

The Adventures of Pinocchio



C. Collodi

THE ADVENTURES OF PINOCCHIO



The demonstration of warm brotherly affection that Pinocchio received.



Yesterday's Classics
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

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CONTENTS

I. MASTER CHERRY FINDS A PIECE OF WOOD.....	1
II. MASTER CHERRY GIVES A PRESENT TO GEPPETTO.....	5
III. GEPPETTO RETURNS HOME TO MAKE A PUPPET.....	11
IV. THE TALKING-CRICKET	18
V. PINOCCHIO IS HUNGRY.....	22
VI. PINOCCHIO FALLS ASLEEP	27
VII. GEPPETTO GIVES PINOCCHIO HIS BREAKFAST	31
VIII. GEPPETTO MAKES PINOCCHIO NEW FEET	37
IX. PINOCCHIO SELLS HIS SPELLING-BOOK.....	43
X. THE PUPPETS RECOGNIZE THEIR BROTHER PINOCCHIO	49
XI. THE FIRE-EATER PARDONS PINOCCHIO.....	55

XII. PINOCCHIO IS TAKEN IN BY THE FOX AND THE CAT61
XIII. THE INN OF THE RED CRAW-FISH69
XIV. PINOCCHIO FALLS AMONGST ASSASSINS75
XV. THE ASSASSINS PURSUE PINOCCHIO.	.81
XVI. PINOCCHIO IS FOUND AND PUT TO BED87
XVII. PINOCCHIO'S NOSE GROWS93
XVIII. PINOCCHIO MEETS THE FOX AND THE CAT AGAIN.	101
XIX. PINOCCHIO IS ROBBED	109
XX. PINOCCHIO IS LIBERATED FROM PRISON.	115
XXI. PINOCCHIO BECOMES A WATCH-DOG.	121
XXII. PINOCCHIO DISCOVERS THE ROBBERS	127
XXIII. PINOCCHIO FLIES WITH A PIGEON TO THE SEA.	133
XXIV. THE ISLAND OF THE "INDUSTRIOUS BEES"	142

XXV. PINOCCHIO PROMISES TO BE GOOD AND STUDIOUS	151
XXVI. PINOCCHIO GOES TO SEE THE DOG-FISH	157
XXVII. THE FIGHT BETWEEN PINOCCHIO AND HIS COMPANIONS	163
XXVIII. PINOCCHIO IS IN DANGER OF BEING FRIED	172
XXIX. THE FAIRY PROMISES TO MAKE PINOCCHIO A BOY	181
XXX. PINOCCHIO LEAVES FOR THE “LAND OF BOOBIES”	193
XXXI. PINOCCHIO GROWS A PAIR OF DONKEY EARS	203
XXXII. PINOCCHIO BECOMES A DONKEY . .	213
XXXIII. PINOCCHIO IS SOLD	223
XXXIV. PINOCCHIO IS THROWN INTO THE SEA	234
XXXV. WHAT PINOCCHIO FINDS IN THE DOG-FISH	245
XXXVI. PINOCCHIO BECOMES A BOY AT LAST	252



This time Master Cherry was petrified.

CHAPTER I

MASTER CHERRY FINDS A PIECE OF WOOD

*How it came to pass that Master Cherry the carpenter
found a piece of wood that laughed and cried like
a child.*

THERE was once upon a time . . .

“A king!” my little readers will instantly exclaim.

No children, you are wrong. There was once upon
a time a piece of wood.

This wood was not valuable: it was only a common
log like those that are burnt in winter in the stoves

PINOCCHIO, THE TALE OF A PUPPET

and fireplaces to make a cheerful blaze and warm the rooms.

I cannot say how it came about, but the fact is, that one fine day this piece of wood was lying in the shop of an old carpenter of the name of Master Antonio. He was, however, called by everybody Master Cherry, on account of the end of his nose, which was always as red and polished as a ripe cherry.

No sooner had Master Cherry set eyes on the piece of wood than his face beamed with delight; and rubbing his hands together with satisfaction, he said softly to himself:

“This wood has come at the right moment; it will just do to make the leg of a little table.”

Having said this he immediately took a sharp axe with which to remove the bark and the rough surface. Just, however, as he was going to give the first stroke he remained with his arm suspended in the air, for he heard a very small voice saying imploringly, “Do not strike me so hard!”

