



The Story of a Slug's Quest to find her Destiny

Once upon a time there was a slug, who one day was not content with her life anymore. Was it because, she grew up at the edge of a midden and enjoyed to gorge herself on written paper? Did she understand anything she was eating? Were there actually people who threw away books about the purpose of life? Anyway, a longing grew in her, to be more than one out of a million greedy, hoggish pest, which only care about their own food, their own survival and pleasure without any regards to other species or the earth as a whole.

How does a slug express her thoughts and feelings? Who knows – maybe she communicates using scents, colors or the consistency of slime, maybe also through direct empathy or something like telepathy. Who can say, what happens inside such a small, unremarkable (or even harmful and unloved) living being? In this story the slug in question felt lots of sadness at first, because she didn't know what she was living for. She allowed herself to feel the entire pain about every meaningless spent hour of her life deep in her cells. Apart from pain coming from sadness, there was also pain from anger, because she let herself be discouraged by her own desire and the lifestyle of other slugs from the search for her very own destiny. And eventually she consciously felt the pain of her fear, because she didn't know how she could discover her destiny as a slug, let alone how to live it and what such a quest would involve.

If she tried to express that to share it with her fellow species, she encountered incomprehension. More and more the others avoided her without a single slug ever directly telling her what was bothering them. But over time other animals came closer. One day a hedgehog approached her: "You smell strange. You slugs with your slime just don't taste nice, but you smell different than the others. Maybe I should taste you?" - "Go ahead, I anyway don't know what I live for", said the slug in deep sadness.

The hedgehog hesitated. The way the slug shared her sadness, sounded just like low drama. That is what the hedgehog unconsciously played for many years, especially in his family, until he noticed that he was only getting older and nothing ever changed. Thus he said: "Ah, you want to play victim? I don't lend myself to these kind of games anymore. I decided not to be a persecutor or a rescuer. And also not a victim: If somebody doesn't respect my boundaries, I will show my prickles. Only then I can follow my destiny..." - "Destiny? You know what your destiny is?" - "Sure thing, I know. I demolish a huge amount of pest and thus take care of the balance in nature." - "Wow, that is more than I can say for myself. I think most rather see me as a pest." - "That might very well be true, unfortunately a bad tasting pest, therefore others need to take care of you slugs." - "See, you don't really bolster me up either." - "Is that my job?" - "I don't know. I think if I would have found my destiny, I would try to encourage and empower others." - "That is not my thing, no idea how it might work."

But as he continued walking, the hedgehog thought about it. Encouraging others, hm, empowering, hm. That is something different from rescuing. He talked about it with his wife, who said: "Yes, hearing that I have to admit that we are actually living all for ourselves. Maybe we should see beyond our own nose, what do you think? What are other animal species interested in, what topics do they deal with? Eating pest, is fine and dandy, but in the long run it is only what we are used to do." And without the slug ever knowing about it, something changed for the hedgehog family and spread out. It created more exchange, more connection, more spirit of discovery. But this would be matter for many more stories...



The slug came up high. Not from her own strength, but because a bird picked her to take her to the nest. “Wow, the world looks quite different from up here”, said the slug. The bird almost let her drop down, because never before did his food talk to him. “What do you mean?” he asked. “Look!”, said the slug, “everything is much closer together. I can perceive the greater connections. Look, how diverse everything is, how many possibilities there are. I believe, if I could fly, I would already know my destiny.” - “Destiny? What is that supposed to be? Can you eat it?” - “No, of course not. Do you only care about feeding?” - “Now that the small ones open their hungry yaps that is the most important thing.” - “Don't you enjoy flying?” - “Well, that is nothing special.” - “And what about singing? Without bird songs the world would be poorer.” - “That is what I do, when I look for a woman, but now I have one, so it is not necessary anymore.” - “What, you don't sing for your woman anymore, only because she already chose you? How is the love between the both of you supposed to stay alive?” - “This is the limit. Enough with all your questions, mind your own business.” And the bird dropped the slug. “Lucky me I don't have bones that could break”, thought the slug as her body softly adapted to the ground she fell on.

Initially the bird was angry about the slug's talk, not least because he didn't had any food left. He went for another spin, played a little with the wind and sun beams and suddenly thought: “Actually, she is right, I could give my wife a special treat once again.” And he sang from the bottom of his heart as he arrived at the nest. Then he could see how the little ones closed their yaps with surprise and how something else than their stomach was nourished by the singing. His wife looked at him with radiant eyes and sang a wonderful love song herself. And also this insight of the bird family spread out way beyond their own family, beyond their species – again matter of many more stories...

But the slug crept further along the ground, continuing her quest of finding her destiny. “If only I knew my destiny, everything would be easier”, she thought. Thereby she did not realize that a human stepped very close to her. “Oh”, the human thought, “a slug. Actually pest, but I am glad I didn't scrunch it. Animals have such an easy life, they just follow their instincts and don't need to worry about their destiny. If only I knew my destiny, everything would be easier...”

In reflections, he looked at the slug and continued pondering: “Or maybe it is simply the way, being on the way, the quest itself, that makes sense? Is it the feeling and sharing of what is in the moment, addressing where there is something to do, the willingness to live connection despite being afraid of closeness?”

Did the slug actually perceive the thoughts of the human? Or was it the other way round? Was it possibly just a coincidence that something similar moved in her being, that she could more and more feel: Yes, it is the journey that counts, not the destination. It is the quest itself, the conscious being on the way with the willingness to feel, be connected and do what is needed right now. And suddenly she felt how a fourth feeling emerged, for what she could only think of one name: Joy.

Although she is long dead, what she brought to the world with her quest and being continues to spread and reaches out to hedgehogs, birds, humans and many other living beings.