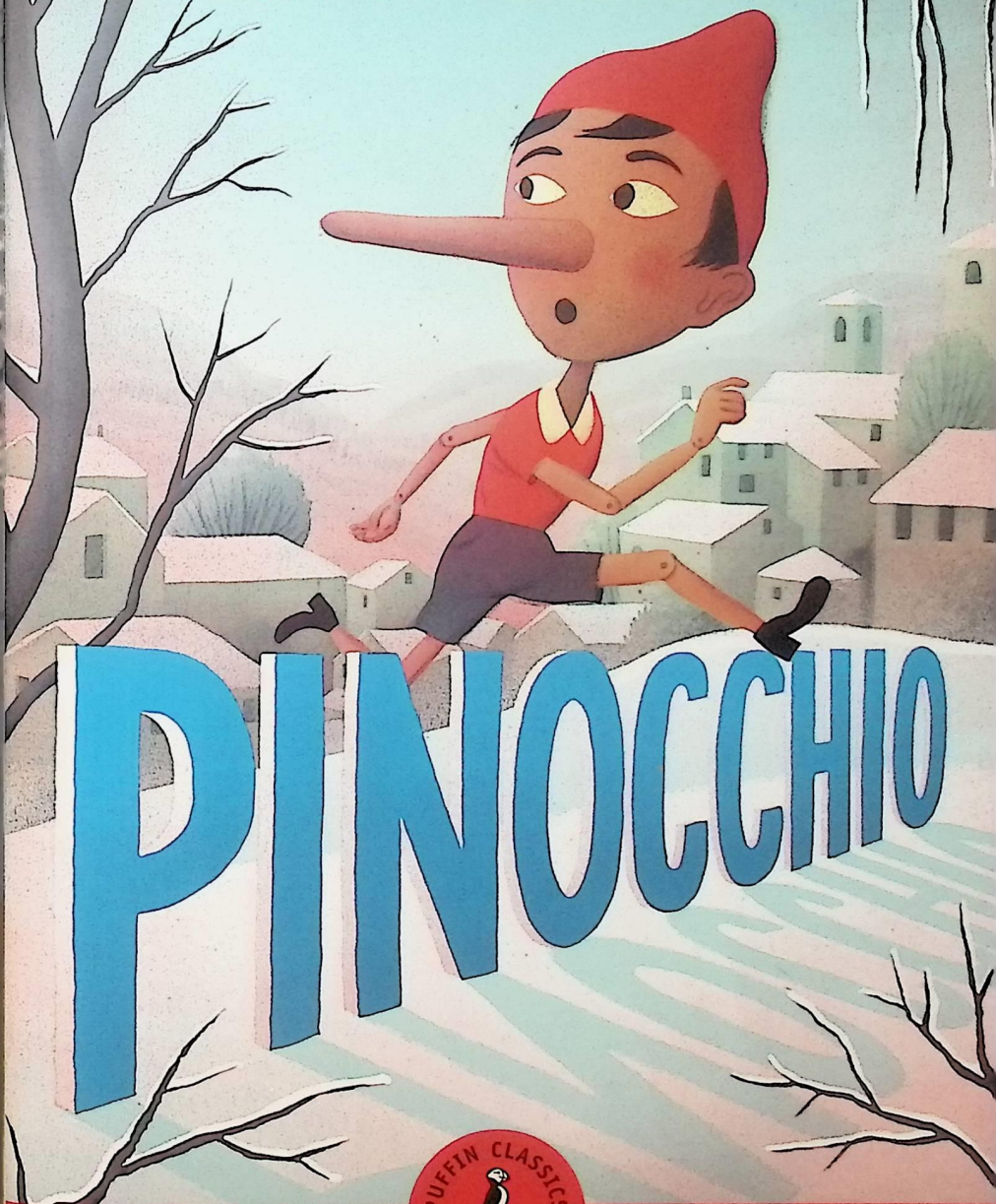
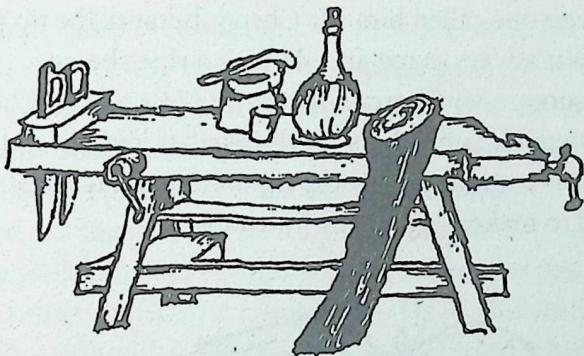


CARLO COLLODI





1

How it happened that Mr 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 shout together.