Picture to yourselves the astonishment of good old Master Cherry!

He turned his terrified eyes all round the room to try and discover where the little voice could possibly have come from, but he saw nobody! He looked under the bench—nobody; he looked into a cupboard that was always shut—nobody; he looked into a basket of shavings and sawdust—nobody; he even opened the

MASTER CHERRY FINDS A PIECE OF WOOD

door of the shop and gave a glance into the street—and still nobody. Who, then, could it be?

“I see how it is,” he said, laughing and scratching his wig; “evidently that little voice was all my imagination. Let us set to work again.”

And taking up the axe he struck a tremendous blow on the piece of wood.

“Oh! oh! you have hurt me!” cried the same little voice dolefully.

This time Master Cherry was petrified. His eyes started out of his head with fright, his mouth remained open, and his tongue hung out almost to the end of his chin, like a mask on a fountain. As soon as he had recovered the use of his speech, he began to say, stuttering and trembling with fear:

“But where on earth can that little voice have come from that said Oh! oh!? . . . Here there is certainly not a living soul. Is it possible that this piece of wood can have learnt to cry and to lament like a child? I cannot believe it. This piece of wood, here it is; a log for fuel like all the others, and thrown on the fire it would about suffice to boil a saucepan of beans. . . . How then? Can anyone be hidden inside it? If anyone is hidden inside, so much the worse for him. I will settle him at once.”

So saying, he seized the poor piece of wood and commenced beating it without mercy against the walls of the room.

Then he stopped to listen if he could hear any little

PINOCCHIO, THE TALE OF A PUPPET

voice lamenting. He waited two minutes—nothing; five minutes—nothing; ten minutes—still nothing!

“I see how it is,” he then said, forcing himself to laugh and pushing up his wig; “evidently the little voice that said Oh! oh! was all my imagination! Let us set to work again.”

But as all the same he was in a great fright, he tried to sing to give himself a little courage.

Putting the axe aside he took his plane, to plane and polish the bit of wood; but whilst he was running it up and down he heard the same little voice say, laughing:

“Have done! you are tickling me all over!”

This time poor Master Cherry fell down as if he had been struck by lightning. When he at last opened his eyes he found himself seated on the floor.

His face was quite changed, even the end of his nose, instead of being crimson, as it was nearly always, had become blue from fright.



CHAPTER II

MASTER CHERRY GIVES A PRESENT TO GEPPETTO

Master Cherry makes a present of the piece of wood to his friend Geppetto, who takes it to make for himself a wonderful puppet, that shall know how to dance, and to fence, and to leap like an acrobat.

At that moment some one knocked at the door.

“Come in,” said the carpenter, without having the strength to rise to his feet.

A lively little old man immediately walked into the shop. His name was Geppetto, but when the boys of the neighbourhood wished to put him in a passion they called him by the nickname of Polendina,¹ because his yellow wig greatly resembled a pudding made of Indian corn.

¹Polendina. In Italian, pudding of Indian corn.

PINOCCHIO, THE TALE OF A PUPPET

Geppetto was very fiery. Woe to him who called him Polendina! He became furious, and there was no holding him.

“Good Day, Master Antonio,” said Geppetto; “what are you doing there on the floor?”

“I am teaching the alphabet to the ants.”

“Much good may that do you.”

“What has brought you to me, neighbour Geppetto?”

“My legs. But to say the truth, Master Antonio, I am come to ask a favour of you.”

“Here I am, ready to serve you,” replied the carpenter, getting on to his knees.

“This morning an idea came into my head.”

“Let us hear it.”

“I thought I would make a beautiful wooden puppet; but a wonderful puppet that should know how to dance, to fence, and to leap like an acrobat. With this puppet I would travel about the world to earn a piece of bread and a glass of wine. What do you think of it?”

“Bravo, Polendina!” exclaimed the same little voice, and it was impossible to say where it came from.

Hearing himself called Polendina Geppetto became as red as a turkey-cock from rage, and turning to the carpenter he said in a fury:

“Why do you insult me?”

“Who insults you?”

MASTER CHERRY GIVES A PRESENT TO GEPPETTO

“You called me Polendina! . . .”

