

# PINOCCHIO

Long ago in Italy there lived an old clock-maker named Geppetto. Tick-tick-TOCK! Tick-tick-TOCK! went all the clocks in his shop. When he worked, Geppetto felt happy. But when he rested, a sad feeling came over him. "Ah!" he would think. "All my life and no child to call my own!"

One day Geppetto carved a puppet from wood in the shape of a boy. The arms and legs could move. He cut and sewed a nice outfit for the puppet, as if it were a real boy. "I will call you Pinocchio," said Geppetto. That night, Geppetto lay the wooden puppet down onto the bed.

From out of the window, a big star twinkled bright. Geppetto looked out the window to the twinkling star.

"Bright star," said Geppetto. "If I could make one wish, it would be that I could have a real boy of my own." But of course, he knew that was not possible.

That night, the same big star swooshed right into Geppetto's room. It changed into a Blue Fairy! The Blue Fairy flew over to the bed.

"Little wood puppet," said the Blue Fairy. "In the morning, you will be able to walk and talk like a real boy." She tapped the puppet one time with her wand. "And if you can prove that you are brave and true, someday you will be a real boy."

Pinocchio's eyes opened.

"One more thing," said the Blue Fairy. Suddenly, a cricket appeared. He was dressed mighty fine -and could talk! "Meet the Cricket", said the Blue Fairy. He will stay with you to help you make wise choices." And with that, the Blue Fairy went swoosh and was gone! Out of the window and up into the night sky.

When Geppetto woke up the next morning, he said, "I will go take my puppet out of bed." But the bed was empty!

"Here I am, Father!" said Pinocchio from the other side of the room.

Geppetto swung around. "What? You can talk?"

"Yep! I am Pinocchio, your boy!"

"How can this be?" said Geppetto in shock. Then he said, "But who cares?" He rushed over and swept the wooden puppet into his arms. "Pinocchio, my son!" he said in great happiness.

## Off to School

One day Pinocchio said, "I want to go to school, like other boys."

"Of course," said Geppetto. But he did not have the money to buy schoolbooks.

Later that day, Geppetto came back home with schoolbooks. "Now you can go to school," he said.

"But Father," said Pinocchio, "where is your warm coat?"

With a wave of his hand Geppetto said, "No need to worry about that. What matters is that you will go to school tomorrow!" He did not want Pinocchio to know he had traded his warm coat to buy the schoolbooks.

The next morning, Pinocchio said good-bye to Geppetto. He skipped along the path to school, humming as he went. The Cricket rode on his shoulder, happy, too.

Coming up to them on the path was a Fox and a Cat.

"And where are you going on this fine day?" said the Fox.

"I am going to school!" said Pinocchio.

"On such a fine day as this?" said the Fox. "It is too nice to be stuck inside school! You should come with us, to the fair."

“Listen to me,” said the Fox. He put his arm around Pinocchio’s shoulder. “Anything you need to know, you can learn at the fair.”

“Really?” said Pinocchio.

“Take it from me,” said the Fox.

“Pinocchio!” said the Cricket. “He does not know what he is talking about!”

The Fox covered the Cricket with his hat. No one could hear the little fellow as the Cricket tried to call out, “Pinocchio, do not listen to him!”

“Okay!” said Pinocchio. “Let’s go to the fair!” And off they went.

### **The Fair**

What a fair it was! By the gate was a man dressed in white. He called out, “Come in, come in! Right this way! Get your tickets here!”

With a sad look Pinocchio said to the Fox and Cat, “I do not have any tickets.”

A man was selling old things at a table near the gate. He called, “Hey, you! Sell me those new schoolbooks of yours! That is how you can get money for tickets.”

The fair was so bright and colorful and exciting, that the next thing Pinocchio knew he had sold his schoolbooks for tickets.

“No, Pinocchio, stop!” called the Cricket, who finally got out from under the Fox’s hat. But Pinocchio, the Fox and the Cat did not hear him. They were already inside the fair.

### **The Man Who Ran the Fair**

On stage was a puppet show! “I am a puppet, too!” said Pinocchio. “I can dance like that!” He jumped right onto the stage and started to dance with the other puppets.

