

CHAPTER 1

Master Cherry found a piece of wood that wept and laughed like a child

Centuries ago there lived—

“A king!” my little readers will say immediately.

No, children, you are wrong. It was a piece of wood. It was not an expensive piece of wood. Far from it. Just a common block of firewood that can make cold rooms cozy and warm.

I do not know how this really happened, but one fine day this piece of wood **found itself in the shop**¹ of an old carpenter. His real name was Master Antonio, but everyone called him Master Cherry. The tip of his nose was so round and red and shiny that it looked like a ripe cherry.

As soon as he saw that piece of wood, Master Cherry enjoyed it. He mumbled to himself happily:

“Very well. I shall use it to make the leg of a table.”

He grasped the hatchet quickly **to peel off the bark**² and shape the wood. But suddenly he heard a wee, little voice:

“Please be careful! Do not hit me so hard!”

Master Cherry was very surprised! He turned frightened eyes about the room to find out where that wee, little voice came from. And he saw no one! He looked under the bench—no one! He peeped inside the closet—no one!

¹ **found itself in the shop** — оказался в мастерской

² **to peel off the bark** — чтобы очистить кору

He searched among the shavings—no one! He opened the door—and still no one!

“Oh, I see!” he then said. “It is a hallucination! Well, well—to work once more.”

He tried to cut the piece of wood.

“Oh, oh! You hurt!” cried the same little voice.

Master Cherry was dumb. His eyes popped out of his head, his mouth opened wide, and his tongue hung down on his chin. Then he said:

“Where did that voice come from? There is no one around. Maybe this piece of wood can weep and cry like a child. I can hardly believe it. Here it is—a piece of firewood, the same as any other. Yet someone is in it. I’ll find him!”

With these words, he grabbed the log with both hands and started to beat it unmercifully. He threw it to the floor, against the walls of the room, and even up to the ceiling.

Where is the tiny voice? He waited two minutes—nothing; five minutes—nothing; ten minutes—nothing.

“Oh, I see,” he said. “It is just a hallucination! Well, well—to work once more.”

He **picked up the plane**¹ to make the wood smooth and even. But as he drew it **to and fro**², he heard the same tiny voice. This time it giggled:

“Stop it! Oh, stop it! Ha, ha, ha! You tickle my stomach.”

This time poor Master Cherry fell down on the floor.

CHAPTER 2

Master Cherry gives the piece of wood to his friend Geppetto

In that very instant, a loud knock sounded on the door.

“Come in,” said the carpenter.

The door opened and a dapper little old man came in. His name was Geppetto, but to the boys of the neighbor-

¹ **picked up the plane** — взял рубанок

² **to and fro** — туда-сюда

hood he was **Polendina (Cornmeal mush)**¹, because his wig was just the color of yellow corn.

Geppetto had a very bad temper. He hated that name, Polendina. He became as wild as a beast easily.

“Good day, Master Antonio,” said Geppetto. “What are you doing on the floor?”

“I am teaching the ants their ABC’s.”

“Good luck to you!”

“What brought you here, friend Geppetto?”

“My legs. Master Antonio, I want to **beg for a favor**².”

“I am at your service,” answered the carpenter, and raised himself on to his knees.

“This morning a fine idea came to me.”

“Let’s hear it.”

“I want to make myself a beautiful wooden Marionette. It will be able to dance, fence, and **turn somersaults**³. With it I intend to go around the world, to earn my bread. What do you think of it?”

“Bravo, Polendina!” cried the same tiny voice.

Master Geppetto was red and said to the carpenter angrily:

“Why do you insult me?”

“Who? I don’t.”

“You called me Polendina.”

“I did not.”

“I know it was you.”

“No!”

“Yes!”

“No!”

“Yes!”

And finally they began to fight. When the fight was over, Master Antonio took Geppetto’s yellow wig and Geppetto found the carpenter’s curly wig in his mouth.

“Give me back my wig!” shouted Master Antonio.

“You return mine and we’ll be friends.”

¹ **Polendina (Cornmeal mush)** – кукурузная лепёшка

² **beg for a favor** – попросить об одолжении

³ **turn somersaults** – кувыркаться

The two little old men shook hands and swore to be good friends for the rest of their lives.

“Well then, Master Geppetto,” said the carpenter, “what is it you want?”

“I want a piece of wood to make a Marionette. Will you give it to me?”

