

# PINOCCHIO AND HIS FATHER

By Will Ledesma

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ISBN 1-60003-666-X

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## **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(6M / 3F / 13either + optional extras, can double down to 4M/1F)  
In order of appearance*

NARRATOR	(M/F, or rotated as ensemble)
ANTONIO	(M) a hot-headed, clumsy carpenter and neighbor to Geppetto
GEPPETTO	(M) a kindly old man and master carpenter, father to Pinocchio
PINOCCHIO	(M, could be played by a girl) a mischievous puppet who comes to life and has an adventure
WOMAN	(F) a motherly sort of woman who Pinocchio meets on his journey
POLICEMAN	(M/F) a dutiful policeman who throws Geppetto in jail
TALKING CRICKET	(M/F) heard but not seen; quite literally the voice of reason
GIRL	(F) a know-it-all child Pinocchio meets outside the puppet theater
MANGIAFUOCO	(M) a large, loud, and brash man with an unexpected softer side
MARIONETTE POLICEMEN	(2, M/F) two of Mangiafuoco's sentries
FOX	(M) a faux gentleman and a con-artist
CAT	(M/F) a partner to the Fox
FAIRY	(F) a beautiful and benevolent woman who teaches Pinocchio to be a real boy
CROW	(M/F) a friend of the Fairy and, apparently, a doctor
OWL	(M/F) likewise to the Crow

BLACK RABBITS	(4, M/F) help the Fairy trick Pinocchio into taking medicine
SNAKE	(M/F) a miserable creature who laughs at the misfortunes of others
MAN	(M) a businessman who takes naughty boys to the Land of Play
BOYS	(several, M) Pinocchio's playmates at the Land of Play
PIGEON	(M/F) a friend of Geppetto's who helps Pinocchio find his father

## **A NOTE ON CASTING**

As you can see, this cast list calls for 23+ characters. In the original production, all roles were played by five actors. The role of the Narrator was split up among four of the actors (who played multiple characters) while one actor remained Pinocchio the entire time. The cast could easily be expanded beyond 23 by dividing the Narrator into several performers who may double as extras in several scenes. The cast may be as large or as small as best fits your production's needs.

## **SETTINGS**

The action happens in a number of locales; it is suggested that different locations be demonstrated with a few simple scenic elements so that scene changes can happen quickly under narration or dialogue in order to keep the action of the story flowing at all times. Settings include Antonio's workshop, Geppetto's home/shop, several city streets and country roads, the outside of the Great Marionette Theater, the Fairy's house, the Field of Wonders, the Land of Play, inside the Terrible Shark, and in the ocean.

Stage directions have been left purposely vague to encourage each production to tackle the challenges inherent in the telling of this tale with its own unique imagination and theatricality! However, if you're stuck, some suggestions can be found in the playwright's notes.

## PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES

Carlo Collodi's *Adventures of Pinocchio* is truly one of the most fantastic and unusual fairy tales I have ever read. So many of us are familiar with the comparatively gentle and whimsical retelling of the tale courtesy of Mr. Disney that we've forgotten (or never really been aware of) Mr. Collodi's wild, wicked, and wonderful romp through a sort of realistic nonsense representation of classical Italy. Like many of my predecessors, I tried to tone down some of the particularly grisly elements of Collodi's book (Pinocchio finds himself strung up by the neck in the original, for example; also, the Fox and Cat make one last appearance, both maimed and dying of terrible diseases) while doing my best to keep the often-irrational storytelling that permeated the original. While many episodes and characters from Collodi's *Pinocchio* were omitted (I particularly miss the housekeeping snail, the fatalist tuna fish, and the man who thought Pinocchio was a fish filet), I think the spirit of the work is largely retained in this adaptation.

Many of the elements of Pinocchio's adventure pose great creative challenges to the theatre artist, especially in the educational sphere. It is my hope that directors and designers will use this story as an opportunity to think outside the box and push their limits to find (practically and financially) reasonable solutions to those challenges. In case you're absolutely stuck, however, here are a few suggestions that may prove helpful. Just to get the wheels turning.

**Animal Characters** – In the original production, several of the animal characters were played by actors manipulating simple puppets. The Owl and the Crow were both piñatas that were modified and covered with paper mache. The snake was played by two actors carrying a puppet made from air conditioner tubing covered with green fabric.

**Simple Set / Props** – The script was originally performed in the round, so complicated scenery was not possible. Instead, the production utilized a large wagon with four compartments that held hand props, costume pieces for quick changes, and a few scenic elements. The cart itself became tables, work benches, chairs, etc. with the power of audience imagination.

**Pinocchio's Nose Growing** – Always one of the biggest challenges. In a smaller space, your options are definitely limited. This effect could be produced by a simple sleight-of-hand, with the actor switching out an old

nose for a longer one during a bit of business or a magical light cue. There are also interesting suggestions online for making a nose that can literally extend on-stage using some common store-bought items. The original production utilized a large wagon a la a medieval travelling troupe of players. The actor grabbed his face and groaned as a sound cue played and stuck his head into the wagon, where a new nose was hanging from a hook. He made a quick switch and emerged from the cart with a longer nose.

**Pinocchio Turning Into A Real Boy** – Again, you can find some great ideas for this online. The use of lights to mask the transformation is probably going to be your best bet. In the original production, the actor wore a sort of stocking over his arms that had been designed to look like wooden limbs and a rubber chin painted to look like wood. As lights swirled, he quickly took these off and stashed them into a satchel. If you don't have the benefit of lighting effects, one option may be to have Pinocchio wearing a mask over the top half of his face, which the fairy can remove for him. (This could also serve as a piece you could attach a nose "extension" to for the nose-growing sequence)

**Pinocchio Becomes A Donkey** – In a blackout, the actor playing Pinocchio slid arm and leg coverings made of fake fur. He also wore a donkey headpiece and had a tail Velcroed to his pants. During the transformation, he simply slipped these elements off.

**Pinocchio's Arm Burning Off** – The simplest way to achieve this effect is to have the actor slip offstage during the narration and slide his arm into his shirt sleeve. Make sure the shirt is loose/baggy enough that it isn't painfully obvious that he's hiding his arm on the inside. (Yes, in the original story Pinocchio burned off his legs, but I thought it would be easier to mask an arm than two legs)

**The Talking Cricket** – It's written in the script that this character be a voice only, and the audience knows where he is from following the actor's focus. A bit of mime is employed here as well. However, that's not the only way the Talking Cricket could be done. The character could be a puppet, or signified with a light (think Tinkerbell in *Peter Pan*), or (I suppose) even an actor in costume.

**The Field of Wonders** – One simple way to stage this section is to unroll some sections of artificial grass mats. Pinocchio and the Fox and Cat can either pantomime digging or else can stick the gold pieces underneath the mat.

**The Terrible Shark** – You can create a giant shark for this one moment if you so desire. However, if you're on a budget you may decide it's not worth the hassle. The original production used a strobe light effect combined with a sound effect while the actor playing Geppetto rowed quickly, scooting himself off-stage toward the "shark." You could also do the entire scene with shadows on the back wall.

### **PRODUCTION HISTORY**

*Pinocchio and his Father* was original produced by the A. D. Players as part of their Rotunda Children's Theatre series in 2011, opening on March 29th. The production was directed by Will Ledesma. Assistant director was Stephen Hurst. Stage manager, Hannah E. Smith. Scenic and lighting design by Mark Lewis. Properties design by Jason D. Hatcher. Sound design by Orlando Arriaga. Costume design by Laurie Arriaga.

### **CAST**

- Actor 1 ..... Travis Hayes  
(played Pinocchio)
- Actor 2 ..... Craig Griffin  
(played Narrator, Antonio, Policeman, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marionette Policeman, Fox, Owl, 3<sup>rd</sup> Black Rabbit, and Boy)
- Actor 3 ..... Stephen Hurst  
(played Narrator, Geppetto, 1<sup>st</sup> Marionette Policeman, Cat, 2<sup>nd</sup> Black Rabbit, Snake, and Boy)
- Actor 4 ..... Katharine Hatcher  
(played Narrator, Woman, Girl, Fairy, and Snake)
- Actor 5 ..... Linford Herschberger  
(played Narrator, Mangiafuoco, Crow, 1<sup>st</sup> Black Rabbit, Man, and Pigeon)

*With many thanks to  
Stephen Hurst for his  
tireless effort, and  
encouragement.*

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### **Lights up on NARRATOR.**

NARRATOR: Once, a long time ago in a country across the sea, there was...

*(Light up on SEÑOR ANTONIO's work bench, where a block of wood sits alone.)*

a block of wood!