No, children, you make a mistake. Once upon a time there was a piece of wood.

It was not the best, but just a common piece of wood, such as is used in stoves and fireplaces to kindle the fire and warm the rooms in winter.

How it happened I cannot tell, but the fact is that one fine day this piece of wood just happened to be there in the shop of an old carpenter whose real name was Mr Antonio,

but everyone called him Mr Cherry, because the tip of his nose was always as red and shiny as a ripe cherry.

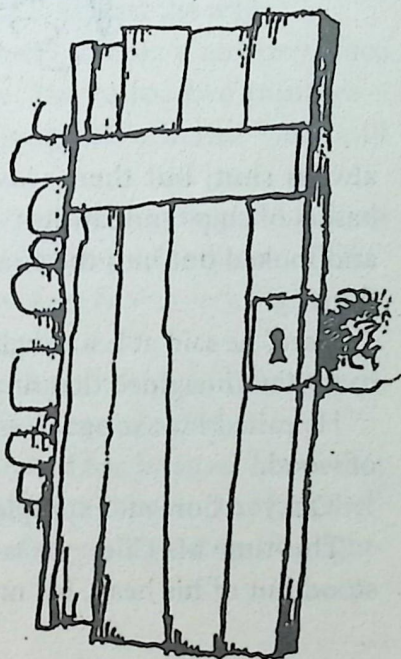
As soon as Mr Cherry noticed this piece of wood, he was delighted. He rubbed his hands together joyfully and said, 'This has come at exactly the right moment. It is just what I need to make a leg for my little table.'



Then, without hesitating a moment, he took his sharp axe to strip off the bark and the rough part of the wood. But just as he raised the axe for the first blow, he stopped with his arm in the air, for he heard a very tiny voice, begging him gently, 'Don't strike me too hard!'

You can imagine old Mr Cherry's surprise.

He looked round the room to see where the tiny voice had come from, but he saw nobody. He looked under the bench – nobody. He looked in the cupboard which was





always shut; but there was nobody. He looked in the basket of chips and sawdust – no one. He opened the door and looked out into the street – no one! What was to be done?

‘I see,’ he said at last, laughing and scratching his wig, ‘I must have imagined that tiny voice. Now let’s to work!’

He raised his axe again, and down it went on the piece of wood.

‘Oh, you hurt me!’ complained the same tiny voice.

This time Mr Cherry was struck all of a heap. His eyes stood out of his head, his mouth was wide open, and his

tongue hung out over his chin, as you see on some fountain masks.

As soon as he could speak he said, trembling and stuttering with fright, 'But where did that tiny voice come from that cried "Oh"? There's not a living soul here. Is it possible that this piece of wood has learnt to cry and complain like a baby? I can't believe it. This piece of wood – just look at it! It's nothing but a piece of firewood, like all the others; when you put it on the fire it will make a kettle boil. Well, then? Is someone hidden inside it? If there is, so much the worse for him. I'll attend to him!'

And he took the poor piece of wood in both hands and, without mercy, started to beat it against the wall.

Then he stopped and listened to hear if any tiny voice were complaining this time. He waited two minutes – nothing; five minutes – nothing; ten minutes – and still nothing!

'Now I understand!' he exclaimed, laughing and pulling his wig. 'I must have imagined that tiny voice that said "Oh!" I'd better do my work.' And, because he was very frightened, he began singing to encourage himself.

Meanwhile he put the axe down and, taking his plane, began planing and shaping the piece of wood.

But while the plane went to and fro, he again heard that tiny voice which said, laughing, 'Stop! you're tickling me!'

This time, poor Mr Cherry dropped as if struck by lightning.

When he opened his eyes, he was sitting on the floor. He was so changed you could hardly have recognized him. Even the end of his nose, which was always red, had turned blue with fright.





2

Mr Cherry gives the piece of wood to his friend, Geppetto, who plans a marvellous puppet that can dance, and fence, and turn somersaults in the air

At that moment somebody knocked on the door. 'Come in!' said the carpenter; but he was too weak to stand up.

A little, jolly old man came into the shop. His name was Geppetto, but when the boys in the neighbourhood wanted to tease him they called him by his nickname of Polendina, because of his yellow wig which looked very like a dish of polenta.

Geppetto was very short-tempered. Woe betide anybody

'I would like to have a little piece of wood to make my marionette. Will you give it to me?'

