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In college, I thought I had it all figured out. I was going to go on and get my Master's in History, then my PhD, and achieve my dream of becoming a historian! I wanted to work as a historical consultant on film and tv shows and have my academic work published and reviewed by my fellow historians.

However, my life hasn't turned out that way. And, while I still do consider myself a historian, my career path and ambitions have completely changed.

I graduated from Lake Forest College in May 2014. Luckily for me, I was graduating with a plan: I had gotten a job teaching English in France, just outside of Paris, for the next academic year. I was headed back to Paris, the city that holds my heart.

During my year in Paris, I discovered grad school in the UK. It did not require those nasty standardised tests like in the US, and most programs were for one year. I applied to both the University of Glasgow and King's College London for their History MA programs. Although I had visited Glasgow and its university a few times, I decided to go to King's.

King's was one of most profitable decisions I've ever made and, looking back, perhaps it was the best made in my life thus far. I struggled with the workload and expectations of a Master's history student, and it was in the winter when I decided that I no longer wanted to pursue a PhD in History. The workload and life of an academic no longer appealed to me - instead, there was something else that had caught my eye: fashion.

Living in both Paris and London had opened my eyes to the fashion world and the wonders surrounding it. At King's I even perused into some fashion history - and while I decided to change my dissertation topic to military history and my love Napoleon Bonaparte, my interest in both fashion and its history continued to grow.

I began looking into jobs and networking in April and continued my job search until my student visa ran out on January 30th, but it ended in failure. After speaking with someone in fashion HR, I realised that only senior-level jobs received visa sponsorship. I began applying for any kind of entry-level graduate job that I could possibly qualify for because my goal became to remain in London through any way that I could. However, visa sponsorship is one of the most difficult things to acquire when searching for a job - and nearly impossible for someone who could only apply at entry-level. Time had run out and I had to exit London and re-enter on a tourist visa.

I stayed in London until mid-March so that I could get my affairs in order, travel, and spend as much time as I had left with my friends and boyfriend. It was absolutely devastating when I had to leave.

Returning home was very difficult. Although I did return home with a Master's degree from one of the top universities in the world, I felt defeated. My job hunt began again, but I soon learned that even without visa issues, nobody was interested in hiring someone with two advanced degrees but no "experience". The months between mid-March and June were very tough. (And it did not help that my bratty little sister enjoyed calling me a loser and berating me over not having a job to no end.) Plus, Seattle has never been known as a center of fashion.

In May I realised that perhaps I should be trying to find an internship with someone to gain some more experience and make more connections that would lead to a real adult job. This is what led me to my summer internship with Fitcode.

At Fitcode, a fashion technology startup, I began to learn more about digital and social media marketing from their brilliant Marketing Director, Stephanie. Everyone on the Fitcode team was amazing and I fully enjoyed my experience there - I learned a lot about fashion, technology, business, social media, copywriting, and digital marketing. I am extremely grateful and very satisfied with the internship route I took.

In the last month of my internship, I managed to secure an interview and then a job offer with the fashion ecommerce business, Zulily. A friend of my dad's is a Creative Recruiter there and my father had put me in touch with him over the summer. Greg met with me one day and gave me a tour of the office. I remember I was extremely impressed and thought to myself, "wow, this is a great place, it's too bad I'll never be working here." At that point, after the months and months of depressing job hunting, I felt like I would never find a job.

However, Greg and I got along really well. He was impressed with me and offered to get me a job interview for one of Zulily's entry-level jobs. Although they only required a High School degree, I was ready to have a steady job and income. Plus, I told myself that if I didn't like the job offer, I could always decline it.

I soared during my interview. Luckily for me, my friend Henry was visiting at the time and he helped coach me through potential questions they would ask and the right answers to give. I was interviewing for a Production Assistant role, but immediately following the interview I received a call from one of the two interviewers. He was hiring for a different entry-level position with the same pay known as a Sample Processor. He told me that he was impressed with my interview and was offering me the job as a Sample Processor, where I would have room to grow and the opportunity of a promotion to an Assistant Buyer. I couldn't believe what I was hearing, but I was excited and I accepted.

I now work at a Sample Processor at Zulily and I could not be happier with where I ended up. I am excited to work hard and prove myself so I can rise up in the ranks. I finally have a concrete life plan and am extremely relieved that I finally feel like I've gotten my life together.

(Note from 2020: I found myself promoted within six months to the role of Product Copywriter on the copy team, which I did for over a year before moving to Japan.)

Although it has been somewhat of a turbulent trip to my career path, I do not regret a thing. I learned more about myself and life than I ever could have imagined and this path that I've been set down has introduced me to places and people I could never imagine living my life without. The job hunt is certainly tough, but the advice I have to offer is this: keep persevering, and when times are tough and you want to give up, something will be right around the corner. It was for me.