*(NARRATOR steps into the workshop and regards the wood block.)*

Now that's a rather unusual way to start a story, don't you think? Then again, this is a very unusual story. Besides, it isn't how a thing starts that's really important, it's how the thing finishes. Like this block: this hunk of wood is going to go through so much change that, by the end of the story, you wouldn't believe me if I told you it had once been a simple block of wood. Only you will believe me, of course, because you will see the change before your own eyes. That is the whole point of the story: transformation! Old things becoming new! But I must not get ahead of myself. You will see what I mean in due time. For now, we must start at the beginning, and in the beginning, we have this block of wood sitting a bit restlessly on a bench in the workshop of an old master carpenter named Maestro Antonio.

*(Enter ANTONIO, a driven, skittish old man who is quickly pacing around the room, swinging his head to and fro like a weathervane on a blustery day. HE mumbles a bit.)*

ANTONIO: Blasted table... confounded table... boysenberry... what a mess...

NARRATOR: On this particular day, poor Antonio was quite vexed, as he had just sat down for a nice meal of boysenberry jelly on a crust of bread when

ANTONIO: *(Still to himself.)* Crash!

NARRATOR: His dinner table unexpectedly fell apart...

ANTONIO: Catastrophe!

NARRATOR: ...and everything shattered and scattered on the floor...

ANTONIO: Calamity!

NARRATOR: ...dishes lay in pieces all about his dining space, and

ANTONIO and NARRATOR: Boysenberry jelly

NARRATOR: ...all over everything.

ANTONIO: Blasted table!!

NARRATOR: Thus, Maestro Antonio found himself in need of a new table leg to replace the one that had suddenly broken.

ANTONIO: *(Spying the block of wood on the work bench.)* Aha!

*(Crosses to the bench.)* You'll make a fine new table leg, so you will! To work, Antonio, to work! *(HE grabs some tools and sits, beginning to shave the rougher edges from the block.)*

NARRATOR: And so Maestro Antonio set to work, smoothing off the rough edges, when very much to his surprise, the little block of wood... laughed!

*(PINOCCHIO's voice is heard laughing. ANTONIO stops working and looks around for the source of the laughter.)*

ANTONIO: Somebody here? Hello? *(HE shrugs and goes back to work.)*

PINOCCHIO: Oh, that tickles! *(Laughs again.)*

*(ANTONIO leaps from his stool and drops the tool, but keeps the block of wood in his hand.)*

ANTONIO: Look... look here, whoever's out there! I'm closed! You'll have to come back tomorrow! *(HE turns back toward the block.)*

PINOCCHIO: Yes! Come back tomorrow!

*(ANTONIO yelps and tosses the block in the air. PINOCCHIO laughs. ANTONIO catches the block and glares at it.)*

ANTONIO: You... you can't speak! You hear me? You're a piece of wood! I will not allow you to...

*(With a sudden jerk, the block whacks ANTONIO in the head. PINOCCHIO laughs again. While ANTONIO is stunned, the block whacks him again. As PINOCCHIO's laughter grows to a roar, ANTONIO attempts to wrestle the block back onto the table, but it slips from his grip a couple of times, attempts to hit him again, and tries to throw itself on the floor. Finally, a terrified ANTONIO slams the block down on the table and sits on it. The block continues to attempt to break free, but PINOCCHIO's laughter is finally muted. ANTONIO looks warily around, his eyes darting from corner to corner of the old*

*workshop anxiously. There's a knock at the door, and ANTONIO hollers and jumps about a foot in the air before landing on the block of wood again.)*

I... I am closed! You... you must come back!

GEPPETTO: *(outside the door)* Antonio! It's me, Geppetto! Surely you can open the door for an old friend?

ANTONIO: Oh... surely not, good Geppetto! Please do come back tomorrow!

GEPPETTO: But it is a great emergency, Maestro Antonio! I simply insist that you let me in!

ANTONIO: Very well, you may enter.

GEPPETTO: I may *not* enter, your door is locked!

ANTONIO: Oh... well... all right, wait there. I'll... I'll come open it for you.

*(HE cautiously gets up off the wooden block, preparing to leap upon it again if necessary. However, the block does not move. HE slowly backs toward the door, tripping over a small bench on the way. HE finally gets to the door and turns around briefly, unlocking the door as quickly as possible so as not to keep his back turned on the devilish block any longer than necessary. HE turns back toward it and opens the door. In steps GEPPETTO, a very poor but very kind older gentleman with a dusty-blond wig and a bit of a fiery temper.)*

GEPPETTO: Thank you, my friend!

ANTONIO: How... how may I be of service, good Geppetto?

GEPPETTO: I wish to create a puppet, the most life-like marionette the world has ever known! I have piles of wood in my shop, of course, but for this project I need something special! I need a piece of wood with real personality!

ANTONIO: And I have *just* the block for you, Geppetto! Here, here it is on my work bench! What do you think of it?

GEPPETTO: That is nice... it is very good and sturdy, no doubt.

However, are you certain it has personality?

ANTONIO: I swear to you it has more personality than I can deal with.

GEPPETTO: Well here, let us have a closer look...

*(ANTONIO picks the block of wood carefully off the table, and GEPPETTO leans in and peers through his thick glasses. The block jumps and rams him in the forehead. GEPPETTO staggers backwards.)*

Maestro Antonio! Really, there is no call for such action!

*(The block, still in ANTONIO's hand, jumps and wallops ANTONIO in the face.)*

Goodness, that wasn't necessary. You could simply have said you were sorry.

PINOCCHIO'S VOICE: I am not sorry!

ANTONIO: No, I *am* sorry!

GEPPETTO: Make up your mind, dear man! You're behaving very strangely. Perhaps I ought to come back tomorrow after all.

ANTONIO: No! Take the wood! Please! It is my gift!

GEPPETTO: No call for that. I may be poor, but I can certainly pay you for one block of wood!

ANTONIO: Just take it! As an apology for accidentally hitting you in the forehead a moment ago!

GEPPETTO: No, I insist I must pay you something. I am no beggar, sir!

PINOCCHIO'S VOICE: I am no beggar, sir!

GEPPETTO: What! Now you mock me?

ANTONIO: I promise, I do not mock you. Only please, take this! Now!

*(The block leaps from his hands and solidly into GEPPETTO's gut. The old man is nearly bowled over backwards. HE takes the block in one hand and waves it toward ANTONIO.)*

GEPPETTO: Now see here, Antonio, if I were not a gentleman, I'd...

*(The block leaps from his own hand as HE hits himself in the face. GEPPETTO stands, dazed for a moment. HE leans to one side and another before shaking his head to clear the daze, but HE is still plenty confused.)*

Er... right then. Maestro Antonio... good night.

*(HE turns and exits. ANTONIO slumps down on his stool as the lights fade on ANTONIO's workshop.)*

NARRATOR: I don't know whether Maestro Antonio ever got to enjoy boysenberry jelly that night or not, but my suspicion is that he went promptly to bed and tried to convince himself that the whole evening had been a bad dream. Our story now follows kind old Geppetto and that devilish wooden block.

*(Lights up on GEPPETTO's work space. GEPPETTO sets the block down and begins to grab his tools.)*

GEPPETTO: You will be my masterpiece! The finest puppet in all of the country! I think I shall give you my eyes, or perhaps my smile. You'll be so lifelike that people will think at first that you are my son! And you'll bring joy to many children, Pinocchio. Yes, I think that's a fine name for you. I will call you Pinocchio.

NARRATOR: And so Geppetto went straight to work transforming that block with the rough edges into a small boy made of wood. I know it sounds like quite a difficult job, but the time seemed to fly by because it was a labor of love. Just after the sun had already come out the next morning, Geppetto had done what he'd said he would do. Pinocchio was one of the finest puppets ever crafted. And Geppetto was very pleased.

GEPPETTO: *(To PINOCCHIO, who is now sitting, facing him, on the table.)* There. You are finished. Tell me, Pinocchio, what do you think of the world?

NARRATOR: Now Pinocchio had lain very still throughout the entire carving process—he was afraid that if he moved, Geppetto might accidentally cut off his ear or his arm—so the old wood-carver had no idea that the piece of wood he had bought from Maestro Antonio was really alive. So imagine his surprise when the puppet looked at him and said:

PINOCCHIO: I like it, Father!

GEPPETTO: Pinocchio! You can *talk*?

PINOCCHIO: Don't be so surprised, Father. You are the one who gave me a mouth, after all.

GEPPETTO: Ha! And can you move as well??

*(PINOCCHIO swings one foot, kicking GEPPETTO in the knee. GEPPETTO yelps and hops back. PINOCCHIO laughs.)*

Oh dear... well, I suppose I should have expected that. Little boys are quite rambunctious, are they not? Wait, here, I have a small hat that you may wear.

*(The hat is behind him. HE turns and bends over to pick it up, and PINOCCHIO kicks again, hitting GEPPETTO in the rear. GEPPETTO jumps and PINOCCHIO laughs again.)*

Pinocchio! You are being a very naughty boy! I don't know if I will give you this hat after all!

