

A SEA SLUG IN TURKEY

Mersin, Turkey, 2007

An American travelling in Turkey found a washed up sea slug.

The man poking a stick into the washed up translucent green thing hesitated when she approached, just long enough to chuckle under his breath and say something Turkish she didn't understand. A giant sea slug she thought, but exactly what kind of exotic Mediterranean beast rolled at their feet—she had no idea. She considered how to save it from the man and his stick. She thought to say, *let me handle this*. But how? Roll it back to sea? How would her tampering, the oils of her skin, leave it? The man continued to stab at the slug and she continued to walk. Plenty was ahead of her. Like, the man she loved, walking fast up the coast at a hard to match clip. Him, and the rest of her day. A whole day of discoveries not unlike the slug—rolling and locked small in a world of incompatible elements.

And still years later, she thought of the man and the slug, the stabbing and, of course, the man she loved in the distance walking too quick. And during one of these years, on a whim, thousands of miles elsewhere, she entered into a search engine: *how to save a washed up sea slug*. But the search brought up little. A few forums, mostly related to mass death, weather related phenomenon, the consequences of storms slamming schools of life to shore. Not much of what to do should just one lay in your path. Generally, she learned that little could be done. By the time you find the slug, by the time it hits the shore, low tide water has gone too hot by the sun and oxygen has gone too faint in the blood. And so, she learned again as she had so many times before and would so many time later, that everything has its place.