



XII. AN OFFER I COULDN'T REFUSE

Age: 20

Wow! It didn't take long. I don't think I had unpacked my luggage before I began to feel brand new. Being greeted and welcomed home in the way I was immediately energized me. I was determined to capitalize on how I felt. With MGR still in the picture, I decided to visit one of their locations in Buffalo's nicest mall. The chemistry was explosive. An instant connection was made with managers and employees there.

As I was sharing some retail selling secrets (Lol), their district manager walked into the store. Too coincidental! When he learned who I was it was off to lunch to talk about what I wanted to do and what he could offer me. He oversaw a massive territory in Upstate New York, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts, and he had stores that needed help. He wasn't Italian, but he made me an offer I couldn't refuse. He made a list of five locations I could choose from. Whichever one I picked I could have.

If I was agreeable he would send me to the corporate office to meet personally with the CEO, as well as with others in the corporate office. I would be taken on a tour of the facilities, meet with buyers and support personnel. If I liked what I saw he would make my compensation work. Was this for real?

They made a strong case for me coming on board with them and it was hard to resist. So off to Maryland I went. Upon arrival I was picked up in a limousine and treated like a celebrity by everyone I met. MGR knew how to put on a presentation. They completely seduced and sold me. I was still only 20 years old and they had made a very strong impression on me. I was in. The next step was to pick a store? My options were Rochester, NY, Albany, NY, Manchester, NH, Worcester, MA, and Medford, MA.

My decision had been influenced as much by personal reasons as by professional. My childhood sweetheart growing up in Buffalo was now living in Boston with her family. Although we had moved on and gone in different directions she was still in my heart. The idea of seeing her again made my choice to get as close to Boston as I could an easy one.

Of the five stores Rochester was the top producer by far. It's manager was being promoted to Troubleshooter. A position I desired. It included a lot of traveling and problem solving which I had become accustomed to doing. District Manager came next. The locations nearest to Boston were Medford, Worcester and Manchester. Worcester was experiencing the most challenges including having the lowest sales numbers by far. The understanding was if I could turn that store around there would be a direct path for me to move up quickly in the company.

Worcester had been an embarrassment for the district and regional managers and they both expressed hope that I would go there. It wasn't the closest to Boston, but it was close enough. That would be my destination. I was off to face my next challenge and everything that came with it. It was another exciting time.

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