Mr Antonio, pleased as Punch, hurried to his bench, and took the piece of wood which had frightened him so much. But, just as he was giving it to his friend, it shook so hard that it slipped out of his hands, and struck poor Geppetto's shin.

'Ah! This is a fine way to make me a present, Mr Antonio! You have almost lamed me.'

'Upon my honour, I didn't do it!'

'Oh! So I did it then!'

'It's all the fault of this piece of wood -'

'Yes, I know the wood hit me, but you threw it at my legs!'

'I did not throw it at you!'

'That's a lie!'

'Geppetto, don't insult me! If you do, I shall call you Polendina.'

'Blockhead!'

'Polendina!'

'Donkey!'

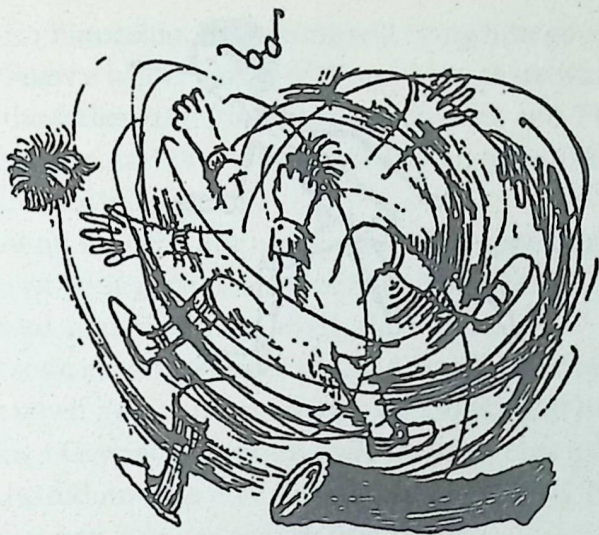
'Polendina!'

'Ugly monkey!'

'Polendina!'

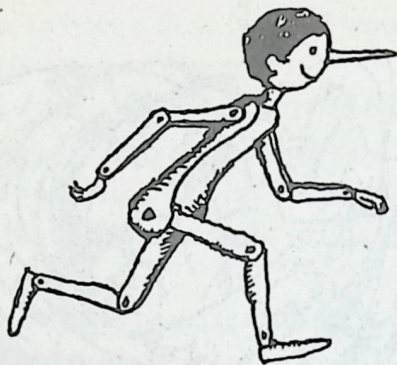
When he heard himself called Polendina for the third time Geppetto, blind with rage, rushed at the carpenter, and the second fight was worse than the first.

When it was over, Mr Antonio had two more scratches on



his nose, and Geppetto two buttons less on his jacket. Honours thus being even, they shook hands again, and vowed to be good friends for ever. Then Geppetto took the piece of wood and, thanking Mr Antonio, went limping home.





3

Geppetto goes home and makes his puppet; he calls him Pinocchio; the puppet gets into mischief

Geppetto's little room on the ground floor was lit by a window under the stairs. His furniture could not have been simpler. An old chair, a tottering bed, and a broken-down table. At the back of the room you could see a fireplace, with the fire lit; but the fire was painted, and over the fire was painted a kettle boiling merrily, with a cloud of steam that was just like real steam.

As soon as he arrived home, Geppetto took his tools and began to make his puppet.

'What shall I call him?' he asked himself. 'I think I shall

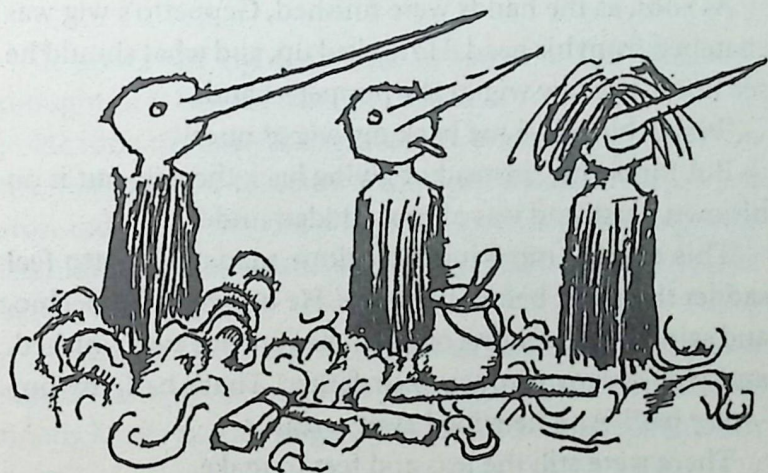
call him Pinocchio. That name will bring him good luck. I once knew a whole family of Pinocchios: there was Pinocchio the father, and Pinocchia the mother, and Pinocchii the children, and they all got along splendidly. The richest of them was a beggar.'

