

LECTURE THIRTEEN

CHAPTERS 34,35,36

Pinocchio

Chapter 34

Pinocchio is thrown into the sea, eaten by fishes, and becomes a Marionette once more. As he swims to land, he is swallowed by the Terrible Shark.

Down into the sea, deeper and deeper, sank Pinocchio, and finally, after fifty minutes of waiting, the man on the cliff said to himself:

"By this time my poor little lame Donkey must be drowned. Up with him and then I can get to work on my beautiful drum."

He pulled the rope which he had tied to Pinocchio's leg--pulled and pulled and pulled and, at last, he saw appear on the surface of the water-- Can you guess what? Instead of a dead donkey, he saw a very much alive Marionette, wriggling and squirming like an eel.

Seeing that wooden Marionette, the poor man thought he was dreaming and sat there with his mouth wide open and his eyes popping out of his head.

Gathering his wits together, he said:

"And the Donkey I threw into the sea?"

"I am that Donkey," answered the Marionette laughing.

"You?"

"I."

"Ah, you little cheat! Are you poking fun at me?"

"Poking fun at you? Not at all, dear Master. I am talking seriously."

"But, then, how is it that you, who a few minutes ago were a donkey, are now standing before me a wooden Marionette?"

"It may be the effect of salt water. The sea is fond of playing these tricks."

"Be careful, Marionette, be careful! Don't laugh at me! Woe be to you, if I lose my patience!"

"Well, then, my Master, do you want to know my whole story? Untie my leg and I can tell it to you better."

The old fellow, curious to know the true story of the Marionette's life, immediately untied the rope which held his foot. Pinocchio, feeling free as a bird of the air, began his tale:

"Know, then, that, once upon a time, I was a wooden Marionette, just as I am today. One day I was about to become a boy, a real boy, but on account of my laziness and my hatred of books, and because I listened to bad companions, I ran away from home. One beautiful morning, I awoke to find myself changed into a donkey--long ears, gray coat, even a tail! What a shameful day for me! I hope you will never experience one like it, dear Master. I was taken to the fair and sold to a Circus Owner, who tried to make me dance and jump through the rings. One night, during a performance, I had a bad fall and became lame. Not knowing what to do with a lame donkey, the Circus Owner sent me to the market place and you bought me."

"Indeed I did! And I paid four cents for you. Now who will return my money to me?"

"But why did you buy me? You bought me to do me harm--to kill me--to make a drumhead out of me!"

"Indeed I did! And now where shall I find another skin?"

"Never mind, dear Master. There are so many donkeys in this world."

"Tell me, impudent little rogue, does your story end here?"

"One more word," answered the Marionette, "and I am through. After buying me, you brought me here to kill me. But feeling sorry for me, you tied a stone to my neck and threw me to the bottom of the sea. That was very good and kind of you to want me to suffer as little as possible and I

shall remember you always. And now my Fairy will take care of me, even if you--"

"Your Fairy? Who is she?"

"She is my mother, and, like all other mothers who love their children, she never loses sight of me, even though I do not deserve it. And today this good Fairy of mine, as soon as she saw me in danger of drowning, sent a thousand fishes to the spot where I lay. They thought I was really a dead donkey and began to eat me. What great bites they took! One ate my ears, another my nose, a third my neck and my mane. Some went at my legs and some at my back, and among the others, there was one tiny fish so gentle and polite that he did me the great favor of eating even my tail."

"From now on," said the man, horrified, "I swear I shall never again taste fish. How I should enjoy opening a mullet or a whitefish just to find there the tail of a dead donkey!"

"I think as you do," answered the Marionette, laughing. "Still, you must know that when the fish finished eating my donkey coat, which covered me from head to foot, they naturally came to the bones--or rather, in my case, to the wood, for as you know, I am made of very hard wood. After the first few bites, those greedy fish found out that the wood was not good for their teeth, and, afraid of indigestion, they turned and ran here and there without saying good-bye or even as much as thank you to me. Here, dear Master, you have my story. You know now why you found a Marionette and not a dead donkey when you pulled me out of the water."

"I laugh at your story!" cried the man angrily. "I know that I spent four cents to get you and I want my money back. Do you know what I can do; I am going to take you to the market once more and sell you as dry firewood."

