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Opening extract from

Winnie-the-Pooh Deluxe Complete Collection

Written by

A. A. Milne

Published by

Egmont Books Ltd

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Winnie-the-Pooh

COMPLETE STORIES & POEMS

DELUXE EDITION

This beautiful deluxe collection contains the stories by A. A. Milne from *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926) and *The House at Pooh Corner* (1928), and the poems from *When We Were Very Young* (1924) and *Now We Are Six* (1927). The characters of Pooh, Piglet, Eeyore, Tigger, Kanga and Roo are based upon the real nursery toys belonging to A. A. Milne's son, Christopher Robin, and their adventures are set in the Ashdown Forest where Milne and his family lived. The artist, E. H. Shepard, lovingly depicted the Forest and the toys in his illustrations, and the places he drew can still be seen today.



A. A. MILNE was born in London in 1882. He began his writing career with humorous pieces for *Punch* magazine. It was in this publication, in 1923, that Winnie-the-Pooh made his first appearance in the poem *Teddy Bear*. Milne also wrote plays, and by the time *When We Were Very Young*, his first book of poems for children, was published in 1924, he had already made his name as a dramatist and novelist.

E. H. SHEPARD, born in 1879, became known as the 'Man who drew Pooh', but was also an acclaimed artist in his own right. Shepard won a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Arts, and later, like Milne, worked for *Punch* magazine as a cartoonist and an illustrator. Shepard's illustrations of Winnie-the-Pooh and his friends in the Hundred Acre Wood have become classics in their own right and are recognised all over the world.



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Contents

Winnie-the-Pooh 9

The House at Pooh Corner 171

When We Were Very Young 351

Now We Are Six 455



Winnie-the-Pooh



Introduction

IF YOU HAPPEN to have read another book about Christopher Robin, you may remember that he once had a swan (or the swan had Christopher Robin, I don't know which), and that he used to call this swan Pooh. That was a long time ago, and when we said good-bye, we took the name with us, as we didn't think the swan would want it any more. Well, when Edward Bear said that he would like an exciting name all to himself, Christopher Robin said at once, without stopping to think, that he was Winnie-the-Pooh. And he was. So, as I have explained the Pooh part, I will now explain the rest of it.

You can't be in London for long without going to the Zoo. There are some people who begin the Zoo at the beginning, called WAYIN, and walk as quickly as they can past every cage until they get to the one called WAYOUT, but the nicest people go straight to the animal they love the most, and stay there. So when Christopher Robin goes to the Zoo, he goes to where the Polar Bears are, and he whispers something to the third keeper from the left, and doors are unlocked, and we wander through dark passages and up steep stairs, until at last we come to the special cage, and the cage is opened, and out trots something brown and furry, and

with a happy cry of 'Oh, Bear!' Christopher Robin rushes into its arms. Now this bear's name is Winnie, which shows what a good name for bears it is, but the funny thing is that we can't remember whether Winnie is called after Pooh, or Pooh after Winnie. We did know once, but we have forgotten . . .

I had written as far as this when Piglet looked up and said in his squeaky voice, 'What about Me?' 'My dear Piglet,' I said, 'the whole book is about you.' 'So it is about Pooh,' he squeaked. You see what it is. He is jealous because he thinks Pooh is having a Grand Introduction all to himself. Pooh is the favourite, of course, there's no denying it, but Piglet comes in for a good many things which Pooh misses; because you can't take Pooh to school without everybody knowing it, but Piglet is so small that he slips into a pocket, where it is very comforting to feel him when you are not quite sure whether twice seven is twelve or twenty-two. Sometimes he slips out and has a good look in the ink-pot, and in this way he has got more education than Pooh, but Pooh doesn't mind. 'Some have brains, and some haven't,' he says, and there it is.

And now, all the others are saying, 'What about Us?' So perhaps the best thing to do is to stop writing Introductions and get on with the book.

A. A. M.







Chapter One

IN WHICH WE ARE INTRODUCED TO
WINNIE-THE-POOH AND SOME BEES,
AND THE STORIES BEGIN

HERE IS EDWARD BEAR, coming downstairs now, bump, bump, bump, on the back of his head, behind Christopher Robin. It is, as far as he knows, the only way of coming downstairs, but sometimes he feels that there really is another way, if only he could stop bumping for a moment and think of it. And then he feels that perhaps there isn't. Anyhow, here he is at the bottom, and ready to be introduced to you. Winnie-the-Pooh.

When I first heard his name, I said, just as you are going to say, 'But I thought he was a boy?'

'So did I,' said Christopher Robin.

'Then you can't call him Winnie?'

'I don't.'

'But you said –'

'He's Winnie-ther-Pooh. Don't you know what "*ther*" means?'

'Ah, yes, now I do,' I said quickly; and I hope you do too, because it is all the explanation you are going to get.

Sometimes Winnie-the-Pooh likes a game of some sort when he comes downstairs, and sometimes he likes to sit quietly in front of the fire and listen to a story. This evening –

'What about a story?' said Christopher Robin.

'*What* about a story?' I said.

'Could you very sweetly tell Winnie-the-Pooh one?'

'I suppose I could,' I said. 'What sort of stories does he like?'

'About himself. Because he's *that* sort of Bear.'

'Oh, I see.'

'So could you very sweetly?'

'I'll try,' I said. So I tried.

