

# Moving On

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"I don't know how I'm going to get through Christmas" my mom sighed. "Shopping, planning, cooking, getting the house ready for visitors..." I had just come in from a preliminary round of Christmas shopping with a couple of friends. We were all starting to feel holiday merriment and the afternoon had been fun if not too productive. "I'll help you Mom, as soon as my exams are over," I offered.

Dad came in and we all sat around the dinner table. "I have something to tell you all," he said. "It's pretty big news. You remember a while back that I mentioned that part of my department would be relocated out of province? I hadn't heard much more for a while, so I thought my section was staying here. Today I heard that in fact that the entire department is moving."

I looked up in shock. "Moving? Where? When?" I stuttered.

My little brother's eyes were as big as saucers. "Are we selling our house?" he asked, his voice quivering.

"We will be moving to Prince Edward Island, but not until February," Dad replied. "Yes we will be selling this house. I'll spend a few days in Summerside looking at houses. When I have found a few possibilities, you all will come down and we can decide which one is the best."

Marty's eyes were full of tears. "I don't want a new house. I like this house and my school."

I could feel panic building. "Can't you switch to another department Dad? One that's staying here?" I asked desperately. "I don't want to move away, all my friends are here. I won't know anybody."

"I know it's hard to leave all your good friends here," Mom said. "At least there will be lots of new people at school who are transferring from Ottawa."

I pushed my chair away from the table. "I'm not hungry. I'm going to call Karen and tell her the horrible news."

Karen couldn't believe it. "I'm just devastated," she wailed. "I'm calling Judy and we're coming over to your house right now."

Soon Judy and Karen arrived, bringing Dave and Mike with them. We sat in the basement rec room with chips and cokes, talking over the details. The boys thought it would be a great idea for us to visit all our hang-outs together one last time during the Christmas holidays. We would do it all in one day.

Starting at Wellington and Somerset we'd visit Jack's restaurant first, hunt for bargains at Neighbourhood Services then pop in to see Adele at the Manhattan. After checking out United Stores, we could visit George and Frank at the Galaxy to see if they had any luck at the track. Malhams was always good for candy and gum. Maybe something fun would be playing at the Elmdale. Fred and Eva at the Aroma Restaurant were always ready to yell at us. After a walk through Beamish's, we would wind up at Jimmy's and hope that our friend Sandy the cop would be there. He was always full of stories and good for a laugh.

Our plan was set by dinnertime and the gang agreed to meet and spend as much time together as we could in the days remaining to us.

I was feeling more and more depressed, and as my friends trooped out the door I muttered to my mom, "I don't know how I'm going to get through Christmas either."