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Opening extract from

Absolutely Winnie!

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Published by

Oxford University Press

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OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide in

Oxford New York

Auckland Cape Town Dar es Salaam Hong Kong Karachi
Kuala Lumpur Madrid Melbourne Mexico City Nairobi
New Delhi Shanghai Taipei Toronto

With offices in
Argentina Austria Brazil Chile Czech Republic France Greece
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Whizz-Bang Winnie first published in 2008
Mini Winnie first published in 2008
Winnie Says Cheese first published in 2009
This edition first published in 2013

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data:
Data available

ISBN: 978-0-19-273463-1 (paperback)

2 4 6 8 10 9 7 5 3 1

Printed in Great Britain

Paper used in the production of this book is a natural, recyclable product made
from wood grown in sustainable forests. The manufacturing process conforms
to the environmental regulations of the country of origin

Hot Cross Winnie

Winnie's garden was as hot as a cauldron. Wilbur lay under a rhubarb leaf with his legs stretched and his tongue hanging out. Along came Winnie wearing such dark sunglasses that, TRIP!—



'Mrrrow!'

'Whoops! Blooming cat!' said Winnie, rubbing her nose.

'Mrrow-ow-ow!' said Wilbur.

'Well, I'm hot too, you know!' said Winnie.



'I'm a hot cross witch and you're a hot cross cat. We need to cool down.'

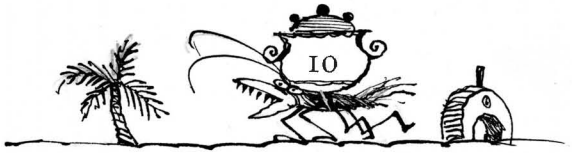
Winnie picked up the watering can and watered her feet.



'Oo, that's nice!' she said, wiggling her steaming toes. 'I wish, I wish . . . Oo, I've got an idea!' said Winnie, and she pointed her wand at the watering can. 'Abracadabra!' she shouted.

Instantly, there was a giant watering can up in the sky, spilling down a great showering waterfall of cold water.

'Lovely!' said Winnie, dancing in the shower. 'Come on, Wilbur!' But Wilbur was thrashing his wet tail and scowling at Winnie. 'Whoopsy warts,' said Winnie. 'I forgot that cats don't like water!'





'Abracadabra!'

In another instant the watering can was gone. Winnie stood there, dripping and steaming.

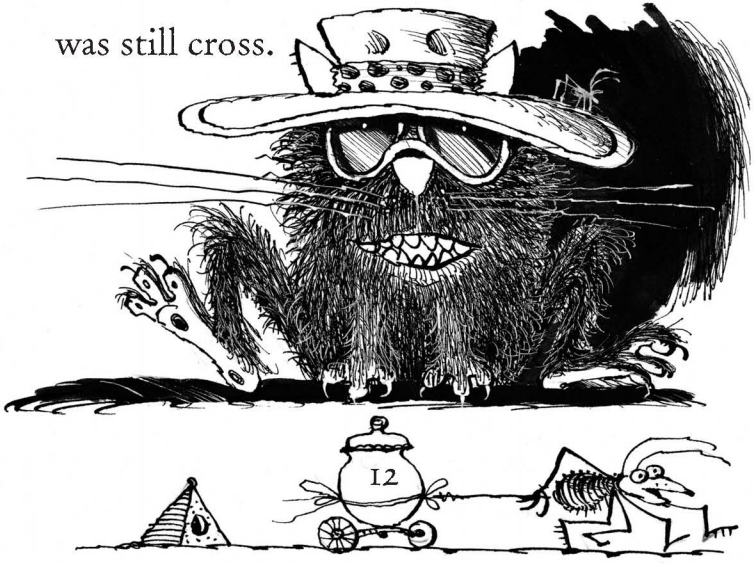
'I'm sorry, Wilbur. Sorry, sorry, sorry. Now, can we be friends again?'

Wilbur closed his eyes.

'I'll magic you a sun hat. I'll magic you some sunglasses!' said Winnie.

'Abracadabra Abracadabra!'

Now Wilbur looked a dude, but he was still cross.



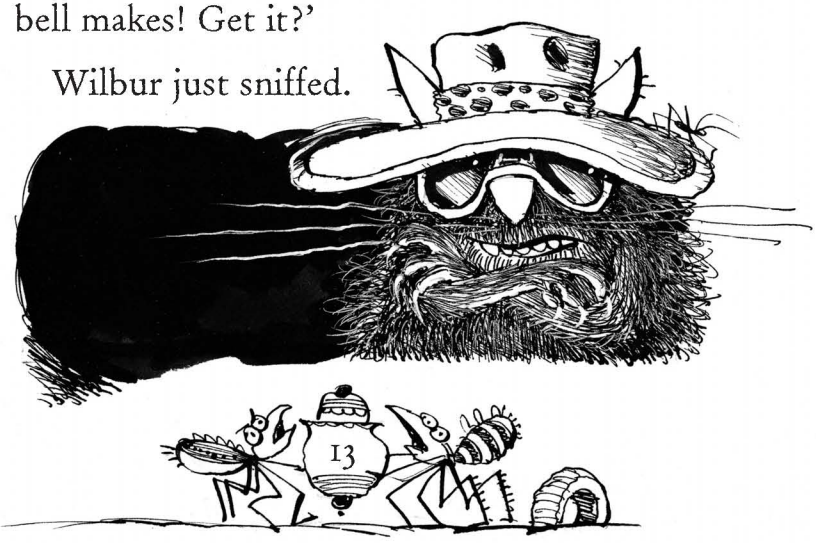


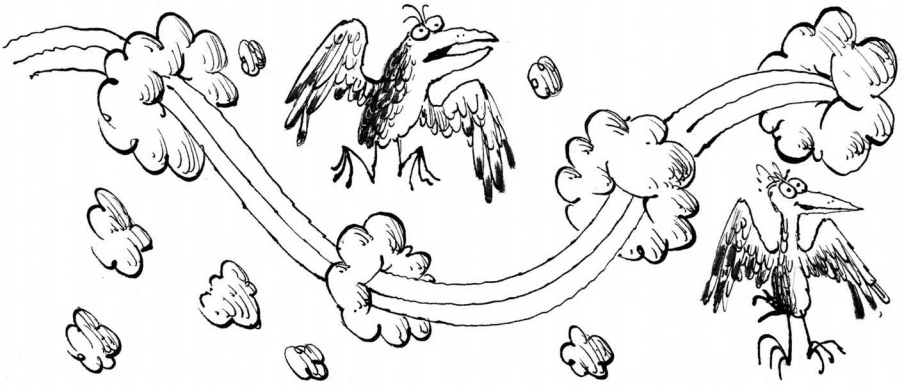
'This'll make you laugh!' said Winnie. 'What's brown and sticky and sounds like a bell?'

Wilbur looked the other way and pretended not to listen.

'Dung!' said Winnie. 'Dung's brown and sticky and "dung" is the sound a big bell makes! Get it?'

Wilbur just sniffed.

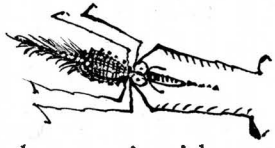




'I'll buy you a present, then. That'll cheer you up,' said Winnie. She got her broom.

'Jump up, Wilbur!'

Wilbur's ears flattened on his head, but he climbed on board.



It was hot, flying.

'Let's go faster to make a breeze,' said Winnie. 'Abracadabra!'

In an instant, Wilbur had to cling on to the broom with every claw. He lay flat and he closed his eyes, his tail whizzing out behind the broom.