"Very well, sell me. I am satisfied," said Pinocchio. But as he spoke, he gave a quick leap and dived into the sea. Swimming away as fast as he could, he cried out, laughing:

"Good-bye, Master. If you ever need a skin for your drum, remember me."

He swam on and on. After a while, he turned around again and called louder than before:

"Good-by, Master. If you ever need a piece of good dry firewood, remember me."

In a few seconds he had gone so far he could hardly be seen. All that could be seen of him was a very small black dot moving swiftly on the blue surface of the water, a little black dot which now and then lifted a leg or an arm in the air. One would have thought that Pinocchio had turned into a porpoise playing in the sun.

After swimming for a long time, Pinocchio saw a large rock in the middle of the sea, a rock as white as marble. High on the rock stood a little Goat bleating and calling and beckoning to the Marionette to come to her.

There was something very strange about that little Goat. Her coat was not white or black or brown as that of any other goat, but azure, a deep brilliant color that reminded one of the hair of the lovely maiden.

Pinocchio's heart beat fast, and then faster and faster. He redoubled his efforts and swam as hard as he could toward the white rock. He was almost halfway over, when suddenly a horrible sea monster stuck its head out of the water, an enormous head with a huge mouth, wide open, showing three rows of gleaming teeth, the mere sight of which would have filled you with fear.

Do you know what it was?

That sea monster was no other than the enormous Shark, which has often been mentioned in this story and which, on account of its cruelty, had been nicknamed "The Attila of the Sea" by both fish and fishermen.

Poor Pinocchio! The sight of that monster frightened him almost to death! He tried to swim away from him, to change his path, to escape, but that immense mouth kept coming nearer and nearer.

"Hasten, Pinocchio, I beg you!" bleated the little Goat on the high rock.

And Pinocchio swam desperately with his arms, his body, his legs, his feet.

"Quick, Pinocchio, the monster is coming nearer!"

Pinocchio swam faster and faster, and harder and harder.

"Faster, Pinocchio! The monster will get you! There he is! There he is! Quick, quick, or you are lost!"

Pinocchio went through the water like a shot--swifter and swifter. He came close to the rock. The Goat leaned over and gave him one of her hoofs to help him up out of the water.

Alas! It was too late. The monster overtook him and the Marionette found himself in between the rows of gleaming white teeth. Only for a moment, however, for the Shark took a deep breath and, as he breathed, he drank in the Marionette as easily as he would have sucked an egg. Then he swallowed him so fast that Pinocchio, falling down into the body of the fish, lay stunned for a half hour.

When he recovered his senses the Marionette could not remember where he was. Around him all was darkness, a darkness so deep and so black that for a moment he thought he had put his head into an inkwell. He listened for a few moments and heard nothing. Once in a while a cold wind blew on his face. At first he could not understand where that wind was coming from, but after a while he understood that it came from the lungs of the monster. I forgot to tell you that the Shark was suffering from asthma, so that whenever he breathed a storm seemed to blow.

Pinocchio at first tried to be brave, but as soon as he became convinced that he was really and truly in the Shark's stomach, he burst into sobs and tears. "Help! Help!" he cried. "Oh, poor me! Won't someone come to save me?"

"Who is there to help you, unhappy boy?" said a rough voice, like a guitar out of tune.

"Who is talking?" asked Pinocchio, frozen with terror.

"It is I, a poor Tunny swallowed by the Shark at the same time as you. And what kind of a fish are you?"

"I have nothing to do with fishes. I am a Marionette."

"If you are not a fish, why did you let this monster swallow you?"

"I didn't let him. He chased me and swallowed me without even a `by your leave'! And now what are we to do here in the dark?"

"Wait until the Shark has digested us both, I suppose."

"But I don't want to be digested," shouted Pinocchio, starting to sob.

"Neither do I," said the Tunny, "but I am wise enough to think that if one is born a fish, it is more dignified to die under the water than in the frying pan."

"What nonsense!" cried Pinocchio.

"Mine is an opinion," replied the Tunny, "and opinions should be respected."

"But I want to get out of this place. I want to escape."

"Go, if you can!"

"Is this Shark that has swallowed us very long?" asked the Marionette.

"His body, not counting the tail, is almost a mile long."

