

the beginning of

POSITION AVAILABLE (from **FUNNY AS A CRUTCH**)

a short comedy by Rich Orloff

Time: The present

Place: An employment bureau

Characters: DALE, a job seeker, visibly disabled
Ms. (or Mr.) FROGWORM, a human resource counselor

An office in an employment bureau. Ms. (or Mr.) FROGWORM sits at her/his desk. She's an endlessly upbeat sort. DALE enters. He (or she) is here for the first time.

DALE

Hello, Ms. Frogworm?

FROGWORM

Well, hello. Pleased to meet you. Are you –
(checks her desk calendar:)
Dale Jones?

DALE

That's me.

FROGWORM

Come in. I've heard great things about you –
(checks her desk calendar, looks up:)
Dale – from the folks at the rehabilitation center.

DALE

They probably exaggerated.

FROGWORM

And now I bet you want a new job
so you can reenter the work force.

DALE

Exactly.

FROGWORM

Then you've come to the right place.

DALE

I tried a couple of conventional employment bureaus, but they weren't very help—

FROGWORM

Don't worry. We at CLICHÉ – the Concerned Liberal Institute for Compassionate Handicapped Employment – we believe that every "Person Who Is Not Quite the Same Abled" has a place in society.

DALE

I'm glad.

FROGWORM

Just an hour ago we had an opportunity come in you'll find irresistible. Are you a...

She leafs through an index card file on her desk.

FROGWORM (cont'd)

Bitter Disabled Person With Amazingly Creative Talent?

DALE

No.

FROGWORM

You're not bitter?

DALE

I'm not talented.

FROGWORM

Are you sure? Can you paint with your left foot?

DALE

No.

FROGWORM

Do you shine as a pianist?

DALE

I can't play Chopsticks.

FROGWORM

Okay, well, I'm sure we can find you something.

(looks through card file, then:)

Ah, here we go. Are you a – Tragically Deformed Person With An Almost Saintly Goodness?

DALE

Nope.

FROGWORM

Have you ever told anyone, "I am not an animal; I am a human being!"

DALE

Not sober.

FROGWORM

Would you give sanctuary to a frightened Gypsy girl?

DALE

Is she cute?

FROGWORM

I think we can let go of that category...
Hmm, hmm, oh, here's something. Are you a –
Relentlessly Cheery Type Who Reminds Us
These Are the Best Years of Our Lives?

DALE

Actually, I just started anti-depressants.

FROGWORM

Okay... Ah, here's a position that might be more
up your alley. How'd you like to be a – Social
Outcast Who Confronts Society's Hypocrisies?

DALE

I'm not very confrontational.

FROGWORM

Were you born on the Fourth of July?

DALE

Arbor Day.

FROGWORM

Hmm... Oh, here's a good one. If you contracted
polio, would you still run for president?

DALE

Would I have to register to vote?

FROGWORM

So much for political icons... Hmm... hmm...
Are you mentally challenged but able
to keep track of cards at Blackjack?

DALE

I lose at Go Fish.

FROGWORM

Hmmm... Hmm... Hmm...

DALE

I'm sorry if –

FROGWORM

We'll find something. Aha. How'd you like to be an Ostracized Deformed Character Whose One Special Ability Saves the Circus?

DALE

What movie is *that* from?

FROGWORM

Dumbo.

DALE

Look, I know this may be hard to believe, given my *disability*, but I have no special virtues or abilities.

FROGWORM

Then how do you triumph over adversity?

DALE

I avoid adversity whenever possible.

FROGWORM

Wouldn't you like people to look up to you?

DALE

Actually, I'm a pedaphobic.

FROGWORM

That's not something with kids, is it?

DALE

No, it's a severe fear of falling off pedestals.

FROGWORM

Wouldn't you like to be a role model?

DALE

Not really.

FROGWORM

Then how can we turn you into an uplifting cliché?

DALE

Maybe you can't.

FROGWORM

But we have to. We're liberals;
you're disabled; ergo you're special.

DALE

I'm sorry, but I'm just an average, ordinary person.

FROGWORM

You can't be *that* average.

DALE

I'm probably the most average person you ever met.

FROGWORM

(a light bulb goes off:)

Say that again.

DALE

I'm probably the most average person you ever met.

FROGWORM

In other words, you're extraordinarily ordinary.

DALE

I'm exceptionally unexceptional.

FROGWORM

That's it!

DALE

What's it?

FROGWORM

We'll create a new position for you:
The Fearlessly Mediocre Disabled Guy.*

(*or "Gal")

DALE

I can do that!