

# Writer loses . . .

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I decided to guts it out, though. Bocce Balls it was. And then something awful happened. Bocce Balls started tasting bad to me.

By this time I was severely depressed. I happen to enjoy bars; I go to them a lot. Back when I was 18, I was excited by the very prospect of a lifetime spent downing straight scotches at wood-paneled, manly bars. Now, here I was. I couldn't even take a Bocce Ball anymore.

I threw my self-esteem to the wind. One night I just charged straight up to the bar, shouldered my way between the businessmen and working women, and said the dreadful words I never thought would pass my lips: "Strawberry daiquiri."

I felt I could go no lower. Imagine the scene. On my left is a woman in a handsome suit, drinking a Cutty Sark on the rocks. On my right is a woman in slacks and a blouse, drinking a Jack Daniel's and water. I am trying my best to smile a tough, sardonic smile and gaze into the middle-distance, like men at bars are supposed to do. It's a little hard to carry off, though, because sitting in front of me, in a stemmed glass, is a frothy pink concoction topped by a plump, fresh strawberry.

Invariably the bartender would solicitously inquire: "Would you like a straw for that?"

Then one night last week, something terrifying happened. The strawberry daiquiris stopped tasting good to me.

I saw the bartender mixing something for somebody's maiden aunt who had somehow wandered onto the premises. He was putting the ingredients into a blender.

"What is that?" I inquired.

"You really don't want to know," he said.

"No, really," I said. "It looks pretty good."

"Why don't you just have another strawberry daiquiri?" he said.

"I want to know what you just made," I said.

He sighed.

"It's an Amaretto and ice cream," he said.

You don't want to hear the rest of the story.

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Letters will be selected on the basis of clarity, timeliness and availability of space on the editorial pages.

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