

Pinocchio's disciplinary child care centre.

CHARACTERS:

PINOCCHIO (*male*)

GEPETTO (*male*)

PARENT (*male/female*)

HENRY/HENRIETTA (*male/female*)

PAUL/PAULINE (*male/female*)

STEVEN/STELLA (*male/female*)

SCENE 1:

Pinocchio's Disciplinary Child Care Centre, Morning

GEPETTO, an incredibly old man at this point in his life sits down yelling an advert for his son, PINOCCHIO, who is a young man with business plans.

GEPETTO: Do you have a naughty child who is driving you crazy? Do you want them to become brave, truthful and unselfish? Then come on over to ... right here. Pinocchio's disciplinary child care centre! (*Coughs a lot*) ugh, I'm getting too old for this sort of stuff.

A stressed out PARENT walks on stage with HENRY/HENRIETTA and PAUL/PAULINE.

PARENT: Hello, is this Pinocchio's child care centre?

GEPETTO: Disciplinary child care centre.

PARENT: Whatever. I would like you to teach my children to be honest, brave and unselfish.

GEPETTO: Sure.

HENRY: Can't we just go home, Dad. Please! Please!

PAUL: Dad, he won't stop complaining. Can you tell him to be quiet please!

HENRY: I'm not complaining, you just want dad to get angry at me. Dad, He's being mean.

PAUL: I am not. You're being mean and I'm being nice.

HENRY: No you're not. You're just pretending to be nice so you'll get a treat. Dad!

PAUL: Dad!

PARENT: Shut it!

Henry and Paul cower in the corner.

GEPETTO: So should I put you down for a full disciplinary day or would you like to split it up in to a three day programme?

PARENT: What's the difference?

GEPETTO: The difference is with the one day, it only takes one day for the full honesty, bravery and unselfishness experience but with the three days we split it up one attribute learned each day.

PARENT: Well I think I'll go with the one day package.

GEPETTO: Okay then that'll be \$500.

PARENT: Come again?

GEPETTO: Well it's a big thing teaching a child to be a good child in just one day.

PARENT: Well then I'll go for the three days.

GEPETTO: Okay, that'll be \$1500

PARENT: Excuse me?

GEPETTO: Well, it's three days, three times the price.

PARENT: Fine, I'll just go for the one day.

GEPETTO: Okay then, that will be \$700.

PARENT: But I thought it was \$500?

GEPETTO: Well, times are tough, you know. And the market can change at a moments notice.

PARENT: Fine, but they had better be the most honest, brave and unselfish kids ever.

Parent goes to write a cheque when Geppetto stops him/her.

GEPETTO: It's \$700 each.

Parent begrudgingly writes a cheque for more money.

GEPETTO: Yes, just make it out to Geppetto, that's G E double P E double T O

PARENT: There you go.

GEPETTO: Thank you very much. Hey Pinocchio!

Pinocchio and his assistant, STEVE, yell from offstage

PINOCCHIO: Hey Geppetto!

GEPETTO: There is a customer out here!

PINOCCHIO: okay, I'm coming. New Guy! Get over here.

STEVE: *(offstage)* I have a name you know.

Pinocchio walks on stage followed by Steve.

PINOCCHIO: Really?

STEVE: Yeah, it's Steve.

PINOCCHIO: No that's not Italian enough. I will call you, Stefan.

STEVE: But that's not my name that's-.

PINOCCHIO: Be quiet, Stefan. Hello, and what is your name?

PARENT: My name is-

PINOCCHIO: That's lovely. Where are the children?

HENRY: Here, you idiot.

PAUL: Come on Henry, don't be mean to Mr Pinocchio. Hello Mr Pinocchio,
my name is Paul and this is my brother Henry.

HENRY: Suck up.

PINOCCHIO: Well it's very nice to meet you Paul. You too Henry. I wouldn't worry about a thing, Mr/Mrs ...

PARENT: My name is

PINOCCHIO: That's lovely. See you in a few hours then.

PARENT: Okay, bye guys, be good for Mr Pinocchio.

Parent hugs the children and Pinocchio waits impatiently for them to finish.

PINOCCHIO: Whenever you're ready.

PARENT: Alright.

GEPPELTO: Would you like me to escort you outside?

PARENT: Sure.

Parent and Geppetto walk offstage

PARENT: Your son seems a little impatient, Geppetto.

GEPPELTO: Hey, the deal was for honesty, bravery and unselfishness. If you wanted patience you should've gone to sleeping beauty.

PINOCCHIO: Now kiddies, let's start by planning our day together. From 10:30 to 12 we will be getting exploited by a cat and a fox and then being caged by an Italian puppeteer.

STEVE: What?

PINOCCHIO: Hmm?

STEVE: What did you just say?

PINOCCHIO: I said we will be getting exploited by a cat and a fox and then get caged up by an Italian puppeteer.