While talking in the darkness, Pinocchio thought he saw a faint light in the distance.

"What can that be?" he said to the Tunny.

"Some other poor fish, waiting as patiently as we to be digested by the Shark."

"I want to see him. He may be an old fish and may know some way of escape."

"I wish you all good luck, dear Marionette."

"Good-by, Tunny."

"Good-by, Marionette, and good luck."

"When shall I see you again?"

"Who knows? It is better not to think about it."

Chapter 35

In the Shark's body Pinocchio finds whom? Read this chapter, my children, and you will know.

Pinocchio, as soon as he had said good-by to his good friend, the Tunny, tottered away in the darkness and began to walk as well as he could toward the faint light which glowed in the distance.

As he walked his feet splashed in a pool of greasy and slippery water, which had such a heavy smell of fish fried in oil that Pinocchio thought it was Lent.

The farther on he went, the brighter and clearer grew the tiny light. On and on he walked till finally he found --I give you a thousand guesses, my dear children! He found a little table set for dinner and lighted by a candle stuck in a glass bottle; and near the table sat a little old man, white as the snow, eating live fish. They wriggled so that, now and again, one of them slipped out of the old man's mouth and escaped into the darkness under the table.

At this sight, the poor Marionette was filled with such great and sudden happiness that he almost dropped in a faint. He wanted to laugh, he wanted to cry, he wanted to say a thousand and one things, but all he could do was to stand still, stuttering and stammering brokenly. At last, with a great effort, he was able to let out a scream of joy and, opening wide his arms he threw them around the old man's neck.

"Oh, Father, dear Father! Have I found you at last? Now I shall never, never leave you again!"

"Are my eyes really telling me the truth?" answered the old man, rubbing his eyes. "Are you really my own dear Pinocchio?"

"Yes, yes, yes! It is I! Look at me! And you have forgiven me, haven't you? Oh, my dear Father, how good you are! And to think that I--Oh, but if you only knew how many misfortunes have fallen on my head and how many troubles I have had! Just think that on the day you sold your old coat to buy me my A-B-C book so that I could go to school, I ran away to the Marionette Theater and the proprietor caught me and wanted to burn me to cook his roast lamb! He was the one who gave me the five gold pieces for you, but I met the Fox and the Cat, who took me to the Inn of the Red Lobster. There they ate like wolves and I left the Inn alone and I

met the Assassins in the wood. I ran and they ran after me, always after me, till they hanged me to the branch of a giant oak tree. Then the Fairy of the Azure Hair sent the coach to rescue me and the doctors, after looking at me, said, 'If he is not dead, then he is surely alive,' and then I told a lie and my nose began to grow. It grew and it grew, till I couldn't get it through the door of the room. And then I went with the Fox and the Cat to the Field of Wonders to bury the gold pieces. The Parrot laughed at me and, instead of two thousand gold pieces, I found none. When the Judge heard I had been robbed, he sent me to

jail to make the thieves happy; and when I came away I saw a fine bunch of grapes hanging on a vine. The trap caught me and the Farmer put a collar on me and made me a watchdog. He found out I was innocent when I caught the Weasels and he let me go. The Serpent with the tail that smoked started to laugh and a vein in his chest broke and so I went back to the Fairy's house. She was dead, and the Pigeon, seeing me crying, said to me, 'I have seen your father building a boat to look for you in America,' and I said to him, 'Oh, if I only had wings!' and he said to me, 'Do you want to go to your father?' and I said, 'Perhaps, but how?' and he said, 'Get on my back. I'll take you there.' We flew all night long, and next morning the fishermen were looking toward the sea, crying, 'There is a poor little man drowning,' and I knew it was you, because my heart told me so and I waved to you from the shore--"

"I knew you also," put in Geppetto, "and I wanted to go to you; but how could I? The sea was rough and the whitecaps overturned the boat. Then a Terrible Shark came up out of the sea and, as soon as he saw me in the water, swam quickly toward me, put out his tongue, and swallowed me as easily as if I had been a chocolate peppermint."

"And how long have you been shut away in here?"

"From that day to this, two long weary years--two years, my Pinocchio, which have been like two centuries."

"And how have you lived? Where did you find the candle? And the matches with which to light it--where did you get them?"

