

Dear Ted,

I will address you in English as we have some of our international friends and colleagues present today as well. I promised you yesterday to keep it a little bit light and definitely not too long. I'll try to keep that promise.

You have been a lawyer now for 40 years, and you were one of the cofounders of our firm 35 years ago. It would be quite hard to list all your achievements in the field of labour migration law, as I'd have to cover such a long time.

And to be fair, it would be hard for me to do, because you were already a bar licensed lawyer before I was even born. So we'd have to dig the archives, to see what you were up to as a lawyers all these years.

In fact that is something we did, and it was a lot of fun.

For example, we found this little gem: the letter from your then patron to the Amsterdam bar to recommend you to be admitted to the bar upon completion of the patronage. He writes that that you had shown great dedication, and that you were especially well versed in immigration law.

I don't think that your special interest for immigration has changed a bit -ever since. So thinking about what it is I wanted to say to you today Ted, I knew right away what it would be about. It is a short story about that professional passion and excitement.

When I joined this firm 6 years ago, the bit of professional background that I had so far was as a civil servant, and of that most of the time at the Justice department. Adam, Eva and myself (Abraham, we joked quite a lot about our biblical status) all joined at the same time. At some point we learned that the firm would throw a little party upon our official swearing in ceremony as lawyers, and we learned that it was a tradition that the firm was going to gift us our bands (befje) with our name inscribed in it.

And what a celebration it was. It was a large beerpub in the city centre, next to our old office on the Rokin, called the Bierfabriek (the beer factory). At some point in the evening it was time for you to give a speech.

You suddenly jumped on the benches so that you could address us all, in that noisy crowded bar. With your speech then you made it so clear that you were just excited about the future, and excited about having three new lawyers on board! And you, addressing us on the table in a pub as if we were a band of pirates, was quite a thing.

I must say, as a recent ex-civil servant I was not used to this. When you jumped on that table, right there and then I knew this new workplace – and its leaders – were going to be anything but ordinary.

And it has been anything but ordinary ever since...

Over these six years I have seen you get very passionate and excited about many things that make practicing as a lawyer so much fun: strategizing about a case., weighing the strength of legal arguments or principles, or even better: coming up with original new ones. But also things like business development strategies or in general planning the firm's future.

When you talk about these matters – and I got to hand it to you: you can talk a lot! - your eyes light up and you can see that spark in your eyes. That genuine excitement.

To still have that spark... an almost boyish excitement after 40+ years of being a lawyer, that says a lot about you.

I hope and believe that our present to you will be the stuff of excitement for you as well. We have prepared a gift for you that has been the work of many people. Your friends and colleagues, former colleagues, both here and abroad.

There could have been many more included in this gift, so there's no pretense of this being a complete picture, but this is obvious both because your career has been so long, and because the editor, well he did his best, but he has his flaws.

What I can say though, is that all those who contributed, did so with great enthusiasm. They put aside their busy schedules to contribute, which made this a great – albeit slightly stressful project to do. The other important aspect was its secrecy, I remember Marco at some point spending quite a bit of time with you in London in November last year, all the while having to watch his words not to spill the beans on our little secret. They all managed wonderfully well, because I really think we kept this a secret for you. Judging by the look on your face, I think we did...

So to conclude, dear Ted, this is a gift that we as a firm, the partners, would like to give to you. Yet the greatest part of it all, is that this has become a gift of many – not just your colleagues at Everaert - to you.

And it is not something we will only give to you, as it is a book, - which by now you might have guessed - and we will have copies for all those who are here with us today to join us in this celebration.

Because this professional passion of yours for the law, and for migrants, is served best if shared with colleagues and friends!

It is a great pleasure and honour to give you this book of friends, your own liber amicorum.

Thank you Ted.