

FOR: SYLVIA FINE KAYE

You're looking at a woman of achievement? What achievement?

My husband is an achiever. He can fly an airplane. I can't even grow a flower. When I want a flower I call a nursery.

I called the wrong nursery once and got Dena. That was an achievement.

My husband, actually, tends to overdo achieving. If your husband wanted to escape a Beverly Hills social obligation like a Hadassah dinner dance, would he go to Denmark? Glendale, maybe. But Denmark? My husband is in Denmark tonight.

I stopped achieving after puberty. When I was eight I achieved a Ribbon of Achievement at a summer camp by staying under water for 3 minutes and 8 seconds. Achievements when you are that age are much grander. They are like oatmeal. They stick to your ribs. For the rest of your life.

I remember my first kiss. What an achievement! I remember it better than I do my last one.

But you didn't come here tonight to listen to me. Wives came here to be danced with. Husbands came because they couldn't think of an excuse to be in Denmark. Look, husbands -- show your wives a nice time tonight. All in the spirit of Hadassah. It's only for a little while, and you will achieve sainthood. Imagine. You can be the first Jewish saints in the history of organized religion.

That is an achievement.

DRAFT OF REMARKS FOR SYLVIA FINE KAYE

Thank you for honoring me tonight as your Woman of Achievement. I must admit that you have given me an entirely new way of thinking about myself. Until today, my achievements were limited to the one time I was able to stay under water for five minutes, tricking my husband into once trying my meatloaf, and knowing how to spell Hadassah. H-A-D-A-S-S-A-H, right?

My list on non-achievements is, alas, much longer. I never grew to be six-feet tall so I could be a high-fashion model. I haven't been able to get my husband to say that I can cook at least half as good as he can. I have been unable to master even one video game. I've never been able to be appreciative of the New York City telephone operators wishing me a nice day...right before they slam the phone down in my ear. I haven't been able to feel comfortable calling the President "Ron" since he was elected. It was easy when he was just another out-of-work actor. And, I am sorry to admit that I have never achieved the language of the Valley girls. I live only five miles from the Valley, but, like, I, yeah, just can't talk hiply.

This award tonight has inspired me not to give up on some dreams for achievements. You are all my witnesses that I am determined to memorize by new nine-digit zip code by next year. I am planning to be able to finish at least one romance novel, so I'll be able to talk to strangers on airplanes. Further, I plan to get to know a computer well enough to find out the answer to the age-old question, how much is two plus two. How are those for achievement goals?

Sylvia Fine Kaye Draft -- 2

Thank you for truly making me feel like a Woman of Achievement. You probably noticed that my husband is not here to share in this honor. He is in Denmark visiting Queen Beatrix, some sort of official visit for UNICEF, he claimed. I know the truth, though. He was jealous. He knows I can have dinner with the Queen any old time, but he'll never be named a Woman of Achievement. Besides, he can't spell Hadassah, and I won't teach him.

Thank you again for making me feel very special.

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