"You must know that, in the storm which swamped my boat, a large ship also suffered the same fate. The sailors were all saved, but the ship went

right to the bottom of the sea, and the same Terrible Shark that swallowed me, swallowed most of it."

"What! Swallowed a ship?" asked Pinocchio in astonishment.

"At one gulp. The only thing he spat out was the main- mast, for it stuck in his teeth. To my own good luck, that ship was loaded with meat, preserved foods, crackers, bread, bottles of wine, raisins, cheese, coffee, sugar, wax candles, and boxes of matches. With all these blessings, I have been able to live happily on for two whole years, but now I am at the very last crumbs. Today there is nothing left in the cupboard, and this candle you see here is the last one I have."

"And then?"

"And then, my dear, we'll find ourselves in darkness."

"Then, my dear Father," said Pinocchio, "there is no time to lose. We must try to escape."

"Escape! How?"

"We can run out of the Shark's mouth and dive into the sea."

"You speak well, but I cannot swim, my dear Pinocchio."

"Why should that matter? You can climb on my shoulders and I, who am a fine swimmer, will carry you safely to the shore."

"Dreams, my boy!" answered Geppetto, shaking his head and smiling sadly. "Do you think it possible for a Marionette, a yard high, to have the strength to carry me on his shoulders and swim?"

"Try it and see! And in any case, if it is written that we must die, we shall at least die together."

Not adding another word, Pinocchio took the candle in his hand and going ahead to light the way, he said to his father:

"Follow me and have no fear."

They walked a long distance through the stomach and the whole body of the Shark. When they reached the throat of the monster, they stopped for a while to wait for the right moment in which to make their escape.

I want you to know that the Shark, being very old and suffering from asthma and heart trouble, was obliged to sleep with his mouth open. Because of this, Pinocchio was able to catch a glimpse of the sky filled with stars, as he looked up through the open jaws of his new home.

"The time has come for us to escape," he whispered, turning to his father. "The Shark is fast asleep. The sea is calm and the night is as bright as day. Follow me closely, dear Father, and we shall soon be saved."

No sooner said than done. They climbed up the throat of the monster till they came to that immense open mouth. There they had to walk on tiptoes, for if they tickled the Shark's long tongue he might awaken--and where would they be then? The tongue was so wide and so long that it looked like a country road. The two fugitives were just about to dive into the sea when the Shark sneezed very suddenly and, as he sneezed, he gave Pinocchio and Geppetto such a jolt that they found themselves thrown on their backs and dashed once more and very unceremoniously into the stomach of the monster.

To make matters worse, the candle went out and father and son were left in the dark.

"And now?" asked Pinocchio with a serious face.

"Now we are lost."

"Why lost? Give me your hand, dear Father, and be careful not to slip!"

"Where will you take me?"

"We must try again. Come with me and don't be afraid."

With these words Pinocchio took his father by the hand and, always walking on tiptoes, they climbed up the monster's throat for a second time. They then crossed the whole tongue and jumped over three rows of teeth. But before they took the last great leap, the Marionette said to his father:

"Climb on my back and hold on tightly to my neck. I'll take care of everything else."

As soon as Geppetto was comfortably seated on his shoulders, Pinocchio, very sure of what he was doing, dived into the water and started to swim. The sea was like oil, the moon shone in all splendor, and the Shark continued to sleep so soundly that not even a cannon shot would have awakened him.

Chapter 36

Pinocchio finally ceases to be a Marionette and becomes a boy.

"My dear Father, we are saved!" cried the Marionette. "All we have to do now is to get to the shore, and that is easy."

Without another word, he swam swiftly away in an effort to reach land as soon as possible. All at once he noticed that Geppetto was shivering and shaking as if with a high fever.

Was he shivering from fear or from cold? Who knows? Perhaps a little of both. But Pinocchio, thinking his father was frightened, tried to comfort him by saying:

"Courage, Father! In a few moments we shall be safe on land."

"But where is that blessed shore?" asked the little old man, more and more worried as he tried to pierce the faraway shadows. "Here I am searching on all sides and I see nothing but sea and sky."

"I see the shore," said the Marionette. "Remember, Father, that I am like a cat. I see better at night than by day."

