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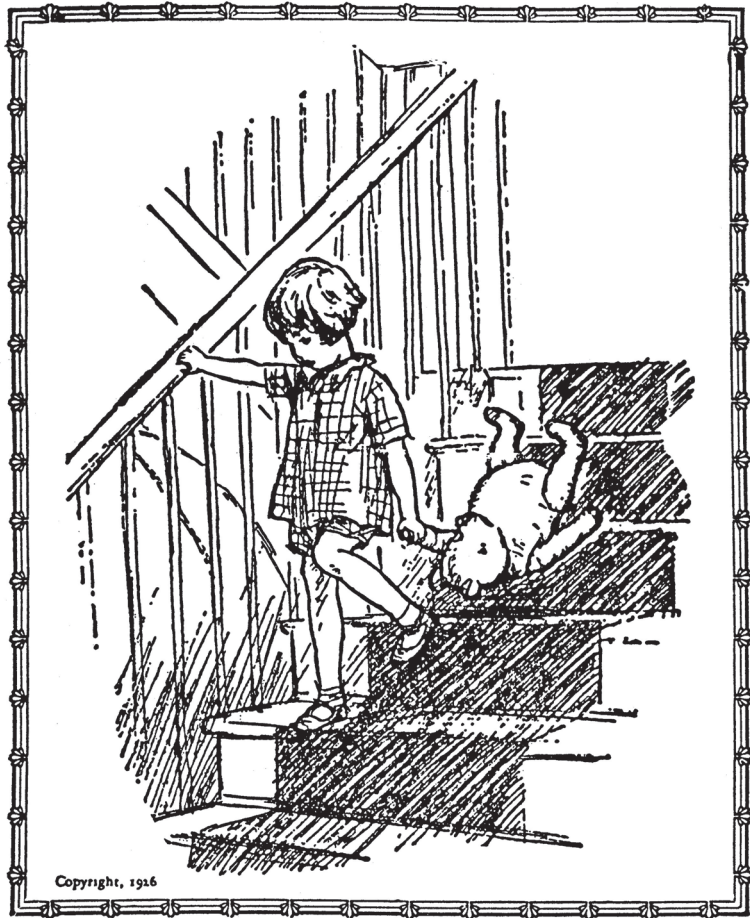
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Dramatic Publishing

WINNIE-THE-POOH



DRAMATIZED BY KRISTIN SERGEL FROM THE STORIES OF A. A. MILNE

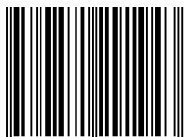


THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

WINNIE-THE-POOH

Cast: 13 children or adults. Winnie-the-Pooh is Christopher Robin's fat little bear of Very Little Brain, who would like to drift peacefully through life, humming tunes and stopping frequently to eat "a little something." However, he finds himself involved in all sorts of frantic adventures, assisted by such friends as the dismal Eeyore, Piglet and Rabbit, with his countless relations. Pooh's intentions are always the best, but his passion for honey and condensed milk keeps getting him into trouble. When friend Piglet gets roped into Kanga's household and Kanga starts bathing him (with soap!) and forcing down spoonfuls of Strengthening Medicine, Pooh wants to fly to the rescue but he's had so many snacks he gets stuck in the door. A.A. Milne's wit and special understanding of young people make this one of the most successful plays available. *Bare stage w/props.*

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WINNIE-THE-POOH

From the stories of A. A. Milne

Dramatized
by
KRISTIN SERGEL



The Dramatic Publishing Company
Woodstock, Illinois • London, England • Melbourne, Australia

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WINNIE-THE-POOH

A Play in Two Acts
For Thirteen Characters

CHARACTERS

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN	a young boy
WINNIE-THE-POOH	.....	a teddy bear
PIGLET		
OWL		
EEYORE	.....	a donkey
KANGA	.....	a mother kangaroo
ROO	.....	her child
RABBIT		
ANIMAL 1	.....	a small rabbit
ANIMAL 2	.....	a small skunk
ANIMAL 3	.....	a rabbit
ANIMAL 4	.....	a rabbit
VOICE	.....	the narrator

