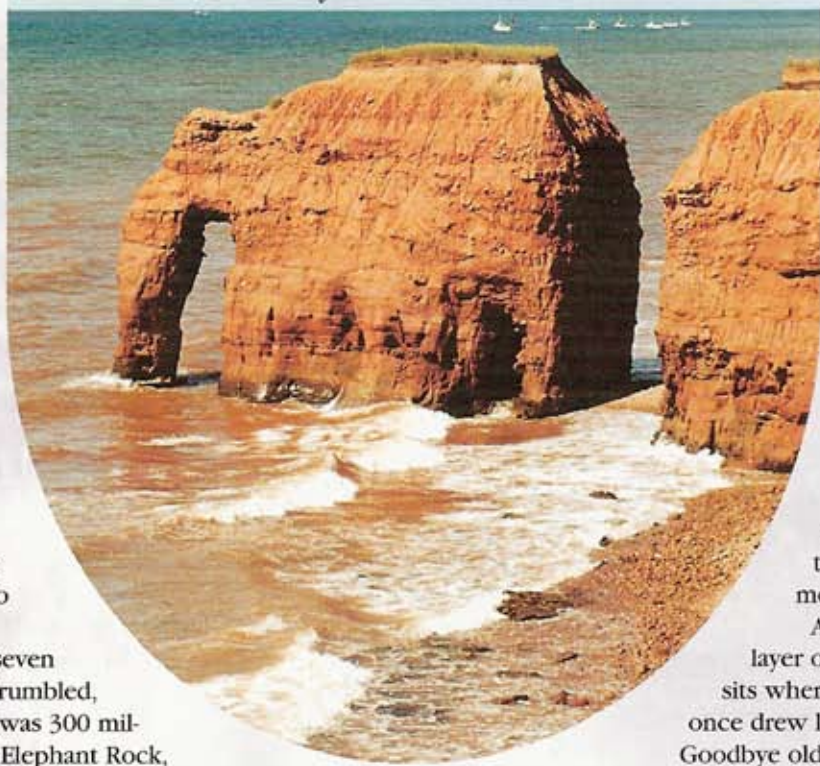


A Lady of Rock

By: Barbara Dickson



Sometimes sad news travels slowly. I found out recently that I lost an old friend and yet she has been gone for over a year. I remember her peaceful way, her strength and serenity in the face of raw adversity. She was a wise, silent teacher who taught by example.

My "friend" was only seven years old when her life crumbled, although technically she was 300 million years old. Known as Elephant Rock, she stood on the shore of the North Cape in Prince Edward Island. As her name implied, this ruddy-hued stone formation resembled a gigantic elephant. Her rocky trunk reached into the cold Northumberland Strait, and I imagined her drawing water from the deep recesses of the Atlantic. Emerald tufts of hair topped off her smooth back. Her stillness and solitude pervaded the shore.

At low tide, a humbling walk around her chunky feet was possible. A walk that was just as beneficial for the soul as it was for the body. When the tide roared in, swirling water seemed to tug at her base, pulling her to sea. Facing the Atlantic, she welcomed friend and foe.

There was something special about the "lady of rock." She came to life before my eyes. For me, she exhibited beautiful, humanlike qualities with her solid strength and her steadfastness, regardless of what life threw at her. Whether it was the suffocating heat of summer, frigid temperatures of winter or violent Atlantic storms, she faithfully stood firm.

Every year she inspired tens of thousands from all over the world. How couldn't she as she faced the elements undaunted and courageously stayed at her post? But the

very force that brought her to life caused her destruction. Erosion relentlessly wore and carved, weathered and beat her. A few days before Christmas in 1998, the stone lady's trunk collapsed into the sea, succumbing to the constant pummeling of waves and wind. A heap of clay, just another layer of red sand on the shore, sits where her graceful trunk once drew life.

Goodbye old friend.

The rock's demise can remind us that what appears rugged today may be no more than a mound of rubble tomorrow.

Sadly, erosion's power isn't limited to rock. Human lives can wear out, too. As women, we convince ourselves that we're strong, steady and sure. We attempt to please all who need us, juggling the role of mother, wife, daughter, grandmother, friend and colleague. With the march of time and the storms of life, our bodies age, we grow weary, and our dreams dash against the rocks in the high tides of disappointment and circumstance.

Sometimes we may feel that our lives lie crumbled, like the trunk of the elephant lady, in a rocky heap. But unlike the lady of rock, we don't have to stay broken and crushed. There is Someone who amidst the rubble, doesn't crumble. God never wears out. He doesn't fade away with time. He doesn't erode. He is strong enough to pick up fallen pieces. He is big enough to bear the weight of worries and sorrows. And, He can shelter dreams from life's winds and high seas.

Today, erosion is again at work carving a new trunk on the other end of the elephant stony body. She may return one day from the sea. ☪

*Amidst life's rubble, there is
Someone who never crumbles*