STEVE: And why on earth would we do that?

PINOCCHIO: To teach the kids honesty.

HENRY: That sounds like a pretty dumb idea.

PINOCCHIO: Hey! That's how I was raised.

PAUL: Really Mr Pinocchio? Because that sounds a little silly.

PINOCCHIO: Well, how else do you think kids learn to be truthful?

STEVE: By first-hand experience of lying and it's consequences?

PINOCCHIO: Ha, and you thought my idea was silly.

PAUL: Actually, that sounds like a more logical approach.

HENRY: At least it's not as stupid as your idea.

PINOCCHIO: We'd better move it up to 10:15, these kids are already spewing with lies.

Steve looks puzzled for a second and goes to question that statement before Pinocchio interrupts him.

PINOCCHIO: Alright so we'll be escaping from the puppeteer with the help of the blue fairy around about 12:15 and then we'll be heading on over to pleasure island and getting turned into donkeys until about 1:30 or 2 o'clock depending on how long we take.

STEVE: Sorry, to stop you again but what the hell will getting turned into donkeys do?

PINOCCHIO: Teach them to be unselfish.

STEVE: How?

PINOCCHIO: Well, they indulge in things like eating unhealthy foods, playing rough games and smoking and-

STEVE: Smoking!

PINOCCHIO: Yes smoking, and then they get turned into donkeys proving that indulging on an overly excessive level will always turn you into a donkey.

STEVE: Hang on, can we just go back to that smoking bit, you do realise that smoking is terrible for your health. And should never be done by anybody, let alone a child.

PAUL: Yeah, Mr Pinocchio, Daddy says smoking is bad for you.

HENRY: No, filling your lungs with tar is always good for you.

PINOCCHIO: See, this kid knows what he's talking about!

HENRY: I was being sarcastic.

Pinocchio ignores Henry.

PINOCCHIO: When I was a boy back in 1940 something, all of the kids were smoking.

STEVE: Well we won't be doing anything of the sort.

PINOCCHIO: Fine, as long as we can get turned into donkeys it's all good.

STEVE: Yeah, about that.

PINOCCHIO: So after that we'll escape from pleasure island and head down to the beach to get eaten by a whale.

STEVE: Oh my- Are you aware of what comes out of your mouth.

PINOCCHIO: Oh, what now?

PAUL: Mr Pinocchio, I don't think it would be a good idea to ... You know.

HENRY: Get digested by a whale!

STEVE: Yeah, Pinocchio out of all of your ideas so far this one has to be the worst of all.

PINOCCHIO: I don't know what's wrong with you kids, the only way to become a good kid is to get swallowed by a whale.

STEVE: Geez man, don't you know about animal rights, and the dangers of drowning and ... You want them to get swallowed by a whale for crying out loud!

PINOCCHIO: I don't want them to get swallowed by a whale! They just need to be in it's mouth long enough to light a boat on fire and make him sneeze you out of his mouth.

STEVE: Is this really how you were raised?

PINOCCHIO: Of course! Going on any and every wilful urge you have and contradicting your conscience at every turn is the only way to become a good child! Oh my goodness I completely forgot! Do you kids have any talking crickets that you can carry with you? A beetle would work too.

PAUL: Don't bugs have germs Mr. Pinocchio?

HENRY: Bugs are gross. And they don't talk.

STEVE: Are you crazy or something? You want us to get caged by puppeteers, turned into donkeys and eaten by whales! And this will somehow teach them to be good children? How does this work in your mind?

PINOCCHIO: With the magic of Disney.

PAUL: Oh I like Disney!

STEVE: Okay, now no one is going to be doing any of those things!

PAUL: Not even like Disney?

STEVE: No you can like Disney.

PAUL: Yay!

PINOCCHIO: Hey, Why shouldn't they do that stuff ? It's an educational experience for children.

STEVE: It is life threatening, Pinocchio!

PINOCCHIO: What are you talking about, I got through it okay.

STEVE: You were made of wood back then. Your nose grew when you lied! You were a cartoon! Nothing bad ever happens in cartoons! You cannot expect the same principles to apply in real life, Pinocchio!

PINOCCHIO: Hey! This is my disciplinary child care centre and we are going to learn to be good children, my way! Now everybody drop your bags because we are going to get caged up, turned into donkeys and eaten by a whale because that's how I did it, and that's what works!

HENRY: But..

PINOCCHIO: No buts!

PAUL: But...

PINOCCHIO: Nup.

STEVE: But...

PINOCCHIO: I said no buts! Come on guys, you need to listen. Now you may get knotted together at one point during the caging but don't undo the knots because it will make sure you don't lose each other when we get eaten by the whale.

HENRY: But won't that make us unable to swim?

