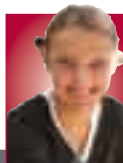


Musings



with Marta Kaminska

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Winnie's world ...

Recently I have spent a lot of time thinking about baby clothes. This is because a number of my friends either have just had a baby or are about to have a baby. Anyway, almost a thousand miniature outfits have passed through my hands and this is what I discovered, almost all of them feature Winnie the Pooh. It's a little weird because very few people have actually read the book, but yet we see the ubiquitous happy face of Winnie and even stranger is the fact that while many people are big fans of this fat bear, as many more have a dread of this story. I have to confess that I never met a person who was indifferent to Winnie the Pooh.

First of all, I should state that Winnie the Pooh is a character created by British writer A.A. Milne in 1926. Winnie lives in the forest and is fat because he likes honey and with his friends, enjoys lots of adventures. He counts some unusual characters among his friends. Among them are the quiet, shy and ever-scared Piglet, the ever-pessimistic Eeyore, the uber-smart Owl, the hilarious Tigger, the weird Rabbit and of course Christopher Robin, the human who is friends with everyone. As you know, there are many more characters in the story but I want to concentrate on the most stereotypical characters who were central to ensuring

the continuing popularity of the story. So, what is the secret of this story, which is still popular after 84 years? Ha, the answer is really simple, you just have to look around and observe your friends and now you should know. All Milne's characters are represented in every social group, there is always an Eeyore who is constantly complaining, a Tigger who tells funny jokes and somewhere around the corner, sitting in silence, sits Piglet, or perhaps the cute, fat Winnie. Right now I just looked around my apartment for my boyfriend and I note that he is a Tigger who, unfortunately, is slowly changing into Winnie.

Thinking about this crazy Winnie world, I must admit that I have just discovered that I am a huge fan of this story. First of all, because as a small girl, I could often be found reading this book and I have a sentimental attitude to it. Secondly, in times when new cartoons often make parents sick, Winnie the Pooh and his friends are almost sweet. For those of you who remain unconvinced of the merits of this story, I say go back to the book or watch the Disney movie and maybe you will change your mind and instead of screaming at poor Winnie the Pooh, you will manage to remain indifferent.

PS. Friday is the start of the World Cup, so please keep your fingers crossed for Ar-

gentina because I have a €10 bet on them!

Kubuś i przyjaciele

Jakoś tak się złożyło ostatnimi czasy, że często zdarza mi się oglądać ubranka dziecięce. Dzieje się tak za sprawą moich koleżanek, które albo już mają bobaska albo się go niebawem spodziewają. Tak czy owak przez moje ręce przewinęły się setki spiozszków, kaftaników, koszulek i takich tam miniaturowych odpowiedników odzieży wierzchniej. Jedno co mi się rzuciło w oczy to fakt, że na większości z nich pojawia się wizerunek Kubusia Puchatka. I tu jakaś dziwna sprawa jest z tym Kubusiem, bo niby go nikt nie czyta a on i tak wszędzie się pojawia. No i jeszcze sprawa tego dziwnego podziału: z jednej strony gorący wielbiciel grubego misia, a z drugiej wręcz palający nienawiścią przeciwnicy. Przyznam, że nigdy nie spotkałam się z opinią, że dla kogoś Kubuś Puchatek jest po prostu obojętny.

Po pierwsze wypada napisać, że Kubuś Puchatek (angielski Winnie The Pooh) to postać literacka stworzona w 1926 roku przez brytyjskiego pisarza A.A. Milne'a. Mieszka sobie w stumilowym lesie, jest grubutki bo kocha miodek i wraz z przyjaciółmi miewa różne

przygody. Warto w tym miejscu wspomnieć niezwykle przyjaciół Kubusia. Tak więc mamy spokojnego, często nieśmiałego i lęklivego Prosiaczka. Wiecznego pesymistę-Kłapouchego, przemądrzałą sowę, brykającego tygrysa, dziwnego królika no i oczywiście Krzysia- człowieka, który jest przyjacielem wszystkich mieszkańców lasu. Jak każdy wie postaci jest tu więcej jednak wymienić chciałam tylko te najbardziej charakterystyczne i chyba te, dzięki którym Kubuś i przyjaciele są wciąż tak niezwykle popularni. A w czym tkwi ten sekret? Ha odpowiedź jest bardzo prosta. Wystarczy obejrzeć się naokoło, poobserwować swoich znajomych i już wszystko jasne. Okazuje się, że bohaterowie brytyjskiego pisarza to przede wszystkim charaktery ponadczasowe a jednocześnie typowe. W każdym towarzystwie, mniej lub bardziej związanej grupie ludzi znajdzie się jakiś kłapouch-pesymista, żartowniś, cwaniaczek-tygrysek, milczący, nieśmiały- prosiaczek czy przemily grubasek- Kubuś. Ja tak właśnie teraz rozglądam się po mieszkaniu i patrząc na mojego chłopca widzę w nim tygrysa nieubłaganie przemieniającego się w Kubusia Puchatka. Tak obserwując to Kubusiuwe szaleństwo jestem skłonna uznać się raczej za zwolenniczkę



Jacek Ciepły pictured at the truck show in Athlone on Sunday last. Pic: Ariel Błaszczuk.

nika mieszkańców stumilowego lasu. Po pierwsze dlatego, że sama będąc dzieckiem czytałam wiele razy tę książkę i mam do niej pewien zrozumiały sentyment. Po drugie w czasach, gdy niejednokrotnie te nazwijmy je „nowe” bajki przyprawiają rodziców o mdłości, Kubuś i jego przyjaciele wydają się wręcz słodcy. A tym co nie

znoszą tej bajki proponuję ponowne zapoznanie się z treścią książki (lub obejrzenie filmu Disneya)- może dzięki temu zmienią zdanie i zamiast warczeć na bogu ducha winnego Kubusia, będzie im on choćby obojętny.