Having thought out a name for his puppet, he started his work with great determination. He made his hair, his forehead, and his eyes in a very short time.

As soon as the eyes were finished, imagine his bewilderment when he saw them moving and looking at him!

When Geppetto saw those two wooden eyes looking at him, he did not like it at all, and he said angrily, 'Naughty wooden eyes, why are you staring at me?'

But no one answered.



After the eyes, he made the nose; but as soon as it was finished, it began to grow. It grew, and it grew, and in a few minutes' time it was as long as if there was no end to it.

Poor Geppetto worked fast to shorten it; but the more he cut it off, the longer that insolent nose became.

After the nose, he made the mouth; but before he had finished it, it began to laugh and poke fun at him.

'Stop laughing!' said Geppetto; but he might as well have spoken to the wall.

'Stop laughing, I say!' he shouted, menacingly.

The mouth stopped laughing, and stuck out its tongue.

However, as Geppetto did not want to spoil the puppet, he pretended not to see it, and continued his work.

After the mouth, he made the chin, then the neck, the shoulders, the stomach, the arms, and the hands.

As soon as the hands were finished, Geppetto's wig was snatched from his head. He looked up, and what should he see but his yellow wig in the puppet's hands.

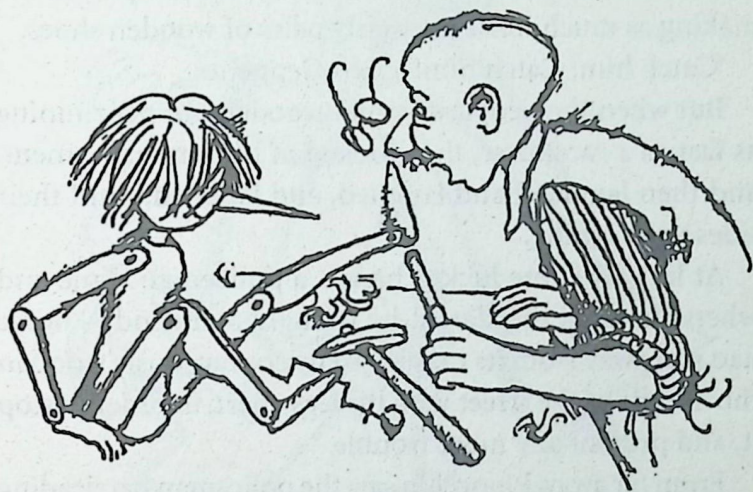
'Pinocchio! Give me back my wig at once!'

But Pinocchio, instead of giving back the wig, put it on his own head, and was almost hidden under it.

This cheeky, mocking behaviour made Geppetto feel sadder than ever before in his life. He turned to Pinocchio, and said, 'You scoundrel of a son! You are not even finished, and you already disobey your father! That's bad, my boy – very bad!' And he wiped away a tear.

There were still the legs and feet to make.

When Geppetto had finished the feet, he received a kick on the nose.



‘It serves me right,’ he said to himself. ‘I should have thought of it before. Now it is too late.’

He took the puppet in his hands, and put him down on the floor to see if he could walk; but Pinocchio’s legs were stiff, and he did not know how to move them. So Geppetto led him by the hand, and showed him how to put one foot before the other.

When the stiffness went out of his legs, Pinocchio started to walk alone, and run around the room; and finally he slipped through the door into the street and ran away.

Poor old Geppetto ran after him as quickly as he could, but he did not catch him, for the little rascal jumped like a rabbit, and his wooden feet clattered on the pavement, making as much noise as twenty pairs of wooden shoes.

‘Catch him! Catch him!’ cried Geppetto.

