

DIARY ENTRY

SILVER BROOK

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After reading Chapter Four of *Silverbrook: Yumna and the Golden Horse* by Yasmin Abdel-Magied, write a diary entry from the perspective of Sadieqa explaining her experience of encountering the golden horse.

You should describe the build-up to seeing the golden horse, the event itself, her intense emotions, how she reacted, and how she felt after running away. You can also use the diary entry to make a prediction about what you think will happen next.

Dear Diary,



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS – EXTRACT I

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Extract taken from Chapter Four of *Silverbrook: Yumna and the Golden Horse* by Yasmin Abdel-Magied.

the olives and greens of houses and fields. She swept her gaze up and down, trying to spot any nocturnal creatures, voles or owls or even a tiny pipistrelle. No luck. But then, there was a flash of movement—

Yumna dropped her binoculars in shock.

'Pssst! Sadeeqa!' Yumna tried to catch her friend's attention. 'Sadeeqa, look!'

To their right, only a handful of yards away, stood a golden, glowing creature. It was enormous, with a mane that shone like starlight, and a grace that seemed otherworldly. A horse, but not one like they'd ever seen before. It seemed to glide through the trees, as if untouched by reality. Was it a dream, or a hallucination?

'Can you see it?' Yumna whispered. 'It's beautiful . . .'

Sadeeqa, on the other hand, looked terrified. Yumna suddenly remembered Sadeeqa's deep fear of horses.

'It's not going to hurt us . . .' Yumna whispered, but her voice was drowned out by the horse's snorting, then its loud neigh echoing through the woods. It turned to face the girls, raising its front hoof and kicking at the ground, as if ready to charge.

'Gotta get out of here,' Sadeeqa said, her voice low and tight. Yumna shook her head, wordlessly asking her friend to wait. She turned her attention towards the creature, locking her eyes with its unblinking gaze. Its eyes were

wild, darting about, foam gathering around its mouth. *It looked frightened.*

'Hey, hey, shhh, it's OK, buddy, it's OK . . .' Yumna edged towards the horse, her soft voice masking her own fear. She didn't have that much experience with horses, but even she could tell this one needed help. What was such a beautiful horse doing outside, alone in the middle of the night? As she closed the distance between them, the horse reared up, neighing loudly, then crashed down with thunderous effect, before galloping towards them.

YIKES!

Yumna squealed, throwing herself to the side. She squeezed her eyes shut as she hit the ground, a sharp rock digging into her side, her backpack thudding loudly as she fell – then opened her eyes just in time to watch the creature soar right over her. She stared, mouth open, as the horse, which seemed to emit light from its body, landed a metre away from her head, then continued to canter away.

Her heart galloping, Yumna scrambled to her feet.

'Holy moly . . . can you believe that!?' she said aloud.

There was no reply. Yumna glanced around. Sadeeqa was nowhere to be seen. Once again, Yumna's body was flooded with adrenaline, but this time it was sharper, scarier than before.

'Sadeeqa? Sadeeqa!'

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- How did Sadeeqa react when she saw the horse? Give details from the text.
- The narrator asks, "Was it a dream, or a hallucination?" Why might the author include that question here? What does it tell us about Yumna's state of mind?
- The horse is described as "glowing" and "otherworldly," but its eyes are "wild" and it is "foaming." What does this mixture of images make you feel about the horse – friend, enemy, or something else?
- Why does Yumna decide to edge closer to the horse even though she is scared? What does that show about her character?
- Have you ever felt both excited and frightened at the same time, like Yumna?
- Do you think Yumna made the right choice trying to calm the horse? Why or why not?



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS – EXTRACT 2

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Extract taken from Chapter Ten of *Silverbrook: Yumna and the Golden Horse* by Yasmin Abdel-Magied.

Yumna dropped the binoculars from her eyes and sighed. She'd been watching the Moonlight Monster do its funny walk all across the fields for ages, trying all her observational tricks to work out what it was doing, but nothing made sense.

Worse still? Now, despite keeping a close eye on its movements, Yumna had lost sight of the creature. It had ducked behind a bale and simply not reappeared. *Great.* She pondered her next course of action.

She wanted to solve the mystery of the Moonlight Monster, and she wanted to do it now. She needed to salvage something from this mess of a night!

What did she have to go off?

Yumna looked around and spotted the trail of prints in the dew that the Moonlight Monster had left, zigzagging across the field. She traced the steps with her gaze, trying to figure out whether or not there was a discernible pattern. Apart from covering almost every inch of visible field, she couldn't deduce anything more.

Yumna turned towards the BnB. It was a long shot, but the last time she had seen it, the Moonlight Monster had appeared to enter the BnB. Maybe it would do so again?

A light flickered on in a bedroom on the second floor of the BnB.

Yumna tried to see who was inside. It was too far away. *Binoculars!*

She fiddled with the focus wheel as she raised the lenses to her eyes. *This is creepy*, she thought. Peeking into a stranger's room in the dead of night was not the height of detective work. But something told her the answers to her questions lay in that room.

A silhouette approached the window pane. The shape was the body of a regular-sized man . . . but it had the *head* of the Moonlight Monster! *Subhanallah*. Yumna's eyes strained, but the light behind the creature meant she couldn't see any details. Then, the blank face turned, and Yumna felt the hairs on the back of her neck rise. The glass eyes were *staring right at her*.

The creature drew the curtains shut with a snap.

Yumna let go of the breath she had been holding.

She was right.

The Moonlight Monster . . . was in the BnB.

