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PINOCCHIO

Once upon a time, there was a carpenter named Geppetto who lived in a small and humble house. He was a kind, hardworking, and loving man. Even though he sometimes felt lonely, he always tried to smile and keep going.

One day, Geppetto found a very special piece of wood. When he touched it, he felt it was not like the others.

—I will make a puppet from this wood, he said happily. —It will be the finest one of all.

So he began to work very carefully. He carved the head, the arms, the legs, and the feet. Little by little, the puppet began to take shape.

—I will call you Pinocchio, said Geppetto with a big smile.

But as soon as he finished making him, something surprising happened. The puppet opened his eyes, moved his hands, and took a few little jumps.

—I'm alive! cried Pinocchio joyfully.

Geppetto could hardly believe what he was seeing.

—What a wonder! he exclaimed. —Now I will not be alone.

From that day on, Geppetto loved Pinocchio as if he were his own son. He spoke to him kindly, taught him a few things, and dreamed that one day he would become a good and responsible boy.

The next morning, Geppetto said:

—Pinocchio, you must go to school to learn how to read, write, and count.

Pinocchio nodded.

—Yes, Father Geppetto, he answered. —I will go to school and be very good.

Geppetto was so happy that he sold his old coat to buy Pinocchio a schoolbook. Then he gave it to him with great love.

—Take good care of it, he said. —It is for you to learn many things.

—Thank you, Father, answered Pinocchio, hugging him.

Pinocchio set off happily on his way to school. But along the road, he heard music, laughter, and applause. Very close by, there was a puppet theater.

—I will only look for a moment, he said to himself.

When he went inside, Pinocchio was amazed. There were lights, songs, and puppets dancing all around. He forgot about school, and he also forgot about the book Geppetto had bought for him with so much sacrifice.

The owner of the theater saw Pinocchio and was surprised.

—What a special puppet! he said. —Come, step onto the stage.

Without thinking too much, Pinocchio began to dance and move with the other puppets. The audience clapped happily, but this

was not the right thing to do. Pinocchio had forgotten his promise.

That night, while he was alone, a good fairy dressed in blue appeared. Her voice was soft and calm.

—Pinocchio, she said. —Geppetto loves you very much. Did you go to school today?

Pinocchio lowered his head, but instead of telling the truth, he answered:

—Yes, I went to school.

At that very moment, his nose began to grow.

Pinocchio opened his eyes wide.

—What is happening? he asked in fear.

The Blue Fairy looked at him gently.

—Every time you tell a lie, your nose grows.

Pinocchio touched his nose and became very nervous.

—I am sorry, he said. —I did not go to school. I stopped at the theater.

Then the fairy smiled a little.

—Telling the truth, even when it is hard, is always better.

Pinocchio felt ashamed, but he also understood that he had done wrong.

—I promise I will behave better, he said.

The fairy waved her wand, and Pinocchio's nose became small again.

—You must learn to be honest, obedient, and kind, she explained.

—If you do, one day you may become a real boy.

Pinocchio felt excited.

—Can I truly become a real boy? he asked.

—Yes, answered the fairy. —But first you must show that you have a good heart.

The next day, Pinocchio tried to do the right thing. Still, he was very curious, and sometimes he was easily tricked. More than once, he got into trouble because he did not listen to good advice.

One day, Pinocchio learned that Geppetto had gone out looking for him because he was very worried.

—I must find Father Geppetto, said Pinocchio sadly. —He has always taken care of me, and I have caused him so much worry.

So began a long journey. Pinocchio walked through many places, asked many people, and did not give up. He wanted to find Geppetto and ask for forgiveness.

After searching for a long time, Pinocchio discovered that Geppetto was trapped inside a huge whale in the sea. Without thinking twice, the little puppet jumped into the water.

—I'm coming to save you, Father! he shouted bravely.

Inside the whale, in a dark and silent place, Geppetto was sad and tired. But suddenly he heard a familiar voice.

—Father Geppetto!

Geppetto lifted his head and saw Pinocchio running toward him.

—Pinocchio! he cried with emotion. —You have come!

Pinocchio hugged him tightly.

—Yes, Father. I came to find you. I could not leave you alone.

Geppetto looked at him with tenderness.

—You have been very brave, my son.

Pinocchio quickly thought of a way to escape.

—We must get out of here, he said. —I have an idea.

They waited for the right moment, and when the whale opened its mouth, they escaped by swimming with all their strength. It was difficult, but at last they reached the shore safe and sound.

Geppetto was tired, so Pinocchio helped him walk and took care of him with great love. From that day on, the puppet truly began to change. He worked, helped at home, told the truth, and thought before acting.

One night, while he was sleeping, the Blue Fairy appeared again.

—Pinocchio, she said with a smile. —You have learned to be generous, brave, and truthful. You have shown that you have a good heart.

Pinocchio looked at her with hope.

—Then have I really changed? he asked.

—Yes, answered the fairy. —And for that reason, from today on, you will be a real boy.

A soft light filled the room. When Pinocchio opened his eyes, he was no longer a wooden puppet. Now he was a real boy.

Geppetto saw him and filled with joy.

—Pinocchio! he said with emotion. —My dear son!

Pinocchio smiled and hugged him tightly.

—Thank you for always loving me, Father.

From then on, Pinocchio and Geppetto lived very happily together. They never lacked love, and in that little house there was always hope, warmth, and smiles. Pinocchio never forgot how important it is to tell the truth, obey those who care for us, and act with a good heart.

THE END