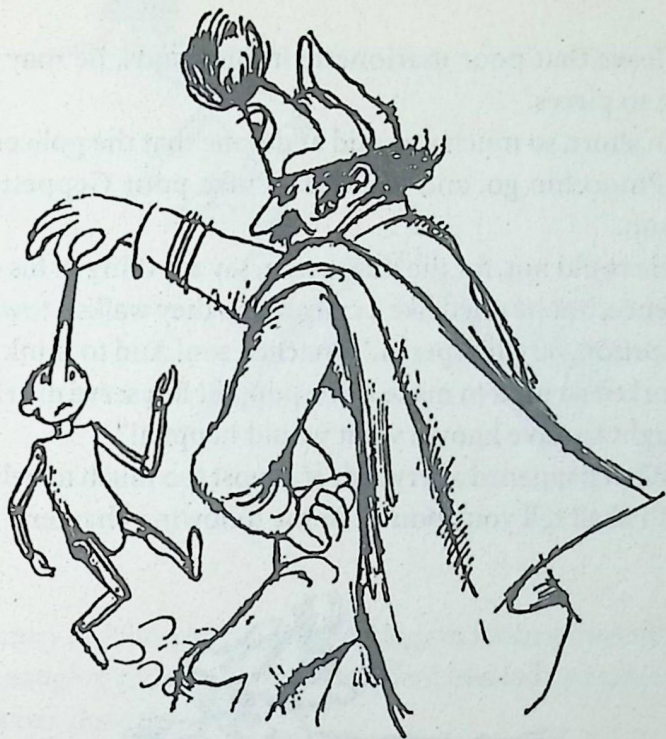
But when the people saw that wooden puppet running as fast as a racehorse, they looked at him in amazement, and then laughed, and laughed, and laughed, until their sides were aching.

At last, by some lucky chance, a policeman came and when he heard the clatter, he thought somebody’s horse had run away from its master. So he courageously stood in the middle of the street with his legs apart, in order to stop it, and prevent any more trouble.

From far away, Pinocchio saw the policeman barricading the street, and he decided to run between his legs; but he failed dismally.

The policeman, without moving from his place, picked him up by the nose – that ridiculous, long nose, that seemed made on purpose to be caught by policemen – and returned him to Geppetto, who wanted to pull his ears to punish him for his naughtiness. Imagine what he felt when he could not find any ears! And do you know why? Because he had made him in such a hurry that he had forgotten his ears.

So he took him by the nape of his neck, and as they walked away he said, shaking his head menacingly, ‘You just come home, and I’ll settle your account when we get there!’



At this threatening remark, Pinocchio threw himself down on the ground, and refused to walk.

A crowd of idle and inquisitive people gathered around him. Some said one thing, some another.

‘The poor puppet,’ said some of them, ‘is right, not wanting to go home! Who knows how horribly that bad Geppetto might beat him?’

And others added, with evil tongues, ‘Geppetto *seems* to be a good man, but he is a perfect tyrant with children. If

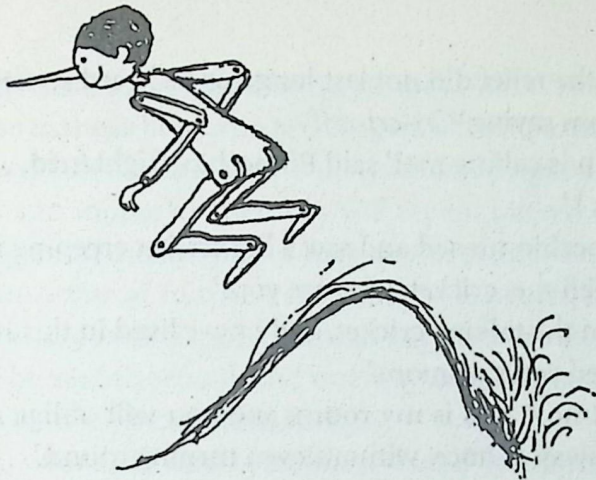
we leave that poor marionette in his hands, he may tear him to pieces.'

In short, so much was said and done that the policeman let Pinocchio go, and decided to take poor Geppetto to prison.

He could not, for the time being, say anything in his own defence, but he cried like a calf and, as they walked towards the prison, he whimpered, 'Wretched son! And to think that I worked so hard to make a fine puppet! But serve me right. I ought to have known what would happen!'

What happened afterwards is almost too much to believe; and I shall tell you about it in the following chapters.





4

The story of Pinocchio and the talking cricket in which we see that naughty children do not like to be corrected by those who are wiser than they are

Well, I must tell you children, that while poor Geppetto was led to prison through no fault of his own, that rascal Pinocchio, left alone, ran home across the fields as quickly as possible. In his hurry he jumped over high banks, thorn hedges, and ditches full of water, like a kid, or a young hare running away from the hunters.

When he arrived home, he found the door ajar. Pushing it open he went in, and locked it securely after him. Then he threw himself down on the ground with a great sigh of relief.

But the relief did not last long, for he heard someone in the room saying '*Cri-cri-cri!*'

'Who is calling me?' said Pinocchio, frightened.

