

Northern Lights Extract

Comprehension Questions

Lyra had to adjust to her new sense of her own story, and that couldn't be done in a day. To see Lord Asriel as her father was one thing, but to accept Mrs Coulter as her mother was nowhere near so easy. A couple of month ago she would have rejoiced, of course, and she knew that too, and felt confused.

But, being Lyra, she didn't fret about it for long, for there was the Fen town to explore and many Gyptian children to amaze. Before the three days were up she was an expert with a punt (in her eyes at least) and she'd gathered a gang of urchins about her with tales of her mighty father, so unjustly made captive.

"And then one evening the Turkish Ambassador was a guest at Jordan for dinner. And he was under the orders from the Sultan hisself to kill me father, right, and he had a ring on his finger with a hollow stone full of poison. And when the wine came round he made as if to reach across my father's glass, and he sprinkled the poison in. It was done so quick that no one else saw him, but—"

"What sort of poison?" demanded a thin-faced girl.

"Poison out of a special Turkish serpent." Lyra invented, "what they catch by playing a pipe to lure out and then they throw it a sponge soaked in honey and the serpent bites it and can't get his fangs free, and they catch it and milk to venom out of it.

Anyway, my father seen what the Turk done, and he says Gentlemen, I want to propose a toast of friendship between Jordan College and the College of Izmir, which was the college the Turkish Ambassador belonged to. And to show our willingness to be friends, he says, we'll swap glasses and drink each other's wine."

"And the Ambassador was in a fix then, 'cause he couldn't refuse to drink without giving deadly insult, and he couldn't drink it because he knew it was poisoned. He went pale and he fainted right away at the table. And when he come round they was all still sitting there, waiting and looking at him. And then he had to either drink the poison or own up."

"So what did he do?"

"He drunk it. It took him five whole minutes to die, and he was in torment all the time."

"Did you see it happen?"

"No, 'cause girls en't allowed at the High Table. But I seen his body afterwards when they laid him out. His skin was all withered like an old apple, and his eyes were starting from his head. In fact they had to push 'em back in the sockets..."
And so on.

Meanwhile, around the edges of the Fen country, the police were knocking at doors, searching attics and outhouses, inspecting papers and interrogating everyone who claimed to have seen a blonde little girl; and in Oxford the search was even fiercer.



Questions

Comprehension recall



What did Lyra say the Turkish Ambassador had put in her father's glass?

What was the name of the college that the Turkish ambassador was from in Lyra's story?

Meaning of words



Find and copy the phrase that tells the reader that Lyra had only recently found out who her parents were.

Language for effect



Throughout the text, the author writes to mimic how Lyra speaks.
Can you find an example and explain why he does this?

Questions

Inference



What does the phrase 'or at least in her eyes' suggest about how good Lyra is at punt?

Why might they be searching so fiercely for Lyra?

Lyra enjoys telling stories to the Gyptian children. Justify this using evidence from the text.

Answers

Comprehension recall



What did Lyra say the Turkish Ambassador had put in her father's glass?

poison

What was the name of the college that the Turkish ambassador was from in Lyra's story?

College of Izmir

Meaning of words



Find and copy the phrase that tells the reader that Lyra had only recently found out who her parents were.

Lyra had to adjust to her new sense of her own story

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Examples: what they catch by playing a pipe", And he was under the orders from the Sultan hisself to kill me father, right", Anyway, my father seen what the Turk done",No, cause girls en't allowed at the High Table"

He does this because it allows the reader to get a sense of the character and what she is like. It helps the reader paint a picture of the character and hear her voice.

Answers

Inference



What does the phrase ‘(or at least in her eyes)’ suggest about how good Lyra is at punt?

She believed she was good but she wasn't as good as she thought she was.

Why might they be searching so fiercely for Lyra?

she was or had something very important

Lyra enjoys telling stories to the Gyptian children. Justify this using evidence from the text.

Lyra gathers a gang of urchins to tell her tales. These tales are made up as it says,

“she invented”. This suggests that she is making up stories to get their attention and build her father up as someone very mighty and important.