

***SURPRISE, IT WAS A TREAT TO HAVE READ WINNIE ILLE PU***  
**BY**  
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**Ecce Edwardus Urus scalis nunc tump-tump-tump occipite gradus pulsante post Christophorum Robinum descendens.**  
Bumping against each riser of the stairs is our introduction to Edward Bear as he and Christopher Robin, the young master, descend to the Milne residence's main floor

If this entrée was not indignity enough, Christopher gives Edward Bear the sobriquet of **Winnie ille Pu, aut breviter Pu**

Pooh, he was that sort of bear. He liked stories about himself

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Alexander Lenard is the Latin scholar, **Winnie ille Pu** and Alan Alexander Milne is the author, **Winnie the Pooh**

Lenard was born in Budapest, Hungry. His formative years were in post-First World War Vienna, Austria, later Italy. He was a physician, painter, musician, and poet. He also spoke and wrote Hungarian, German, Italian, English, and Latin

Milne was born in London, England, with his formative years being the era prior to the First World War. He was a successful playwright and wrote children's literature, chiefly poetry. He spoke and wrote only English

Lenard and Milne each *loved the play of words*

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Lenard's **Pu** is 118 pages. Milne's **Pooh** is 192 pages

Writing a work in another language is more than the exchange of noun-for-noun. **Pu** is a Roman; and as a Roman his words and acts are those of the society in which he lives

Lenard transforms Milne's Edwardian English to Caesar's Latin. The sense of Milne's work is observed, the idiom is Roman. Lenard's work presents the antique world in dialogue and deed. To illustrate this shift and sense, three passages have been selected: **crustulum cru** followed by **polum septentrionalem** and **aquis circumdatus est**

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A special request before we look at **crustulum cru** and the other passages

The Romans did *not* have silent reading. The Romans used their senses to read a passage: they *saw* the word, they *said* the word, they *heard* the word

So, do as the Romans do, read aloud and enjoy **urus pauxilli cerebri**, a **bear of small brain**

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***CRUSTULUM CRU***

The first selection is the **crustulum cru** passage which opens **Caput VI**; commencing at the top of page 51, to conclude with **Eeyore**, the donkey, exclaiming, **'Optime,' dixit lor, That's right, said Eeyore. The oassage is recited in full**

**lor, auritulus ille annosus et cinereus apud ripam rivuli stabat et sese in aqua intuebatur.**

**'Patheticum!' dixit. 'Mehercle, ita est. Patheticum.' Se convertens lente viginiti ulnas secundum flumen descendit, vado transit, et in ulteriore ripa lente rediit. Deinde se iterum in aqua adspexit.**

**'Non secus ac fore suspicatus eram,' dixit. 'Hoc latere ne minime quidem melius. Sed nemo curat. Nemini curae est. Patheticum, ita est.'**

**Tum strepitus in filicibus post eum factus est et exit Pu.**

**'Ominor tibi bonas horas matutinas,' dixit Pu.**

**'Salve, Urse Pu,' dixit maestus lor. 'Si mane bonum est,' dixit. 'Quod in dubium voco,' dixit.**

**'Cur? Quid tibi accidit?'**

**'Nihil, Pu urse, nihil. Non omnes possumus et nonnulli nostrum nequeunt. Res non aliter se habet.'**

**'Quid nequeunt nonnulli?' dixit nasum perfricans Pu.**

**'Hilaritas, chorea, carmina, circa morum saltamus!'**

‘O,’ dixit Pu. Per multum tempus meditatus est deinde rogavit: ‘Qualis morus est ea?’

‘Bonhommy,’ perrexit lor maestus. ‘Vox gallica, quae “bonhommy” significat. Nolo queri, sed ecce, Pu magno quodam saxo consedit et conatus est, id responsum quo valeret, intellegere. Ei quasi aenigma apparebat et ipse nunquam aenigmator praeclarus fuerat, quia urus pauxilli cerebri erat. Itaque loco solutionis ‘crustulum cru’ cantavit:

Pooh now sings a three-stanza poem, each stanza asks a riddle. The Latin text cites the poem as a **stroph**a. A **stroph**a is a Greek lyric poem where the chorus is divided in two equal groups. The first group *calls* and the second group *answers*

Lenard and Milne are quoted in full. The texts differ in content and style. The English text is original to Milne

