

Woman Files Sexual Harassment Suit Against Boss Who Allegedly Wooed Her With Racist Insults



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A female executive assistant at the business management firm Alvarez & Marsal has filed a sexual harassment suit against the company, alleging that her boss continuously assaulted her with a flow of inappropriate, unwelcome, and generally racist comments. The woman, Maysa Abdel-Razeq, claims that this sort of behavior went on for years, "culminating in a campaign of retaliation against her" after she publicly refused her boss's advances.

According to the suit, managing director Paul Aversano asked Abdel-Razeq to join him for a "couples massage" and told her she had the perfect hips for "carrying babies." Other comments include, "Your body is like a Coca-Cola bottle," "Damn those watermelons," and the highly logical "You are a Middle Eastern Queen, but I prefer to call you a Brazilian Queen so I prevent myself from liking a terrorist." Aversano also assured Abdel-Razeq that although their first time having sex would be "for 30 seconds" because he would "get too excited," he could later step up his game and go for "3-4 hours."

The 30-year-old says she reported her complaints to the human resources department at Alvarez and Marsal before filing a suit through the Manhattan Federal Court, but that she found herself being "punished" rather than her aggressor.

"I think the complaint speaks for itself, but this sort of conduct in the workplace is reprehensible," says Abdel-Razeq's lawyer Douglas H. Wigdor. "And as if that isn't enough, when she had the courage to stand up and complain the company took a number of steps to try to intimidate and retaliate against her."



Abdel-Razeq's complaint claims that her emotional and physical health has been compromised as a result of this continued harassment and that the ordeal has threatened her professional livelihood as well as her "ability to care for her son as a single mother."

The suit is being filed against the company as well as Aversano, managing director Anthony Caporrino, and Alvarez and Marsal's General Counsel, Joel Portesky. Abdel-Razeq seeks an unspecified monetary amount in damages.

In response, Alvarez & Marsal issued this statement:

The firm does not comment publicly on its current or former employees out of respect for their privacy, but the firm can share that Ms. Abdel-Razeq is still a current employee and it has never taken any adverse employment action against her. We elected not to settle this matter because we deny the allegations. Ms. Abdel-Razeq has not been subjected to any unlawful discrimination, harassment or retaliation in her employment. We will continue to ensure that Ms. Abdel-Razeq is treated fairly and with respect at all times, and that she will face no retaliation as a result of filing this action.