

The-God-Who-Sees

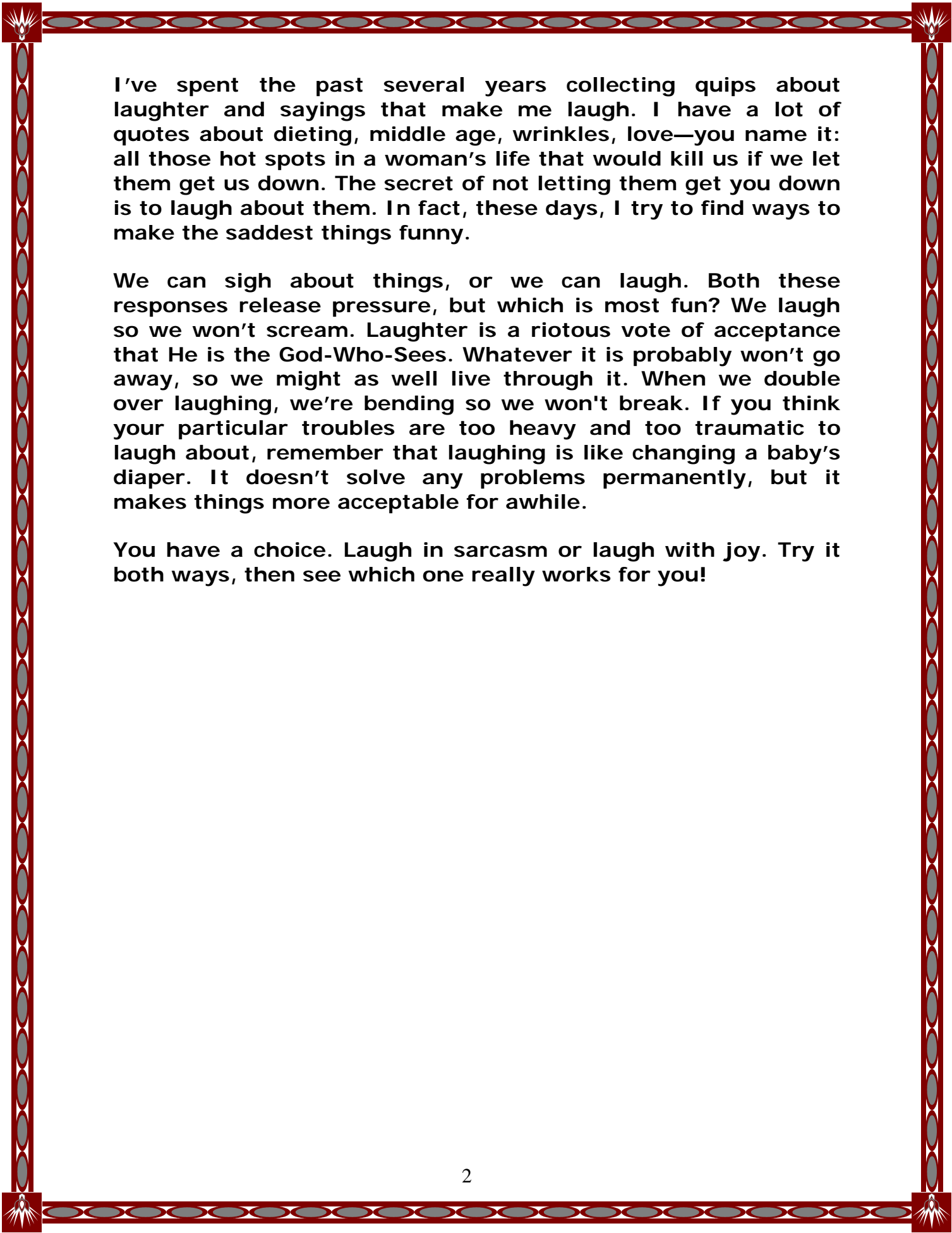
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Hagar, the pregnant maidservant of Sarah, had fled into the wilderness. She just wanted to die. But God sent an angel who found her and told her to go back home even though it was the hardest place to go. He then predicted that the child born to her would be a wild man who wouldn't get along with anybody.

Now I don't know about you, but if I were Hagar, that's not exactly what I would have wanted to hear. Hagar's response, however, was to call God a name that had never been used before: The-God-Who-Sees. And she accepted what He said. Yes, our God is the all-knowing One who sees our scars, our secrets, and our strength. Our wounds and shame are His affair, and He knows just how much trouble we can stand. Somehow, the fact that He knows us so well makes a difference. We understand there is a direction and we are part of a bigger picture. From the wildernesses in our lives, the fact that He sees gives us a reason to carry on. No longer are we anonymous, lonely, and lost.

I wonder what kind of reception Hagar got when she returned to the campsite of Sarah and Abraham? The Bible doesn't tell us. But five chapters and fourteen years later, the Lord visited Sarah. Her life, also, had been burdened and full of trouble. The root of her problem was not fertility, like Hagar's, but infertility. Once years before, Sarah had laughed sarcastically at messengers who predicted she would have a baby. It seemed a ridiculous thing since she was long past childbearing age. When confronted with the fact that she'd laughed behind closed doors, Sarah denied it. (Genesis 18:10-15). But that didn't change the facts.

God knew. He is the God-Who-Sees our secrets. In spite of what we try to hide from Him, He leads us toward our destiny. At a ripe old age, Sarah bore a boy named Isaac and laughed again. But this time the sarcasm was gone. This time, it was just fun, hilarity, and real toe-tingling joy. She said right out loud: "God has made me laugh." But the part I like best is when Sarah added, "and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me" (Genesis 21:6). I think God has given women the power to move-on in life through the contagion of laughter.



I've spent the past several years collecting quips about laughter and sayings that make me laugh. I have a lot of quotes about dieting, middle age, wrinkles, love—you name it: all those hot spots in a woman's life that would kill us if we let them get us down. The secret of not letting them get you down is to laugh about them. In fact, these days, I try to find ways to make the saddest things funny.

We can sigh about things, or we can laugh. Both these responses release pressure, but which is most fun? We laugh so we won't scream. Laughter is a riotous vote of acceptance that He is the God-Who-Sees. Whatever it is probably won't go away, so we might as well live through it. When we double over laughing, we're bending so we won't break. If you think your particular troubles are too heavy and too traumatic to laugh about, remember that laughing is like changing a baby's diaper. It doesn't solve any problems permanently, but it makes things more acceptable for awhile.

You have a choice. Laugh in sarcasm or laugh with joy. Try it both ways, then see which one really works for you!