P.S Już za chwilę rozpoczyna się mistrzostwa, więc proszę trzymajcie za Argentynę, bo postawiłam na nią dychę!

From Punch and Judy era to world according to Cowell!

It's not often that I miss out on something worthwhile, but on each of the last two Friday nights, when the Kilbeggan Dramatic Society put on their 3-act play 'No Home Tomorrow' in the local St. Mary's Hall, I was sadly unable to attend. And from what I hear it was me that missed out, because everywhere I went over the bank holiday weekend I was being told about the wonderful show that it was, and the superb performances that were given by each and every one of the cast.

Now the fact that it was so well acted and produced didn't surprise me even the slightest little bit, because the amount of rehearsal time that went into the production was just amazing. I happen to live in close proximity to the parochial hall, and since January there have been many, many evening rehearsals taking place, and I can't ever remember such a massive effort going into any previous production. Larry Donoghue was the producer, with Johnny Peter Kelly his assistant, and general organiser, and all I can do is congratulate everyone who was involved on a wonderful success. There were people in attendance from Glenamaddy and Tuam, and all over, and I'm told that a long-time friend of mine and former member of The Rhythm Stars and Premier Aces showbands, Stephen Treacy from Castlereagh, was also up for a look. Stephen is one of the Treacy Brothers, all of whom were well-known, very talented and accomplished musicians, and who all

contributed greatly to the showband era – and I was sorry to miss him.

Anyway we were talking the other evening about how great it was to have a live local show take place in the parochial hall, and how well attended it was, and it brought me back to my young days when I was in Creggs national school, before television came along and more or less killed off all live forms of entertainment. Back then (as I've often said) we were supposed to be living in abject poverty, and yet, there was always something entertainment-wise going on in the schools. We had Punch and Judy shows, mini circuses, jugglers and magicians all appearing on occasions, while every so often we used be visited by a family, comprising of father, mother and two children, who would put on a variety show with music, song and comedy all thrown in. We used give a penny or two, or maybe even sixpence, to help cover the cost of the performances, and whether they were good or not, to us they were brilliant. I don't know what comes to the schools nowadays but it was hard to beat the entertainment that came our way.

However it's back to the present now, and there seems to be no other way now to make it except through talent shows. There's been X Factor, Britain's Got Talent, and recently I've seen a show picking the lead roles for 'Fame' which is to be a stage production of the musical. The quality has been quite good but it's 'Britain's Got

Talent' that has really captured the imagination. In fairness every class of an act has a chance although the fellow who chopped wood, while dressed like Robin Hood, must still wonder how he made it to the semi-finals.

The weirdest act I saw was the fellow who swallowed Amanda Holden's engagement ring, a locked lock and a key – all separately – and managed to open the lock, put the ring onto it, and lock it again, while all in his stomach! How he did it no-one knows, but I saw it with my own two eyes. We also had an 81 year old granny, who was a really fine singer, a dancing dog, the fellow who ate after-eight mints, while the winner, as was the case last year also, was one of these new dance groups which had the most amazing routine. However good as they were, they were put in the shade I thought, by the show put on by last year's winners, Diversity. I can't even try to describe it, but it was well worth seeing. Anyway it's all over for this year but I read on the paper today, that Simon Cowell is now thinking of going global with the show and hopes to line up a world show called, naturally enough, 'The World's Got Talent' – another few million for Simon, but it would certainly be a winner.

Talking of winners it was an extraordinary weekend for football followers. Sligo, Louth, Monaghan and Westmeath all produced major shocks, and we now certainly will have an interesting summer in the qualifiers. There are

a lot of 'big guns' already there while the biggest of them all, either Cork or Kerry, will also find themselves taking the scenic route. When Roscommon meet Leitrim on June 20th the Rossies should make home advantage count. The way things are going it looks to me as if we'll have a Sligo-Roscommon Connacht final with the Yeats County men likely to capture another elusive Connacht title.

I know I've left Galway out of the equation, but rumour has it all is not well in the camp – if that is so then it's hard to see them making much of a showing, especially against a team like Sligo, that's on the up and up.

A young footballer that's also on the up and up, James McKeague, had a surprise 21st birthday party in Micken's on Sunday night, and it was good to see a number of the 2006 minors turn up. They seem to be a good bunch of lads, and no Rossie will ever forget the journey they took them on that summer. James played a major part in that unforgettable trip, and has a great future ahead of him.

The party was good fun, and DJ Alan Curley kept the dance floor hopping – unfortunately myself and Duff had played a few holes earlier in Castlereagh Golf Club, and I wasn't up to my usual dancing self. However I promise not to give up and will be back in action the next night. Anyway congrats, James, and we look forward to a lot more success on the football fields.

I had a long chat with 'Big Dave' from

Meath, and he told me to look out for the 'Royals' this summer – he might be right. Finally, our girl, Lisa, is off to Tanzania this evening to work as a doctor for the summer – it's a daunting prospect in a country where medicines are very scarce, and where the electricity is switched off each evening at 8 o'clock. She flies to Amsterdam, and from there to Kilimanjaro, where she will, hopefully, be installed by the time you read this; we wish her well and will keep you posted on her adventures.



'Til next week, bye for now.

Frankly Speaking ...
with Frank Brandon