

# UNICORN SEEKERS

## THE NIGHT OF THE UNICORN DANCE



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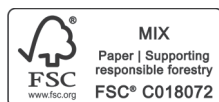
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*In shining memory of Skylar,  
who knew every horse was secretly a unicorn.*



Dear Unicorn Seeker

Thank you for stopping by our awesome blog!

We are four lovely friends who are actual, authentic Unicorn Seekers. We've all seen unicorns on our doorsteps, in our gardens and even in bathtubs.

First, let us tell you the story of how we discovered a UNICORN in a South London park last autumn. This wasn't just any unicorn - she was pretty extraordinary, luminous as the moon and quite alarming, and she was just a baby. Think super cute but totally unpredictable. Like a cross between a mountain goat and a wildcat.

Her name was Stormy, and she was the colour of snowstorms and wishes. Her horn was as beautiful as enchanted ice, and if she accidentally caught you with it - it hurt! Like, a lot.

She belonged to a glory called Winter's Dawn, who live in snowy, glacial climates and spend a long time in freezing water, almost like a mer-horse. She was the most magical little soul we'd ever met.

But Stormy's fierce and graceful mum, Lumi, was in serious trouble! She'd been kidnapped by these two Scandinavian guys, who were also excellent musicians. And Stormy's bold and beautiful dad, Dash, was being lured into danger by the same musical guys, which was totally not cool.

Their kidnappings were part of a dark plan to capture Stormy, because a baby unicorn's horn holds the most powerful magic. But with the help of our fabulous friend Rishi, and his chai-latte-loving mum, along with Elodie's mum, Esme (the original Unicorn Seeker!), we managed to save the day, set the family of unicorns free AND help cure a beloved guide dog along the way.

It was hard to say goodbye to Stormy though - to watch her dip and dive beneath the waves. All our hearts cracked a little bit as she swam away. But we feel better knowing that she's safe with Lumi and Dash,

living her best underwater life in the cold Iceland Sea.

We still miss her so much, but now we're focused on rescuing more unicorns - and we'd love YOUR help.

We know there are Unicorn Seekers all over the world who are just waiting to discover their gifts. Maybe you dream of unicorns? Perhaps you've spotted a unicorn's shadow when everyone else saw a horse? Or maybe you've even seen a real-life unicorn behind the recycling bins?

Just remember - anyone can see a unicorn if the weather is right! And if you want to make friends with one, always carry gluten-free muffins, dandelions or thistles, as these are their fave foods. They adore moonlight and respond to LOVE, so always be welcoming and respectful.

Keep seeking with an open heart, and if you ever find a unicorn that needs help,

please get in touch through the comments section  
of this blog.

Yours faithfully,

Elodie, Caleb, Marnie-Mae, Kit and Rishi

AKA The Unicorn Seekers of South London






## CHAPTER ONE

# SUNSHINE AND SAUSAGE ROLLS

In the vast city of London, where the sky can turn from brightest blue to golden grey in the blink of a dreamer's eye, just south of the great misty river and close to a lovely leafy park, Elodie Lightfoot was beginning to awake.

A soft summer dawn seeped beneath her curtains and Elodie blinked her sleepy brown eyes. As she turned over, a tiny zap of lightning quietly fizzed in her hair and she grinned. Elodie loved that she had her own little lightning storm in the ends of her dancing curls. Her hair was a heap of spiralling ringlets, which were mostly brown but occasionally glittered blue, especially if a unicorn was near.

The cosy second-floor flat where she lived with




her dad and her maman was peaceful and still. The only sound was her dad, Max, whistling softly in the kitchen, where he was mixing, baking and icing gluten-free cakes and treats for the day ahead. Max always rose at six minutes after sunrise so he'd be ready to leave on time to set up the Feather and Fern coffee van.

Elodie stretched and smiled as the flickering memory of her dream came back to her. It had been of Stormy and her proud and beautiful parents, all arching majestically through the wild waves of the Iceland Sea. Little Stormy's horn had shone with the luminous glitter of sea-light, and in its strange and eerie glow Elodie thought she'd caught a glimpse of a mermaid.


"I hope you're all happy," she murmured to herself, trying to ignore the tug of sadness that pulled at her heart whenever she thought of saying goodbye to them last autumn.

But Elodie knew, deep down, that the family of Winter's Dawn unicorns were safe and free, and that was all that truly mattered, even if she missed them terribly.




She sat up in bed and flung the curtains wide open, letting the morning light flood in. Spring had blended into summer, with the tall, swaying trees around the lake budding beautifully with creamy hawthorn blossoms and a richness of green leaves. The day was cloudy but warm.

Elodie peered at her moon dial clock and saw she had woken early. In the long years when her beloved maman had lived in Paris, performing top-secret Unicorn Seeker duties, Elodie always left the flat one hour and six minutes after sunrise with her dad.



Since Maman had come home, Elodie didn't really need to leave so early. She could stay and listen to Maman's soothing singing as they sipped mint tea together and ate any misshapen chocolate croissants.




Yet sometimes Elodie still loved to hop, step and skip into the new day with her dad, helping him get ready to sell delicious treats to all of South London.

Today was one of those days.

