



## Pinocchio: The Origin Story

*Alessandro Sanna (Illustrations)*

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Told as a story of cosmic beginnings, this version of Pinocchio is about the formative energy and magic that reside in the wood that becomes the boy. This version is also about life on the molecular level and what it means to think about our composition as human beings from the point of view of energy and cosmic matter.

Born in 1975, **Alessandro Sanna** is one of Italy's leading contemporary illustrators. He has earned wide recognition for his work, which has appeared in the *New York Times Book Review* and the *New Yorker*. He is a prolific and popular author and has received many awards. He lives and works in Mantua, Italy.

## Pinocchio: The Origin Story Details

Date : Published August 23rd 2016 by Enchanted Lion Books (first published 2015)

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Author : Alessandro Sanna (Illustrations)

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## **From Reader Review Pinocchio: The Origin Story for online ebook**

### **Bo says**

Wordless book. Stunning watercolor illustrations.

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### **Annie says**

This one is a thinker, and I would love to know what some actual children make of it. It is exceptionally beautiful, but I have just read it for the fifth time and I feel as if I'm just starting to understand it.

A tree grows from a cosmic spark. A branch stuck by lightning (more sparks) becomes animate and runs off joyfully to see the world. Encounters fox and wolf, who he seems to be glad to have as companions, then goes into a forest on his own where he is confronted by other animate branches. The whole exchange is terrifying—he is encircled by them, engulfed in flames, and cast out with his head on fire by, I'm going to say, the spirit overlord of the forest? He tries to go back home (to his original tree), but a huge snake has taken up residence there, and eats him, along with an owl and another bird who have perched on the tree.... and this cycle of trauma and rebirth repeats in different iterations until the branch itself grows into a new tree. The branch keeps circling back to his origins (and clearly carries them with him) and the way he sees his origins evolves to include the experiences that he has. Also, the way that fire is incorporated is pretty fascinating—it's the source of life, but also a weapon. Frightening and powerful. It's an excellent play on the word "spark".

A gorgeous story about growing up and about the resources one can use to work through trauma.

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### **Sara says**

One doesn't necessarily "read" this book. With the exception of the title and an introduction, there are not words. But I liked it.

Read while in the Shakespeare and Co book shoppe in Paris.

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### **????? ?????? says**

Wow.

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### **Becca says**

Didn't completely understand how this was Pinocchio, but the pictures were beautiful.

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### **Rajesh Kandaswamy says**

Beautiful, charming and totally worth the 15 min it takes to flip the pages.

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### **Becki Iverson says**

I'm not sure what I expected from this but it wasn't what I thought. Really this is the story of a tree. I was thinking this was more about how Gepetto came to want to create Pinocchio and how their relationship began. The watercolors in this book are absolutely gorgeous - I would love to frame a few of these illustrations - but the story itself is a little bland. I also think this would be better as a hard cardboard page book for little kids, who are likely to be the only ones really interested in this, rather than a really beautiful (but fragile) paper edition. Worth a flip through if you're reading to kids but this isn't a masterpiece of the genre, for me.

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### **Goshen PL Childrens says**

I'm not sure how I feel about this book. I love the idea of how Pinocchio has an origin before becoming a puppet but frankly, I was scratching my head with this one. The illustrations were beautifully done but the story was odd to me. Possibly a re-read is in order?

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### **David Schaafsma says**

Sanna also produced the wordless picturebook *The River*, which I really liked. This, also wordless except for single sentences at the beginning and ending, is accompanied by a preface explaining how the book got its beginning. Sanna had been for a time visiting a children's hospital in Turin, where one special child Gabriele inspired him to tell a story about the birth of a marionette that is also about the birth of creation and creativity. The preface is especially wonderful, and the color is astonishing.

The story is a little difficult to figure out sometimes—I had to read it a few times after my first mad dash through it just for the wonderful art—but then I liked it very much. It's an origin story, but about the spark in all of our origins, in a way. I think it is a picturebook intended for 4-7 year olds, but as with *The River*, I really see it as for all ages.

