From The Doctor, With Love

by Michelle Elvy

I am *tired, man, beat*.
feel like a whiny kid,
are we there yet,
need to sleep!
Don't know if I can walk
another mile, though you might talk
me into it. 'Cause though I'm
stomped and scuffed,
and have wrinkles and pocks,
you say they're not wrinkles,
but creases and folds —
you say I have character,
you say I'm not old.
You caress me,
hold me and stroke
the soft spots between my folds.
I love how you touch me,
your hands warm on my shape,
and I know we are bonded
by more than duct tape.

Remember that dog shit?
And the chewing gum?
It's a hazardous world, but you, old chum,
scraped and washed me clean of all
those insults, every single time.
Then came the thinning —
your hair, my sole.

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We're well suited, you and I —
Together, we're whole.

And though you toss me
in the corner each night,
I feel a surge of affection
the next morning
as you pick me up gently again,
choose me over the Adidas, the Nikes,
and even those Florsheims
that your mother once bought,
back when you were jobhunting.
You look right past them,
once shiny and loud
now dusty with disuse.
I wait quietly and think,
I am here for you.

We're both thinner, older,
greyer, slower,
but you are still you
and I am The Doctor.
And I feel it deep down,
you never say it but I know:
I am not just any old loafer.