“It was not I!”

“Would you have it, then, that it was I? It was you, I say!”

“No!”

“Yes!”

“No!”

“Yes!”

And becoming more and more angry, from words they came to blows, and flying at each other they bit, and fought, and scratched manfully.



When the fight was over.

When the fight was over Master Antonio was in possession of Geppetto's yellow wig, and Geppetto discovered that the grey wig belonging to the carpenter had remained between his teeth.

PINOCCHIO, THE TALE OF A PUPPET

“Give me back my wig,” screamed Master Antonio.

“And you, return me mine, and let us make friends.”

The two old men having each recovered his own wig shook hands, and swore that they would remain friends to the end of their lives.

“Well then, neighbour Geppetto,” said the carpenter, to prove that peace was made, “what is the favour that you wish of me?”

“I want a little wood to make my puppet; will you give me some?”

Master Antonio was delighted, and he immediately went to the bench and fetched the piece of wood that had caused him so much fear. But just as he was going to give it to his friend the piece of wood gave a shake, and wriggling violently out of his hands struck with all its force against the dried-up shins of poor Geppetto.

“Ah! is that the courteous way in which you make your presents, Master Antonio? You have almost lamed me! . . .”

“I swear to you that it was not I! . . .”

“Then you would have it that it was I? . . .”

“The wood is entirely to blame! . . .”

“I know that it was the wood; but it was you that hit my legs with it! . . .”

“I did not hit you with it! . . .”

MASTER CHERRY GIVES A PRESENT TO GEPPETTO

“Liar!”

“Geppetto, don’t insult me or I will call you Polendina! . . .”

“Ass!”

“Polendina!”

“Donkey!”

“Polendina!”

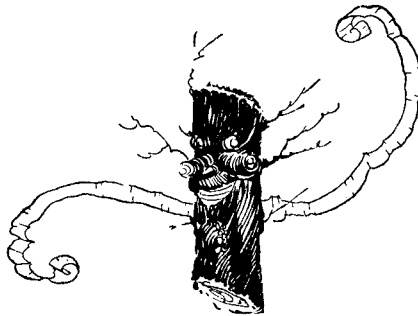
“Baboon!”

“Polendina!”

On hearing himself called Polendina for the third time Geppetto, blind with rage, fell upon the carpenter and they fought desperately.

When the battle was over, Master Antonio had two more scratches on his nose, and his adversary had two buttons too little on his waistcoat. Their accounts being thus squared they shook hands, and swore to remain good friends for the rest of their lives.

Geppetto carried off his fine piece of wood and, thanking Master Antonio, returned limping to his house.







CHAPTER III

GEPPETTO RETURNS HOME TO MAKE A PUPPET

Geppetto having returned home begins at once to make a puppet, to which he gives the name of Pinocchio. The first tricks played by the puppet.

GEPPETTO lived in a small ground-floor room that was only lighted from the staircase. The furniture could not have been simpler,—a bad chair, a poor bed, and a broken-down table. At the end of the room there was a fireplace with a lighted fire; but the fire was painted, and by the fire was a painted saucepan that was boiling cheerfully, and sending out a cloud of smoke that looked exactly like real smoke.

As soon as he reached home Geppetto took his tools and set to work to cut out and model his puppet.

“What name shall I give him?” he said to himself; “I think I will call him Pinocchio. It is a name that will bring him luck. I once knew a whole family so called.

PINOCCHIO, THE TALE OF A PUPPET

There was Pinocchio the father, Pinocchia the mother, and Pinocchi the children, and all of them did well. The richest of them was a beggar.”

Having found a name for his puppet he began to work in good earnest, and he first made his hair, then his forehead, and then his eyes.

The eyes being finished, imagine his astonishment when he perceived that they moved and looked fixedly at him.

Geppetto seeing himself stared at by those two wooden eyes took it almost in bad part, and said in an angry voice:

“Wicked wooden eyes, why do you look at me?”

No one answered.

He then proceeded to carve the nose; but no sooner had he made it than it began to grow. And it grew, and grew, and grew, until in a few minutes it had become an immense nose that seemed as if it would never end.

Poor Geppetto tired himself out with cutting it off; but the more he cut and shortened it, the longer did that impertinent nose become!