Master Antonio, very glad indeed, went immediately to his bench to get the piece of wood which frightened him so much. But as he gave it to his friend, it slipped out of his hands and hit against poor Geppetto’s legs.

“Ah! Master Antonio, this is how you make your gifts! I’m almost lame!”

“I swear to you I did not do it!”

“It was I, of course!”

“This piece of wood.”

“You’re right; but remember you threw it at my legs.”

“I did not throw it!”

“Liar!”

“Geppetto, do not insult me or I’ll call you Polendina.”

“Idiot.”

“Polendina!”

“Donkey!”

“Polendina!”

“Ugly monkey!”

“Polendina!”

Geppetto lost his head with rage and threw himself upon the carpenter. The fight continued.

After this fight, Master Antonio and Geppetto shook hands and swore to be good friends again.

Then Geppetto took the fine piece of wood, thanked Master Antonio, and went home.

CHAPTER 3

The first pranks of the Marionette

Geppetto’s house was little, but neat and comfortable. It was a small room on the ground floor, with a tiny window under the stairway. The furniture was very simpler: a very

old chair, a rickety old bed, and an old table. A fireplace was painted on the wall opposite the door. Over the fire, there was painted a pot full.

When Geppetto reached home, he took his tools and began to cut and shape the wood into a Marionette.

“What shall I call him?” he said to himself. “I think I’ll call him Pinocchio. This name will make his fortune. I knew a whole family of Pinocchi once—Pinocchio the father, Pinocchia the mother, and Pinocchi the children—and they were all lucky. The richest of them was the beggar.”

Then Geppetto began to work, he made the hair, the forehead, the eyes. These eyes moved and then stared fixedly at him. Geppetto asked:

“Ugly wooden eyes, why do you stare so?”

There was no answer.

After the eyes, Geppetto made the nose. It stretched and stretched and stretched till it became so long, it seemed endless.

Next he made the mouth. The mouth began to laugh.

“Stop it!” said Geppetto angrily.

In vain.

“Stop it, I say!” he roared in a voice of thunder.

The mouth stopped to laugh, but showed a long tongue.

After the mouth, Geppetto made the chin, then the neck, the shoulders, the stomach, the arms, and the hands. When he finished the finger tips, they pulled his wig off.

“Pinocchio, give me my wig!”

But Pinocchio put it on his own head.

Geppetto became very sad and downcast.

“Pinocchio, you wicked boy!” he cried out. “You are impudent to your poor old father. Very bad, my son, very bad! I deserve it!” he said to himself. “Now it’s too late.”

He put the Marionette on the floor to teach him to walk.

But Pinocchio’s legs were very stiff and did not move. Geppetto taught him to walk.

Finally, Pinocchio started to walk by himself and ran all around the room. He came to the open door, and away he ran!

Poor Geppetto ran after him but was unable to catch him.

“Catch him! Catch him!” Geppetto shouted. But the people in the street laughed.

At last, a Carabineer grabbed the Marionette by the nose and returned him to Master Geppetto. Geppetto seized Pinocchio by the back of the neck and took him home. He said to him angrily:

“When we get home, I’ll give you a good lesson!”

Pinocchio threw himself on the ground and refused to go. The people gathered around them.

Some said one thing, some another.

“Poor Marionette,” said a man. “I am not surprised he doesn’t want to go home. Geppetto, no doubt, will beat him unmercifully. He is very mean and cruel!”

“Geppetto looks like a good man,” added another, “but with boys he’s a real tyrant. Poor Marionette!”

The Carabineer heard that and dragged Geppetto to prison. The poor old Geppetto did not know how to defend himself. He wept and wailed like a child and said between his sobs:

“Ungrateful boy! I wanted to make you a good Marionette! I deserve it, however!”

What happened after this is an almost unbelievable story.

CHAPTER 4

The story of Pinocchio and the Cricket

So poor old Geppetto was in prison. In the meantime that rascal, Pinocchio, ran wildly across fields and meadows, and reached home. The house door was half open. He slipped into the room, locked the door, and threw himself on the floor.

Then he heard:

“Cri-cri-cri!”

“Who is this?” asked Pinocchio, greatly frightened.

“I am!”

Pinocchio turned and saw a large cricket on the wall.

“Tell me, Cricket, who are you?”

"I am the Cricket. I live in this room. One hundred years."

