

# THE NEW YORKER

SHOUTS & MURMURS

## HI FROM HEIDI

BY PAUL RUDNICK MAY 31, 2010



**The reality-show personality Heidi Montag recently underwent ten plastic-surgery procedures on a single day. Montag told *People* that, before deciding to take these measures, “I prayed about it for a long time and said, ‘God, if it’s wrong, then I won’t do it.’ ” The full text of Montag’s prayer has only recently been made available:**

Dear Lord:

As You probably know, because I guess You sort of know everything, I’m thinking about having a mini brow lift; lipo on my neck, waist, hips, and thighs; a chin reduction; an ear job; fat injections in my cheeks, nasolabial folds, and lips; a revision of my previous rhinoplasty; a redo of my earlier breast implants; Botox injections in my forehead and frown area; and a buttocks augmentation, if that is Thy will.

I won’t go ahead with any of this if You don’t approve, but I keep thinking, Why would God have made my plastic surgeon, Dr. Frank Ryan, so totally cute if He didn’t want me to use

him? Although, of course, I also wondered, Why did God make my hips and thighs, both inner and outer, a teeny bit chunky, and why did He dig those grooves around my nose? But then I thought, Maybe because God creates so many gazillions of new people every day there are bound to be some manufacturing imperfections, so in a way my nose is just a facial Toyota. Or maybe my parents never prayed enough, so God said, "I'm going to teach them a spiritual lesson by sending them a daughter with low, almost angry-looking eyebrows." I bet that Angelina Jolie's mother prayed every second of the day, especially for Angelina's lips. Sometimes I just want to call up my mother and say, "Gee, thanks, Mom. Maybe I wouldn't need to have my ears pinned back if you hadn't spent so much time worshipping Satan."

But I'm probably just being selfish, and I'm sure that You get tons of requests about correcting body parts. I mean, the cast of "Desperate Housewives" must have You on Speed-Prayer. And I know that my body-image issues aren't Your No. 1 priority, because there are starving people and the ozone layer and this girl I know from my TV show who has, like, enough cellulite to stucco a split-level with a three-car garage. And I don't think that I'm special in any way, so, even if You can't get back to me, like, today, it's totally O.K., because maybe there's a hurricane somewhere, or an earthquake, and a lot of the victims will be asking, "While You're saving my leg, could You also do something about my older daughter's upper arms, because she isn't getting any younger, and I don't want to have to send her over to the next village?"

You are just so awesomely amazing, and I hate to even, like, bring this up, but I just keep wondering, if You're so all-powerful and everything, why is there war? And by war I mean that hater who tweeted, "Heidi Montag already looks like a hooker-shaped air mattress."

Why do You let people say stuff like that, and kill each other with guns? And why do some people, even if they're really nice, no matter what their ex-best friends say—why don't You give those people their own eyewear collections?

My husband, Spencer, says that God sends us bad stuff to test us and to help us grow stronger, and I asked him, "Do you mean bad stuff like people telling me I have a Leno chin?" and Spencer said, "Exactly," and I said, "Well, your scraggly beard is the same color as your skin," and he said, "Babe, if God wanted us to fight He would have made one of us a Muslim and the other one a regular person."

Sometimes I even wonder about those commandments, like when You said, "Thou shalt not kill." Does that include spiders and germs and people who are just taking their own sweet time crossing the street when I'm already forty-five minutes late for a meeting with my publicist? And when You said, "Thou shalt not steal," does that cover other people's boyfriends and the tops that they never wear and just leave lying around, and a really cute baby that you just want to borrow for, like, fifteen minutes to show your surgeon what you want your new face to feel like? And, I just have to say it, ten commandments are a lot. Couldn't you change some of them to be, like, "Thou shalt not ask Heidi on a talk show if her marriage is real"?

These are just suggestions, but maybe You should jot them down.

Anyway, thank You so much for listening to me and all my tiny problems, some of which will hopefully get tinier and two of which should probably get twice as big, don't You agree? Because I was thinking that if I can look really pretty and perfect then I can be Your best possible advertisement. It's, like, people already look at me and sometimes I hear them whisper, "Dear God." I'm not saying that You don't love chubby and unattractive people; it's just that Your making them chubby and unattractive is a handy way of saying, "Oh, look, there go some godless people." Or, as I like to think of them, people without their own shows. Or, as Spencer calls them, our fans.

Bye from Heidi. ♦

# Discussion Questions

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- ❖ What did you think of Heidi's prayer?
- ❖ Do you think God cares about Heidi's issues?
- ❖ Do you share any of Heidi's questions? Which ones?
- ❖ Do you think Heidi understands God? Why?
- ❖ Would you pray for things that Heidi prays for? Why?
- ❖ How would you answer some of Heidi's questions?