She got dressed and twisted her mass of glorious curls into a thick plait, taking care not to catch her fingers on the little crackles of lightning that glimmered and sparked. But when Elodie peered at







herself in the mirror the plait was all a bit messy. She sighed and reached into her overcrowded bookcase, where a little pot of lotion that had belonged to her great-grandmother, Elyse de Lyon, was carefully wedged behind a collection of Celtic fairy tales.

The pot was the colour of rust and silver, and looked like it was centuries old. It had a mythical winged horse embossed upon its lid.

*Not mythical*, Elodie thought with a smile. *Real.*




Slowly she unscrewed the lid. At once the entire room filled with the aroma of rain on a midsummer's eve, then she breathed in the rushing saltiness of the sea, followed by the swift smell of frost. Lastly came Elodie's favourite scent of all: moonlight.



She took the tiniest pinch of lotion, which was as cold as snow to touch, shook out her messy plait and smoothed the lotion through her hair, marvelling at her reflection as her beautiful curls obeyed and glided into a neat plait.

After carefully closing the lid and returning the lotion to its place on the bookcase, Elodie picked up her backpack, looped her rainbow-laced roller skates over her shoulder and walked happily into





the cinnamon-scented kitchen to steal a lavender cupcake for breakfast.

“Great timing, Elle!” her dad, Max, beamed at her. “I’ve made extra vegan sausage rolls this morning. I could definitely use some help getting them to the van.”


Elodie nodded, shoving the lavender cupcake into her mouth and grabbing as much as she could carry.

Out of the door and down the creaky steps they tiptoed with bags of almond croissants and gluten-free gingerbread hearts, jars of jasmine syrup, boxes of blueberry and lavender delights, baskets of sparkly buns and vegan sausage rolls, and plenty of organic oat milk.



Elodie took special care to step over Pirate, the large bad-tempered cat who belonged to Mrs Singh, their kind and lovely downstairs neighbour. Pirate was dozing on the bottom step. He glared at them with his one eye, but luckily didn’t scratch anyone.


Elodie paused for a moment, staring back up the stairs. She was almost willing Mrs Singh, who was eighty-seven and another highly gifted seeker, to emerge sleepily from her flat to tell Elodie




about a unicorn she'd met in her dreams. But the hallway remained still and quiet, apart from Pirate's disgruntled snores.

Elodie followed Max out into the clear, bright morning. The air felt as crisp as new apples and, though the sun shone warmly, a cool breeze came twirling down the street, tugging playfully at Elodie's plait.

"Perfect weather for croissants," Max said with a wink, and Elodie rolled her eyes.



"You say that every morning, Dad," she groaned as they crossed the empty street and slipped through the rusted gate of the leafy park. 

Elodie adored this time of morning when everything felt possible. The boating lake was a beautiful shade of blue and full of sleek-necked swans, the grass was dotted with the brightness of daisies and, in the clear summer sunlight, if she stared hard enough, Elodie could almost imagine that the ancient statues scattered throughout the park were real.

*If only they were,* she thought longingly, remembering the way she'd once mistaken a beautiful

midnight unicorn, Astra, for a statue of a little black horse.

A bright-winged parakeet swooped overhead, squeaking joyfully, and Elodie set to work helping Max open up the Feather and Fern. The van itself was dazzling green and cluttered with recycled coffee cups, biodegradable napkins and a huge bubbling espresso machine. But Elodie knew that there was room to hide a unicorn in the back if they ever really needed to.

Suddenly the sound of whooshing wheels reached her ears, and Elodie leapt out of the van, kicked off her shoes and pulled on her faded dusky-mauve skates.

“Marnie-Mae!” she screamed, all but flying into her best friend’s arms.

Marnie-Mae’s braided hair was a fabulous shade



of violet, and her beloved skates were leopard print. She was an excellent skater and a fearless protector of unicorns, just like Elodie.

“Girls, not so fast!” called Marnie’s mum, Joni, as the two friends collided into a cuddle and fell laughing to the ground.

“Morning, Joni,” said Max, handing her a decaf mocha, and Joni grinned appreciatively.

“Have a wonderful day, my love.”

She beamed, planting a kiss on Marnie’s forehead. Then Joni turned and strode away up the little hill to the train station in her rather magnificent gold high heels, making her way to the city, where she worked in publicity for a make-up company.

“Let’s skate round the maze!” cried Marnie. “I bet it’s empty at this time of the morning.”

Elodie nodded and glided away after her friend. As she moved gracefully along the track that led to the maze, she was warmed by the sunshine. Then all of a sudden Elodie felt her heartbeat quicken, like the pounding rhythm of a horse’s hooves. It was as if something powerful and bright was rushing towards her.





“Come on, Elle!” yelled Marnie-Mae, beckoning to her impatiently.

Something caught Elodie’s eye, and she skidded to a stop. For a fleeting moment, Elodie thought she had glimpsed the shadow of a galloping horse. She put one of her stoppers down and spun slowly on the spot, blinking her hazel-brown eyes, taking in the butterflies and morning blackbirds.

There was no sign of any horse. The shadow had vanished. Perhaps it was just her wild imagination or her heart being hopeful. Either way, the park was the same as ever.

