteer work. She stared at the screen until the words began to blur. Around midnight she noticed a small mark on her arm and began to scratch it nervously. Then she pressed send and went to bed, unable to sleep for a long time.

The interview was scheduled for Thursday morning, and the clinic's schedule was extremely tight, so she was warned not to arrive late. She took the early bus and found the building twenty minutes ahead of time. A receptionist asked her to take a seat in the waiting area. There were three other candidates there, all younger than she was, all looking at their phones. Marta tried to breathe slowly and be her calmest self, although her hands were cold. She had prepared answers for every difficult scenario she could imagine, including the question about her long gap in employment.

The panel turned out to be friendly. They explained that the clinic organised a free screening programme for older patients, and they needed someone patient and well organised. Marta described how she had helped run a similar project as a volunteer. She could sense that the woman on the left was genuinely interested, because she kept taking notes. When they asked about her weaknesses, Marta answered honestly rather than cleverly. The oldest member of the panel smiled and said that honesty would satisfy him far more than a rehearsed speech.

The selection process took another ten days, which felt endless. The clinic had to select only one person from a strong group, and Marta knew nothing about the others. She distracted herself by cleaning the flat and reading. Then the call came: the job was hers. Her manager later admitted that the decision had not been unanimous, though nobody had raised any real objection. There had been a small scandal at the clinic the previous year, so the team was careful about whom they chose now. Marta felt a deep satisfaction as she signed the contract. She was satisfied not only with the salary but with the sense that her patience had finally been rewarded.

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