

Heavenly Humor for the Woman's Soul

Featuring the writings of
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Throwing in the Towel

Debora M. Coty

*Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting;
but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.*

PROVERBS 31:30

At age forty-nine, I decided to reinvent myself. Revise. Overhaul. Make over. I figured life is one long revision anyway.

As a teen in the seventies, my best friend Tiffany had the ethereal beauty and grace of Olivia Newton John. I, on the other hand, had the ethereal beauty and grace of Elton John. So I discovered makeup, high heels, and the friendly Whack-A-Do hair stylist.

Then life happened and chic-factor dropped to the bottom of my priority list behind marriage, kids, and career. Several decades later, I was still using Cover Girl makeup and sporting the same clothing styles and long scraggly hairdo held back with alligator clips that I wore in my senior class picture.

At my twenty-fifth high school reunion, I won the “Least Changed” prize. This was not a good thing.

There’s nothing sadder than a middle-aged woman looking like a teen wannabe.

The need to update slammed me head-on when my sixteen-year-old daughter and I were looking through old photographs taken before her birth and counted eight blouses that I still owned. In fact, I was wearing one at that very moment! Despite protests that I was just trying to get my money's worth, she dragged me to the mall and supervised the purchase of five "hot" shirts (with these hot flashes, I'm already a hot mama), two pairs of jeans (that weren't painter's pants), and a purse that didn't resemble a diaper bag on steroids.

The hair was another can of worms. Literally. I've yet to comprehend why God allows hormones to do such a nasty number on once-shiny hair as we age, when all our other body parts are either plunging south or expanding like minute rice in a pot of soup.

The writer of Proverbs wasn't kidding about fleeting beauty!

During my self-neglect years, I simply hacked my own ponytail when it reached an unmanageable length. By the time I sought professional help, there was not much to work with. My stylist tried perming my frizz once called hair. Think Chia Pet. Taming treatments resulted in a serpentine Medusa look. Layers created a strange resemblance to the Christmas trees I drew in third grade. I spent so much time in my stylist's chair, she named a blow dryer after me.

I was sorely tempted to shear my head and drop off wigs for servicing.

Tiffany and I made a pact that the year we turned fifty,

we'd get face-lifts together. But she's backing out. Why not? The bags under her eyes aren't even totes, much less trunks like mine. She still looks like Olivia in her *Grease* days. Unblemished skin, gentle laugh creases instead of inch-deep furrows, one chin. . .

I inherited my grandfather's jowls, which jiggle like a turkey's wattle when I move. Holding my head queenly high in pictures reduces my triple chin to one, but when I bow my head to read or pray, it looks like a wad of bread dough has sprouted from my neck.

So instead of a face-lift, I'm considering alligator clips behind my ears.

God assures us that all this doesn't matter. Despite conflicting cultural messages, our relationship with Him is all that *really* counts. And His rejuvenating touch of joy creates the ultimate face-lift!