

Anita M. E. Moore

Elegy On A Bar Of Soap

How clearly I recall the hour you emerged
triumphantly from your box,
You who lie now utterly spent,
Formless, in the slimy debris
of your former self.
So smooth you were, so firm and shapely,
In the days when the letters stamped
on your brow
Still boldly proclaimed the glory that
once was yours.
How ceaselessly you laboured
throughout your life,
Wearing away your youth so that others
might find comfort.
How much tired skin you must have healed with
that deep-cleansing, moisturizing caress,
Leaving more and more of yourself
behind each time,
Giving so freely of that of which you had
so little,
And taking in return only the
grime and the soil
Which is, in the end, all that this mad world
has to offer.

You did not even complain when someone carelessly
 turned the water on the soapdish
And left you to drown helplessly
 in a stagnant, murky puddle.
There you lie now, your shapely perfection gone,
 your firmness dissipated,
A pale, bloated shadow of what you once were.
Now, your faithful service forgotten, you are
Condemned to be scraped mercilessly away
 by ungrateful hands.
And soon, very soon, another bar,
 fresh and fragrant,
Will take your place,
And lie in the dish that once was yours...
 ...as if you had never been.