“Look at that new puppet!” someone called. “It has no strings!”

“No strings?” said another. “Amazing!”

Everyone laughed and laughed. They threw coins on the stage.

The man who ran the fair saw coins fly onto the stage. “Well, now!” he said, rubbing his chin. “This puppet with no strings will make me rich!”

The next thing Pinocchio knew, he was picked up and thrown in a birdcage. In the next moment, the door was locked shut.

“Hey, get me out!” called Pinocchio. But the person who had thrown him in just left the room. Only the Cricket heard Pinocchio’s calls. The Cricket ran back and forth, in and out of the birdcage, trying to find a way to free the lock. But he could not unlock it.

“I am stuck!” cried Pinocchio. “How did this happen to me?”

### **The Nose Grows**

All of a sudden, poof! There was the Blue Fairy.

“Please!” said Pinocchio. “Can you help me?”

“Tell me something first,” said the Blue Fairy. “How did you get inside that cage?”

“Tell her what happened,” said the Cricket.

“Well...” Pinocchio stopped. Could he really tell the Blue Fairy what had happened?

What would she think of him?

“Um, I was robbed,” said Pinocchio.

“Is that right?” said the Blue Fairy with a frown. Pinocchio’s nose began to grow.

“Yes, robbed!” said Pinocchio. “By two mean men – no, four!”

The nose grew more.

“They took my books. They made me come here. And they threw me into this cage!”

His nose grew longer and longer. Until Pinocchio could see nothing in front of his face but one big giant nose.

“Why is my nose so big?” Pinocchio cried out.

“Pinocchio!” said the Blue Fairy in a stern voice. “You must know what the truth really is.”

“I guess so,” said Pinocchio. “I wanted to come to the fair. I came here with a Fox and the Cat.”

The nose grew shorter.

“I had to sell my books to get some tickets.”

“Had to?” said the Blue Fairy.

“I mean, I decided to sell my books to get tickets,” he said.

The nose got shorter still.

“Then someone put me in this cage,” he said.

The nose was back to normal. “Good job, Pinocchio!” said the Cricket.

“Well done,” said the Blue Fairy. “Now I will get you out of here.”

With a wave of her wand, Pinocchio was out of the cage.

“Here are your books.” And Pinocchio was holding the same new schoolbooks in his hands again.

“Know this,” said the Blue Fairy, “you are on your own from now on. Make sure you do the right thing next time.” And she was gone.

### **The Coachman**

Pinocchio was back on the road to school. A Coachman drove up. “Hey kid, how about a ride?”

“No, thank you,” said Pinocchio. “I am going to school.”

“You will ride faster with me,” said the Coachman to Pinocchio. He said to himself, “He will ride faster all right, but not to where he thinks he is going!”

“Alright,” said Pinocchio. “I want to get to school right away!”

When Pinocchio was inside the coach, the Coachman said, “Say kid, why do you think boys like you go to school?”

“To learn things,” said Pinocchio. “And to grow up, I guess. So we can do what we want.”

“Well,” said the Coachman, “what if I told you that could do what you wanted, right now?”

“Right now?”

“Yep! Think of it. Skip the books. Skip the school. Right now, how would you like to have all the candy you can eat!”

“All the candy?”

“Yep. Ice cream, too. Of every flavor. Ever want to smoke a cigar or play pool? All this and more, at Pleasure Island.”

“Pleasure Island?”

“Best place in the world for boys like you!”

“Don’t listen to him, Pinocchio!” shouted the Cricket.

“Why wait?” said the Coachman. “I know just where Pleasure Island is. This is your lucky day, kid. So what do you say?”

“Let’s go there!” said Pinocchio. “I’m going to Pleasure Island!”

“Augh!” said the Cricket, waving his arms in the air.

### **Pleasure Island**

After a while, the coach stopped. “You got a boy with you in that coach?” said a dark stranger to the Coachman.

“Yep.” The Coachman grabbed Pinocchio and threw him down onto the ground. “He’s all yours. Now pay up.”

The Coachman reached out for something (was it money?) from the dark stranger. Then the Coachman drove off.