Pinocchio stares at Henry with a "you know what I'm going to say next stare"

PINOCCHIO: What did I say about those buts? Also don't question me. Now let's move it out people.

Pinocchio drags Paul and Henry off stage.

STEVE: Pinocchio! This is a terrible idea! Oh Damn it!

Steve hurriedly follows them offstage.

SCENE 2

Pinocchio's Disciplinary Child Care Centre, Evening

Geppetto sits in his office arguing with the children's Parent.

PARENT: Shouldn't they be back yet? I mean it's 3 o'clock now how long does it take to teach a child to be honest and brave and whatever else.

GEPETTO: Unselfish, and I wouldn't worry about a thing, Pinocchio's always been bad with timing, you should've seen him when he turned into a real boy. He took his bloody time with that let me tell you. Always a drama queen.

PARENT: Hey, I never really asked but how exactly does he teach them to be brave and all that?

GEPETTO: Well I don't know all the details but I know it involves getting eaten by a whale.

PARENT: A what?

Henry and Paul walk on stage somewhat traumatised, followed by a remorseful Steve and a confused Pinocchio.

HENRY: A whale!

PARENT: Henry! Paul!

PAUL: I have seen the inside of a whale's stomach. And I don't want to ever have to talk about it.

STEVE: Remind me again why we had to do that?

PINOCCHIO: I'm just wondering why he felt the need to swallow his food. I mean the last time I was in a whale we were just kept in this big cavern of a mouth and there was none of that digestive fluid or anything. Much more dangerous than I remember.

STEVE: You were in a cartoon then remember!

PINOCCHIO: That's right.

PARENT: Excuse me, did you get my children eaten by a whale?

PINOCCHIO: As a matter of fact I did.

PARENT: Don't say that like it's a good thing, because it is not a good thing.

PINOCCHIO: What? You wanted me to discipline your children didn't you?

PARENT: Yeah, discipline them not scare the hell out of them!

PINOCCHIO: There's a difference?

STEVE: Sorry, he's from the 1940's so his views are a little dated.

PARENT: I don't care how dated his views are, nobody lets children get eaten by a whale! I mean, how did they ... You know, get out.

PINOCCHIO: Well, I'll tell you one thing, it wasn't the way I came out last time. That was a new experience, let me tell you.

PARENT: Oh! Come on kids we are getting out of here right now!

HENRY: No need to be asked twice.

PAUL: Yeah, what he said.

Paul and Henry walk off stage.

PARENT: I just wanted my children to behave nicely.

GEPETTO: Well, if they ever misbehave again, just mention whale guts and I'm sure they'll do whatever you tell them.

Parent walks out outraged.

PINOCCHIO: Ah Geppetto, I think I'm going to quit the child care business.

STEVE: Well you bloody should. I think it would be better for you and every single child in existence. Why did you even get into the business in the first place?

PINOCCHIO: Because Stefan, I know that when I was young and made of wood I wasn't the most well behaved kid on the block.

GEPETTO: You can say that again, he gave me an ulcer every time he did just about anything.

PINOCCHIO: Thanks Geppetto, as I was saying, I was never a dream child.

GEPETTO: More of a nightmare child.

PINOCCHIO: Could I just tell my story please?

GEPETTO: Of course, of course. I'll just stay here and be an old man.

PINOCCHIO: Thank you. Now I was never very good when I was growing up, but because my father was a good man, a fairy came to bless him with a boy and she made sure that I was good, she was so dedicated to doing good things for others that she turned me, a mischievous, naïve little idiot, into a good boy. A real boy, someone who is deserving of the life that was given to them. And all I ever wanted to do was help other mischievous, naïve children become deserving of the life that was given to them.

STEVE: Wow, Pinocchio, that was really profound.

PINOCCHIO: By getting them eaten by whales.

STEVE: And now I'm leaving. Have fun with the inevitable law suit.

STEVE walks out. Not caring at all.

PINOCCHIO: What's his problem.

GEPETTO: No idea. *(Starts coughing violently)*

PINOCCHIO: Woah, Geppetto, are you alright?

GEPETTO: Oh yeah, I'm fine. Just a few things don't work as well as they used to, you know? *(goes to get up before his back cracks)* Oh, there goes my back.

PINOCCHIO: Just, out of curiosity, how old are you?

GEPETTO: Well, now let me see. I was about 60, and then, you gotta carry the 1 and oh. I must be something like 130 years old

PINOCCHIO: Wow, shouldn't you be, you know.

GEPETTO: What, Dead?

PINOCCHIO: Um, yeah.

GEPETTO: Ha, I was created by Disney, Disney is forever.

PINOCCHIO: *(laughs a bit)* See you tomorrow Geppetto.

GEPETTO: See you, Pinocchio.

PINOCCHIO exits the stage and GEPETTO walks off humming "when you wish upon a star"

THE END