



Mustela®

Pinocchio

Once upon a time ... "A king!" my little readers will say immediately. No, once upon a time there was a piece of wood that Geppetto had received from Master Cherry, the carpenter, and transformed it into a puppet who cried and laughed like a child.

Can you guess who I'm talking about? Yes, well done, it's him: Pinocchio! Well, you will certainly remember that he was a rascal, the one who smashed the Talking Cricket, ignored pieces of advice, and also sold his school book in order to go to Mangiafuoco's Great Marionette Theatre. Most importantly, he was duped by the Fox and the Cat with the false promise of wealth.

The Blue Fairy had to save him several times. Thanks to Pinocchio we have all learned that telling lies makes noses looonger (by the way, how is your nose? Maybe, when you are in front of the mirror, check it out).

But his adventures don't end here, because we know that he was jailed, he risked being fried by the Green Fisherman, and he followed the laziest and most unruly boy of the whole school, Romeo, nicknamed Candlewick, to a place called Land of Toys, beyond the sea, where everyday is like holiday. It was there that, after five months of having a wonderful time, he got a fever that turned him into a donkey, and was bought by a circus and then sold to a man who wanted to skin him to make a drum. Just when he was about to drown, he became a puppet again and managed to escape, but he still went to a lot of trouble, because he was swallowed by the Dogfish and, in its big belly, unexpectedly and luckily found Geppetto. That's incredible! They finally managed



to escape and go back home. After long months of hard work to help his father, Pinocchio, one day, woke up and realized that he had become a real boy, in flesh and blood.

Now, we know his story up to this point, more or less.

What you have never been told is what happened afterward, because, actually, many other things happened to him. In fact, Pinocchio got into his head – no longer a wooden head, but still very hard – that he wanted to be the director of a puppet theatre too. "But how?" you will protest, "just now that he had managed to become a real child and that he was terrified by Mangiafuoco, when he was still in danger of getting burned!"

Yep, that's right. Mangiafuoco, the grouchy director of the Great Marionette Theatre, was so upset with Pinocchio – he said the puppet had interrupted the performance – and that he wanted to use him as firewood to cook his lamb dinner. Despite his appearances however, Mangiafuoco wasn't evil, because, feeling compassion for Pinocchio, he ultimately released him and gave him five gold pieces, which unfortunately appeals to many. How difficult it is to keep up with all the scheduled performances – but on the other hand, Pinocchio had



also seen that after all, Mangiafuoco had shown himself to be sensitive and deserved credit for introducing him to the beauty of the theatre and to the most popular puppets, like Arlecchino and Pulcinella.

Yes, he would have become a famous puppet master, just like Mangiafuoco!

In fact, who knew puppets better than him, considering that before he was one of them? I let you imagine how this scared the life out of the poor Geppetto when he found it out! He hoped that his son would finally have some good sense, and instead... I just let you know that since that moment he wasn't nicknamed Polendina anymore – as he was called because of his yellow wig – but Sgranarolo, because of his wide opened eyes.

Although Pinocchio was a real boy, Geppetto used to make him wear a dress made of flowered paper, a pair of shoes of tree bark and a little cap made with the crumb of bread and, also that morning, he went out dressed like that to go to the bank; the first problem to be solved was indeed obtaining a substantial loan. Just in front of the building, however, Commendatore Grosso Taglio ("Large Bill"), who was dressed up to the nines, but actually was a well trained eyed swindler, approached him.

"All thieves, these bankers!" he shrewdly began to say.

"Be careful, young man! They can't be trusted, they take advantage of the poor people, not like me who generously exchanges twenty precious bills for just two gold coins."

Oh yes, of course, a stranger who likes giving money away! But Pinocchio, you know, was an expert at making mistakes and, driven by the urgency of setting up his own theatre, allowed himself to be fooled. "This is none other than a Commendatore," he thought naively in order to reassure himself, "not like those two scoundrels, the Fox and the Cat!" And, he took two coins out of his pocket, and accepted the exchange.

Meanwhile, Geppetto, resigned, had begun to assemble long wooden boards: if Pinocchio's desire was to raise some audience, certainly a stage couldn't miss.

On his way back home, Pinocchio foolishly convinced to have sealed the best deal ever, thought of stopping at Mr. Almondo's pastry shop to buy something sweet to celebrate. When it was time to pay for the cake, though, "What do you take me for?" asked the pastry chef angrily, "you can see these bills are fake from a mile away! Since when a whippersnapper like you goes around with all this money!" "It's impossible, sir!" Pinocchio replied, "I withdrew the money myself a moment ago at the bank, I have savings."