EXTRAS (other residents of the forest) may be added

ACT ONE

BEFORE RISE: *CHRISTOPHER ROBIN enters in front of the curtain DR. He is pulling a teddy bear along by one paw, heading for a hassock placed DR.*

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN (*to the bear in a matter-of-fact way*). What would you like to do this evening? Play a game of some sort? (*After looking closely for a response, CHRISTOPHER ROBIN sits down. He speaks toward the audience.*) Winnie-the-Pooh doesn't feel like playing a game. He wants to sit quietly and—(*Looks at the bear again, then up.*) What about a story?

VOICE (*narrator, offstage*). What about a story?

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN. Couldn't you very kindly tell him one? Please?

VOICE (*after a slight pause*). What sort of story does he like?

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN (*eagerly*). About himself. He's that sort of bear.

VOICE. I suppose he goes in for a good bit of adventure?

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN (*nodding*). The only thing he likes better than adventure is eating honey. (*Amends this, in response to the bear.*) And marmalade.

VOICE. Very well, then—I'll tell you a story about adventure and eating honey. (*His voice grows ominous.*) A story about how a frightening animal came to the forest—and about the terrible things that happened afterwards.

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN. Is it a scary story? Will I be able to sleep tonight?

VOICE. That depends. Let's get to the story. (*Pause.*) Once upon a time, a very long time ago—

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN. How long?

VOICE. About last Friday—

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN. Oh.

VOICE. —Winnie-the-Pooh lived in the forest under the name of Sanders.

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN. What does “under the name” mean?

VOICE (*after pause*). It means he had the name over the door in gold letters, and he lived under it.

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN (*nodding to indicate the bear*). He wasn't quite sure.

VOICE. One day he was out walking in the forest, when he came to an open place. And right on the edge of it, he saw a large oak tree. He stopped to listen...

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN. What was he listening to?

VOICE. A strange buzzing noise was coming from the top of the tree.

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN. A buzzing noise?

VOICE. Yes. If you'd stop interrupting, you'd be able to hear it. (*Sound of buzzing starts offstage, softly at first.*)

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN. I can! I wonder what it is?

VOICE. So did Winnie-the-Pooh...

(CHRISTOPHER ROBIN exits R as the curtain rises, revealing a bare stage with a neutral background. DL, protruding from the wings, is part of the trunk of a tree. A branch with perhaps some leaves on it should show just before the tree disappears behind the proscenium. Attached well up on the tree is a sign with gold letters on it saying “Sanders.” Underneath it is a child's rocking chair. DR is

a similar tree, but without the sign. URC is another tree. Onstage, WINNIE-THE-POOH is DR, staring intently upward at something as lights come up full.)

VOICE. He sat down, put his head between his paws, and began to think. *(POOH goes to hassock DR and sits down.)* He said to himself, “That buzzing noise means something. If there’s a buzzing noise, somebody’s making it—and the only reason for buzzing that I know of is because you’re a bee—” *(POOH has adopted the “thinking position” as described above.)* Then he thought another long time and said, “The only reason for being a bee that I know of is to make honey—”

POOH *(rising and speaking for himself this time)*. And the only reason for making honey is so I can eat it. *(At the thought of doing so, POOH rubs his paws together, licks his lips, and looks quite rapturous with anticipation. He makes a gurgling sound.)* Honey...*(Accompanies this with a couple of skipping steps in the direction of the tree DR.)* M-m-m...*(Stands still, struck by the thought.)* Funny, my liking it so much...*(He turns this into a song with a vague tune.)* Isn’t it funny...*(Dances a step now and then, keeping time.)* How a bear likes honey...Buzz, buzz, buzz...I wonder why he does...*(He stops and frowns, beset by a problem. He goes over close to the tree and looks up.)* The question is: How do I get to the honey? *(Puts his chin on his hand and supports the elbow with the other hand.)* First, I’ll have to climb the tree—*(Another upward look.)*—which will be a problem. And once I get to the top of the tree—*(He spots the hassock, places it under the tree and tries to reach the honey. When this doesn’t work, he tumbles the hassock over toward URC.)*

(As if in answer to this, the buzzing gets quite loud for a moment—an angry tone about it. POOH is rather startled by this and backs away from the tree toward DC. As he is thinking it over, PIGLET enters from DL, looking rather excited.)