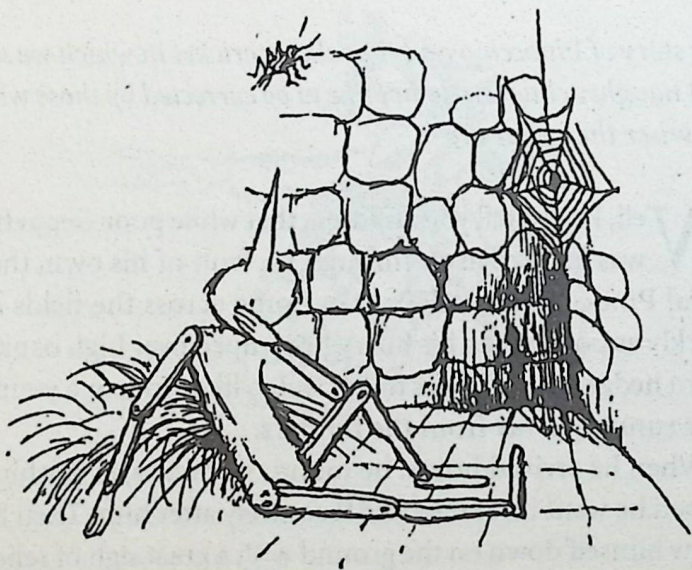
'It is I.'

Pinocchio turned and saw a big cricket creeping up the wall. 'Tell me, cricket, who are you?'

'I am the talking cricket, and I have lived in this room a hundred years or more.'

'But now this is my room, and you will oblige me by going away at once, without even turning round.'

'I shall not leave,' replied the cricket, 'until I have told you a great truth.'



'Well then, tell me, and be quick about it!'

'Woe to those boys who revolt against their parents, and run away from home. They will never do any good in this world, and sooner or later they will repent bitterly.'

'Sing away, cricket, just as long as you please! But as for me, tomorrow at sunrise I am going to leave; for if I stay here the same will happen to me as happens to other boys: I shall be sent to school, and one way or other, by love or by force, I shall be made to study.'

'You poor fool! Don't you know that, if you spend your time like that, you will grow up to be a great donkey, and everyone will make fun of you?'

'Be quiet, you good for nothing, croaking cricket!' shouted Pinocchio.

But the cricket, who was patient, and a philosopher too, instead of being offended by such impudence, continued in the same tone, 'But if you don't like to go to school, why don't you learn a trade, so that you may at least earn your bread honestly?'

'Do you want me to tell you something?' answered Pinocchio, beginning to lose his patience. 'Of all the trades in the world, there is only one which really attracts me.'

'And what might that be?'

'To eat, drink, sleep, and amuse myself, and to lead a vagabond life from morning to night.'

'Let me tell you,' said the talking cricket, as calm as ever,

'that those who follow that trade finish, nearly always, in a hospital or in prison.'

'Be careful, you cricket of ill omen! If you make me angry, woe betide you!'

'Poor Pinocchio! I am really sorry for you!'

'Why are you sorry for me?'

'Because you are a puppet, and – what is worse – you have a wooden head.'

At these last words Pinocchio lost his temper and, seizing a mallet from the bench, threw it at the cricket.

Perhaps he did not mean to hit him, but unfortunately the mallet struck him right on the head. The poor cricket had scarcely time to cry '*Cri-cri-cri*', and there he was, stretched out stiff, and flattened against the wall.





5

Pinocchio is hungry, and he looks for an egg to make himself an omelette; but just as he breaks it in the pan the omelette flies through the window

It was growing dark, and Pinocchio remembered that he had eaten nothing all day. There was a painful feeling in his stomach that closely resembled appetite.

With boys appetite grows fast. In fact, after a few minutes his appetite became hunger, and in no time he was as hungry as a wolf. His hunger was unbearable.

Poor Pinocchio hurried to the fireplace where a kettle was boiling and put out his hand to lift the lid and see what was in it; but the kettle was only painted on the wall.

Imagine his disappointment! His nose, which was already too long, grew three inches longer.

He ran about the room, searched in every cupboard and in every possible place for a little bread – even dry bread. He would have been grateful for a crust, or a bone left by a dog, for a fishbone or a cherry stone – in short, for anything he could chew. But he found nothing, just nothing, absolutely nothing.

He kept growing hungrier every moment, yet he could do nothing but yawn. He yawned so tremendously that his mouth reached his ears; and after he yawned he spattered, and he felt as if he hadn't any stomach left.

