



Out of Abaton, Book 1, The Wooden Prince

By John Claude Bemis



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The automa Pinocchio has always been duty-bound to serve in the floating palace of Venice's emperor. So when Pinocchio finds himself locked in a trunk and delivered to a new master—a wanted criminal and alchemist named Geppetto—he is curious about everything around him. But most curious is the way Pinocchio seems to be changing from a wooden servant into a living, human boy. Before Geppetto and Pinocchio can uncover the mystery surrounding the automa's transformation, Pinocchio is stolen away. Determined to find Geppetto again, Pinocchio begins a harrowing journey across the Empire, where danger in the form of half-beast outlaws and winged airmen abounds for a lost automa. Meanwhile, Princess Lazuli, the daughter of the ruler of a magical kingdom called Abaton, is also on a quest through the emperor's territory. Her father, Prester John, has been captured by the Venetian Empire, and Lazuli is desperate to rescue him. With the emperor's airmen closing in fast, Lazuli learns the only hope for saving her father—and her beloved home—lies in Pinocchio and Geppetto. In a masterful reimagining of Pinocchio, John Claude Bemis weaves an enchanting, thrilling adventure for middle-grade readers in the first installment in the Out of Abaton duology.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 3–7—Pinocchio has been locked in a trunk and shipped from the emperor's floating palace to a new master, Geppetto, who is an alchemist at odds with the empire. As an automa, Pinocchio must serve without question, but as in the tale of old, Pinocchio is transitioning into a real boy with his own thoughts and feelings. Where will his old loyalties to the empire end and his new allegiance to Geppetto begin? When Prester John, king of Abaton, is captured by the empire, Pinocchio helps his daughter, Princess Lazuli, rescue him. John Lister does a stupendous job reading the story and voicing the varied cast of characters. Music by Vernian Process adds mystery and suspense. In this version, Pinocchio's nose grows when he hurts someone, even if unintentionally, and a musical cricket named Maestro replaces Disney's Jiminy Cricket as Geppetto's companion. VERDICT A delightful purchase for lovers of fantasy. ["A good choice for collections where high fantasy is popular": SLJ 1/16 review of the Hyperion book.]—Mary Lee Bulat, Harwinton Public Library, CT

Review

"Wow! John Claude Bemis hides new magic in old stories."? *Tom Angleberger, New York Times best-selling author of the Origami Yoda series*

"Pinocchio's growth is sometimes uncomfortable, sometimes heartwarming, and bound to entrance readers."? *Booklist*

"Flying lions, fiery salamanders, chimera, sylphs, gnomes, men with wings, and an enormous sea monster all play roles in this fantastical retelling of *Pinocchio*."? *School Library Journal*

"Pinocchio gets a new look in this curious, complex novel of betrayal, rebellion, and loyalty. . .the world-building is impressive, and the captivating setting will likely attract fantasy, steampunk, and adventure fans alike."? *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

"Young readers will find this reimagined adventure an exhilarating and insightful journey."? *Kirkus Reviews*

About the Author

John Claude Bemis is an award-winning author, musician, and educator. His novels include *The Prince Who Fell from the Sky* and the Clockwork Dark trilogy: *The Nine Pound Hammer*, *The Wolf Tree*, and *The White City*. John was chosen as North Carolina's Piedmont Laureate for Children's Literature. He lives with his wife and daughter in Hillsborough, North Carolina. Visit him online at johnclaudebemis.com.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Denise Rutledge:

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