Maria Popova's eloquent Brainpickings review. At least open it and skim the stunning paintings! The color!

<https://www.brainpickings.org/2016/09...>

Or just look at a sampling of colorful images here:

<https://www.google.com/search?q=aless...>

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### **Paula says**

This book is a freaking wonder. The piece of wood that, we are told, will someday become Pinocchio, is struck from its tree during a lightning storm. It wanders through night and forest - and through the digestive systems of at least two animals, before leafing out and becoming a tree of its own.

I am going to use the crap out of this book.

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### **Tasha says**

Wordless except for a few lines of text at the beginning and end, this graphic novel picture book is a blazing wonder. It shows the epic beginning of the wood that will one day become Pinocchio. A young tree is hit by a bolt of lightning and a branch falls off, a branch with clear limbs, body and head. The branch runs and is joined by a cat and fox. The three travel together to a snowy woods where there is also fire and now the branch is alight. As the story continues, a snake eats the fiery branch then spits it out. A dove flies with it, and drops it into the water. The branch sinks and is eaten by a shark. Image after image flies past, each with a story to tell and only a few moments to tell it. Finally, spring arrives and the branch sprouts leaves and roots, becoming a full tree itself, and the story of Pinocchio begins.

Unique and wondrous, this picture book is something entirely special. It is an origin story about far more than Pinocchio himself, showing that we all originate from a certain spark. Then along the way we are filled with fire, discover companions, take adventures, grow into our own, and our story at that point is just beginning.

The illustrations are spectacular. Done in watercolor that flows on the page, creating light and energy. There is also clever detailed use of the paint with leaves flowing to create characters and allowing space for almost mythical moments to take place on the page. There are deep colors of undersea and the dark of sky against snow.

Beautiful, raw and filled with innate energy, this picture book is something very special. Appropriate for ages 4-7.

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### **SundayAtDusk says**

Author Alessandro Sanna created this book after experiencing the death of one of the "very fragile children" he visited at a Turin, Italy pediatric hospital. Thus, I really wanted to understand and appreciate the story, but am afraid that did not happen. Part of the reason may be I never read Pinocchio, which I'm sure is not exactly like the Disney movie or The Little Golden Book Pinocchio. The illustrations are colorful and intriguing, but I don't care for the stick figures. There's something menacing to me about them. I'm sure this book will have its fans, though, and am sorry I'm not one of them.

(Note: I received a free copy of this book from Amazon Vine.)

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## **Satyajeet says**

This book is astonishingly beautiful!

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## **Agn? says**

Since often my favorite part about the art is color, the illustrations in this mostly wordless picturebook are INSANELY beautiful:

As for the story, I think I get it (especially after reading the foreword by the author and a very insightful review by Tasha), but still it is kind of meh for me.

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## **Mathew says**

'There was once upon a time a piece of wood in a shop...' is how we would begin a reading of Collodi's classic yet Sanna's myth-making exercise branches out into something bigger: 'Once upon a time there was the universe.' So begins and closes the narrative of this largely wordless fusion text in which we follow the exploits of the tree that would eventually parent Pinocchio himself.

In his foreword, Sanna explains how meeting a 'very fragile child' at a pediatric hospital in Turin, Italy coincided with a train journey in which he spotted an unusually shaped tree which seemed to be cradling, in its branches, a human form.

These two events led him to create a mesmerising cinematic masterpiece in which a branch must endure all the elements that the Universe can throw at it in order to blossom. From its conception in the dust and stars of the universe, a form falls to an early earth and grows into a tree. From this falls a single, spindly branch who, on befriending a cat and a fox, takes on the challenges of the world including man, whales, snakes and fire.

Sanna's watercolours, pacing, sense of action and eye for myth is so powerful in this story that it requires multiple readings to begin to unearth meaning. It is a story of life, rebirth and growth and a celebration of the boundless energy and zest for life that resides in each one of us.