At last, in despair, he began to cry, saying, 'The talking cricket was right. I did wrong to revolt against my father and run away from home. If my father were here now, I shouldn't be dying of yawning. Oh, hunger is a dreadful illness!'

Suddenly, in a rubbish heap, he noticed something white and round that looked like an egg. In less than no time he grabbed it. It was really an egg.

To describe his joy would be impossible; you can only imagine it. He feared he might be dreaming. He turned the egg from one hand to the other, and patted it and kissed it as he said, 'Now, how shall I cook it? Shall I make an omelette? No, it would be better to poach it. But perhaps it would be more tasty if I fried it in a pan. Or shall I just boil it in the shell? No, the quickest way would be to poach it. I am just dying to eat it.'

Without further ado, he set a stewing pan over a brazier of red charcoal. Instead of oil or butter, he put some water in it and when the water began to boil – tac! he broke the eggshell and held it over the pan that the contents might drop into it.

But instead of the yolk and white of an egg, a little chicken flew out and, making a polite curtsy, said gaily, 'A thousand thanks, Master Pinocchio, for having spared me the trouble of breaking the shell! Take care of yourself, and give my love to the folks at home. I hope to see you again.'



With that, the chicken spread its wings and, flying through the open window, was soon lost to sight.

The poor puppet stood there as if bewitched, with his eyes fixed, his mouth open, and the broken eggshell in his hands. When he recovered a little from his first bewilderment, he began to cry, and scream, and stamp on the floor in despair; and as he sobbed he said, 'Indeed, the talking cricket was right. If I hadn't run away from home, and if my father were here, I should not now be dying of hunger. Oh, hunger is a dreadful illness!'

His stomach was complaining more than ever and, as he did not know how to quieten it, he decided to go out again into the village, in the hope of meeting some charitable person who would give him some bread.





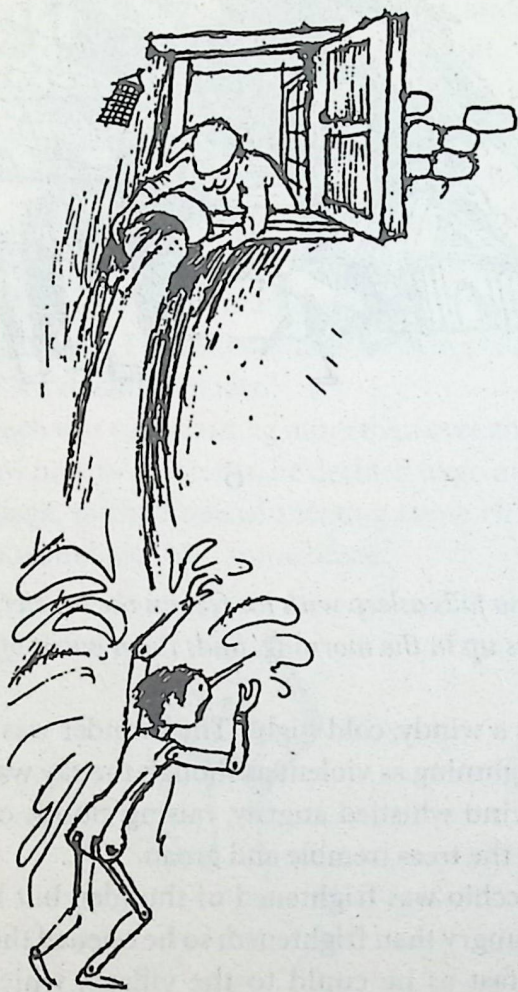
6

Pinocchio falls asleep with his feet on the brazier, and, when he wakes up in the morning, finds them burnt off

It was a windy, cold night. The thunder was fierce, and the lightning as violent as though the sky was on fire. A bitter wind whistled angrily, raising clouds of dust and making the trees tremble and groan.

Pinocchio was frightened of thunder, but he was still more hungry than frightened; so he opened the door, and ran as fast as he could to the village, which he soon reached, panting, with his tongue hanging out like a hunting dog's.

But all was dark and quiet. The shops were closed, the



doors and windows shut, and there was not even a dog in the street. It seemed a village of the dead.

However Pinocchio, driven by hunger and despair, gave a very long peal at the doorbell of one of the houses, saying to himself, 'This will bring somebody out.'

And indeed, a little old man with a nightcap on his head came to the window, and shouted angrily, 'What do you want at this hour?'

'Will you be so kind as to give me some bread?'

'Wait! I'll be back at once!' said the old man, believing that he had to do with one of those street urchins who amuse themselves at night by ringing doorbells, and rousing good people who are sleeping peacefully.