PINOCCHIO: Oh, but I want it, Father! It is mine, you've just said so!

GEPPETTO: Good boys get nice things, naughty boys only get punished. That is the way things will go in this house.

PINOCCHIO: But it's mine! You *must* give it to me! I want it!

GEPPETTO: I would like to give you this hat, Pinocchio. First, however, you must apologize for your rude behavior and promise not to kick me again.

PINOCCHIO: Of course, Father. I am so terribly sorry. It's only because I'm brand new, you see. I don't yet know the right way to behave.

GEPPETTO: There is a good boy, Pinocchio. Here, you may have this.

*(HE moves to put the hat on PINOCCHIO's head, but as soon as HE is close enough, PINOCCHIO kicks him in the shin again. Incensed, GEPPETTO rips the hat away from the puppet.)*

And now you have lied to your father! You are grounded!

PINOCCHIO: What is that?

GEPPETTO: It means you may not go outside and play like the other children for a while.

PINOCCHIO: That isn't fair! You cannot prevent me from doing what I want!

GEPPETTO: Nevertheless, you are grounded, you ungrateful boy.

PINOCCHIO: No! I shall scream as loud as I can!

GEPPETTO: You shall not change my mind!

PINOCCHIO: Then you shall never catch me!

*(HE leaps off the table and runs out of the room as the lights dim on GEPPETTO's house. Transition to a city street.)*

NARRATOR: And quick as lightning, that rascal Pinocchio ran out of Geppetto's house and into the streets, shouting as loud as he could and making his father very angry. Geppetto ran after that perfectly dreadful puppet, causing Pinocchio to cry even louder.

*(Lights up on the street. A WOMAN is present. Enter PINOCCHIO.)*

GEPPETTO: *(off)* Pinocchio! Come back home, you naughty boy!

PINOCCHIO: Help! Oh, help!

WOMAN: Here, child, what's the matter?

PINOCCHIO: He's chasing me! He's going to make me go home, and I don't want to.

WOMAN: Is this man your father?

PINOCCHIO: Yes, but he is terribly mean to me! He never gets me what I want, and he never lets me play with other children. He treats me so badly!

GEPPETTO: *(still off)* Pinocchio, when we get home you will receive quite a punishment!

PINOCCHIO: You see how he threatens me?

WOMAN: How terrible! Poor child. Here, here comes a policeman.  
Sir! Police!

*(Enter POLICEMAN from one side as GEPPETTO huffs and puffs his way on from the other.)*

GEPPETTO: There you are! You must come home at once, Pinocchio.  
I am too old to chase you any further.

WOMAN: You must arrest this man. He is treating this poor child so terribly!

GEPPETTO: What? What's this? This boy is my son!

POLICEMAN: Pinocchio, is this woman telling the truth?

PINOCCHIO: Oh, yes. My Father is very, very mean to me. He treats me very badly.

POLICEMAN: All right, sir, I'm afraid you must come with me.

GEPPETTO: No, this is a misunderstanding! This is my son, I love him. He's just been misbehaving tonight, that is all.

POLICEMAN: *(As HE drags GEPPETTO away)* You may save your story for the courts, sir.

*(THEY exit. WOMAN turns to PINOCCHIO.)*

WOMAN: Pinocchio, if you need someplace to go, my husband and I can...

PINOCCHIO: Oh no, I shall be quite all right on my own! What great fun! *(Laughing, HE exits.)*

*(The WOMAN looks on, confounded, as the lights go down on the street.)*

NARRATOR: And that is how Pinocchio, within an hour of being brought into this world, had his father arrested and sent to jail for a night. Pinocchio now had Geppetto's house all to himself, which at first seemed like great fun...

*(PINOCCHIO runs in to GEPETTO's house.)*

PINOCCHIO: Hurrah! What fun! *(HE runs around the house once or twice, jumping off the table, before suddenly growing bored.)*

NARRATOR: But he soon found himself to be quite bored.

PINOCCHIO: Playing by yourself is quite boring.

NARRATOR: And on top of that...

*(A loud gurgling sound is heard, and PINOCCHIO pats his stomach.)*

...he was getting very hungry.

PINOCCHIO: No matter! I shall simply find some food for my supper!  
*(HE sets about searching for food.)*

NARRATOR: Pinocchio searched all over Geppetto's workshop for food, but the old wood-carver was very poor, and he didn't have anything around the house. He had meant to go out and buy something for himself and Pinocchio to eat that night, but as he was now sitting in a jail, he could not.

PINOCCHIO: Oh! It is so terrible to be hungry and alone! I think I shall die hungry and alone! If only my Father were here! If only he hadn't gotten himself arrested!

TALKING CRICKET: *(a voice only)* Poor, poor Pinocchio. This is the type of fate that befalls all wicked boys. Sooner or later, they end up alone, hungry, and miserable.

PINOCCHIO: What!? Who is speaking to me? I don't see anybody.

TALKING CRICKET: I'm down here, Pinocchio. On the floor. Next to the door.

PINOCCHIO: I still don't see anyone! All I see is... a cricket.

TALKING CRICKET: Hello, Pinocchio.

PINOCCHIO: Is that you? That cricket?

TALKING CRICKET: It is.

PINOCCHIO: I've never heard of a *talking* cricket before!

TALKING CRICKET: Nevertheless, you should listen to me, Pinocchio, for I have great wisdom for you.

PINOCCHIO: I certainly hope it can find me something to eat!

TALKING CRICKET: If you continue to be wicked and lazy and disrespectful to your father, you will be often hungry and rarely happy.

PINOCCHIO: I don't like your advice, Talking Cricket. I wish you to leave me in peace now.

TALKING CRICKET: You have so much to learn, Pinocchio! You ought to help your father, not anger him!

PINOCCHIO: *(Having lost interest, HE goes to the workbench and grabs a hammer.)* Of course, Talking Cricket.

TALKING CRICKET: Reconcile to your Father before it is too late.

Teach your heart to be filled with love and kindness while you are young, for learning is much easier while the heart and mind are still young.

PINOCCHIO: Thank you for your advice, Talking Cricket. Now, goodbye!

*(And HE brings down his hammer in an attempt to crush the small creature. The TALKING CRICKET hops about the shop, chirping as it flies, and PINOCCHIO chases, hammering the desk, the floor, a chair, the door, laughing all the time. Finally, PINOCCHIO brings the hammer down with a crash, and the chirping is heard no more. PINOCCHIO stops laughing.)*

Cricket? Talking Cricket? Where are you? I haven't *actually* smashed you, have I? I don't see him anywhere. Perhaps he simply hopped away. What a pity. I didn't mean to truly squash it. It was a fun game while it lasted. But now I'm alone again. And still hungry!

NARRATOR: And Pinocchio threw himself upon the floor and sulked, and there he eventually fell asleep.

*(PINOCCHIO does so.)*

What he didn't notice was that he fell asleep just next to Geppetto's wood-burning stove, which still had a fire in it because it was very cold outside. As Pinocchio slept, a spark of fire leapt out of the stove and onto Pinocchio's hand, and as the puppet slept, his arm slowly burned right off his body! The next morning, Pinocchio awoke to find that he was missing something.

*(PINOCCHIO wakes, stretches the one arm that HE has left, then notices that the other is missing. HE hollers.)*

PINOCCHIO: Help! Help! Someone has stolen my arm! I've been maimed! Oh, what's happened to me? Someone help!

*(GEPETTO enters quickly through the door hanging his coat on a coat-rack as HE enters.)*

GEPETTO: Pinocchio? What's happened to you, my boy!

PINOCCHIO: Father! You're home! How did you come to escape the jail?

GEPETTO: There was no need for escaping; I merely explained the truth, and they let me out first thing this morning. But what has happened to you, Pinocchio?

PINOCCHIO: It was terrible! I was so lonely, and then a talking cricket gave me some advice—it was really very good advice, too—only I was a horrible child and I killed it, and I was hungry, and there was

no food, and then I went to sleep, and when I woke up, I was like this!

*(HE cries. GEPPETTO puts an arm around him.)*

GEPPETTO: Come, I believe I can fix some of that. *(HE takes three pears from his jacket pocket.)* Here, I bought some pears for our breakfast on my way home.

PINOCCHIO: Only three? For both of us?

GEPPETTO: I am afraid they were all that I could afford.

PINOCCHIO: Then how will we eat tonight?

GEPPETTO: I will go to the market and sell a chair I've made. Do not worry, Pinocchio, I will take care of you. Here.

*(HE gives PINOCCHIO a pear. PINOCCHIO attempts to grab the others with his only hand. HE becomes frustrated when HE cannot.)*

I do hope you intend to leave at least one of those pears for me, my son.