Crustulum, crustulum, crustulum cru	Cottleston, Cottleston, Cottleston Pie,
Cano aenigmata, canis ac tu?	A fly can’t bird, but a bird can fly.
Crustulum, crustulum, crustulum crum	Ask me a riddle and I reply:
Cerebrum meum est fatiga-tum	“Cottleston, Cottleston, Cottleston Pie,”

Fuit prima stroph

a. Ea stropha confecta lor non dixit eam non dilexisse, itaque Pu ei amabiliter secundam stropham cantavit: That was the first verse. When he had finished it, Eeyore didn’t actually say that he didn’t like it, so Pooh very kindly sang the second verse to him:

Crustulum, crustulum, crustulum cru	Cottleston, Cottleston, Cottleston Pie,
Volitant aves, dic volitas tu?	A fish can’t whistle and neither can I.
Crustulum, crustulum, crustulum crum	Ask me a riddle and I reply:
Cerebrum meum est fatiga-tum	“Cottleston, Cottleston, Cottleston Pie,”

Nec tunc quidem lor aliquid dixit, itaque Pu tertiam stroph

am tranquille secum murmuravit: Eeyore still said nothing at all, so Pooh hummed the third verse quietly to himself:

Crustulum, crustulum, crustulum cru	Cottleston, Cottleston, Cottleston Pie,
Sibilo bene, dic sibilas tu?	Why does a chicken, I don’t know why.
Crustulum, crustulum, crustulum crum	Ask me a riddle and I reply:
Cerebrum meum est fatiga-tum	“Cottleston, Cottleston, Cottleston Pie,”

‘Optime,’ dixit lor, ‘Canta! Umti-tiddl, umty tu. Hic collegi- Mus Nuces et Maium. Delectamini!’ “That’s right,” said Eeyor, “Sing! Umti-tiddi, umty tu. Here we tie together *Nuts and May*. You are delighted!”

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The **crustulum cru** passage begins with Eeyore being discontented with his life, saying, ‘Patheticum!’ dixit. ‘Mehercle, ita est. Patheticum.’

**Patheticum** is a post-Classical adjective with the sense of **pathos**. The word may also be interpreted as **pathetic**. Tellingly the phrase’s focus word is: **Mehercle**, **By my Hercules**

**Mehercle** is two words joined, composed of the prefix **me**, the first-person pronoun **me** and the noun **Hercle**, **Hercules**. Though Hercules is not a divinity, the Ancients recognized him as a personal aide for life’s troubles. Lenard has inserted **Hercle** to convey a cultural dimension not in the English text. With **Hercle** by his side, **lor** may now be able to meet all challengers and challenges

There is a final comment regarding **Hercle**. Lenard, throughout his work, often uses variant spelling. The absence of the letter ‘u’ in the proper noun **Hercle** is one example of many. **Hercules** in Latin may be spelt either **Hercle**, **by Hercules** or **Hercules**, **-is** (declined as a Greek-loan word)

Pooh meets and greets Eeyore, ‘Ominor tibi bonas horas matutinas,’ dixit Pu

**Ominor**, is more than a greeting. The verb is a salutation, the address of an oracle to a suppliant: 'I [have] **forbode to you, a good early morning hour,**' said Pooh. (**Ominor** is a deponent verb, spoken in the passive voice with an active sense. More tellingly, **ominor** is the verb the oracle of Delphi used when she addressed the pleader)

The response from Eeyore to Pooh is formal and polite: '**Salve, Urse Pu,**' dixit maestus lor. '**Si mane bonum est,**' dixit

**Salve**, is a general greeting wishing the other person **to be in good health**

**Urse** is in the vocative case of formal address (a masculine, second declension noun ending, **-us**). To further underline the differential status between Eeyore and Pooh, **Urse** is spelt with an upper-case '**U**', a courtesy of hierarchical Roman society

The melancholic Eeyore to Pooh continues to speak, **If morning is good, he said**

'**Res non aliter se habet,**' Matters are not otherwise. And the next line, Eeyore says: '**Hilaritas, chorea, carmina, circa morum saltamus!**' Hilarity, the chorus, the song, we jump around the mulberry bush!

