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Adam's Mark Hotels  
c/o HBE Corporation  
11330 Olive Street Road  
St. Louis, MO 63141

Dear Adam's Mark:

I had the opportunity and pleasure of staying at your hotel in Columbus, Ohio roughly a year ago -- in July of 1998. I am a person who suffers from obsessive compulsive disorder, but I must tell you that your staff was very accommodating of me during my stay. Kudos to your team in Columbus, sir! I did not even tell anyone at the hotel about my disorder because I try to lead as close to a normal life as I can, and I find that as long as I tell no one about my disorder, I am usually able to conceal it when I am out in public. You see, the majority of my disorder involves my morning rituals before I leave my apartment, so as long as I am alone during those times, I am able to complete my rituals in privacy and I appear to be normal in almost every way once I go out the door.

One of my biggest difficulties with OCD is my obsessive hand washing. I sometimes wash my hands 25 or 30 times before I am able to leave in the morning. This is a very common trait in people suffering from OCD; however, my situation involves a further unique twist. You see, I must use the same bar of soap from the time that it comes out of the box, until it is nothing but a last bit of lather in my hands. I cannot use a bar of soap that other people have used before me, and I cannot open a new bar of soap until my last bar is COMPLETELY gone. For these reasons, I carry my personal bar of soap with me everywhere in a little zip lock baggie.

It isn't necessary for me to use the same brand or type of soap each time, but if I buy multipacks of soap, I DO have to use all of those up before moving onto a different type. When I made my trip to Columbus in July of 1998 I was right in the middle of a fine bar of Irish Spring Sport. As you can imagine, I go through quite a bit of hand soap. Most hotel establishments have complimentary soap for their patrons, so in the morning of each day of my three day stay at your hotel, I took the soap left in my room by your staff, but I did not use any of it during my stay. I hope this is not a problem, but considering the room rates at your hotel, I thought it was a reasonable action on my part.

Anyway, as I said, I use quite a bit of hand soap, so I normally buy my soap in bulk. Roughly two days ago I finished off the last bar of my Irish Spring Sport, and I opened up one of the Adam's Mark complimentary soap boxes.

I was shocked to see what appeared to be mold spots on the bar of soap. (I have enclosed a photograph of the soap to illustrate this to you). Could you possibly verify from the photograph that this is moldy soap?

Perhaps you can see my dilemma. You see, my OCD involves a compulsion for cleanliness, so anytime I come into contact with a moldy substance, I must immediately go into my compulsive hand washing rituals. But every time I have used your soap to wash my hands, I believe I am coming into contact with mold, thus necessitating further washing of my hands; but, of course, I have to use the same moldy bar of soap. You can thus see the catch 22 situation that this has caused for me.

I thought that my prior hand washing habits were debilitating, but now it is completely unbearable. I have gone through a number of your complimentary soaps in just two days. I am washing my hands more than 150 times in one cycle, but I am still left with the feeling of uncleanness. I continue to wash my hands until they are raw and to the point of bleeding. I do not yet have any other soap to use, but even if I did, my psychological block, which prevents me from using a new bar of soap before the last one is gone, would bar me from using the new soap. Likewise, I cannot borrow any "clean" soap from my neighbors for the same reasons.

Is there any way you can verify to me that these spots are NOT mold? Perhaps the soap is fashionably designed this way with small splotches of discoloration... If you could verify this, it would certainly help me with my current situation. On the other hand, if this IS mold, could you explain to me how it is that soap gets moldy? I fear that it is mold for the simple fact that the soap is over a year old. What are the ingredients of the Adam's Mark complimentary soaps? And what would cause the mold?

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

*Rusty Lucas*

Rusty Lucas

p.s. While I have your attention, I have two other unrelated questions that I request you address. I notice that your corporate address is 11330 Olive Street Road and I wondered which it was -- a street or a road. You know, when I see "street" I usually think of straight, right-angled streets like in a downtown city block. When I see "road" I think more of a highway or a residential subdivision with twists and turns. Which type of roadway is Olive Street Road?

Also I am curious about the hotel name and insignia. Is the little five point star looking insignia the actual mark of Adam, as in "Adam and Eve"? Or are the hotels named after another Adam? Please clear this up for me as I am very interested to know where the mark in Adam's Mark originated.

If you have any free promotional baseball caps which bear the Adam's Mark logo, I am interested in receiving one. An adjustable cap will suffice.