PINOCCHIO: Father, I am far hungrier than you are. I have not eaten anything ever. You have at least eaten before. I am dying of hunger; give me these pears, and you may eat when you have sold a chair. Unless you want me to starve.

GEPPETTO: No, no... of course not... here, I will build you a new arm as you eat...

*(HE grabs the pears and leads PINOCCHIO to the workbench as the lights go down on his shop briefly.)*

NARRATOR: And so Pinocchio ate the carpenter's breakfast while Geppetto fashioned a new arm for the one Pinocchio carelessly burned off during the night. After his breakfast, Pinocchio felt much better, but he began for the first time to feel guilty for how badly he'd treated Geppetto.

*(Lights back up, PINOCCHIO now has two arms again. GEPPETTO wipes some sweat from his brow.)*

GEPPETTO: There you are. As good as new.

PINOCCHIO: Oh, Father, you have been so good to me! And I... I am afraid I have not been very good to you.

GEPPETTO: That is true.

PINOCCHIO: Father, I am so sorry! I truly am! I want to... I want to learn to be a good boy! To train my heart for love and kindness, like the Talking Cricket said! Father, can you forgive me?

GEPPETTO: Of course, Pinocchio. I will always have room in my heart to forgive you, if you are truly sorry.

PINOCCHIO: I am! Oh, I am!

GEPPETTO: If you really want to learn to be a good boy, that means you will have to go to school with the other boys.

PINOCCHIO: I don't want to do that...

*(GEPPETTO shoots him a glance.)*

...however, if that is what I must do, then I shall! Only... only I don't have an A-B-C book. I shall need one for school.

GEPPETTO: Oh dear... I'm sure I don't have anything like that.

Unless... *(HE looks around the shop, stopping at the coat on the rack.)* Unless... yes, of course. It simply has to be done. Wait here, my boy, please. I must go out.

PINOCCHIO: Where are you going?

GEPPETTO: *(Putting on his coat at the door.)* To buy your A-B-C book.

*(And with that HE is out. Lights dim as PINOCCHIO sits to wait.)*

NARRATOR: And so Pinocchio waited patiently for a full hour for Geppetto to return. When he did come back through the door, he had in his hands a brand new—well, mostly-new—schoolbook.

*(Enter GEPPETTO with book, sans coat.)*

PINOCCHIO: Father! You got one! How did you afford it?

GEPPETTO: I sold my coat.

PINOCCHIO: *(touched)* But... but it's so very cold outside!

GEPPETTO: Nonsense. Besides, it was an old coat anyway.

*(PINOCCHIO hugs GEPPETTO as the lights go down on the house.)*

NARRATOR: Now you may be wondering how Pinocchio, so new to the world, would have known he needed an A-B-C book to begin school. You see, Pinocchio was created as a puppet of a young boy, and as such he already knew the things all boys his size would know about the world. Had Pinocchio been created as a baby puppet, I imagine he wouldn't have known anything at all! And so

the next morning, Pinocchio set off for his first day of school with his brand new—well, mostly new—A-B-C's book.

*(On the front porch, GEPETTO kisses PINOCCHIO on the forehead and waves as PINOCCHIO walks off.)*

While Pinocchio had been a terrible brat his first couple of days, he really did intend to do better on this day. He had firmly decided that he was going to go to school and learn as other boys learned. Then, on the way to school...

*(Sounds of a crowd milled around, many children present.)*

...Pinocchio got... distracted.

*(PINOCCHIO runs up to a young GIRL who is watching something off-stage.)*

PINOCCHIO: Tell me, what is it? What is happening over there?

GIRL: Why that's the Great Marionette Theater, of course. It has been closed down for over a year, but it appears they have just re-opened it.

PINOCCHIO: What do they do in there?

GIRL: Plays, silly boy. They have puppets that perform funny plays. Don't you know anything?

PINOCCHIO: I know a great deal! And I shall know a good deal more once I've gone to school.

GIRL: Go on to school, then. You'll miss the show. I don't know when there will be another.

PINOCCHIO: Oh... I know I really ought to go to school like I told my father I would... and yet I should like to go in and watch the play, too.

GIRL: Have you any money?

PINOCCHIO: No...

GIRL: Then your choice is made for you. They won't let you in to the theater at all if you haven't any money.

PINOCCHIO: That doesn't seem fair. Could I borrow some?

GIRL: From me? I don't even know you! Why should I lend you money? Now, I might give you a few coins for that nice book you have.

PINOCCHIO: Oh... but I need this for school... and my father sold his coat to buy it...

GIRL: Go on, then, and stop bothering me! I intend to have fun in the theater.

PINOCCHIO: All right... all right here, take it! I would really rather have fun than sit in a classroom all day anyway. Perhaps I can give school a try tomorrow! *(HE gives the GIRL his book.)*

GIRL: Here then, come with me!

*(SHE leads PINOCCHIO by the arm into the Great Marionette Theater. A large, ugly man—MANGIAFUOCO—stands by the door. HE takes the GIRL's money, but grabs PINOCCHIO's shoulder to stop him from entering. HE shoves PINOCCHIO backwards.)*

PINOCCHIO: Oh, that girl has paid for me, I believe.

MANGIAFUOCO: And why are you not at work, my little friend?

PINOCCHIO: I have no work, I am a boy and I was on my way to school, only now I can't go because I seem to have lost my A-B-C book, so I thought I may as well enjoy—

MANGIAFUOCO: You are no boy! You are a marionette! Do you think I do not know a puppet when I see a puppet? I own this theater, puppet!

PINOCCHIO: Oh. It's very lovely...

MANGIAFUOCO: I know! Thank you! I mean no thank you!! Why are you not performing with all of the others?

PINOCCHIO: Performing? Oh, I see! You think that I am one of *your* marionettes! I assure you, I am not.

MANGIAFUOCO: But of course you are! I see no other marionette theaters anywhere in this part of the country. If you are a puppet, you must be my puppet! *(HE takes hold of PINOCCHIO.)*

PINOCCHIO: Let go of me! I do not belong to you! My name is Pinocchio, and I belong to my father, who created me!

MANGIAFUOCO: Enough of this foolishness! You do not wish to perform? Fine! I have another job that you can do for me.

PINOCCHIO: Another job? Good! Then I may make some money to buy a new A-B-C book, and maybe even enough to buy Father a new coat!

MANGIAFUOCO: You see, I need a nice, warm dinner tonight...

PINOCCHIO: I've never cooked a meal before, but I suppose I can try my best.

MANGIAFUOCO: You misunderstand me, Pinocchio. I shall be the cook.

*(HE whistles loudly, and two MARIONETTE POLICEMEN appear.)*

You will be the firewood!

*(The MARIONETTE POLICEMEN move and grab PINOCCHIO. THEY begin to lead him off as PINOCCHIO struggles.)*

PINOCCHIO: Firewood? No! Oh, no, please, you can't! I don't want to be firewood.

MANGIAFUOCO: Why not? You are a puppet made of wood! Wood is only useful for making tables, putting on puppet shows, and throwing in the fire. I assure you, it is nothing personal, though I am quite hungry.

PINOCCHIO: Unhand me! How could you do this to a fellow marionette?

FIRST MARIONETTE POLICEMAN: We are sorry, Pinocchio. We have to do what our master says.

SECOND MARIONETTE POLICEMAN: Besides, it is better you than either of us.

PINOCCHIO: This is terrible! Oh Father, how sorry I am! If only I had gone to school as I'd promised you I would! I wish I'd never disobeyed! *(HE begins to cry.)* And now I'll never see you again! How sad you will be to know I've been burned alive! I'm fairly sad about that myself! And after all you've done for me... oh Father, I'm so sorry!

*(MANGIAFUOCO looks on with sympathy. HE looks as though HE may cry, but instead HE sneezes violently.)*

FIRST MARIONETTE POLICEMAN: Look! The master is sneezing!

SECOND MARIONETTE POLICEMAN: This is good news for you, Pinocchio!

PINOCCHIO: What? How?

*(MANGIAFUOCO sneezes again.)*

FIRST MARIONETTE POLICEMAN: You know that when most men are moved to deep sympathy, they shed tears. They cry. However, Master Mangiafuoco is a very curious man. He never cries. When he is sad...

*(MANGIAFUOCO sneezes again.)*

PINOCCHIO: He sneezes?

SECOND MARIONETTE POLICEMAN: Exactly! He is quite moved by your tears, Pinocchio.

*(MANGIAFUOCO sneezes a fourth time.)*

MANGIAFUOCO: Enough! Enough, dear little Pinocchio! I may appear a hard and frightening man, but I cannot bear the sight of tears! You may return home to your father with my great apologies. I would never deprive a father of his son.

PINOCCHIO: *(As MARIONETTE POLICE are shaking his hands and exiting back into the Great Marionette Theater.)* Thank you, sir! You are a kind man after all!

