



22 MARCH 2000

DEAR CHARLY,

HOPE THIS LETTER FINDS YOU WELL. I FINALLY WENT BACK TO WORK. I CHOSE A NEW CAREER AND NOW WORK IN A FLORAL SHOP AS A DELIVERY DRIVER. I NOW CARRY FLOWER VASES INSTEAD OF A GUN. IT DOESN'T MEAN THAT I'M REVERTING BACK TO THE '60'S AND BEING A FLOWER CHILD. IT'S JUST A JOB.

IT'S A SMALL 'MOM AND POP' INDEPENDENT FLORAL SHOP, THEY ARE GOOD PEOPLE TO WORK FOR. THE SHOP IS FTD AND AFS RATED FOR NATIONWIDE SERVICE, THESE PEOPLE WERE HAVING A ROUGH TIME IN KEEPING DEPENDABLE EMPLOYEES WHO WANT TO WORK AND ONE OF THE POSITIONS OPEN WAS THAT OF A DELIVERY^{DRIVER}. ONE OF SHERRY'S FRIENDS KNEW THAT I WAS RETIRED AND DROPPED MY NAME TO THEM.

I WENT TO THE FLORAL SHOP TO APPLY THINKING THAT IT WOULD BE A CHANGE INSTEAD OF BEING A SECURITY GUARD SOMEWHERE ELSE IF I EVER WENT BACK TO WORK.

I WAS FILLING OUT THE EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION (THEY DID NOT KNOW THAT I WAS A RETIRED COP) AND WHEN I CAME TO THE PART ABOUT PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT HISTORY I WROTE DOWN RETIRED KCMO POLICE OFFICER. THEY BOTH TOLD ME TO QUIT WRITING OUT THE FORM AND HIRED ME ON THE SPOT. I'VE FOUND OUT THAT THE FLORAL INDUSTRY IS NOT A SLOW AND BORING JOB LIKE I WAS HOPING THAT IT WOULD BE. I TAKE PHONE ORDERS, CLEAN THE SHOP, PROCESS AND CLEAN FRESH CUT FLOWERS OF EXCESS FOILAGE FOR ARRANGEMENTS WHEN I'M NOT ON DELIVERIES. I WORK MONDAY THRU FRIDAYS WITH THE OWNER DELIVERING SATURDAYS.

I'VE BEEN WITH THEM A YEAR NOW. SOMETIMES I WISH THAT I WAS STILL RETIRED DURING THE BUSY SEASONS: CHRISTMAS, VALENTINE'S DAY AND MOTHER'S DAY AND SCHOOL PROMS.

THE OTHER REASON THAT I WENT BACK TO WORK IS BECKY. I THOUGHT THAT SHE WAS FINISHED WITH SCHOOL AFTER OBTAINING HER ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE FROM THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE LAST YEAR. SHE HAD BEEN DRIVING MY OLD WORK CAR FOR SCHOOL, WORK AND PERSONAL ACTIVITIES BECAUSE I WASN'T DRIVING THAT MUCH BECAUSE OF RETIREMENT. SHE DECIDED THAT SHE THAT WANTED TO FOLLOW HER OLDER BROTHER'S (MARK) FOOTSTEPS AND GO TO DEVRY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND GET A DEGREE AS A COMPUTER PROGRAMMER.

MARK GRADUATED LAST YEAR FROM DEVRY WITH A DEGREE IN THE COMPUTER ELECTRONICS TECHNICIAN PROGRAM. HE MOVED OUT ON HIS OWN AFTER GETTING A JOB WITH THE TELEPHONE COMPANY HAVING A DESK JOB AND TROUBLE SHOOTING FOR THE FIELD TECHNICIANS VIA COMPUTER ON HIS DESK. HE'S MAKING GOOD MONEY AND IS PLANNING TO GET MARRIED THIS SEPTEMBER TO AN IOWA GIRL THAT HE'S BEEN GOING WITH FOR SEVERAL YEARS.

I LOST MYSELF IN THOUGHT. I WENT BACK TO WORK TO BUY BECKY A DEPENDABLE VEHICLE TO GET HER TO SCHOOL AND BACK. DEVRY IS LOCATED ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF TOWN FROM WHERE I LIVE AT AND IS ABOUT A 25 MILE DRIVE ONE WAY. MY OLD CLUNKER WOULDN'T MAKE IT FOR THE NEXT 3 YEARS ON THAT PACE.

SHERRY IS STILL WORKING AND KEEPS ME IN LINE LIKE A MARINE DRILL INSTRUCTOR. SHE STILL WORKS AT MICHAEL'S ARTS AND CRAFTS MAKING SILK FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS. NOW, I DON'T MAKE ANY FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS WHERE I WORK AT. THE OWNER'S WIFE MAKE'S THEM AND HAS BEEN DOING IT FOR 20 YEARS.

I'M PLANNING TO GO THE 3RD MARINE DIVISION
REUNION IN VIRGINIA BEACH, VA THIS SEPTEMBER.

IT WON'T INTERFERE WITH MY SON'S WEDDING DATE.
I GOING TO TRY AND CONTACT ANY OF THE BRAVO 1/3
GROUP THAT WE KNOW TO SEE IF ~~THEY~~ THEY'RE GOING.

I HOPE TO LET YOU KNOW BEFORE THEN.
GUESS THAT'S ABOUT IT FOR NOW. HOPE THINGS ARE
GOOD WITH YOU. TAKE CARE AND GIVE OUR REGARDS
TO AKIKO.

YOUR BUDDY,

ROD



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150 Years

Heart of America



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