* * *

Once upon a time, a very long time ago now, about last Friday, Winnie-the-Pooh lived in a forest all by himself under the name of Sanders.

('What does "under the name" mean?' asked Christopher Robin.



'It means he had the name over the door in gold letters and lived under it.'

'Winnie-the-Pooh wasn't quite sure,' said Christopher Robin.

'Now I am,' said a growly voice.

'Then I will go on,' said I.)

One day when he was out walking, he came to an open place in the middle of the forest, and in the middle of this place was a large oak-tree, and, from the top of the tree, there came a loud buzzing-noise.

Winnie-the-Pooh sat down at the foot of the tree, put his head between his paws, and began to think.

First of all he said to himself: 'That buzzing-noise means something. You don't get a buzzing-noise like that, just buzzing and buzzing, without its meaning something. If there's a buzzing-noise, somebody's making a buzzing-noise, and the only reason for making a buzzing-noise that *I* know of is because you're a bee.'

Then he thought another long time, and said: 'And the only reason for being a bee that *I* know of is making honey.'

And then he got up, and said: 'And the only reason for making honey is so as *I* can eat it.' So he began to climb the tree.

He climbed and he climbed and he climbed, and as he climbed he sang a little song to himself. It went like this:

Isn't it funny
How a bear likes honey?
Buzz! Buzz! Buzz!
I wonder why he does?

Then he climbed a little further . . . and a little further . . . and then just a little further. By that time he had thought of another song.

It's a very funny thought that, if Bears were Bees,
They'd build their nests at the *bottom* of trees.
And that being so (if the Bees were Bears),
We shouldn't have to climb up all these stairs.



He was getting rather tired by this time, so that is why he sang a Complaining Song. He was nearly there now, and if he just stood on that branch . . .

Crack!

'Oh, help!' said Pooh, as he dropped ten feet on to the branch below him.

'If only I hadn't –' he said, as he bounced twenty feet on to the next branch.

'You see, what I *meant* to do,' he explained, as he turned head-over-heels, and crashed on to another branch thirty feet below, 'what I *meant* to do –'

'Of course, it *was* rather –' he admitted, as he slithered very quickly through the next six branches.

'It all comes, I suppose,' he decided, as he said good-bye



to the last branch, spun round three times, and flew gracefully into a gorse-bush, 'it all comes of *liking* honey so much. Oh, help!'

He crawled out of the gorse-bush, brushed the prickles from his nose, and began to think again. And the first person he thought of was Christopher Robin.





('Was that me?' said Christopher Robin in an awed voice, hardly daring to believe it.

'That was you.'

Christopher Robin said nothing, but his eyes got larger and larger, and his face got pinker and pinker.)

So Winnie-the-Pooh went round to his friend Christopher Robin, who

lived behind a green door in another part of the Forest.

'Good morning, Christopher Robin,' he said.

'Good morning, Winnie-*ther*-Pooh,' said you.

'I wonder if you've got such a thing as a balloon about you?'

'A balloon?'

'Yes, I just said to myself coming along: "I wonder if Christopher Robin has such a thing as a balloon about him?" I just said it to myself, thinking of balloons, and wondering.'

'What do you want a balloon for?' you said.

Winnie-the-Pooh looked round to see that nobody was listening, put his paw to his mouth, and said in a deep whisper: '*Honey!*'

'But you don't get honey with balloons!'

'*I* do,' said Pooh.

Well, it just happened that you had been to a party the day before at the house of your friend Piglet, and you had balloons at the party. You had had a big green balloon; and one of Rabbit's relations had had a big blue one, and had left it behind, being really too young to go to a party at all; and so you had brought the green one *and* the blue one home with you.

'Which one would you like?' you asked Pooh.

He put his head between his paws and thought very carefully.

'It's like this,' he said. 'When you go after honey with a balloon, the great thing is not to let the bees know you're coming. Now, if you have a green balloon, they might think you were only part of the tree, and not notice you, and if you have a blue balloon,





they might think you were only part of the sky, and not notice you, and the question is: Which is most likely?'

'Wouldn't they notice *you* underneath the balloon?' you asked.

'They might or they might not,' said Winnie-the-Pooh. 'You never can tell with bees.' He thought for a moment and said: 'I shall try to look like a small black cloud. That will deceive them.'

'Then you had better have the blue balloon,' you said; and so it was decided.



Well, you both went out with the blue balloon, and you took your gun with you, just in case, as you always did, and Winnie-the-Pooh went to a very muddy place that he knew of, and rolled and rolled until he was black all over; and then, when the balloon





was blown up as big as big, and you and Pooh were both holding on to the string, you let go suddenly, and Pooh Bear floated gracefully up into the sky, and stayed there – level with the top of the tree and about twenty feet away from it.

'Hooray!' you shouted.

'Isn't that fine?' shouted Winnie-the-Pooh down to you. 'What do I look like?'

'You look like a bear holding on to a balloon,' you said.

'Not,' said Pooh anxiously, ' – not like a small black cloud in a blue sky?'

'Not very much.'

'Ah, well, perhaps from up here it looks different. And, as I say, you never can tell with bees.'

There was no wind to blow him nearer to the tree so there he stayed. He could see the honey, he could smell the honey, but he couldn't quite reach the honey.

After a little while he called down to you.

'Christopher Robin!' he said in a loud whisper.

'Hallo!'