MANGIAFUOCO: Tell me of your father, Pinocchio. Is he a wealthy man?

PINOCCHIO: No, sir, not at all! Yesterday he spent all of his money on three pears so we could eat... and I ate all three of them.

Afterwards, he went out and sold his only coat so that I could have a book to go to school... and I traded that for money to come to your theater. If only I could buy a new coat to replace the one that my father lost.

MANGIAFUOCO: The poor man! *(HE sneezes.)* Here, I will give you five pieces of gold. That will buy a very nice coat, and some very nice books, and anything else you should have need of.

PINOCCHIO: Thank you!

MANGIAFUOCO: Think nothing of it. Take these directly to your father, and send my best wishes!

PINOCCHIO: I will! Oh, thank you so much! *(HE crosses the stage to exit.)*

MANGIAFUOCO: However, my dinner still needs cooked... oh, bother it all.

*(MANGIAFUOCO exits into the Great Marionette Theater. As PINOCCHIO is about to exit HE crosses a FOX and a CAT. The FOX carries a walking cane and wears a cape and top hat, a faux gentleman, with a crutch. The CAT wears a blindfold and holds a walking stick.)*

FOX: Good day, Pinocchio!

PINOCCHIO: How do you know my name?

FOX: I know your father well. In fact, I saw him just this morning. He looked very cold, shivering in the cold in his short sleeves, the poor man.

PINOCCHIO: After today, he will suffer no longer.

FOX: And why is that?

PINOCCHIO: Because I have just become a rich man!

FOX: A rich man? You?

*(HE laughs out loud, as does the CAT. PINOCCHIO angrily holds out his hand and shows them the five gold pieces. BOTH stop laughing.)*

*CAT takes off its blindfold and gawks at the gold pieces. FOX notices and slaps CAT with his lame paw. PINOCCHIO notices neither action.)*

May I ask what you are going to do with all of that money?

PINOCCHIO: First, I am going to buy my father a fine new coat, a coat of silver with diamond buttons! Then I shall buy a brand new A-B-C book for myself.

FOX: For yourself?

PINOCCHIO: Yes, for myself. I want to go to school and study hard.

FOX: Ha! To study! Listen, Pinocchio, look at this paw. You see how it is lame?

PINOCCHIO: Yes.

FOX: It is because of studying that I no longer have two good, working paws!

CAT: And it is because of studying that I am blind!

PINOCCHIO: How can that be so?

FOX: Trust me, Pinocchio, I speak from experience when I say no good has ever come from study!

CAT: No good!

FOX: Besides, why would you want to go to school and study when we can show you a way to double your gold pieces?

PINOCCHIO: What do you mean?

FOX: Five gold pieces are nice, to be sure, but wouldn't you rather take home ten? Or even twenty?

CAT: Fifty!

FOX: A hundred?

CAT: Two a hundreds!

FOX: A thousand?

PINOCCHIO: Yes, yes, of course I would. But how?

FOX: Simple, my dear puppet. Instead of returning home... come with us!

CAT: Come with us! Come with us!

PINOCCHIO: Where will you take me?

FOX: Haven't you ever heard of the Field of Wonders?

PINOCCHIO: No, I haven't. And I don't want to go, either! Home is near, and I'm going to my Father. He is waiting for me. And then tomorrow, I will go to school and learn to be a good boy.

FOX: Very well, Pinocchio. You may go home if you wish. But you'll be sorry.

CAT: Sorrrrryyyyy!!

FOX: Think, Pinocchio, you are turning you back on Lady Luck!

CAT: Lady Luck!

FOX: Tomorrow your five gold pieces could be two thousand!

CAT: Two thousand!

PINOCCHIO: Look... are you certain of this?

FOX: I wouldn't lie, Pinocchio. Not to the son of Geppetto!

CAT: Poor old Geppetto!

FOX: Think of how much good you could do for him with all of that money!

CAT: All of that money...

FOX: And it will only take you but one full day! You will be home by tomorrow!

CAT: Two thousand gold pieces... two thousand gold pieces!

PINOCCHIO: Fine! Fine! I know it will be disobeying Father to go with you, but think of how happy he will be when he sees me with a thousand gold pieces! For I shall only keep one thousand for myself, and the rest I will give as a gift to the two of you!

FOX: A gift for us? Why of course not! We do not work for ourselves, but only to help others.

CAT: Help others!

PINOCCHIO: What fine people you are!

*(PINOCCHIO heads off with the FOX and CAT, who exchange a wink behind his back.)*

NARRATOR: And so Pinocchio decided not to buy his father a coat and himself an A-B-C book with the five gold pieces from the puppet master and instead went off with the Fox and the Cat to find the Field of Wonders. They walked until it was dark out, when the Fox convinced Pinocchio that it was a good idea for them to stop at an Inn to eat and rest, and that they would start out again very early, before the sun rose the next morning. After Pinocchio went to his room to sleep for a few hours, the Fox and the Cat—who were not actually lame nor blind, in case you couldn't tell—snuck away.

*(Enter FOX and CAT, putting on assassins disguises.)*

FOX: That poor, foolish puppet! Once he awakens and finds we've gone, he'll have to pay for our dinners and the room! And then, once he sets out to follow us, alone and in the dark, it will be all too easy to overtake him and make him give us his gold pieces. And if he refuses...

*(CAT makes a slicing motion across his neck with his finger.)*

Precisely! Come, quickly, we will hide in the ditch!

*(THEY exit, now fully disguised, as PINOCCHIO enters, yawning.)*

PINOCCHIO: How strange it was for my friends to go on ahead of me. And I left to pay the bill! I suppose that is all right, though. They are very poor, and I will soon have two thousand gold pieces of my own! I hope they haven't gotten too far ahead.

*(A cricket's chirping can be heard.)*

That noise... who is there?

TALKING CRICKET: It is I, Pinocchio.

PINOCCHIO: The Talking Cricket!

TALKING CRICKET: The Talking Cricket, yes. You'll find it is not so easy to rid yourself of sound advice. It often comes to you when you need it, whether you listen to it or not.

PINOCCHIO: I thought that I had killed you before. I... I am sorry about that.

*(A pause, during which there is only chirping.)*

TALKING CRICKET: Yes, well... you did catch a few of my legs... that was a bit uncomfortable. Nevertheless, I have returned to give you a few words of good advice. Return home with the four gold pieces you have left and give them to your poor old father who is weeping because you have never returned from school this morning.

PINOCCHIO: Tomorrow Father will be a rich man, because these four gold pieces will become two thousand!

TALKING CRICKET: Don't believe those who promise you riches overnight, my boy. They are always either fools or thieves. Listen to me and return home!

PINOCCHIO: But I want to go on!

TALKING CRICKET: The hour is late.

PINOCCHIO: I want to go on!

TALKING CRICKET: The night is very dangerous.

PINOCCHIO: I said I want to go on!

TALKING CRICKET: Remember what happened last time you wanted to do things your own way.

PINOCCHIO: Enough of your nonsense. Good-bye, Cricket!

TALKING CRICKET: Good-night, Pinocchio, and be wary of the bandits.

*(The chirping fades and ceases.)*

PINOCCHIO: Bandits. Fah! That old cricket is always trying to frighten me.

*(The FOX and CAT jump out of hiding upon him.)*

Bandits! Bandits! Help, someone!

*(The BANDITS chase PINOCCHIO about the stage and through the audience, eventually catching him. CAT holds PINOCCHIO from behind.)*

FOX: Your money or your life, puppet!

PINOCCHIO: I have no money.

FOX: Out with that money, or you're a dead man!

CAT: Dead man!

PINOCCHIO: Never!

FOX: And once we've taken care of you, we'll get your father, too!

CAT: Father, too!

PINOCCHIO: No! No! Not my Father!

FOX: Find that gold! Search his pockets!

CAT: Not in his pockets!

FOX: Under his hat!

CAT: Not under his hat!

PINOCCHIO: I told you, I haven't any gold!

*(FOX reaches out and grabs his jaw.)*

FOX: Aha! Under his tongue! That's where it is!

CAT: That's where it is!

*(PINOCCHIO wrenches away from the FOX's grip, and the CAT tries to reach into PINOCCHIO's mouth when PINOCCHIO bites him. CAT leaps back and yelps in pain as PINOCCHIO runs off.)*

FOX: After him!

*(FOX and CAT follow PINOCCHIO.)*

NARRATOR: And the two bandits chased the frightened puppet all night long until it was almost time for the sun to rise.

*(PINOCCHIO enters and leans back on a large rock.)*

PINOCCHIO: I think I've lost them... and good riddance!

*(FOX and CAT spring from behind the rock. CAT drags PINOCCHIO off the rock and pins him to the ground.)*

FOX: Last chance, puppet! Give us that gold, now!