"Today, however, this room is mine," said the Marionette, "so **get out**¹ now."

"I refuse to leave this spot," answered the Cricket, "I want to tell you a great truth."

"Tell it, then, and hurry."

"Woe to boys who refuse to obey their parents and run away from home! They will never be happy in this world. When they are older they will be very sorry for it."

"Nonsense. What I know is, that tomorrow, at dawn, I leave this place forever. If I stay here they will send me to school, like other boys and girls. As for me, let me tell you, I hate to study! I think, it's more interesting to chase after butterflies, climb trees, and steal birds' nests."

"Poor little silly! Don't you know that if you do all that, you will grow into a perfect donkey?"

"**Keep still**², you ugly Cricket!" cried Pinocchio.

But the Cricket, who was a wise old philosopher, continued:

"If you do not like to go to school, why don't you learn a trade?"

"Shall I tell you something?" asked Pinocchio. "Of all the trades in the world, there is only one that I really like."

"And what is that?"

"To eat, to drink, to sleep, to play and to wander around from morning till night."

"Let me tell you, Pinocchio," said the Cricket in his calm voice, "that you can end up in the hospital or in prison."

"Careful, ugly Cricket! If you make me angry, you'll be sorry!"

"Poor Pinocchio, I am sorry for you."

"Why?"

"Because you are a Marionette and you have a wooden head."

¹ **get out** – убирайся

² **keep still** – замолчи

At these last words, Pinocchio jumped up, took a hammer from the bench, and threw it with all his strength at the Cricket.

Oh, my dear children, he hit the Cricket, straight on its head. With a last weak “cri-cri-cri” the poor Cricket fell from the wall, dead!

CHAPTER 5

Pinocchio is hungry and cooks an egg

But the Marionette was hungry. A boy's appetite grows very fast. Pinocchio ran to the fireplace with the pot and stretched out his hand to take the cover off. To his amazement, the pot was only painted! His long nose became at least two inches longer.

He ran about the room, dug in all the boxes and drawers, and even looked under the bed. No piece of bread, or a cookie, or perhaps a bit of fish! He found nothing.

And meanwhile his hunger grew and grew. Pinocchio began to yawn. Soon he became dizzy and faint. He wept and wailed to himself:

“The Cricket was right. It was wrong of me to disobey Father and to run away from home. Oh, how horrible it is to be hungry!”

Suddenly, he saw in a corner something round and white that looked like a hen's egg. It was an egg! The Marionette turned the egg over and over in his hands, fondled it, kissed it, and talked to it:

“And now, how shall I cook you? Shall I make an omelet? No, it is better to fry you in a pan! Or shall I drink you? No, the best way is to fry you in the pan.”

He placed a little pan over a **foot warmer**¹. In the pan, instead of oil or butter, he poured a little water. As soon as the water started to boil—tac!—he broke the eggshell. But in place of the white and the yolk of the egg, a little

¹ a foot warmer — жаровня

yellow chicken escaped from it. The chicken bowed politely to Pinocchio and said to him:

“Many, many thanks, indeed, Signor Pinocchio. Now I’m free! Good-bye!”

With these words he darted to the open window and flew away.

Pinocchio began to cry and shriek:

“The Cricket was right! Oh, how horrible it is to be hungry!”

He decided to go to the nearby village to find some charitable person who might give him a bit of bread.

CHAPTER 6

Pinocchio sleeps with his feet on a foot warmer

Pinocchio hated the dark street, but he was very hungry and he ran out of the house. The night was black. It thundered. An angry wind blew cold, while the trees shook and moaned in a weird way.

Pinocchio was greatly afraid of thunder and lightning, but the hunger was greater than his fear. He came to the village. The village was dark and deserted. The stores, the doors, the windows were closed. It seemed the Village of the Dead.

Pinocchio, in desperation, ran up to a doorway and pulled the bell wildly. He said to himself: “Someone will surely answer that!”

He was right. An old man in a nightcap opened the window and looked out angrily:

“What do you want at this hour of night?”

“Will you give me a bit of bread? I am hungry.”

“Wait a minute,” answered the old man.

After a minute or two, the same voice cried:

“Get under the window and **hold out your hat**!”

Pinocchio had no hat. When he got under the window, he felt a shower of ice-cold water on his poor wooden head,

¹ **hold out your hat** – подставь свою шляпу