Pooh is taken aback and replies, '**O,**' dixit **Pu** and ponders Eeyore's words, and asks the question: '**Qualis morus est ea?**' **What is the quality of the mulberry bush?** (The mulberry bush, its role is symbolic. The human characteristics of *patience* and *endurance* are attributed to the plant. The plant's red berries are edible and the wood is renown for its quality. The Milne and Lenard editions cite the mulberry bush.)

Pooh sits on a large rock and addresses Eeyore: '**Bonhommy,**' perrexit lor maestus. **Vox gallica, quae 'bonhommy' significat. Nolo queri, sed ecce!**

**Bonhommy** is a Gallic phrase. **What does 'bonhommy' signify?** Pooh offers no explanation, '**...sed ecce**' ...but behold

Confronted with Eeyore's downcast disposition, having offered Gallic good-will, Pooh thinks of a riddle. For Pooh, **...quia urus pauxilli cerebri erat. ...was a bear of a small brain,** by singing: **crustulum cru**

The first stanza of the **stropha** is recited. The **aeinigmata**, **riddle** is the second text line of each stanza. The question is posed, **Cano aeinigmata, canis ac tu? I sing a riddle, and can you also sing [a riddle]?**

The second stanza, **Volitant aves, dic volitas tu? Birds fly, say can you fly?**

The third stanza, **Sibilo bene, dic sibilas tu? I whistle well, say can you whistle?**

The passage ends with Eeyore expressing his approval, **Optime**

Pooh, **...urus pauxilli cerebri erat, ...was a bear of small brain.** May 'a bear of small brain' be a diminutive of regard in another form? For the language and manners throughout the **crustulum cru** passage are of the suppliant to the oracle. Mulberry bushes and Gallic words aside, Pooh recites oracularly. Eeyore ends the passage with '**Optime,**' and the non-sensical words citing the Edwardian child's game of *Nuts and May* to end the passage, '**Canta! Umti-tiddl, umty tu. Hic collegimus Nuces et Maium.**

'**Delectamini!**', "You have been delighted!"

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**crustulum**, as every boy in the Forum will tell you, 'It is a fresh-out-of-the-baker's-oven *bun*.' It is flavoured with sultanas and nuts and spices. Brake the bun open and pour honey on the hot, baked dough. Devour!

And, as for **Cottleston Pie**... Ask a baker from Old London Town...

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### **POLIS SEPTENTRIONALEM**

**Caput VIII** of the Lenard edition begins on page 80

Milne was a product of the era within which he lived. That is to say, he championed the heroics of the early years of the Twentieth Century; polar exploration of the **Arctic** and **Antarctic** regions

**Roald Amundsen** of Norway achieved the South Pole on December 14, 1911. **Robert Falcon Scott** of Britain reached the Pole on January 17, 1912. Scott, and the men of his team, on their return journey to Base Camp, died during the endeavour

Legendary men...

In stride – footfall-by-footfall across snow and ice; Christopher Robin and Pooh, and all the woodland creatures, catch the moment and mount their expedition to find the **Polis septentrionalis**, the **North Pole**

May Milne of another period, **Pu, ursus impavidus** build a moon rocket?

Pooh, on page 85 sings a six-line verse. All the animals are present. There is a problem. Owl, Piglet, Rabbit, Eeyore, and even Pooh himself are neither certain what constitutes the North Pole nor the Pole's location. Thus, Lenard has fun with the noun: **polus**, the **axial pole**. Latin alliteration is to the fore as the comedy of **pilus**, the **hair** and **palus**, a **marsh** and **polus** accent nonsensical word-fun and word-learning

Lenard and Milne are quoted in full. The texts differ in content and style. The English text is original to Milne

<b>Bubo et lor et Canga et Ru</b>	They all went off to discover the Pole,
<b>Atque Porcellus et egomet Pu</b>	Owl and Piglet and Rabbit and all;
<b>Cuncti rogamus, non ego solus</b>	It's a Thing you Discover, as I've been tole
<b>Ubi sit pilus aut palus aut polus?</b>	By Owl and Piglet and Rabbit and all.
<b>Heu pilus ubi? O polus quails?</b>	Eeyore, Christopher Robin and Pooh
<b>Polus septentrionalis.</b>	And Rabbit's relations all went too -----
	And where the Pole was none of them knew...
	Sing Hey! For Owl and Rabbit and all!