Poor Pinocchio pretended to be peaceful and contented, but he was far from that. He was beginning to feel discouraged, his strength was leaving him, and his breathing was becoming more and more labored. He felt he could not go on much longer, and the shore was still far away.

He swam a few more strokes. Then he turned to Geppetto and cried out weakly:

"Help me, Father! Help, for I am dying!"

Father and son were really about to drown when they heard a voice like a guitar out of tune call from the sea:

"What is the trouble?"

"It is I and my poor father."

"I know the voice. You are Pinocchio."

"Exactly. And you?"

"I am the Tunny, your companion in the Shark's stomach."

"And how did you escape?"

"I imitated your example. You are the one who showed me the way and after you went, I followed."

"Tunny, you arrived at the right moment! I implore you, for the love you bear your children, the little Tunnies, to help us, or we are lost!"

"With great pleasure indeed. Hang onto my tail, both of you, and let me lead you. In a twinkling you will be safe on land."

Geppetto and Pinocchio, as you can easily imagine, did not refuse the invitation; indeed, instead of hanging onto the tail, they thought it better to climb on the Tunny's back.

"Are we too heavy?" asked Pinocchio.

"Heavy? Not in the least. You are as light as sea-shells," answered the Tunny, who was as large as a two-year-old horse.

As soon as they reached the shore, Pinocchio was the first to jump to the ground to help his old father. Then he turned to the fish and said to him:

"Dear friend, you have saved my father, and I have not enough words with which to thank you! Allow me to embrace you as a sign of my eternal gratitude."

The Tunny stuck his nose out of the water and Pinocchio knelt on the sand and kissed him most affectionately on his cheek. At this warm greeting, the poor Tunny, who was not used to such tenderness, wept like

a child. He felt so embarrassed and ashamed that he turned quickly, plunged into the sea, and disappeared.

In the meantime day had dawned.

Pinocchio offered his arm to Geppetto, who was so weak he could hardly stand, and said to him:

"Lean on my arm, dear Father, and let us go. We will walk very, very slowly, and if we feel tired we can rest by the wayside."

"And where are we going?" asked Geppetto.

"To look for a house or a hut, where they will be kind enough to give us a bite of bread and a bit of straw to sleep on."

They had not taken a hundred steps when they saw two rough-looking individuals sitting on a stone begging for alms.

It was the Fox and the Cat, but one could hardly recognize them, they looked so miserable. The Cat, after pretending to be blind for so many years had really lost the sight of both eyes. And the Fox, old, thin, and almost hairless, had even lost his tail. That sly thief had fallen into deepest poverty, and one day he had been forced to sell his beautiful tail for a bite to eat.

"Oh, Pinocchio," he cried in a tearful voice. "Give us some alms, we beg of you! We are old, tired, and sick."

"Sick!" repeated the Cat.

"Addio, false friends!" answered the Marionette. "You cheated me once, but you will never catch me again."

"Believe us! Today we are truly poor and starving."

"Starving!" repeated the Cat.

"If you are poor; you deserve it! Remember the old proverb which says: 'Stolen money never bears fruit.' Addio, false friends."

"Have mercy on us!"

"On us."

"Addio, false friends. Remember the old proverb which says: `Bad wheat always makes poor bread!'"

"Do not abandon us."

"Abandon us," repeated the Cat.

"Addio, false friends. Remember the old proverb: `Whoever steals his neighbor's shirt, usually dies without his own.'"

Waving good-by to them, Pinocchio and Geppetto calmly went on their way. After a few more steps, they saw, at the end of a long road near a clump of trees, a tiny cottage built of straw.

"Someone must live in that little hut," said Pinocchio. "Let us see for ourselves."

They went and knocked at the door.

"Who is it?" said a little voice from within.

"A poor father and a poorer son, without food and with no roof to cover them," answered the Marionette.

"Turn the key and the door will open," said the same little voice.

Pinocchio turned the key and the door opened. As soon as they went in, they looked here and there and everywhere but saw no one.

"Oh--ho, where is the owner of the hut?" cried Pinocchio, very much surprised.

"Here I am, up here!"

Father and son looked up to the ceiling, and there on a beam sat the Talking Cricket.

"Oh, my dear Cricket," said Pinocchio, bowing politely.

"Oh, now you call me your dear Cricket, but do you remember when you threw your hammer at me to kill me?"