PIGLET *(calling to POOH)*. There you are, Pooh!

POOH *(preoccupied)*. Hello, Piglet.

PIGLET *(importantly, pausing DLC)*. I've got some news—
(Expecting a big reaction.) A strange animal is coming to the forest.

POOH *(abstractedly, still looking at honey tree)*. Piglet, old friend...

PIGLET *(upset, moving to DC)*. I said, a *strange animal* is coming to the forest!

POOH. Hm-m-m-m—

PIGLET *(after a pause, going up close behind POOH and insisting)*. Aren't you going to ask questions?

POOH *(finally facing around to PIGLET)*. About what?

PIGLET *(rather wounded)*. You weren't listening.

POOH. Yes, I was. *(Points up at the tree.)* That's how I can tell it's up there.

PIGLET *(looking)*. What is?

POOH. Honey. *(Faces tree again.)*

PIGLET. I don't see honey. Just a lot of bees flying around—

POOH. Exactly.

PIGLET *(catching on)*. Oh.

POOH. There must be quite a lot of it—and freshly made—
(Working himself up to a frenzy of hungry anticipation, walking around in a circle.)

PIGLET *(a gently admonishing tone)*. Pooh. You're forgetting.

POOH. —thick and golden...

PIGLET. Pooh...

POOH (*carried away*). One delicious mouthful after another—

PIGLET (*tugging at his arm*). Your diet!

POOH (*pausing beside PIGLET*). What's that?

PIGLET. I thought you were going on a diet.

POOH. I am going on a diet. But not now. (*Resumes his hungry pacing, glancing up the tree occasionally.*)

PIGLET. Why not?

POOH (*lamely*). Because—right now I'm hungry. (*More firmly.*) That's not a good time to go on a diet.

PIGLET (*dubious*). Oh. (*A true friend saying what POOH would like to hear.*) I suppose tomorrow—after a good night's rest?

POOH (*agreeing, with relief*). And a good breakfast. (*Pauses under the tree.*)

PIGLET. Yes. (*Crosses to DR and looks up at the tree.*) How are you going to get up there?

POOH. Just what I've been wondering. If I could just reach one of those branches—

PIGLET. If you were three feet taller—

POOH (*sadly*). Which I'm not—

PIGLET (*bravely*). Shall I give you a boost? (*POOH looks hopeful.*) If you stood on my shoulders—(*He stops.*)

POOH. If I stood on your shoulders, I still couldn't reach it. (*Eyes the height for a moment.*)

PIGLET. We'll think of something.

POOH. Thank you for offering, Piglet. You're a true friend. (*PIGLET beams with pleasure. POOH pats his arm fondly, tries to find a solution.*) Now, there *must* be—

(*RABBIT bustles in DL, looking agitated.*)

RABBIT (*muttering*). I don't like it. I don't like the sound of it—

(*RABBIT is followed by several FRIENDS and RELATIONS, who are dogging his steps.*)

RABBIT (*hailing briskly from C*). Pooh—Piglet!

POOH. Hello, Rabbit—(*When RABBIT stops, the FRIENDS and RELATIONS behind him bump into each other. He turns to them.*)

RABBIT. Now, run along and play. (*ALL clamor.*)

ANIMAL 1. But, Uncle Rabbit—

ANIMAL 2. What about the game?

ANIMAL 1. You *promised*—

RABBIT. Later, later. There's an important matter I'll have to attend—

ANIMAL 1. But you *said*—

RABBIT (*shaking finger and raising his tone*). I *said*—I'm busy. Run along and play! (*They know when he means business; they turn and leave DL, reluctantly.*) Now, then. (*Crosses to RC.*) I suppose you've heard?