CAT: Last chance, puppet!

PINOCCHIO: Never!

*(FOX takes a knife out of his coat.)*

FOX: As you wish! Here, *(HE gives the CAT a rope from his jacket.)* tie the puppet to that rock over there. He seems to eat quite well; I imagine that if he doesn't eat for a couple of days, he'll eventually starve.

*(CAT ties PINOCCHIO to the rock.)*

PINOCCHIO: No! Help!

FOX: We'll be back, my little friend... just as soon as you're dead.

Then we'll get those gold pieces and our business together will be completed. Farewell!

CAT: Toodle-oo!

*(THEY exit.)*

NARRATOR: Pinocchio cried for help for hours and hours and hours until he finally fainted from exhaustion, several hours after the sun rose.

PINOCCHIO: Help! Somebody please help me! Oh, if only I'd listened to the Talking Cricket's Ghost and gone back before I could be attacked! I'm such a foolish puppet. And now I'll never see my Father again! Oh, please, somebody help me! Please? Please... I'm feeling so tired... so tired...

*(His head sinks as HE passes out. After a few moments, a beautiful maiden with azure hair, the FAIRY, enters, yawning.)*

FAIRY: Whatever could have been making all that noise? It woke me up... and it takes a great deal of noise to wake me up. *(SHE spies PINOCCHIO.)* Oh dear! Someone has tied this marionette to this rock! The poor thing.

*(SHE unties PINOCCHIO, who falls to the ground.)*

I wonder if this child is alive or dead? I shall have to ask the doctors. Doctors!

*(SHE claps her hands, and in flap a CROW an OWL.)*

Good doctors, examine this puppet. I wish to know if it is alive or dead.

CROW: Hm... hm... hmmm!!

OWL: Yes... yes... oh yes, quite interesting!

FAIRY: Well? How have you found him?

CROW: Ahem. To my mind this marionette is dead and gone; but if, by any chance, he were not, then that would be a sure sign that he may be alive.

OWL: I hate to contradict my esteemed colleague, the Crow, but to my mind this marionette is most certainly alive. Unless, of course, it turns out he is not, for that would be a sure sign that he may be dead.

*(PINOCCHIO moans and begins to roll over.)*

CROW: Aha! Wait! I would like to change my diagnosis!

FAIRY: Quickly, the both of you, help me get this marionette to my home so that we may properly care for him.

*(THEY exit together.)*

NARRATOR: The fairy with the blue hair—for indeed, she was a fairy—and her friends brought Pinocchio back to a small cottage that was nearby. They gave Pinocchio some water to drink and a bit of bread to eat, and soon the boy was able to sit up and speak.

*(Lights up on FAIRY's house; PINOCCHIO sitting up on the floor and FAIRY kneeling next to him.)*

FAIRY: How are you feeling, Pinocchio?

PINOCCHIO: Everything hurts. My head hurts, my feet hurt, my stomach hurts, my ears hurt, my fingers hurt, my...

FAIRY: *(Handing him a cup with medicine.)* I have some special medicine that will take care of that for you.

PINOCCHIO: Is it sweet or bitter?

FAIRY: It is bitter, but it is good for you.

PINOCCHIO: If it is bitter, I don't want it.

FAIRY: You must drink it, Pinocchio.

PINOCCHIO: I don't like it!

FAIRY: Drink it and I'll give you a piece of candy. That will take the bitter taste right out of your mouth.

PINOCCHIO: Show me the candy.

FAIRY: *(Removing a piece from her dress.)* Here it is.

PINOCCHIO: I would like the candy first, and then I'll drink the bitter medicine.

FAIRY: Do you promise?

PINOCCHIO: Yes.

*(FAIRY gives him the candy, and PINOCCHIO eats it.)*

If only candy were medicine! I should take it every day then!

FAIRY: Now you must keep your promise and drink these few drops of medicine. They'll be good for you.

*(PINOCCHIO takes the cup, smells it, and shoves it away.)*

PINOCCHIO: Blech! I can't drink it! It's too bitter!

FAIRY: How do you know that? You haven't even tasted it yet.

PINOCCHIO: But I have smelled it! If you give me another piece of candy, then I will drink it.

FAIRY: All right, but just one more piece.

*(SHE hands him another piece of candy, and HE eats it. FAIRY gives him the glass again.)*

PINOCCHIO: I can't drink it! It's awful! No, I can't! I won't! I won't!

FAIRY: You'll be very sorry.

PINOCCHIO: I don't care!

FAIRY: You are very sick.

PINOCCHIO: I don't care!

FAIRY: You may even get so sick that you die.

PINOCCHIO: I don't care! I'd rather die than drink that awful medicine!

*(Just then, there is an ominous knock at the door.)*

FAIRY: Ah! Oh, my, I wonder who that could be.

*(SHE rises and opens the door, and in spill four BLACK RABBITS with a small black coffin {or, if that image is too grim, a stretcher will serve just fine.})*

FIRST BLACK RABBIT: Is this where the puppet is dying?

FAIRY: I am afraid so.

PINOCCHIO: They can't be here for me?

FIRST BLACK RABBIT: You mean he isn't dead yet?

FAIRY: No, I think he has a few hours yet.

FIRST BLACK RABBIT: Well how do you like that?

PINOCCHIO: No! You can't take me! Don't let them take me?

SECOND BLACK RABBIT: Are you the one who just said, 'I'd rather die than drink that awful medicine'?"

PINOCCHIO: Yes...

SECOND BLACK RABBIT: We can simply wait here, if that's all right with you, lady.

FAIRY: Certainly. Would you care for a candy?

THIRD BLACK RABBIT: I'd love a piece. I love candy.

*(In a panic, PINOCCHIO leaps to his feet and dramatically downs all of the medicine, throwing the cup to the ground when HE is finished.)*

PINOCCHIO: There, you see? I've taken it! Every last drop! And I'm starting to feel better already!

RABBITS: Awww....

THIRD BLACK RABBIT: We've made the trip for nothing.

FIRST BLACK RABBIT: All right everyone, we're not needed here. Let's go.

*(THEY exit, grumgling, with the coffin, THIRD BLACK RABBIT taking one last piece of candy on his way out.)*

FAIRY: See now? That medicine was good for you after all, wasn't it?

PINOCCHIO: Yes, indeed! I feel brand new!

FAIRY: Good. Now that you feel well, perhaps you can tell me about what happened to you last night.

PINOCCHIO: It isn't anything special; some bandits chased me all night because I had some gold coins in my mouth, and they tied me to a rock so that I would starve.

FAIRY: And where are the gold coins now?

PINOCCHIO: I... I lost them.

*(Suddenly, his hands cover his face and HE squirms a bit, as if in pain.)*

Ack! Owww!

*(When HE sits up straight again, his nose is slightly longer.)*

FAIRY: And where did you lose them?

PINOCCHIO: In the pond after I jumped in. OH!

*(And again, HE tries to cover his nose, and again it becomes longer.)*

FAIRY: Pinocchio... is there something different about your nose?

PINOCCHIO: How do you mean?

FAIRY: Wasn't it smaller just a moment ago?

PINOCCHIO: ...no... it's always been this size. ACK!

*(And again, the nose grows; it is now almost six inches long.)*

What's happening! What's happening to me?

*(FAIRY is laughing.)*

Why do you laugh???

FAIRY: I'm laughing at your lies. Here.

*(SHE leans close and blows on PINOCCHIO's nose, then knocks on it three times, and the extension falls off, leaving PINOCCHIO's original nose.)*

PINOCCHIO: How did you do that? Are you... are you a fairy??

FAIRY: Certainly. And that was just my little reminder, Pinocchio, that lies are always found out. No matter how clever you think you are being, sooner or later a lie will always become as plain as the nose on your face! That's a lesson you'll have to learn if you ever hope to become a real boy.

PINOCCHIO: I thought I was a real boy already!

FAIRY: Oh, you're really alive, Pinocchio, but you're still a puppet. As long as you are a puppet, you can never grow, never age, and never truly know what it means to love.

PINOCCHIO: All right, then, you make me a real boy!

FAIRY: Oh, Pinocchio, I cannot. If you want to become a real boy, it will be entirely up to you.

PINOCCHIO: Up to me? I don't understand, Fairy.

FAIRY: I'll give you a clue, then: the first step is to return home and apologize to your father for all the bad things you've done.

PINOCCHIO: Oh! My Father! I almost completely forgot about him!

You're right, I must return home at once! I'm sure he is very worried about me!

FAIRY: Certainly he is. Go straight home, Pinocchio. Don't turn aside for anything!

PINOCCHIO: Of course I won't! Thank you, good fairy! Thank you!

*(HE starts to exit, then quickly comes back.)* Do you really believe that I can become a real boy?

FAIRY: Yes, Pinocchio.

