

## **Losing the Old Oak Tree in the Hundred Acre Wood**

It was a Very Blustery Day in the Hundred Acre Wood, and Pooh was at home, quietly counting his pots of honey, when all of a sudden he heard a commotion from outside.

It was Piglet, and Tigger, and Rabbit, and Eeyore, and Owl, and Kanga, and Roo, and Christopher Robin; and when Pooh opened his front door and they implored him to "Come! Come quickly!", Pooh knew that something Very Important Indeed must have happened.

Leaving his honey pots behind, Pooh followed them through the forest. It had been raining for many days, and the air was filled with the scent of damp pine.

And then! All of a sudden, the pathway widened, and they found themselves out in the middle of a clearing that Pooh knew oh, so very well. In the centre of the clearing grew the strongest, tallest, oldest tree in the Hundred Acre Wood. That tree had been growing here well before any of them had ever been born; and they had all of them always assumed that it would be there until after they were gone. A constant in all of their lives.

The group came to a halt. Shocked, and silenced. And devastated.

"It must have been the storm," said Rabbit, in a slow, sad, most-unlike-Rabbit kind of voice; and Pooh saw how the great trunk had been split almost down the middle, the bark charred and devastated as it had fallen. That great tree, standing so firm and so solid for so many, many, many years; now broken, uprooted, and toppled to the ground.

For some time, none of them said a word. They walked quietly around their fallen friend, occasionally reaching out to gently touch a branch or bough.

Pooh thought about the many, many times they had shared together in this clearing. When he was very young, there had been parties here, protected from the overhead sun by the shade the tree afforded them. They had held races around the trunk; played hide and seek amongst the boughs.

As he got older, the friends had often come to the clearing to spend evenings together, chatting and laughing until the sky was an inky black. Pooh and Piglet had even once sat on one of the lower branches together all night, until the sun came up, and the whole of the forest was bathed in radiant pink light.

There had been the more difficult days, too. This was where Pooh had always come when he needed to be alone; where he had walked around the clearing with tears staining his cheeks. And yet, when he had reached out to touch the bark of the great tree, had somehow felt like he was never quite alone.

The tree would be there for ever. Pooh was certain about that.

Until all of a sudden it wasn't, and he felt the world slip irreparably on its axis; because nothing, now, would ever be quite the same again.

"I loved you, Tree," said Roo in a small voice; and they all nodded, because oh, how they had loved that tree, too.

Far overhead, the clouds started to clear, and the first tentative rays of sun peeped out; shining down onto Pooh, and Piglet, and Tigger, and Rabbit, and Eeyore, and Owl, and Kanga, and Roo, and Christopher Robin, as they said goodbye to their friend.

*Kathryn Wallace, [instagram.com/iknowineedtostoptalkingblog](https://www.instagram.com/iknowineedtostoptalkingblog)*

## **September the 8th, 2022**

You were old, already, when I was born  
And I took your gentle face for granted:  
On every coin and every postage stamp,  
Each Christmas message, poppy wreath laid.  
Most famous of faces around the world,  
I saw you, once or twice, felt I knew you  
And many people cherish their stories  
Of garden parties and medals received.

We feel the sands of time shift beneath us  
As history is marked before our eyes.  
We feel the cold wind blow, the night draw in  
And pull our coats tightly around our chests;  
We raise our heads, as you did, say a prayer;  
We cling to the true rock, the true anchor  
As you did. We live with faith, hope and love.

*Sorrel May Wood*