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Letter from Barbara Toohey to Ann Hopkins, December 17, 1990

Barbara Toohey

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SugarFree Centers

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December 17, 1990

Ann B. Hopkins
Accountant
World Bank
1818 H. St., NW
Washington, DC 20433

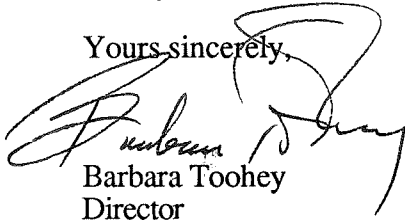
Dear Ms. Hopkins:

I thought that the enclosed might give you a wry smile.

I've been trying to place it in various periodicals, but it ain't easy—especially since people need to know the background before they can understand the satire.

Congratulations on the appeal decision! I hope that ultimately you win and that the fruits of your victory are not entirely chomped up by your attorneys.

Yours sincerely,



Barbara Toohey
Director

BT/mcw

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THERE'S NO ACCOUNTING FOR THEIR PROMOTION PRACTICES

By

Barbara Toohey

Last week accountant Andrew Hopkins was quietly celebrating his victory with friends. He sipped a Kir Royale, never interrupting or arguing or trying to dominate the conversation, in other words, he was acting in the warm and gracious manner he has through seven years of litigation over his right to be a partner in a major accounting firm. It was just that sort of unmasculine behavior that had let the firm to reject him, a Federal judge had ruled, and because of that the firm would have to take him back.

Mr. Hopkins had already won at every turn in his case against the firm, Nice Kettlafish, which he said passed him over because they judged him to be benign, accommodating, "in need of a few weeks in Marine boot camp," and, on top of everything else, "He walks funny." But despite this evaluation, the court ordered Nice Kettlafish to make him a partner—the first time a court had awarded a partnership as a remedy for race or sex discrimination.

47-year-old Mr. Hopkins was among 88 candidates for a partnership in 1983, and had brought in more business than any of the others. But he also received more negative comments from partners, including some who said he shouldn't shave so often and he ought to smell a little sweaty and in general should stomp around the office and knock over chairs in a more masculine way.

Not that Mr. Hopkins doesn't have his admirers. Out of his earshot at the celebration, they were quick to say that while on the surface he might seem genteel and kind-hearted and fastidious, the manner masked a crude, abrasive, insensitive lout. One associate praised him with "Don't kid yourself. He's as masculine as they come. I once saw him break a guy's nose with a hockey stick." Others rushed to add such accolades as, "He always looks as if he slept in his clothes." and "You couldn't have a birthday around the place without Andy bringing in a couple of strippers." and "His table manners would get him thrown off a hog farm," and "I've never known anybody who belches and scratches and spits as much as he does." and "Talk about getting falling down drunk and running around on his wife—all four of them! . . . Yeah, when it comes to being macho, old Andy wrote the book—in four letter words!"

But that positive evaluation came from friends, who freely admitted they held a minority view. They also said they knew that, despite Mr. Hopkins' gentle, forgiving mien, deep down inside he's been "boiling with rage" throughout the years of litigation and is just waiting for the chance to "punch somebody's lights out."

Even if Nice Kettlafish doesn't appeal the decision—as they're expected to— one important question remains. Will Mr. Hopkins prove as self-effacing and conciliatory as he's reputed to be and submissively accept the court-awarded partnership plus over \$400,000 in back pay? Or will he, with arrogant vindictiveness, tell Nice Kettlafish where they can stick their partnership and money—the way a real man would? Only time and hormones will tell.

Note: Barbara Toohey is a Director of the SugarFree Center for Diabetics with headquarters in Van Nuys, California. She does not walk funny.