



Conversation with Winnie the Pooh

Winnie the Pooh was sitting on a tree stump waiting for me.

"Don't you think," I asked, "that the words you use are sometimes a bit convoluted for children to understand?"

"Tigger and Eeyore understand me," he answered, "and so does Christopher Robin."

I raised a quizzical eyebrow.

"I mean what I say and I say what I mean," he added.

"That's from Alice in Wonderland."

"I know that," he replied, "but I was hoping **you** wouldn't know. It's hard to come up with words all by myself. This interview isn't going very well is it? Why don't I interview you instead? Do you like honey?"

"Bears eat honey," I told him. "People eat other things."

"Some bears eat people," volunteered Pooh. "Christopher Robin told me that."

"What else has he told you?" I asked.

"That I'm the fluffiest cuddliest wonderfulest bear in the whole wide world." Pooh announced proudly.

"Apart from that?"

"Er – um -I don't know. I can only think and say what I'm told. If A A Milne were here he'd be able to help me."

"Do you know why you were called Winnie the Pooh?"

"Ah! I know the answer to that one!" exclaimed Pooh eagerly. "I was called Winnie after a black bear Christopher Robin saw at London Zoo – which is a zoo in London." he added importantly.

"And Pooh?"

"I was coming to that. You humans are jolly impatient."

"Sorry." I said trying not to smile.

"And so you should be. Pooh – if you still want to know – was a swan Christopher Robin met while on holiday."

"Not that you can meet a swan." I volunteered.

"If Christopher Robin said that's what it was, then that's what it was," said Pooh sulkily.

"Christopher Robin called me a bear of very little brain," he went on, "which was very unfair of him because my brain is much bigger than Owl's, Piglet's and Eeyore's." He swelled proudly. "I am a big brained bear."

He looked at me sternly as if waiting for me to disagree with him.

"If I was on Twitter," he added, "I'd tweet that I am the bear with the most bigly brain."

Then, out of the blue, he asked, "Would you like to hear a song?"

Before I could answer he sang this song:

" How do you do?
Tiddely poo
And how are you?
Tiddely pooh."

"That's as far as I've got. It's hard to find things to rhyme with Pooh. It would be far easier if I'd been called Winnie the Bear. There are loads of rhymes with bear. Hair, dare, care, lair ... "

And then suddenly – I noticed that he kept doing this – changing the question before I'd even asked one.

"What's a lockdown? I've heard of locked up but never locked down."

Fortunately, before I could answer him, Christopher Robin came along to tell Winnie that it was time for tea. So off he went without even a goodbye.

"Pooh." I said.

500 words