



## VII. TO BE OR NOT TO BE

Age: 19

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There were assistant managers all over the country waiting for the same opportunity I sought. They were not only many years my senior, they had deeper resumes educationally and within the company. But, the idea that someone else would take over my store, the one I helped build didn't seem logical. With my Store Manager being promoted and transferred, who else knew this store and its clientele as well as me? It wasn't to be.

Not only was I not promoted, the store was given to a crosstown rival. As my Manager and now very close friend was departing to his new store his words to me were simple but very clear. "Put aside your pride and give the new manager your loyalty and support."

This turned out to be invaluable advise. It would not only test my character, but help keep me focused. Being loyal to your mentor is one thing, but giving it to someone who comes in and takes what you believed was yours was a different kind of challenge. Disappointed for about 15 minutes, I dusted myself off and became even more driven.

I found another gear to kick it into I didn't even know I had. I was inspirationally angry and I used every ounce of that energy to produce numbers greater than before. I may not have been happy, but I definitely was loyal, dedicated and willing to prove myself as often as it took. Besides, I was expected to support this new manager the way I had my previous store manager, and support him I did.

The results were greater than expected and corporate was extremely happy. Happy enough to want to see if I could produce a repeat performance in another location. If I could I would be next in line for my own store. Where would I be going? Jacksonville was experiencing tremendous growth and I loved living there. In addition, college would have to be put on hold. Corporate's decision had come in. I was heading to Daytona Beach. Or was I?