

**Ashley Patel (Employee ID No. 8055),**  
59, Jalan Wall Street  
Taman Shibuya Crossing  
60859 Selangor.

9 April 2020

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**Department of Human Resources,**  
Rhonda Co.  
Level 20 Menara Utama Selatan  
Jalan Tun Syed  
14300 Kuala Lumpur.

**[Attn: Mr. J.S. Kanagasabai]**

**Re: Reply to Sexual Harassment Complaint dated 30.3.2020**

The purpose of this letter is to address Mr. Nathan's complaints against me. I will address each complaint in turn to provide a reasonable explanation.

Mr. Nathan and I are actually good friends outside of work. I am close to him and was trying to get to know him on a personal level. In fact, I recently discovered that Mr. Nathan and his fiancé had recently broken up and he was not taking the break up very well. On top of that, the deadline for the Company's audit submission was fast approaching and I noticed that Mr. Nathan was not his usual self and lacked focus.

As he is my good friend and my subordinate, his wellbeing matters a lot to me. I usually call and text him often after working hours to check up on him just to make sure he is doing fine. My invitation to him for supper was sincere and there were definitely no ill intentions behind it. Furthermore, I am usually in the habit of teasing my friends and colleagues (for example En. Ajemin Ali of the Company's Finance Department) to put them at ease hence my comment on Mr. Nathan's body.

In response to the so-called inappropriate text messaging, I state that I am in the habit of using terms such as "*sayang*", "*darling*" and "*babe*" to refer to my friends. We live in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and I do not see a reason as to why one would be offended by this. In fact, many of us in the office use these terms as it helps to boost morale around the office and encourages team spirit. I also do not see the problem in sending those emoticons in text messages. After all everyone sends emoticons as such to their best friend.

What I uttered to Mr Nathan in the pantry was in jest to cheer him up as I noticed that he was looking rather sombre. It was only meant as a compliment. Mr. Nathan did not tell me that he was uncomfortable when I uttered those words to him. In fact, I saw him smile after I uttered those words to him.

Furthermore, I must state that my actions of innocently eating during lunch has been exaggerated and taken out of context. Everyone in the office knows that I am a light eater and bananas are my go-to snack whenever I am feeling peckish. I deny that I ate the banana in front of Mr. Nathan in a suggestive manner. I merely ate the banana just like anyone else would have done. I must add that I did not only eat just a banana in front of Mr. Nathan but I also ate petai sambal in front of him on that day. I presumed the reason he walked out was because of the pungent smell of the petai.

On 13.3.2020, Mr. Nathan was leaving the office premisses to head down to the carpark. Mr. Nathan's eyes were teary and red. It looked like he was having a bad night. Therefore, as I was also leaving the office, I decided to accompany Mr. Nathan to the carpark. We were chatting casually and he was laughing at my attempts to cheer him up. As we approached his car, I hugged him goodbye. This was a normal occurrence between Mr. Nathan and I as we are good friends. As I was about to let go from our embrace, I noticed Mr. Nathan pulled me in closer. I did not find anything amiss and I assumed that Mr. Nathan just wanted to be comforted further. I did not attempt to kiss Mr. Nathan. I believe Mr. Nathan may be overthinking my actions as he is currently not in the right frame of mind due to his break-up.

My actions towards Mr. Nathan were sincere and genuine as I knew he was not feeling his best lately especially after his break up. I wanted to reassure him I am always there for him if he needed someone to talk or vent to. These complaints against me have been taken out of context.

Yours sincerely,

*Ashley Patel*