POOH (*from DR*). I'm not sure.

RABBIT. That a strange animal is coming to the forest—

PIGLET (*from DC*). I've heard.

RABBIT (*disappointed*). Oh, you have.

PIGLET (*pouring it out*). That's what I was trying to tell you, Pooh. Her name is Kanga—(*Building this.*) She's one of the Fiercer Animals—

RABBIT. She's very tall—

PIGLET. *Enormous!*

POOH (*thinking this over very calmly, in a quiet tone*). Any family?

RABBIT. I believe she has one offspring.

PIGLET. Is that all?

RABBIT. Its name is Roo. (*After pause.*) Imagine having a family of one! (*He is scornful of the idea.*)

POOH. How many in yours, Rabbit?

RABBIT. Hm-m-m...Sixteen.

PIGLET. Isn't it seventeen?

RABBIT. Perhaps. It's hard to keep *exact* count. (*Drops the subject.*) The important thing is, Kanga is coming—and she's...

POOH (*interrupting*). I make it fifteen.

RABBIT. What?

POOH. Your family.

RABBIT (*impatiently*). Never mind them!

POOH. I thought—

RABBIT (*cutting him off*). The *important* thing is—Kanga is coming to live in the forest.

PIGLET. Yes!

POOH. And bringing an offspring named Roo—(*Looks up at the honey.*)

RABBIT. Yes—

POOH. And what's all the excitement about?

RABBIT. Because—Baby Roo isn't all she's bringing.

PIGLET. What else?

POOH (*hopefully*). Groceries?

RABBIT (*hushed, fearful tone, after looking back over his shoulder*). A bathtub.

PIGLET (*stuttering with fright*). A b-bath—*bathtub*? What for?

RABBIT (*explaining, in a patronizing tone*). Surely you know what a bathtub is for? You fill it with water—you get in—

PIGLET. I do *not*!

RABBIT (*rather enjoying PIGLET's nervous state*). We hope not, Piglet. We *hope* not. (*Folds his arms and stares into space.*)

PIGLET (*crossing to POOH*). You wouldn't let that happen to me, would you?

POOH (*firmly*). You can count on me.

RABBIT. Now you see what the excitement is about. You see the necessity for taking action—

POOH. When is she supposed to arrive?

RABBIT (*hasn't any idea; pausing to think*). Presently.

POOH. Does that mean she isn't here yet?

RABBIT. Of course.

POOH. What a relief. There was another little matter...*(A loud moan is heard offstage DL.)*

PIGLET. Help! *(Clings wildly to POOH. POOH and RABBIT stare in the direction of the sound.)*

VOICE *(offstage DL)*. Miserable. Miserable!

RABBIT. Someone's saying "miserable."

POOH. It must be Eeyore. He generally is.

(EEYORE enters DL, carrying a thistle and talking glumly to himself, but it sounds as if it were a continuation of POOH's speech.)

EEYORE. Utterly miserable. *(Stands apart, DL, waiting to be recognized.)*

POOH *(brightly)*. Good morning, Eeyore. *(Crosses to LC.)*

EEYORE *(raising his head, reluctantly)*. Good morning, Pooh Bear—*(Hangs head down again.)* if it is a good morning—*(Gives head a slight shake.)*—which I doubt.

RABBIT *(crossing to C)*. Surely it isn't that bad.

EEYORE. Perhaps not now. *(Flings his head up, with more emphasis.)* But it will be—when she gets here!

PIGLET *(hurrying to a place between POOH and RABBIT)*. He must mean Kanga.

EEYORE. Ah—you've heard.

RABBIT. About Kanga—yes.

POOH. And Baby Roo—

PIGLET (*the topper*). And the bathtub!

EEYORE (*continuing*). And the soap? (*EEYORE turns his back while OTHERS digest this new bombshell. He talks in the other direction.*) I found out by chance.

POOH. Soap?

EEYORE. No one would bother to tell *me*.

