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opening extract from

the adventures of pinocchio

written by

carlo collodi

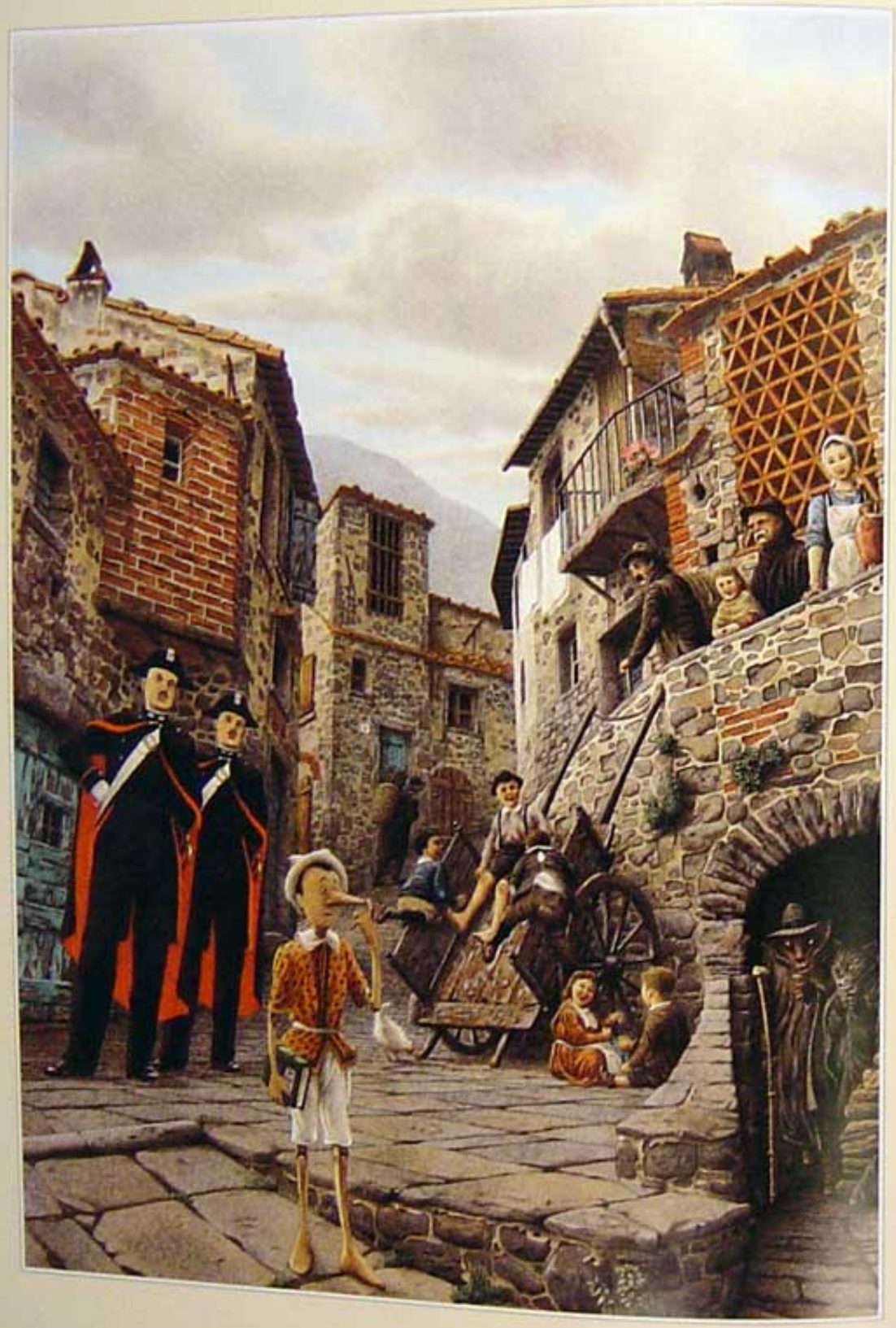
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The Adventures of PINOCCHIO

Carlo Collodi & Roberto Innocenti

DESIGNED BY RITA MARSHALL

A TOM MASCHLER BOOK

JONATHAN CAPE • LONDON

{ Chapter 1 }

Master Cherry finds a strange piece of wood

Once upon a time there was . . .

"A king!" you will say.

But you are wrong. Once upon a time there was a piece of wood.

This wood was not valuable; it was a common log just like those that are used for firewood in the winter.

