

A Grim Tale

Pinocchio sat picking his nose.

As you can imagine, given his recent behaviour, this took some time. But he wasn't in any hurry. His adoptive mother Rapunzel, had left him a list of chores including cleaning up her stray hairs which went everywhere. As he dug deeper into his nose he realised that all the sawdust was falling onto the carpet, adding to the mess already there. Pinocchio sighed and reached for his friend Dyson, the miniature baby elephant. Dyson jumped forward and using his trunk, sucked up all the mess on the carpet in an instant.

Pinocchio was already bored and looked at the list. He had spent a whole week in school before deciding not to go back. He realised this might have been a mistake as the list just seemed to be a lot of squiggly lines, if only he knew how to read. But the horrific memory of the woodwork class still made him shudder.

In a rare moment of reflection, Pinocchio knew he should be doing more with his life. He stomped outside and felt the sunshine and the gentle breeze. The Hundred Acre wood seemed to be calling him, so he ran towards the group of trees, which didn't seem like a hundred acres but, as he had missed Geography and Maths, what did he know? He headed for the little bridge, hoping he would find friends there to play with. Poo and Piglet were usually there throwing sticks into the water. And Pinocchio always felt better when he saw Eeyore, who tended to mope about muttering about his mental health issues. But the bridge was deserted and the trees had started to laugh at him as the wind picked up and the sky darkened. Pinocchio preferred to avoid getting wet as he then always felt bloated and swollen.

Following the path, Pinocchio came across a small cottage he didn't remember seeing before. The door was open and he walked in. On the table were three bowls that appeared to be porridge and even though he preferred Rice Crispies, Pinocchio grabbed the largest bowl and devoured the contents.

Burping contentedly, Pinocchio settled into the big chair by the fire and fell asleep. He dreamt of his friends, in particular the three little pigs and the seven dwarfs, laughing and playing together. He became aware that the warmth of the fire was getting closer to him and he could feel the heat on his face. Alarmed, he opened his eyes and found himself staring into the face of a wolf whose hot breath had woken him.

'Hello my little friend. Do you want some company?'

'Oh yes that would be lovely.' said Pinocchio. 'I think there's some porridge left. We can hang out together until this bad weather goes away.'

'That's very kind of you.' said the wolf. 'But won't your parents be worried about you?'

'No. Nobody knows I'm here.'

The wolf smiled as he walked over to shut the door, which he also bolted.