In half a minute the window was opened, and the same voice called Pinocchio, 'Stand under the window, and hold out your hand!'

Pinocchio held out his hands, and a great kettle of water poured down on him, drenching him from head to foot, as if he had been a pot of dry geraniums.

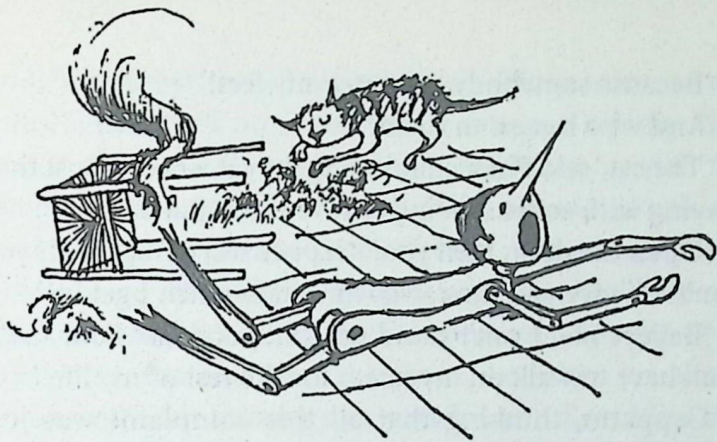
He went home wet as a rag and exhausted with fatigue and hunger. He had no strength to stand, and so he sat down, and put his wet, muddy feet on the brazier full of burning coal.

Then he fell asleep, and while he was asleep his feet, which were wooden, caught fire, and slowly burned away to cinders.

Pinocchio slept and snored, as though his feet belonged to someone else. At last, at daybreak, he was awakened by someone rapping on the door.

'Who is it?' he called, yawning, and rubbing his eyes.
'It is I!' answered a voice.
And it was the voice of Geppetto.





7

Geppetto comes home, and gives Pinocchio the breakfast that the poor man had brought for himself

Poor Pinocchio's eyes were still half closed, and he had not noticed that his feet were burnt off. Thus, when he heard his father's voice, he tumbled down from his stool to run and open the door; but, after staggering a couple of times, he fell his full length on the floor, making a noise as of a whole bag of wooden ladles falling from the fifth storey.

'Open the door!' cried Geppetto from the street.

'I can't, Daddy,' answered the marionette, crying, and rolling over and over on the floor.

'Why not?'

'Because somebody has eaten my feet!'

'And who has eaten them?'

'The cat,' said Pinocchio, seeing the cat who was just then playing with some shavings with his forepaws.

'Open the door, I tell you!' Geppetto cried again. 'If you don't, I'll give you the cat-o'-nine-tails when I get in!'

'Believe me, I can't stand up. Oh, poor me! Poor me! I shall have to walk on my knees for the rest of my life!'

Geppetto, thinking that all this complaint was just another of Pinocchio's tricks, decided to end it for good. He climbed up the wall, and got in at the window.

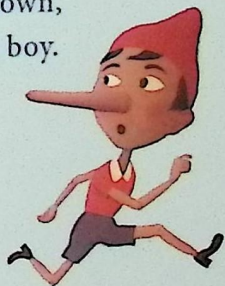
At first he was angry, and scolded him; but, when he saw his own Pinocchio lying on the floor, and really without feet, his anger vanished.

He took him in his arms, kissed and caressed him, spoke many affectionate words and, with tears on his cheeks, he said, sobbing, 'My dear little Pinocchio, how did you burn your feet?'

'I don't know, Daddy. But believe me, it has been a horrid night. I shall never forget it as long as I live. It thundered and lightnined, and I was very hungry, and the talking cricket said, "It serves you right; you have been wicked and you deserve it!" And I said, "Be careful, cricket!" And he said, "You are a puppet, and you have a wooden head!" And I threw the hammer at him, and he died; but it was his fault, for I didn't want to kill him. And the proof of that is that I put the pan on the brazier, but the chicken flew away and

PINOCCHIO IS A PUPPET WITH A DIFFERENCE ...

Geppetto carves a wonderful puppet and gets more than he bargained for when the wooden boy comes to life! Pinocchio the puppet can talk and walk – and cause mischief. And when he tells a lie his nose grows and grows. But Pinocchio is also brave and adventurous, and truly, deep down, he just wants to become a real boy.



PLUS

An introduction by John Boyne, and a behind-the-scenes journey, including an author profile, a guide to who's who, activities and more ...

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