

Cracking Up!

"The great enemy of the truth is very often not the lie – deliberate, contrived and dishonest – but the myth – persistent, persuasive and unrealistic,"

– John F. Kennedy

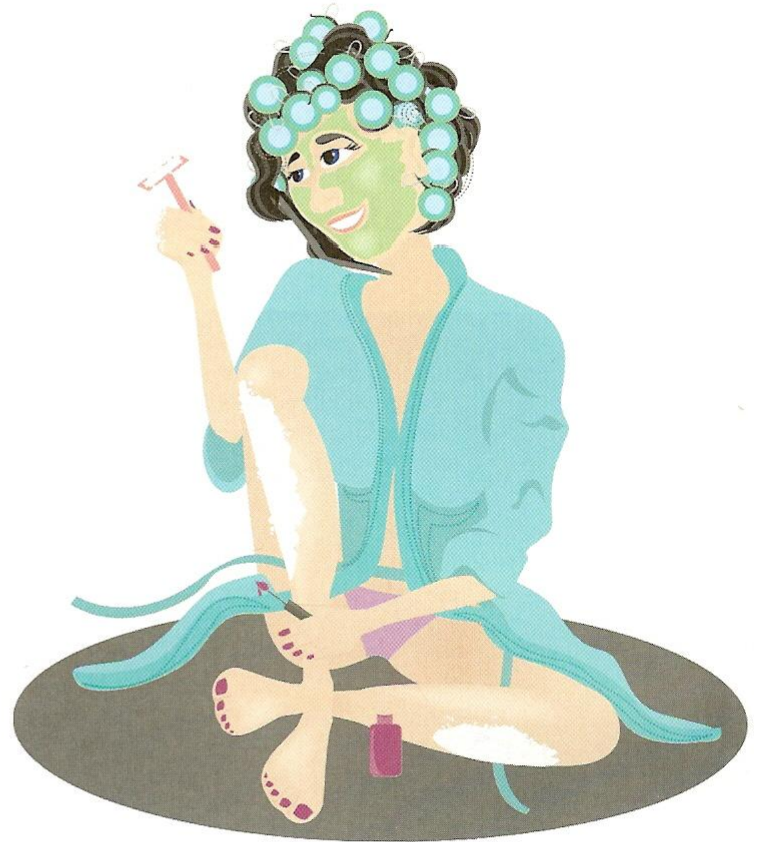
I'm cracking up. No. Really. Clumps of greyish green clay are cracking off my face and landing on my chest; kind of like rock falling from Mt. Rushmore. It's evening and I'm propped in bed reading the latest issue of a favourite magazine. I just love this magazine because it is all new-agey and supportive of the modern woman shunning societal pressures to conform to the pursuit of universal perfection. Refreshing stuff; truly embraces the natural look and respects the "real" woman. Finally!

I take a sip from my mushroom green tea (conveniently supposed to prevent wrinkles and enhance digestion at the same time). The clock catches my eye and I note, with a start, that my mask and moustache remover have been adhering to my skin long past the recommended treatment time.

I pad across the carpet to the bathroom and see that my freshly painted toenails (Charged-up Cherry if you must know) are looking a bit gummy. Hmmm. Hope I didn't scuff them on the bed sheets. I start running the warm water and then look up at my reflection in the mirror. Ho-ley mackerel!!! I squint. Is that a grey hair? Just there – next to my part. Wow. I'd better make an appointment pronto to get some highlights. And maybe we'd better investigate low-lights too while we're at it. I make a mental note to clip the photo of the hair-do from the magazine – the one that was all Ivory Girl natural looking. I'm sure Olga the hairdresser could pull that off. She's a wizard with colour.

I scrape and rub and scrub and scrape a bit more, until the sink is full of the murky sludge that was cracking on my face. There! Now, don't I look all rosy and dewy? I open my mouth wide, horse-yawn like, and savour the renewed freedom of movement. My upper lip feels numb – a little like the dentist pricked it with freezing. It is indeed considerably pinker than the rest of my scoured face but, heck, that should pass by morning. And if not, a swipe of "Red Rhapsody" on the lips should sufficiently divert attention.

I brush my teeth with Brilliant Whitener and wander over to the scale. I give it a little kick to activate the digital screen. When I am absolutely certain that a "0" comes up (sometimes it skips ahead a bit and who needs that?), I climb aboard. I continue brushing vigorously while the numbers flip, flip, flip, looking for a



place to land. Then I freeze, lest my toothbrush jiggling flip us too far. I hold my breath. The numbers solidify. Bigger numbers than I really feel comfortable with. I jump off and head for the sink and spit.

I fondly recall hearing it is foolish to weigh one's self in the evening. Apparently, the only truly accurate readings are from an early morning weigh-in. Really early – probably before I even get up.

I slip back into bed and take a quick peek at my husband to be sure I haven't woken him. Based on the rumbling snores, he's undisturbed. I truly am lucky to have this man in my life. He is kind and supportive and never critical of what I wear or how I look. I once overheard him telling a friend what first attracted him to me: he liked that I could throw a baseball as well as any guy, I could drive a stick shift and I preferred beer to those girly cider drinks. Such a funny fellow.

My head begins to bob as I give in to my fatigue. The articles "Aging – A Completely Natural Part of Life" and "10 Age-Defying Makeovers" will have to wait. I know in order to achieve my natural best tomorrow, I'd better get my beauty rest now. I pull my cotton gloves on over the herbal anti-age-spot cream and slide my lavender-scented eye mask down over my eyes.

The pursuit of true beauty can really sap a gal's energy. **MP**

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