PINOCCHIO: Huzzah! *(HE starts to exit, then quickly returns again.)*

May I have just one more piece of candy before I go?

*(The FAIRY laughs and gives him a piece. PINOCCHIO pops it in his mouth and hurries out.)*

NARRATOR: And so Pinocchio left the fairy in her little cottage and went to find his way home to his father. He still had four gold pieces clinking in his pocket and a firm resolve to tell his father that he was sorry for being so selfish and disobedient in his short life. Temptation, however, is never far, especially from one with the best intentions, and soon Pinocchio found himself in troublesome company yet again.

*(PINOCCHIO strides purposefully across the stage as the FOX and CAT run up to him from behind.)*

FOX: Pinocchio! Pinocchio, wait for us!

PINOCCHIO: What happened to the two of you?

FOX: We wanted to leave early so that we could be sure the Field of Wonders would be all ready for you when you arrived, dear puppet!

CAT: AIIIII ready!

FOX: But no sooner had we left the safety of the village when we were attacked by bandits!

CAT: We were bandits!

*(FOX whacks him.)*

We were *attacked* by bandits!

PINOCCHIO: The same thing happened to me! I am glad to see that you are all right.

FOX: The same to you, Pinocchio. And now let us resume our journey to the Field of Wonders!

PINOCCHIO: No! No Field of Wonders for me! Every time I try to do something other than what my Father wants, things go badly!

FOX: But what can go badly? Look, see? We're almost there! You can even see it from here!

PINOCCHIO: You can?

FOX: Yes, look! *(HE points.)* That's it right there.

PINOCCHIO: That isn't far at all...

FOX: You'll be back on your way home in no time.

CAT: No time.

PINOCCHIO: Well... Father would be more likely to forgive me if I come home with eight pieces instead of four... all right. But only very quickly!

FOX: Of course! Right this way!

CAT: Right away!

*(THEY travel to the Field of Wonders.)*

FOX: Here we are, Pinocchio! The Field of Wonders!

PINOCCHIO: I'm very excited! What do I do?

FOX: You simply have to dig a hole and bury your gold right here, in the ground.

CAT: Right in the ground!

FOX: Then, you go away and close your eyes for twenty minutes... no more time and no less!

CAT: No more and no less!

FOX: Then you simply return to the Field of Wonders, dig up your original hole, and poof!

CAT: Poof!

PINOCCHIO: Poof?

FOX: Yes, poof! Double your money!

PINOCCHIO: It sounds so easy!

FOX: It is, it is! Go on, now, bury your gold coins. By the end of the day, you could be a very rich man indeed!

*(PINOCCHIO bends down and digs a hole, dropping his coins.)*

That's it! That's it! You've made a very wise decision, boy. You'll never need to study or work a day in your life. Nor will your Father, for that matter! Well done, Pinocchio, well done! Now go! Go just far enough that you can no longer see the field, and wait for twenty minutes! Your fortune will be waiting!

PINOCCHIO: Thank you! Thank you so very much! *(HE hurries off.)*

NARRATOR: Poor, simple Pinocchio! Well, you can probably guess what happened next. The fiendish Fox and Cat quickly dug up Pinocchio's gold pieces and took every last one. Then they left.

*(FOX and CAT dig up the gold and exit.)*

Twenty minutes later, Pinocchio returned, just as it started to rain.

*(Thunder and rain cue as PINOCCHIO returns.)*

PINOCCHIO: It's been twenty minutes, no more and no less! Time to collect I and my father's riches! *(HE begins digging.)* There... there isn't anything here!

*(Thunder.)*

I must be digging in the wrong place. Silly Pinocchio, you have forgotten where you buried the gold!

*(HE moves to another spot and digs. HE does so multiple times in the following speech.)*

NARRATOR: Pinocchio dug and dug, hole after hole, but he never found even one of his shiny gold pieces from the puppet master. As the field became muddy and Pinocchio grew wetter and wetter, he started to get very tired.

*(PINOCCHIO kneels and starts to weep as a SNAKE slithers onstage around behind him. The SNAKE snickers.)*

PINOCCHIO: Now who is it? *(HE turns and sees the SNAKE.)* You leave me alone, snake.

SNAKE: Poor, poor little puppet. Cry, cry, cry.

PINOCCHIO: You'd cry too if you couldn't remember where you buried a fortune!

SNAKE: *(Laughing now.)* That doesn't sound like the sort of thing I'd forget.

PINOCCHIO: As soon as I find it, I'll be the one laughing! Then my father and I will be rich, and...

SNAKE: Did your father ask you to bury his gold in the ground?

PINOCCHIO: Well no... it was going to be a surprise.

SNAKE: *(Laughing almost uncontrollably.)* And a surprise it will be! But not a very nice one, I'm sure!

PINOCCHIO: You clearly don't know anything. This is the Field of Wonders, and the Fox said that...

SNAKE: Is it the same Fox that stole your money as soon as you ran away?

PINOCCHIO: What?

*(The SNAKE simply laughs harder than ever and exits.)*

Snake? Snake?? Come back!! He's gone. Oh well, he wasn't very pleasant company anyway. But now I'm lost! And now I have absolutely no money! And it's raining! Oh, what will I do? I may catch a cold, or a flu, or even pneumonia, and the Fairy isn't here to save me!

*(A MAN with an umbrella and a lantern enters.)*

MAN: You! You there, boy! Come over here and share my umbrella!

PINOCCHIO: Thank you, sir. I was very miserable in that rain.

MAN: Let me look at you... why you're not a boy at all! You're a... could it be... you're a puppet?

PINOCCHIO: Yes... but I'd like to be a real boy.

MAN: Why don't you come with me and get out of this rain? We've got a nice dry bed for you where I come from!

PINOCCHIO: Oh no, I really, really, *really* need to return home to my father!

*(Thunder.)*

MAN: You'll never make it in this storm. Come stay with us, just for this one night.

PINOCCHIO: You say "us," but I don't see anybody with you.

MAN: I mean the rest of the boys who live with me in the Land of Play!

PINOCCHIO: The Land of Play?

MAN: I promise you, it's everything your heart desires! No studies, no worries, no rules, nothing but games and fun all day and every day! There are rocks to climb, beaches to swim in, dogs to play with, and candy everywhere!

PINOCCHIO: It sounds like a fun place.

MAN: Fun? My puppet friend, you have never *known* fun unless you have been to the Land of Play!

PINOCCHIO: I really ought to get home... but I won't make it in this storm by myself. And I suppose one more day away can't get me in any more trouble than I'm already in. All right, I'll go with you!

MAN: To the Land of Play!

PINOCCHIO: Yes, to the Land of Play! But only for one day.

MAN: Of course, son... of course...

*(HE leads PINOCCHIO off. Lights down on the Field.)*

NARRATOR: The man led Pinocchio to a covered wagon pulled by donkeys where there were forty other boys crammed in so tightly that nobody could even move! None of them cared, however. They were all excited about going to the Land of Play. Once they got there, the boys played with all their might.

*(PINOCCHIO and other BOYS rush on and play.)*

They played, they ran, they climbed, they wrestled, they swam, and they had such a wonderful time that Pinocchio decided that just one day in the Land of Play wasn't quite enough. He stayed a second

day. And a third. And a fourth. Soon, he had quite forgotten about going home to Geppetto. All he wanted to do was play all the time.

*(PINOCCHIO and BOYS run off.)*

Finally, after five months of playing day and night and eating nothing but candy and junk food, Pinocchio awoke one morning to find something unusual had happened to him.

PINOCCHIO: *(in the dark; Yawns.)* All right, another morning of fun! *(Suddenly brays like a donkey.)* What was that? Where did that noise come from? *(Brays again.)* Was that... a donkey? Is there a donkey in this room with me—*HAWW!* That... that didn't come out of me, did it? Where is my lantern??

*(The lantern flicks on, and in the half-light we see PINOCCHIO, bent over on all fours and covered in donkey hair, complete with ears and a tail.)*

It is me! What's happened? Help! Help!

*(His cries become brays as the MAN enters with a rope.)*

MAN: It's the little puppet, is it? We've never had a living puppet in the Land of Play before, so I didn't know how long it would take.

Actually, I wasn't sure it would happen at all, but sure enough...

PINOCCHIO: Something terrible's happened to me! You have to help mee—*HAWW!*

MAN: That's the way it goes in the Land of Play! I take the bad boys—the *really* bad boys, the ones who run away from home, who forget their fathers and mothers, who don't want to go to school, who want to spend all day playing—and I let them play whatever they want for however long they want! Oh, what fun you've had in your time here! But children who do *nothing* but play aren't good for anything, so sooner or later, they all turn into donkeys! That way I can sell them to the highest bidder, and they can finally do some good in the world!

