

The Unicorn in the Garden by James Thurber

Once upon a sunny morning a man who sat in a breakfast nook looked up from his scrambled eggs to see a white unicorn with a golden horn quietly cropping the roses in the garden. The man went up to the bedroom where his wife was still asleep and woke her. "There's a unicorn in the garden," he said. "Eating roses." She opened one unfriendly eye and looked at him. "The unicorn is a mythical beast," she said, and turned her back on him. The man walked slowly downstairs and out into the garden. The unicorn was still there; he was now browsing among the tulips. "Here, unicorn," said the man and pulled up a lily and gave it to him. The unicorn ate it gravely. With a high heart, because there was a unicorn in his garden, the man went upstairs and roused his wife again. "The unicorn," he said, "ate a lily." His wife sat up in bed and looked at him, coldly. "You are a booby," she said, "and I am going to have you put in a booby-hatch." The man, who never liked the words "booby" and "booby-hatch," and who liked them even less on a shining morning when there was a unicorn in the garden, thought for a moment. "We'll see about that," he said. He walked over to the door. "He has a golden horn in the middle of his forehead," he told her. Then he went back to the garden to watch the unicorn; but the unicorn had gone away. The man sat among the roses and went to sleep.

And as soon as the husband had gone out of the house, the wife got up and dressed as fast as she could. She was very excited and there was a gloat in her eye. She telephoned the police and she telephoned the psychiatrist; she told them to hurry to her house and bring a strait-jacket. Then the police and the psychiatrist looked at her with great interest. "My husband," she said, "saw a unicorn this morning." The police looked at the psychiatrist and the psychiatrist looked at the police. "He told me it ate a lily," she said. The psychiatrist looked at the police and the police looked at the psychiatrist. "He told me it had a golden horn in the middle of its forehead," she said. At a solemn signal from the psychiatrist, the police leaped from their chairs and seized the wife. They had a hard time subduing her, for she put up a terrific struggle, but they finally subdued her. Just as they got her into the strait-jacket, the husband came back into the house.

"Did you tell your wife you saw a unicorn?" asked the police. "Of course not," said the husband. "The unicorn is a mythical beast." "That's all I wanted to know," said the psychiatrist. "Take her away. I'm sorry, sir, but your wife is as crazy as a jay bird." So they took her away, cursing and screaming, and shut her up in an institution. The husband lived happily ever after.

Moral: Don't count your boobies until they are hatched.

Full Name :

Group:.....



S1 Examination in Literature

1. Put True, False or Maybe next to the following statements. (4 points)

- a. The wife asked the man to prepare breakfast for her.
- b. The man went to sleep because he was sad that the unicorn had gone away.
- c. The man didn't like the word "booby" because his wife always called him that.
- d. The unicorn preferred roses to lilies.

2. Why do you think the man said to his wife "We'll see about that"? (1 point)

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3. Find a word or expression in the paragraph which means the same thing as: (6 points)

- a. animal
- b. jumped
- c. seriously
- d. spouse
- e. little while
- f. inquired

4. Rewrite the following false statements to make them true according to the story. (4 points)

a. The husband did not take a nap after he found that the unicorn had left.

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b. The wife was calm and silent when the police took her away.

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c. The man was depressed when he went up for a second time to tell his wife about the unicorn.

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d. The wife called the police and the psychiatrist after the husband had entered the house.

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5. Why do you think the police told the man "your wife is as crazy as a jay bird"? (1 point)

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6. (Circle the correct letter/answer) The police and the psychiatrist looked at her with great interest because... (1 points)

- A. they were interested in knowing more about why she told them to hurry and bring a strait jacket.
- B. they had noticed that there was a gloat in her left eye.
- C. it was part of their job always to seem interested in what people told them.

7 . Find a word or expression which means the opposite of (3 points)

- a. loudly
- b. let go of
- c. move slowly