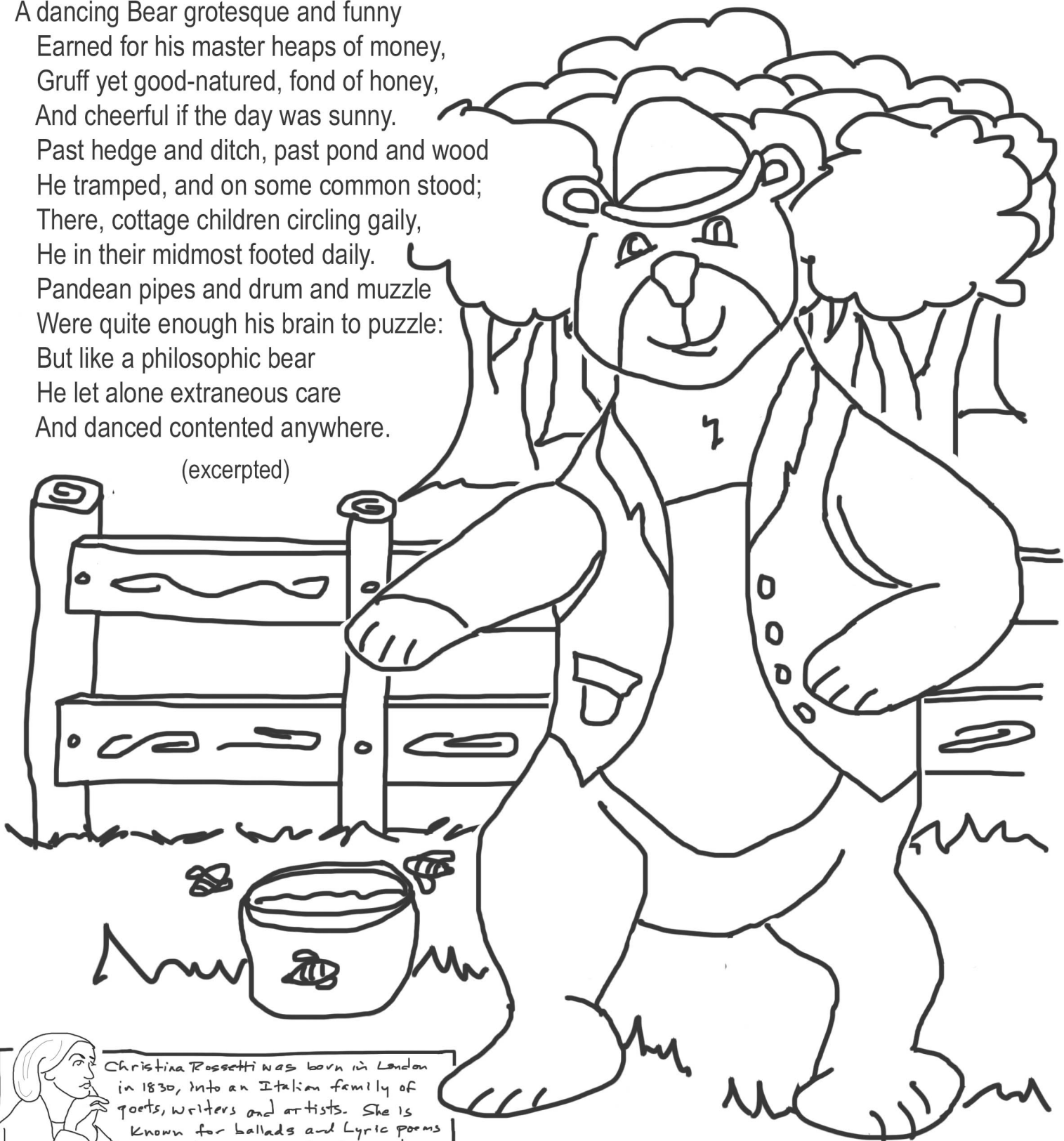


Brother Bruin by Christina Rossetti

A dancing Bear grotesque and funny
Earned for his master heaps of money,
Gruff yet good-natured, fond of honey,
And cheerful if the day was sunny.
Past hedge and ditch, past pond and wood
He tramped, and on some common stood;
There, cottage children circling gaily,
He in their midst footed daily.
Pandean pipes and drum and muzzle
Were quite enough his brain to puzzle:
But like a philosophic bear
He let alone extraneous care
And danced contented anywhere.

(excerpted)



Christina Rossetti was born in London in 1830, into an Italian family of poets, writers and artists. She is known for ballads and lyric poems marked by themes of religion, loss, mortality and the inconsistency of love.