What could it all mean? But as Pinocchio looked around, he no longer cared. For everything the Coachman had told him was true! Heaps of candy all about. Tubs of ice cream in every flavor. Boys like him could eat and eat, and play all day. None of them had to work or clean up. There were even cigars if you wanted one, and pool tables to play.

But after a few days, something was odd. “Where did all the boys go?” he asked the Cricket.

“All I see now are donkeys,” said Pinocchio.

“I must say, there used to be more boys around here,” said the Cricket.

Just then, one of his ears popped into a donkey ear. Then his other ear popped into a donkey ear, too.

“Oh!” cried the Cricket. “What is happening to you?”

“I don’t know - HONK!” said Pinocchio.

Pinocchio and the Cricket saw a line of donkeys led by a dark stranger onto a truck. “Oh, no!” said the Cricket. “Now I get it! Boys get turned into donkeys here. Then the donkeys are sold! Pinocchio, we have to get you out of here, fast - while we still can!”

“Let’s go – HONK!” said Pinocchio. His two feet had popped into four.

“Run, quick!” said the Cricket. One good thing about Pinocchio’s new four legs is he could run very fast! Quick, quick, they ran out of Pleasure Island. Soon they were at a dock by the ocean.

“Please sir!” Pinocchio called out to a man by the dock. “I am looking for an old man named Geppetto. Do you know him? – HONK!”

“Sounds like you are getting a bad cold,” said the man. “Hmm, Geppetto. That’s the old man whose son left one morning and did not come back. He went out on a boat to look for him. No one has seen the poor fellow since.”

“Oh no! This is all my fault – HONK!” said Pinocchio. “I must look for my father!”

Pinocchio jumped off of the dock into the ocean. The Cricket jumped in too, close behind.

### **The Whale**

Most of Pinocchio was still made of wood, so he could float on the ocean. “Father!” he called out, paddling the water with his arms. “Father!” but there was no answer.

All Pinocchio could see around him was blue water, everywhere. Until – what was that, far away? Something was rushing up. Something big, and very fast!

In a moment, a giant whale was upon them. It opened its giant jaws and with one gulp, swallowed Pinocchio! Rushing inside with all the sea water tumbled Pinocchio and the Cricket. When they came to a stop, they saw that they were in the dark belly of the whale.

“Are you okay?” said Pinocchio to the Cricket.

“I am fine,” said a voice of an old man.

“Wait a minute,” said Pinocchio. “Father, is that you?”

There was Geppetto!

“Father, Father, it’s me!” said Pinocchio.

“My son!” said Geppetto. “I thought I was dreaming!”

They hugged in joy.

“Look!” said Geppetto as three fish swam by. “There goes our dinner!”

“Father, I have an idea! Let’s make a fire.”

“Grilled fish tonight!” said Geppetto.

“No, I mean for us to get out!” said Pinocchio. He gathered driftwood and got a flame going. “This is how we can make the whale sneeze!” he said. Pinocchio waved his arms over the flame to make a lot of smoke. Soon, clouds of black smoke were rising up. The whale gave a cough. “Hang on!” said Pinocchio. And then... WHAM!! In one big sneeze, Pinocchio, Geppetto and the Cricket flew out of the whale’s mouth. Rolling over and over in the sea water, at last they rolled up onto the shore.

“Pinocchio?” Geppetto rose to his feet. The Cricket was there beside him. But where was Pinocchio?

And then they found him! Pinocchio was face down, his head in a puddle.

“Pinocchio!”

They were too late. Geppetto and the Cricket wept over Pinocchio, the boy puppet, who lay still in the water.

Then in a flash, who was there but the Blue Fairy!

“Pinocchio,” she said. “You saved your father. You proved that you are both brave and true.” She tapped his head with her wand. “And now you will be a real boy.”

Pinocchio woke up. He looked at his soft arms and soft legs.

“Father!” he cried out. “Look! I am a real boy!”

“That you are!” cried Geppetto.

The Blue Fairy turned to the Cricket. “Come,” she said. In a flash, the two of them were gone.

And Pinocchio and Geppetto lived many long and happy years together.