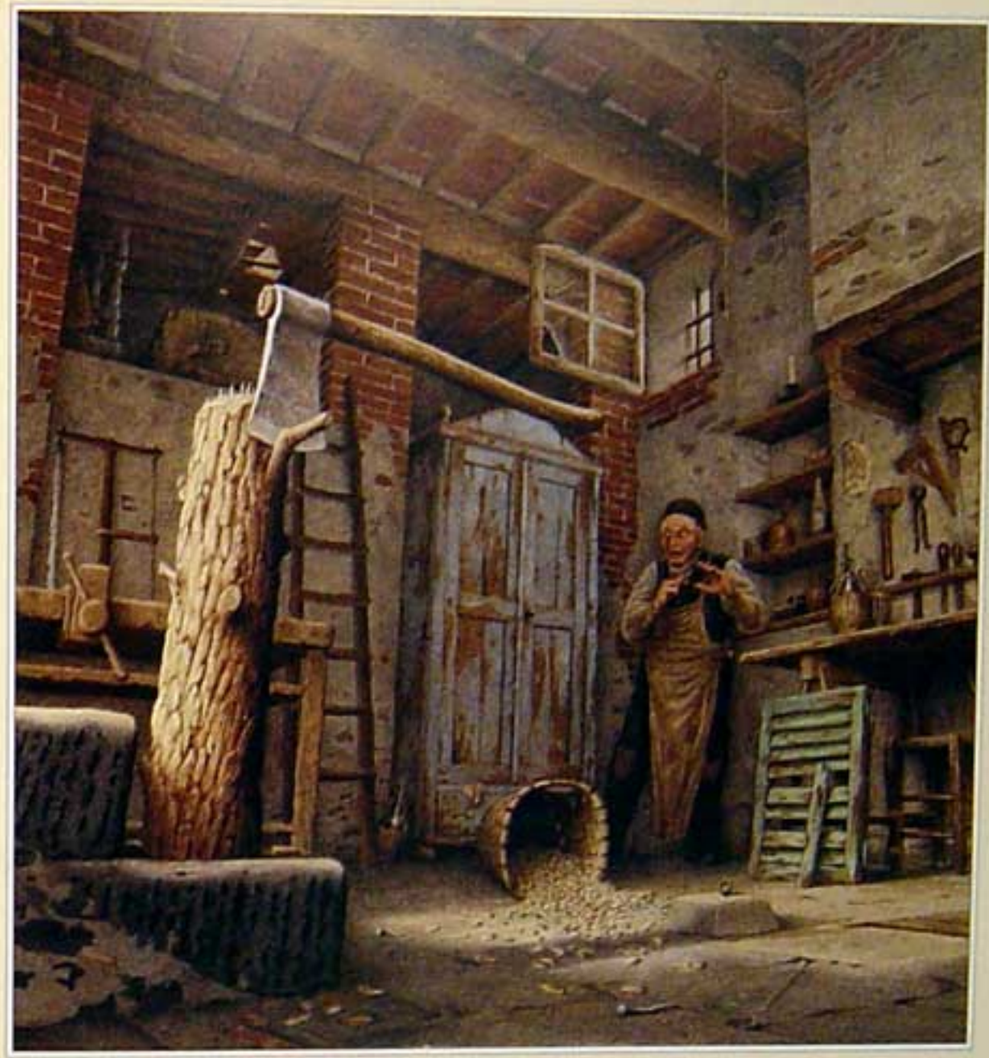
I cannot say how, but one day this piece of wood was found in the shop of an old carpenter called Master Antonio. But everybody called him Master Cherry because the end of his nose was always as red and shiny as a ripe cherry.

As soon as Master Cherry spotted the wood he beamed with delight and rubbing his hands together with satisfaction, he said, "This has come at just the right time – it will make the perfect leg for a little table."

Having said this, he picked up an axe to remove the bark and the rough surface with. But just as he was about to start, he heard a very small voice say, "Don't hit me!"

Master Cherry was astonished.

He looked around the room, terrified, to see whether he could see where the voice had come from, but there was nobody there! He looked under the bench – nobody; he looked into a cupboard that was always shut – nobody; he looked into a basket of wood shavings and sawdust – nobody; he even opened the door of the shop and



glanced into the street – and still nobody. But who could it be?

"I see," he said, laughing and scratching his wig. "The voice must have been my imagination."

He picked up the axe again and hit the piece of wood hard.

"Oh! Oh! Ouch!" cried the same little voice.

This time Master Cherry was petrified. His eyes and mouth widened with fright, and his tongue hung right out of his mouth. As soon as he could speak again, but still

stuttering and trembling with fear, he said, "But where on Earth can that little voice have come from? There's definitely nobody. Surely this piece of wood cannot cry like a child. I can't believe it. This piece of wood is just a log for fuel like all the others and it would only burn long enough to boil a pan of beans. So how can anyone be hidden inside it? And if anyone is inside, he will be in trouble. I'll show him!"

Master Cherry grabbed the piece of wood and started mercilessly beating it against the wall.

He stopped to listen for the little voice. He waited two minutes – nothing; five minutes – nothing; ten minutes – still nothing.

"I see," he said again, forcing himself to laugh as he adjusted his wig. "The little voice must have just been my imagination," he said as he started again.

But by this time, Master Cherry was quite frightened, so he tried to sing to give himself courage.

He put the axe down and picked up his plane to smooth and polish the wood. But as he ran it up and down, he heard the same little voice and this time it was laughing. "Stop it! You're tickling me!"

Poor Master Cherry fell down as if he had been struck by lightning and when he opened his eyes he realized he was lying on the floor.

His face was quite different. Even the end of his nose, instead of being bright red, as it usually was, had become blue from fright.

{ Chapter 2 }

Geppetto makes a wonderful puppet



t that moment, someone knocked on the door.

"Come in," said Master Cherry, too weak to get up.

A lively little old man walked into the shop. His name was Geppetto but all the local boys called him "Polendina," because his yellow wig looked just like the Indian corn pudding, polendina. It made Geppetto furious whenever he heard it.

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

"I am teaching the ants to read."

"I hope it does you good!"

"What brings you here, Geppetto?"

"My legs of course. But I have also come to ask you a favour."

"At your service," replied the carpenter, rising to his knees.

"This morning I had an idea."

"Let's hear it then."

"I thought I would make a beautiful wooden puppet – a wonderful dancing, singing puppet that could do tricks and acrobatics. With this puppet I would travel the world and earn my living. What do you think?"

"Well done, Polendina!" exclaimed the same little voice. But it was impossible to