

February 13, 2001

The Board of Directors
50 Central Park West
New York, NY 10023

Re: Young-Ae Sohn

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of reference in support of Young-Ae Sohn's application for residence in your cooperative.

Young-Ae is a charming and gracious hostess with whom you can expect to share polite repartee about life's joyous moments over cocktails and canapés. You will find that she pleasantly exchanges appropriate greetings and will make well-mannered inquiries about your health.

Young-Ae is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent. Especially clean. In other words, she is like a boy scout, only without a penis. And she doesn't sleep in a tent; hence the purchase of a multi-million dollar apartment.

Young-Ae is committed to family values, only without the husband or children. This is actually quite convenient for the urban high-rise, cooperative apartment lifestyle. As neighbors, you get the incalculable benefit of knowing that she stands for decency and respectability; but at the same time, you will not have to listen to kids' racket or unseemly domestic disputes through the walls of her apartment.

I know you must be concerned about letting racial minorities into your privileged enclave; and I confess this is a legitimate concern. But you need not worry about Young-Ae dragging down property values. Few people, if anyone, will suspect that she is a property owner. Most folks on the street will think she's coming into the building to clean, cook, or do laundry. At first blush, allowing an Asian to live in your co-op may feel like a dirty little secret;

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but it will have the substantial benefit of forging stronger bonds among the other residents of the building, many of whom presently have nothing interesting to say to each other.

There is a related problem that I will not minimize, but which I suggest you look at as a challenge: how to pronounce her name. Surely nothing could be more awkward than seeing her in the hallway - or worse, getting stuck with her in an elevator - and not knowing what to call her. "Young" is pronounced the way it looks; "Ae" is the tricky part. Pronounce this syllable "ŭ", as in the word "gut". This isn't even close to correct, but it is the authorized white-person's pronunciation when mumbled quickly.

Once you get to know Young-Ae, I am confident that you will find her to be very, very rich. In this way, I am sure that she will fit beautifully into your cooperative membership.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Very truly yours,

Mark B. Jacobs