

# **The Moth and the Light**

by

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*Moths are insects that most people do not pay much attention to, while some consider them inferior cousins to butterflies or describe them as foolish. The latter could be because moths are better known for being attracted to sources of light like lamps, thus leading themselves to their untimely deaths. As pointed out by Jeff Smith: “You’d think the goal for the night would be to find food or find a mate ... But I’ve had a moth out on my porch for three days, just sitting next to the light the whole time ... If a praying mantis doesn’t eat it, or a frog doesn’t eat it, it might just sit there wasting much of its life” (2018).*

*This unique behavior and bizarre “loyalty” to their cause to reach the light is what moved us into making a moth the main character of the fable “The Moth and the Light.” What is usually seen as stupidity, we interpret as devotion and passion. According to Smith, moths are actually trying to navigate using the North Star, but they get sidetracked by the artificial lights humans use. The devotion of the moth to reach the light of the North Star, confusing it for a different light, is fascinating and it has worked perfectly with the premise of the story: to follow your dream and what you feel is right for you. The moths might be tricked by the fake lights of lamps on porches, but this is the path they believe is right for them. And this is the connection we attempt to highlight.*

*Then comes the twist! We were first thinking of having the moth follow the light for eternity, but at that point, we were too attached and needy for a happy ending for our little character. So, we added another element, the plot-twist character of the firefly. It worked perfectly with our intentions since fireflies are basically small sources of light.*

*Another important element that might appear as just an aesthetic touch, or get ignored, is the addition of a red thread connecting all the slides. The red thread was not part of the original plan, but it was intertextually added after reading a short story, called “Blue Thread, Red Thread” by Ha-Yun Jung (2002). In this story, there is a phrase that reads, “Fate, even if it existed, probably was not the most dependable link that connected people’s lives” (Jung 2002). Fate is another theme of the fable. The little moth decides to challenge what they knew, what was destined for them, and make their own decisions, creating a new fate for themselves.*

*Additionally, in Greek folklore, stories usually start with a little poem:*

Red thread tied  
rolled in the yarn  
give it a small kick to unravel it  
for the story to begin.

*This beautiful way of starting a story, implying the message of the red thread of fate, was simply too perfect to be ignored.*

*The overall story might be seen as childish or unsophisticated, but after you start reading, and unraveling the thread, it uncovers a much deeper meaning, teaching a lesson to people of all ages. No one should give up on their dreams and get comfortable with what is thought right, or rational for them. Somewhere, deep inside every one of us, there lies a fostering a dream, and with this story, we are trying to encourage people to un-dust it, polish it, and bring it back to life. For everyone has their own path based on their dreams, beliefs, and wants. We control our own fate, and no one can take that away!*

### **Works Cited**

- Jung, Ha-Yun. “Blue Thread, Red Thread.” *The Threepenny Review*, no. 90, 2002, pp. 12–14, [www.jstor.org/stable/4385140?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4385140?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents). Accessed 1 Dec. 2022.
- Smith, Jeff. “Why Do Moths Love Lamps so Much?” *Animals*, 5 Oct. 2018, [www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/article/moth-meme-lamps-insects-lights-attraction-news](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/article/moth-meme-lamps-insects-lights-attraction-news). Accessed 1 Dec. 2022.