PIGLET (*in a faint, squealing voice*). Soap?

EEYORE (*turning*). You didn't know about it?

RABBIT. What soap?

EEYORE. You didn't know she carries a cake of the stuff in her pocket? (*To himself again.*) Well, none of us knows everything. (*Munches on the thistle he has been carrying.*)

RABBIT (*to OTHERS*). This is terrible!

PIGLET. Awful!

RABBIT. It couldn't be worse!

EEYORE. It could be *much* worse. And probably will be. (*He chews dolefully.*)

RABBIT (*annoyed*). Eeyore, *must* you eat thistles?

EEYORE. All donkeys eat them. And I happen to be *especially* fond of them.

RABBIT. No wonder you're so gloomy. (*EEYORE stares steadily at him.*) How anyone can help seeing the dark side of things, if they eat thistles all the time...(*EEYORE, very wounded, lies down on his stomach, burying his head in his arms.*)

EEYORE (*sobbingly*). That's right. Deprive me of the only pleasure I have left. Why not give up *everything*? (*He is so broken that RABBIT gives a sigh of "What can you do?"*)

POOH (*crossing to DL where EEYORE is lying*). He didn't mean it.

RABBIT (*crossing to just upstage of EYORE*). I didn't mean it! I apologize! (*Tries harder, as EYORE just sniffs disconsolately.*) Eat thistles—please! (*EYORE sits up and takes out another thistle, and after wiping his eyes on his arm, begins to munch.*)

EYORE (*after a pause*). Very well. It's terrible kind of you. (*Takes another bite. RABBIT wipes his forehead with relief.*)

RABBIT (*moving back to C*). Now. Where were we? (*PIGLET has been too nervous to bother about EYORE's persecution-mania and has moved to C.*)

PIGLET (*shakily*). Soap...

RABBIT. Yes. I'm afraid the time has come—(*He lets this statement hang ominously and looks over to POOH, who is still standing by EYORE, watching his chewing with fascination. POOH turns.*)

POOH (*suddenly*). What time is it, by the way?

RABBIT. Eleven o'clock.

POOH. Just as I thought. I generally have a little something around eleven...(*Crosses to DRC and looks up at the honey.*)

RABBIT. When I say "The time has come," I don't mean eleven o'clock. I mean that danger is threatening!

POOH. Danger?

PIGLET. The bathtub...the soap...

RABBIT. Yes!

POOH (*thoughtfully*). That sort of thing is unpleasant. But dangerous?

(OWL's sonorous, booming voice is heard from just on-stage UR where he has entered slowly during the last few speeches.)

OWL. What about the bottle of poison?

RABBIT (*not noticing who has said this, arguing with POOH*). Yes! What about the—(*He stops.*)

PIGLET (*looking around*). Who said that?

OWL (*coming further onstage to RC*). Who, indeed?

RABBIT and POOH. Owl!

EEYORE. I wish he *wouldn't*...this barging in suddenly—

OWL (*coming downstage*). I didn't barge in. I've been here for some time.

EEYORE. Then why not speak up sooner?

OWL (*frowning at EEYORE*). There was nothing whatever to say.

PIGLET. But you said "bottle of poison"!

OWL (*nodding slowly*). I did. Because she has one. A small bottle—filled with brown stuff.

POOH. How do you know it's—

OWL (*talking over this*). Clearly written on the label is the word "Poison."

RABBIT. I can't believe it! (*RABBIT, POOH, PIGLET and EEYORE form a compact group DLC.*)

PIGLET. It must be true—he knows how to read—

POOH. And write—

RABBIT. And spell—

EEYORE (*scoffing*). Spell his name, perhaps...W-O-L...that's not so hard. He goes to pieces over words like "measles" or "buttered toast"...(*As they ALL regard OWL doubtfully, he draws himself up and continues.*)

OWL. In addition to the word "Poison" on the label, there was a picture.

POOH. What sort of picture?

OWL. The bones of some dead creature.

RABBIT. Bones!

POOH. Who would want that sort of picture?