"You are right, dear Cricket. Throw a hammer at me now. I deserve it! But spare my poor old father."

"I am going to spare both the father and the son. I have only wanted to remind you of the trick you long ago played upon me, to teach you that in this world of ours we must be kind and courteous to others, if we want to find kindness and courtesy in our own days of trouble."

"You are right, little Cricket, you are more than right, and I shall remember the lesson you have taught me. But will you tell how you succeeded in buying this pretty little cottage?"

"This cottage was given to me yesterday by a little Goat with blue hair."

"And where did the Goat go?" asked Pinocchio.

"I don't know."

"And when will she come back?"

"She will never come back. Yesterday she went away bleating sadly, and it seemed to me she said: `Poor Pinocchio, I shall never see him again. . .the Shark must have eaten him by this time.'"

"Were those her real words? Then it was she--it was-- my dear little Fairy," cried out Pinocchio, sobbing bitterly. After he had cried a long time, he wiped his eyes and then he made a bed of straw for old Geppetto. He laid him on it and said to the Talking Cricket:

"Tell me, little Cricket, where shall I find a glass of milk for my poor Father?"

"Three fields away from here lives Farmer John. He has some cows. Go there and he will give you what you want."

Pinocchio ran all the way to Farmer John's house. The Farmer said to him:

"How much milk do you want?"

"I want a full glass."

"A full glass costs a penny. First give me the penny."

"I have no penny," answered Pinocchio, sad and ashamed.

"Very bad, my Marionette," answered the Farmer, "very bad. If you have no penny, I have no milk."

"Too bad," said Pinocchio and started to go.

"Wait a moment," said Farmer John. "Perhaps we can come to terms. Do you know how to draw water from a well?"

"I can try."

"Then go to that well you see yonder and draw one hundred bucketfuls of water."

"Very well."

"After you have finished, I shall give you a glass of warm sweet milk."

"I am satisfied."

Farmer John took the Marionette to the well and showed him how to draw the water. Pinocchio set to work as well as he knew how, but long before he had pulled up the one hundred buckets, he was tired out and dripping with perspiration. He had never worked so hard in his life.

"Until today," said the Farmer, "my donkey has drawn the water for me, but now that poor animal is dying."

"Will you take me to see him?" said Pinocchio.

"Gladly."

As soon as Pinocchio went into the stable, he spied a little Donkey lying on a bed of straw in the corner of the stable. He was worn out from hunger and too much work. After looking at him a long time, he said to himself: "I know that Donkey! I have seen him before."

And bending low over him, he asked: "Who are you?"

At this question, the Donkey opened weary, dying eyes and answered in the same tongue: "I am Lamp-Wick."

Then he closed his eyes and died.

"Oh, my poor Lamp-Wick," said Pinocchio in a faint voice, as he wiped his eyes with some straw he had picked up from the ground.

"Do you feel so sorry for a little donkey that has cost you nothing?" said the Farmer. "What should I do--I, who have paid my good money for him?"

"But, you see, he was my friend."

"Your friend?"

"A classmate of mine."

"What," shouted Farmer John, bursting out laughing. "What! You had donkeys in your school? How you must have studied!"

The Marionette, ashamed and hurt by those words, did not answer, but taking his glass of milk returned to his father.

From that day on, for more than five months, Pinocchio got up every morning just as dawn was breaking and went to the farm to draw water. And every day he was given a glass of warm milk for his poor old father, who grew stronger and better day by day. But he was not satisfied with this. He learned to make baskets of reeds and sold them. With the money he received, he and his father were able to keep from starving.

Among other things, he built a rolling chair, strong and comfortable, to take his old father out for an airing on bright, sunny days.

In the evening the Marionette studied by lamplight. With some of the money he had earned, he bought himself a secondhand volume that had a few pages missing, and with that he learned to read in a very short time. As far as writing was concerned, he used a long stick at one end of which he had whittled a long, fine point. Ink he had none, so he used the juice of blackberries or cherries. Little by little his diligence was rewarded. He succeeded, not only in his studies, but also in his work, and a day came when he put enough money together to keep his old father comfortable and happy. Besides this, he was able to save the great amount of fifty pennies. With it he wanted to buy himself a new suit.