PINOCCHIO: I don't want to be a donkey! I'm going to be a boy! A real boy!

MAN: Maybe you were once, but now it's a little too late for that, don't you think? *(HE laughs places the rope around PINOCCHI's neck.)*

Come with me, my little donkey. I'm sure someone can use a nice working animal like you! *(HE leads PINOCCHIO off.)*

NARRATOR: The man took Pinocchio to an auction. Nobody there wanted a good, healthy, working animal, so instead he sold the poor

animal to a man who made instruments. He planned to strip of Pinocchio's skin and use it to make a nice new drum. That night, Pinocchio went to sleep for what he thought would be the last time.

*(Lights up on PINOCCHIO sleeping.)*

And as he slept, he dreamed. And in his dream, he met the Talking Cricket who had tried twice to keep him from harm.

*(Chirping sound is heard.)*

TALKING CRICKET: Pinocchio. Pinocchio.

*(PINOCCHIO lifts his head.)*

Little Pinocchio, what has happened to you?

PINOCCHIO: I'm finished, Cricket. I'll never see my father again. I'll never be a real boy. They mean to kill me and use my skin to make a drum with. I hope I shall be a better drum than I was a son...

TALKING CRICKET: Did I not warn you that bad things would come if you disobeyed your Father and did things your own way?

PINOCCHIO: You did, Cricket, and I didn't listen! How I wish I had! How I wish the Fairy were here to save me again!

*(Chirping cricket noises die away as the FAIRY appears.)*

FAIRY: Dear little Pinocchio.

PINOCCHIO: Fairy! Oh, my dear Fairy, you must change me into a boy! Or if not that, at least a puppet again! Anything that will not allow them to skin me and turn me into a drum!

FAIRY: All is not lost, Pinocchio. Tell me, what do you remember of your father?

PINOCCHIO: That he was good, and kind... and he did everything for me, even when I was terrible to him. Oh Fairy, he was so good to me, he loved me so much, and all I've ever done is hurt him, even when I was trying to do things right. I wish I could speak to him! I wish I could tell him how sorry I am for everything I've done! For all the grief I've caused him!

*(FAIRY disappears as GEPPETTO steps into the room.)*

GEPPETTO: Pinocchio.

PINOCCHIO: Father! But you're... you're not really here, are you?

This is a dream, isn't it?

GEPPETTO: This is a dream.

PINOCCHIO: Well, dream or not, this may be the only chance I ever get to tell you... Father, I'm so sorry! If I had another chance, I would obey you and love you the way you've loved me! But there is no other chance. I've turned into a donkey, and tomorrow I'll be turned into a drum.

GEPPETTO: Pinocchio, get up.

*(PINOCCHIO does so.)*

No matter what anybody else says, no matter what anybody else tells you that you are, I want you to always remember this: you are my son. I made you. I even gave you my eyes and my smile. And I love you.

*(Lights change and GEPPETTO exits as PINOCCHIO is waking up.)*

You are my son. And I love you.

*(GEPPETTO is gone. PINOCCHIO stands on his hind legs.)*

PINOCCHIO: My father... my father loves me.

NARRATOR: And then, a very curious thing happened.

*(One of the arms of donkey hair falls off of PINOCCHIO.)*

PINOCCHIO: And I love my father!

*(Another arm falls.)*

And if I ever do see him again, I will ask his forgiveness in person! *(HE realizes what is happening to him.)* What... what's happening? The donkey skin! It's all melting away! *(HE strips himself of the remaining bits.)* It's gone! I'm a puppet again! But how? The man in the Land of Play said that all the really bad boys became donkeys... the lazy, the selfish, the ones that forget their fathers... that's it! I remembered my father! Hurrah, I'm free!

*(Enter a PIGEON.)*

PIGEON: You! You-hoo! You down there!

PINOCCHIO: Do you mean me, little bird?

PIGEON: Little bird? I am a pigeon, thank you very much! And of course I mean you! Who else would I be talking to? That lump of fur? Ew... er... what is that?

PINOCCHIO: It's going to be a drum head.

PIGEON: Fine. Dandy. You! Do you know of a little wooden puppet named Pinocchio?

PINOCCHIO: I *am* that little wooden puppet!

PIGEON: Oh! At last! At last! I've found you!

PINOCCHIO: You've been looking for me?

PIGEON: Your father! Geppetto! He's been looking all over Europe for you! Up hills and across lakes and into caves and my, that man is exhausted!

PINOCCHIO: Where is he now? Is he close?

PIGEON: Oh no, oh no, not a bit. He's gone and decided to sail across the ocean to find you!

PINOCCHIO: Oh dear! I've got to get to him!

PIGEON: Well hop on, then! We'll find him together!

*(PINOCCHIO hops on the PIGEON and they "fly" away.)*

NARRATOR: So Pinocchio and the Pigeon soared through the sky, searching for Geppetto.

PINOCCHIO: Down there!

NARRATOR: They found him on a small raft only a few miles off the shore.

PIGEON: I can swoop him up and fly you both back to the shore!

PINOCCHIO: Oh, thank you!

PIGEON: Hold on to me tightly! Down we go!

*(PINOCCHIO and the PIGEON head down toward the sea.)*

PINOCCHIO: Father! Father! I'm up here! Look, he sees us! He sees us!

NARRATOR: Indeed, Geppetto did see Pinocchio, and he waved out with both hands and jumped up and down with joy. However, just as Pinocchio and the Pigeon got close, a great and terrible shark rose from the depths. Its jaws were so large that Geppetto's entire raft became lost between the rows of teeth.

PINOCCHIO: Father, no! Hurry, you must drop me!

PIGEON: Into its mouth?

PINOCCHIO: I'll not let my Father go so easily! Let me go!

PIGEON: Very well. Fare thee well, Pinocchio!

NARRATOR: And the pigeon dropped the brave little puppet, who dropped toward the closing jaws of the monster until...

*(Lights go to blackout. Loud gulping sound is heard. Dim light as PINOCCHIO awakens inside the terrible shark.)*

PINOCCHIO: Father! Father!

*(Enter GEPETTO in a daze.)*

GEPETTO: Pinocchio?

PINOCCHIO: Father!!! *(HE runs up to and embraces GEPETTO.)*

GEPETTO: What has just happened? Where are we?

PINOCCHIO: We're inside a shark, but I don't care! I'm with you, and I'd rather be with you inside a terrible shark forever than spend another minute in that horrible Land of Play!

GEPETTO: Ah... of course. Pinocchio, I've looked everywhere for you. Up hills, across lakes...

PINOCCHIO: I know... oh father, I've been so terrible to you. Can you forgive me?

GEPETTO: Of course I forgive you, my son.

*(HE embraces PINOCCHIO when there's a sneezing sound that echoes like cannonfire, causing the ground to tremble.)*

What was *that*??

PINOCCHIO: An earthquake? Or rather, a shark-quake?

*(Another sneezing sound, and THEY shake again. PINOCCHIO falls over into a pile of muck.)*

GEPETTO: I believe the beast is... sneezing!

PINOCCHIO: Sneezing?

GEPETTO: Perhaps it is allergic to one of us. Ah! The poor beast!

PINOCCHIO: That's it, then! That's how we can escape!

GEPETTO: I was unaware sharks could have allergies...

PINOCCHIO: We need to make our way closer to the mouth, and when he sneezes again, out we'll go!

GEPETTO: And straight into the water! I fear your plan is a bit flawed, my son. I am a very old man and not strong enough for much swimming.

PINOCCHIO: If you hold on to me, I can swim us to shore.

GEPETTO: No, Pinocchio, that sounds too dangerous.

PINOCCHIO: Please, Father, I can do it!

GEPETTO: Well... we may as well try, I suppose. Yes. Yes, we shall! I cannot worry about what may happen next; I'm with my son again, and that is all that matters!

NARRATOR: And so Pinocchio, and Geppetto crawled their way to the front of the terrible shark.

GEPETTO: Here comes another sneeze.

NARRATOR: And when the beast sneezed...

*(A loud sneezing sound.)*

...they all shot forward into the ocean!

*(THEY tumble forward. GEPETTO grabs PINOCCHIO, who swims as hard as he can.)*

Pinocchio began swimming immediately, with Geppetto holding on for his life. Soon they had broken the surface of the water and were heading for the shore. Eventually, Pinocchio began to grow tired. GEPETTO: Good work, Pinocchio! I can see *(Coughs)* the shore in the distance!

*(Sound of the terrible shark breaking the surface of the water.)*

The shark!

PINOCCHIO: He is after us!

GEPETTO: Swim faster, Pinocchio!

PINOCCHIO: I'm trying, Father!

*(PINOCCHIO and GEPETTO begin to lag behind, falling closer to the open jaws of the angry shark.)*

The shark is too fast and strong! I... I can't swim fast enough! I'm sorry, Father!

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