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### **AQUIS CIRCUMDATUS EST**

The third passage is the opening paragraph from **Caput IX**. In the Lenard edition, the chapter begins on page 94

Of the three cited passages, this passage is foremost Roman. *It rains, it pours, its an inundation* and **Deus** – for there is always a divinity in telling the Antique tale (but absent in the Milne text), with **sum** in the subjunctive, the adjective **longaevus** and God's knowing and Piglet's years, the quantity known...?

Lenard and Milne are quoted in full. The texts differ in content and style. The English text is original to Milne

<b>Pluebat et pluebat et pluebat. Porcellus secum dixit se</b>	It rained and it rained and it rained. Piglet told himself that
<b>nunquam dum erat – et Deus scit quantum sit longaevus:</b>	never in all his life, and <i>he</i> was goodness knows <i>how</i> old –
<b>trimus aut quadrimus erat! – tantum pluviarum vidisse. Per</b>	three, was it, or four? – never had he seen so much rain.
<b>dies et dies et dies</b>	Days and days and days

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### **ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-SIX VERBS**

Reading *Winnie ille Pu*, its 118 pages, was enjoyable and – at times – a challenge. Lenard translated Milne's book with the express purpose of providing grammar exercises for two girls. In, other words, push the student to learn, explore, and gain through the challenge. **Mehercle**

From **Ursus Pu** is a list of 136 verbs not usually present in an introductory Latin course. The list may assist...

So, while **dico** and **cano** are not cited, you can recite **dictito** and **cantito**  
And too...

You want the wining ticket, for antiquity had the lottery too, so mimic the oracle with **ominor**

You double your fortune with **delibero**

You do not like what somebody says, then **censeo** the fellow

You, every morning, **balneo**

You are energetic, so neither **pigeo** nor **me piget ignaviae tuae** are you

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## CONCLUSION

When *Winnie ille Pu* was published in December 1960, the work was a literary and business success. *Pu* was 20 weeks on the New York Times 'best seller' list. A total of 21 editions were published, for a total print count of 125,000 copies. The only English within the work is on the reverse side of the title page citing the publisher, *E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc.* and copyright information. A remarkable achievement for a work written in Classical Latin

Reading *Winnie ille Pu* was a challenge, the length of the work and its correlative of reading a minimum number of pages per day. Always, I found either an interesting word or phrase. Finding new words or phrases resulted in researching other Latin texts. And, that is how I proceeded, with *Pu* hand-in-hand down the road

If reading the work was a challenge, my next hurdle was what to write, more accurately; what to include in my commentary

As a child I had not read *Winnie the Pooh*. Reviewing my Latin notes, I wondered to what degree had my understanding of read-material differed from Milne's own writing? Lenard faithfully follows *Pu*, but; he often deviated. My commentary, by chance, outlines three areas where text-deviation occurred, the two songs sung by *Pu* in *crustulum cru* and *polum septentrionalem*, and the opening paragraph to *Caput IX*, the *aquis circumdatus est* passage

My above comment is *in praise* of Milne. For every tongue has its own dialogue, its own beat and rhythm. When I first read the poem *polum septentrionalem*, the fourth line of the verse was arresting, *Ubi sit pilus aut palus aut polus?* I re-read the line aloud. Many thoughts flooded my mind. There – on the page – was the essence of conveying a thought, in a poetic and questioning manner that nudged me forward to ask, *Ubi sit polus?*

At the time, playing with words; *pilus, palus, polus* I found I had written the following. My doggerel is my departure to you:

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For the intrepid scholar get your shovel and dig for your dictionary too

*pilus* and *palus* and *polus* play the phonetic

*pilus* and *palus* are sensible too

*polus* is sympathetic

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## REFERENCE

Quotes are from *Winnie the Pooh* and *Winnie ille Pu*. May be cited either as the Milne or the Lenard edition. Only page numbers from *Winnie ille Pu* are cited

Milne, A.A. et Lenard, A. *Winnie ille Pu*. Novi Eboraci: Sumptibus Duttonis. MCMLX. Latin translation, copyright 1960 by Alexander Lenard. Winnie-the-Pooh, illustrations and text in English copyright 1926 by E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc. Copyright renewal, 1954, by A.A. Milne. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A. Edition: Seventh Printing, February 1961

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