

*Tell me about when you saw the bear...*

“It was like a teddy bear, it was so, so beautiful. We came round a bend and...he was already there. Gary said, ‘There’s maybe a bear around this corner,’ but because of this whirlpool we had to leap over he said it may startle him, which is exactly what happened. We arrived and the bear looked up and then he stood up on his hind legs. And I saw him and he was so sensational, like a big teddy bear face.

“It was hard to take seriously, I wanted to smile, he must have been seven feet on his hind legs and I think the camera man just got his ears before he took off, we saw little else, and then we turned around and went to do another run and as we turned around and jettied up we came around the corner to the right and there was a bear running, it was just sensational. It ran in a semi circle, it looked as if it was coming toward us and then it cut across and into the bushes and we got a lovely view of it and then we got up further and had some sandwiches and then drifted down again.

“We came round and there it was this Grizzly bear on a log, looking for fish. It saw us but it wasn’t sure what we were. It was a beautiful thing it walked along three or four logs. I was happy. There is something wonderful about seeing a big thing in its own territory, in its own world, being a wild beast. There is something deeply impressive that it can hunt that well.

“This big muscley bear, a big hairy arsed bear going along the rocks like that. It’s just so brilliant. There is something extraordinary about these animals, that can stand to live in such an extraordinary climate, they can survive in it, sleep through the winter and go through all those things it has to do. Building itself up to survive. And the salmon, the sock-eyed salmon were going up the river and they are neon red with a green head and a green tail, like designer fish...hundreds of them up the river and that’s what the bears are into, they like to eat the brain and the roe...and there are so many...and the eagles all love the flesh... what a country, just booming with these things...I was very happy.”