The mouth was not even completed when it began to laugh and deride him.

“Stop laughing!” said Geppetto, provoked; but he might as well have spoken to the wall.

“Stop laughing, I say!” he roared in a threatening tone.

GEPPETTO RETURNS HOME TO MAKE A PUPPET

The mouth then ceased laughing, but put out its tongue as far as it would go.

Geppetto, not to spoil his handiwork, pretended not to see, and continued his labours. After the mouth he fashioned the chin, then the throat, then the shoulders, the stomach, the arms and the hands.

The hands were scarcely finished when Geppetto felt his wig snatched from his head. He turned round, and what did he see? He saw his yellow wig in the puppet's hand.

"Pinocchio! . . . Give me back my wig instantly!"

But Pinocchio, instead of returning it, put it on his own head, and was in consequence nearly smothered.

Geppetto at this insolent and derisive behaviour felt sadder and more melancholy than he had ever been in his life before; and turning to Pinocchio he said to him:

"You young rascal! You are not yet completed, and you are already beginning to show want of respect to your father! That is bad, my boy, very bad!"

And he dried a tear.

The legs and the feet remained to be done. When Geppetto had finished the feet he received a kick on the point of his nose.

"I deserve it!" he said to himself; "I should have thought of it sooner! Now it is too late!"

He then took the puppet under the arms and placed him on the floor to teach him to walk.



*When Geppetto had finished the feet he received a kick
on the point of his nose.*

GEPPETTO RETURNS HOME TO MAKE A PUPPET

Pinocchio's legs were stiff and he could not move, but Geppetto led him by the hand and showed him how to put one foot before the other.

When his legs became flexible Pinocchio began to walk by himself and to run about the room; until, having gone out of the house door, he jumped into the street and escaped.

Poor Geppetto rushed after him but was not able to overtake him, for that rascal Pinocchio leapt in front of him like a hare, and knocking his wooden feet together against the pavement made as much clatter as twenty pairs of peasants' clogs.



Geppetto rushed after him.

“Stop him! stop him!” shouted Geppetto but the people in the street, seeing a wooden puppet running like a racehorse, stood still in astonishment to look at it, and laughed, and laughed, and laughed, until it beats description.

At last, as good luck would have it, a carabineer arrived who, hearing the uproar, imagined that a colt had

PINOCCHIO, THE TALE OF A PUPPET

escaped from his master. Planting himself courageously with his legs apart in the middle of the road, he waited with the determined purpose of stopping him, and thus preventing the chance of worse disasters.

When Pinocchio, still at some distance, saw the carabineer barricading the whole street, he endeavoured to take him by surprise and to pass between his legs. But he failed signally.

The carabineer without disturbing himself in the least caught him cleverly by the nose—it was an immense nose of ridiculous proportions that seemed made on purpose to be laid hold of by carabineers—and consigned him to Geppetto. Wishing to punish him, Geppetto intended to pull his ears at once. But imagine his feelings when he could not succeed in finding them. And do you know the reason? It was that, in his hurry to model him, he had forgotten to make them.

He then took him by the collar, and as he was leading him away he said to him, shaking his head threateningly:

“We will go home at once, and as soon as we arrive we will regulate our accounts, never doubt it.”

At this announcement Pinocchio threw himself on the ground and would not take another step. In the meanwhile a crowd of idlers and inquisitive people began to assemble and to make a ring round them.

Some of them said one thing, some another.

“Poor puppet!” said several, “he is right not to wish

GEPPETTO RETURNS HOME TO MAKE A PUPPET

to return home! Who knows how Geppetto, that bad old man, will beat him! . . . ”

And the others added maliciously:

“Geppetto seems a good man! but with boys he is a regular tyrant! If that poor puppet is left in his hands he is quite capable of tearing him in pieces! . . . ”

It ended in so much being said and done that the carabineer at last set Pinocchio at liberty and conducted Geppetto to prison. The poor man, not being ready with words to defend himself, cried like a calf, and as he was being led away to prison sobbed out:

“Wretched boy! And to think how I have laboured to make him a well-conducted puppet! But it serves me right! I should have thought of it sooner! . . . ”

What happened afterwards is a story that really is past all belief, but I will relate it to you in the following chapters.