One day he said to his father:

"I am going to the market place to buy myself a coat, a cap, and a pair of shoes. When I come back I'll be so dressed up, you will think I am a rich man."

He ran out of the house and up the road to the village, laughing and singing. Suddenly he heard his name called, and looking around to see whence the voice came, he noticed a large snail crawling out of some bushes.

"Don't you recognize me?" said the Snail.

"Yes and no."

"Do you remember the Snail that lived with the Fairy with Azure Hair? Do you not remember how she opened the door for you one night and gave you something to eat?"

"I remember everything," cried Pinocchio. "Answer me quickly, pretty Snail, where have you left my Fairy? What is she doing? Has she forgiven me? Does she remember me? Does she still love me? Is she very far away from here? May I see her?"

At all these questions, tumbling out one after another, the Snail answered, calm as ever:

"My dear Pinocchio, the Fairy is lying ill in a hospital."

"In a hospital?"

"Yes, indeed. She has been stricken with trouble and illness, and she hasn't a penny left with which to buy a bite of bread."

"Really? Oh, how sorry I am! My poor, dear little Fairy! If I had a million I should run to her with it! But I have only fifty pennies. Here they are. I was just going to buy some clothes. Here, take them, little Snail, and give them to my good Fairy."

"What about the new clothes?"

"What does that matter? I should like to sell these rags I have on to help her more. Go, and hurry. Come back here within a couple of days and I hope to have more money for you! Until today I have worked for my father. Now I shall have to work for my mother also. Good-by, and I hope to see you soon."

The Snail, much against her usual habit, began to run like a lizard under a summer sun.

When Pinocchio returned home, his father asked him:

"And where is the new suit?"

"I couldn't find one to fit me. I shall have to look again some other day."

That night, Pinocchio, instead of going to bed at ten o'clock waited until midnight, and instead of making eight baskets, he made sixteen.

After that he went to bed and fell asleep. As he slept, he dreamed of his Fairy, beautiful, smiling, and happy, who kissed him and said to him, "Bravo, Pinocchio! In reward for your kind heart, I forgive you for all your old mischief. Boys who love and take good care of their

parents when they are old and sick, deserve praise even though they may not be held up as models of obedience and good behavior. Keep on doing so well, and you will be happy."

At that very moment, Pinocchio awoke and opened wide his eyes.

What was his surprise and his joy when, on looking himself over, he saw that he was no longer a Marionette, but that he had become a real live boy! He looked all about him and instead of the usual walls of straw, he found himself in a beautifully furnished little room, the prettiest he had ever seen. In a twinkling, he jumped down from his bed to look on the chair standing near. There, he found a new suit, a new hat, and a pair of shoes.

As soon as he was dressed, he put his hands in his pockets and pulled out a little leather purse on which were written the following words:

The Fairy with Azure Hair returns fifty pennies to her dear Pinocchio with many thanks for his kind heart.

The Marionette opened the purse to find the money, and behold--there were fifty gold coins!

Pinocchio ran to the mirror. He hardly recognized himself. The bright face of a tall boy looked at him with wide-awake blue eyes, dark brown hair and happy, smiling lips.

Surrounded by so much splendor, the Marionette hardly knew what he was doing. He rubbed his eyes two or three times, wondering if he were still asleep or awake and decided he must be awake.

"And where is Father?" he cried suddenly. He ran into the next room, and there stood Geppetto, grown years younger overnight, spick and span in his new clothes and gay as a lark in the morning. He was once more Mastro Geppetto, the wood carver, hard at work on a lovely picture frame, decorating it with flowers and leaves, and heads of animals.

"Father, Father, what has happened? Tell me if you can," cried Pinocchio, as he ran and jumped on his Father's neck.

"This sudden change in our house is all your doing, my dear Pinocchio," answered Geppetto.

"What have I to do with it?"

"Just this. When bad boys become good and kind, they have the power of making their homes gay and new with happiness."

"I wonder where the old Pinocchio of wood has hidden himself?"

"There he is," answered Geppetto. And he pointed to a large Marionette leaning against a chair, head turned to one side, arms hanging limp, and legs twisted under him.

After a long, long look, Pinocchio said to himself with great content:

"How ridiculous I was as a Marionette! And how happy I am, now that I have become a real boy!"