

101 'Tails' of a House Call Veterinarian

DR. FAITH KRAUSMAN



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Dedicated to my husband Ron and my daughter Rachel, my two most favorite people in the world, and the reason I exist; and to my mother, Jeanne Krausman, who let me keep 12 hamster cages in my room when I was 10; and to my father, Bernard Krausman, who introduced me to the love of a dog; and to my sister, Ruth Krausman, for putting up with it all; and to Judy Summers, my kidney donor and the one who made it possible for me to keep doing what I love.

Acknowledgments



First I would like to thank Dr. Jay Buchholz for his mentorship during the last two decades. He showed me a thing or two about our chosen field and why we love it.

I would like to acknowledge Samuel Wishner, who brought all of the hamsters, mice, rabbits, and birds into my life.

I would also like to thank all of the clients I have come to know while taking care of their beloved pets.

And I especially want to thank all of the animals featured in this book. Without them, where would I be?

*Strange it is this speechless thing,
Subject to our mastering,
Subject for his life and food
To our gift, and time, and mood;
Timid pensioner of us Powers,
His existence ruled by ours,
Should—by crossing at a breath
Into safe and shielded death,
By the merely taking hence
Of his insignificance
Loom as largened to the sense,
Shape as part, above man's will,
Of the Imperturbable.*

—Excerpted from *Last Words to a
Dumb Friend*, by Thomas Hardy

Foreword



Finding a good vet is difficult. Finding a great vet who makes house calls is also difficult. But finding a great vet who makes house calls and whom your animal actually trusts ... wow, that's golden!

Now my cat, Oliver, is very particular. He and I have been together about 15 years, and I gotta tell you, he does not like the box—the litter box—and he is really picky about his food. When he doesn't want to be bothered, he disappears.

What he really, really hates are the vets: their smell, their offices

That is, until Dr. Faith came along, and I think because she comes to him, to his house and smells like wellness and feels safe to him, he's all right with her. Now what more could you ask for in somebody who's looking after your animal?

Dr. Faith happens to be one of the smartest women I've met. You will get a feel for who she is when you read her book.

The problem that I am going to tell you about right now will be yours: that is the fact that Dr. Faith probably won't be your vet. But, I can tell you, her vibe rubs off on you when you read the book. You and your pet will be much better off for all of this.

And if you're fortunate enough to have a Dr. Faith in your life, you'll know you're lucky.

—Whoopi Goldberg

Prologue



Why do house calls?

I do house calls because it provides a service that is unique and necessary. Many pets cannot handle the travel or the stress of going to an office. They fear the smells, the sounds, and the sights. They detest being away from home. The cats hate the carrier, the bright lights, and the metal exam table. The dogs hate other dogs and the magnified sounds that seem to be coming from everywhere.

When I come to the house, I see the pet in its natural environment. Even if what I do is slightly stressful, they recover quickly and can be found at the food dish five minutes later. Some of them look forward to my visit.

This creates a nurturing environment for the owners as well. Knowing their pet is in a comfortable space while the exam is going on keeps them happy and calm. They are always grateful and relieved when it is over.

House calls also provide me with an inside look at the animal's habitat. I can see where they are living, what the surrounding area is like, and what their diet is. If I visit a guinea pig housed in a cold basement, I am not surprised to learn that he has been sneezing. If I see a rabbit cage right next to the front door, and it is 10 degrees outside, then I may expect the rabbit to have a respiratory infection. If an owner cannot recall what type of food she feeds her pet, I can just ask her to show it to me.

I can also see how the pet interacts with its environment, with other pets in the house, and with the owners.

These are things that cannot be learned when a pet comes into the clinic, and they provide me with knowledge as to what makes each pet tick. Of course, the veterinary hospital is very important to the optimal health of our pets, but there is a place for both, and they complement each other.

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