I bet you can imagine what happened to him at that point: his nose, even if now was a real one, like mine and yours, immediately grew. "I know this story!" Mr. Almondo resumed, "some time ago a disobedient puppet used to live here and tell a lot of lies, and the more he told, the more his nose grew!" Pinocchio was exposed and, in an instant, he was surrounded by guards. They took him straight to prison for making a false statement while others went to warn Geppetto.

Arriving at the shop, they saw that the woodcarver was very busy and noticed his beautiful handcrafted items, with carvings representing leaves, flowers and animals.



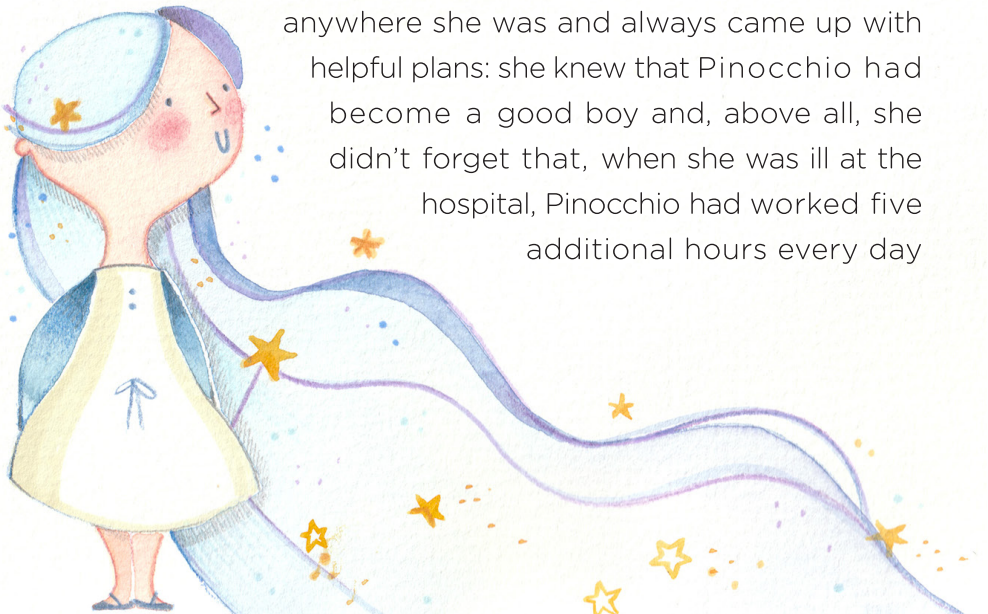
"If we could have such a sturdy chair!" a guard exclaimed, "our office does have only one crooked stool for all of us!"

"We could try to convince the old man to build new chairs and tables" another guard replied, "and if he agrees, we'll give him his bad boy back."

When Geppetto recovered after learning the news about Pinocchio's arrest, he couldn't help but accept the agreement, that night, terribly worried, he didn't get a wink of sleep, how could he build all that furniture for the next day?

On the other side of the village, there was someone else who was spending a sleepless night: Pinocchio was visited by the Talking Cricket, who, through the window, informed him about his father's desperate effort, and he couldn't help but sobbed : "oh what daddy has to go through because of me!" he repeated in tears, "he should be so tired that he can't even stand up!".

The Blue Fairy couldn't be indifferent to Pinocchio's tears, she had helped him so many times that she could have distinguished him among a thousand. She could hear him anywhere she was and always came up with helpful plans: she knew that Pinocchio had become a good boy and, above all, she didn't forget that, when she was ill at the hospital, Pinocchio had worked five additional hours every day



at the gardener's to support her and Geppetto.

The exhausted woodcarver, at some point in the middle of the night, fell asleep among the sawdust, but the morning after something unexpectedly wonderful had happened: Geppetto found that all the chairs and tables were built and lined up in front of him! That sure was a Blue Fairy's spell.

So he immediately went to the police station to exonerate his son, who ran and put his arms around him and showered him with kisses, happy as he had never been before!

"From now on, daddy, I promise to help you every day!" On their way back Pinocchio said, "forget about puppet theatre, together we will build houses and I will always be by your side. I've made a decision: I want to become a woodcarver like you!"

The boy proved to be extraordinarily skilled with the tools of the trade; in fact, who could handle the wood better than him, considering that he was born from a log? Do you agree?

He and Geppetto worked hard all day long, tirelessly singing.

Pinocchio didn't lose the desire to carve a puppet and put some little performances on for the children of the street:

"How funny I was, when I was a puppet!" he said while he was looking at a puppet taking shape, leaning on a chair nearby, "and how happy I am now that I am a puppet master!"



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