Yumna ran towards the BnB, all thoughts of her friends forgotten. She had to warn Mrs Hardy, had to tell her the BnB guests were in danger. She raced through the fields, but soon found herself slowing down to a semi-respectable jog. The fields were rather large, and she was beginning to wheeze rather dramatically. *I might need to work on my*

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- What is Yumna trying to work out about the Moonlight Monster at the start of the extract?
- What new clue makes Yumna believe the Moonlight Monster is inside the BnB?
- Why does Yumna feel frustrated when the Moonlight Monster disappears? Which words or phrases show this?
- Yumna calls peeking into the window “creepy”. Why does she still do it anyway? What does this tell us about her personality?
- How can we tell that Yumna is becoming more certain she has solved the mystery by the end of the extract?
- Why does Yumna immediately run towards the BnB instead of waiting or telling her friends first? What might this decision suggest about her strengths and weaknesses?



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS – EXTRACT 3

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Extract taken from Chapter Eighteen of *Silverbrook: Yumna and the Golden Horse* by Yasmin Abdel-Magied.

Yumna or Nafisa, who were following the conversation ping back and forth like a tennis match. Not Mr Sulaiman, or Abdullah. One minute, they were talking to Mrs Hardy about the choir, the next, they were being frogmarched off the green.

Yumna's mind raced. There had never been security at a market before. It was a local village market, why would they need security? But there were three men in yellow vests, just 'doing their job' and another man in a leather jacket who looked familiar . . .

'Norton?' Yumna said, as the nerdy man she had gone nature exploring with pushed Abdullah's shoulder. 'What are you doing here?'

'Norton works for us,' Hector said in Yumna's direction. 'He's a loyal servant of the Maidstones, and has been with the family for many years.'

Yumna couldn't believe it. She shrugged away from the security guard that was trying to move her along. Getting in between Norton and her father, she looked up at the man who less than 24 hours ago, she would have considered a new friend.

'Norton, what are you doing here?'

Norton shrugged. 'My job, lassie.'

'I don't understand – you told me . . .' She searched for the words, then spotted Mr Turner in the market crowd.

He turned before she could register his expression, and this small movement snapped something in Yumna. Why was it that every single person she relied on had lied to her, shunned her, turned away from her?

'ARE YOU EVEN A HERPETOLOGIST?!"

The market fell quiet. All eyes turned to the scene: the three Muslim families, surrounded by security guards, being ushered off stage.

Then, in the distance, the sound of a thousand buzzing insects began to rise . . .

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- Why is Yumna so shocked to see Norton with the security guards?
- What does Hector's description of Norton as a "loyal servant" suggest about power and control in this moment?
- How can we tell that Yumna feels betrayed by more than one person, not just Norton?
- Why do you think Mr Turner turns away instead of responding to Yumna?
- Why do you think Yumna's question "ARE YOU EVEN A HERPETOLOGIST?!" is written in capital letters? What effect does this have on the reader?
- The final line introduces the sound of "a thousand buzzing insects." What mood does this create, and why might the author end the scene this way?



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SETTING DESCRIPTION – GLEBE MANOR

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After reading *Silverbrook: Yumna and the Golden Horse* by Yasmin Abdel-Magied, write a paragraph describing Glebe Manor, the Maidstone's property. Think about using your senses to bring the place to life. You might include:

- ◆ **Sight:** What does it look like?
- ◆ **Smell:** What can you notice in the air when you step inside?
- ◆ **Light and shadow:** Is it bright, dim, or full of shifting shadows?
- ◆ **Sounds:** What noises can be heard, or what makes it feel quiet?
- ◆ **Atmosphere:** How does the building make you feel?



Try to use powerful adjectives and phrases to help the reader imagine the scene clearly.



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WORDSEARCH

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F	Y	M	P	L	K	E	E	N	X	I	E	M	D
D	U	A	A	S	D	O	O	W	T	T	Y	A	E
S	M	G	J	U	R	D	E	D	R	R	E	I	G
I	N	I	F	K	M	K	N	E	E	M	T	D	A
L	A	C	K	O	U	E	I	T	C	B	D	S	L
V	N	A	D	T	S	T	S	E	N	F	A	T	L
E	H	L	S	R	N	Y	Y	C	E	U	W	O	I
R	Y	M	O	P	M	M	N	T	D	O	O	N	V
B	O	H	U	A	O	I	D	I	L	Y	R	E	E
R	W	A	O	P	A	J	I	V	O	B	O	S	W
O	D	R	O	J	I	O	K	E	G	O	G	Z	U
O	P	R	Y	N	D	A	Q	R	F	U	A	C	N
K	P	Y	N	A	E	V	I	D	E	N	C	E	M

DETECTIVE

HORSE

SILVERBROOK

DJINN

MAGICAL

VILLAGE

EVIDENCE

MAIDSTONES

WOODS

GOLDEN

MYSTERY

YUMNA



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WORDSEARCH ANSWERS

SILVER BROOK

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F	Y	M	P	L	K	E	E	N	X	I	E	M	D
D	U	A	A	S	D	O	O	W	T	T	Y	A	E
S	M	G	J	U	R	D	E	D	R	R	E	I	G
I	N	I	F	K	M	K	N	E	E	M	T	D	A
L	A	C	K	O	U	E	I	T	C	B	D	S	L
V	N	A	D	T	S	T	S	E	N	F	A	T	L
E	H	L	S	R	N	Y	Y	C	E	U	W	O	I
R	Y	M	O	P	M	M	N	T	D	O	O	N	V
B	O	H	U	A	O	I	D	I	L	Y	R	E	E
R	W	A	O	P	A	J	I	V	O	B	O	S	W
O	D	R	O	J	I	O	K	E	G	O	G	Z	U
O	P	R	Y	N	D	A	Q	R	F	U	A	C	N
K	P	Y	N	A	E	V	I	D	E	N	C	E	M

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