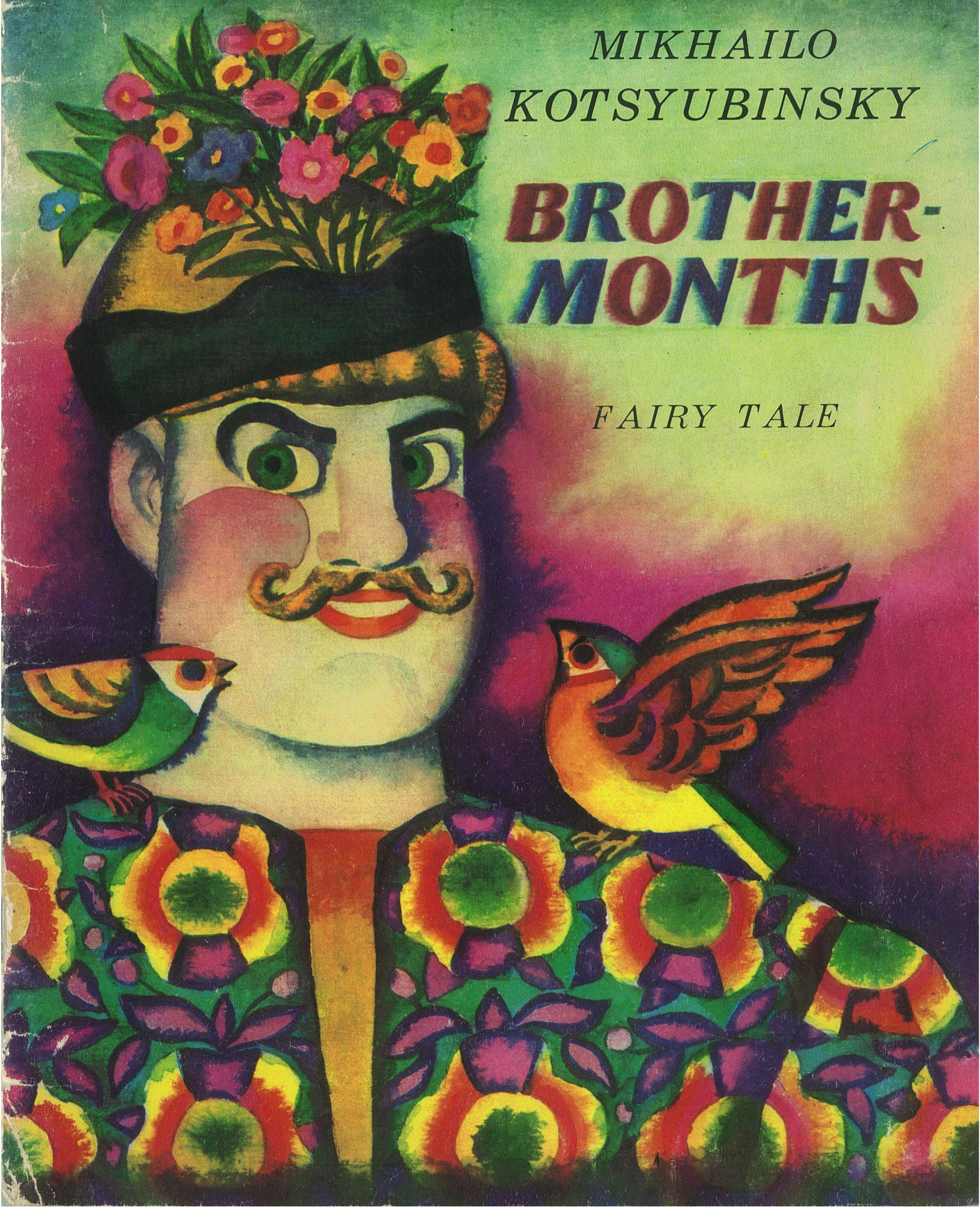


MIKHAILO
KOTSYUBINSKY

**BROTHER-
MONTHS**

FAIRY TALE



KIEV
DNIPRO PUBLISHERS
1979



*MIKHAILO
KOTSYUBINSKY*

**BROTHER-
MONTHS**

FAIRY TALE

**TRANSLATED
FROM THE UKRAINIAN
BY WALTER MAY**

**ILLUSTRATED
BY YULIY KRYHA**





March is so angry, with winds he goes raging,
Making bare trees bend and groan in their plight.
Showers come soaking chilled earth in the daytime,
While in the nighttime the frost grips her tight.
Clouds gather thick from all corners of heaven,
So that the sun on the earth cannot peep...
Thawing spring waters like rivers go streaming,
Roads and embankments aside soon they sweep.
With its wet whirlwind in field and in forest
Snow quickly buries the green shoots alive...
March is so angry, his heart is foretelling him —
Soon, very soon now, the day will arrive
When to his brother, young blossoming April,
He must hand over his kingdom and sway,
He slyly decides to invite his young brother,
Knowing he's sure to get stuck on the way.





See now, he blows from the sky all the stormclouds,
Bows before the bright sun, to his knees,
Begs him to send down his help from the heavens,
(Also makes use of the blustering breeze)
To dry out the earth and adorn it with snowdrops,
Carpeting groves with fresh cowslips and grass.
As soon as the sun from on high glances downward
Marshlands begin to show winding white paths,
Birds begin twittering, the air is transparent,
Little green shoots through the snow start to press.
Seeing the sun is so heartily working,
March slyly sends by the birds his request,
Those which from summery days have come flying,
Bidding his brother to come as his guest,
Making believe a warm welcome is waiting.
Off fly the birds upon March's behest.
April, on hearing of this invitation,
Said with great joy, as his merry eyes glowed:
"I shall at once go to visit my brother!
I must begin to prepare for the road."

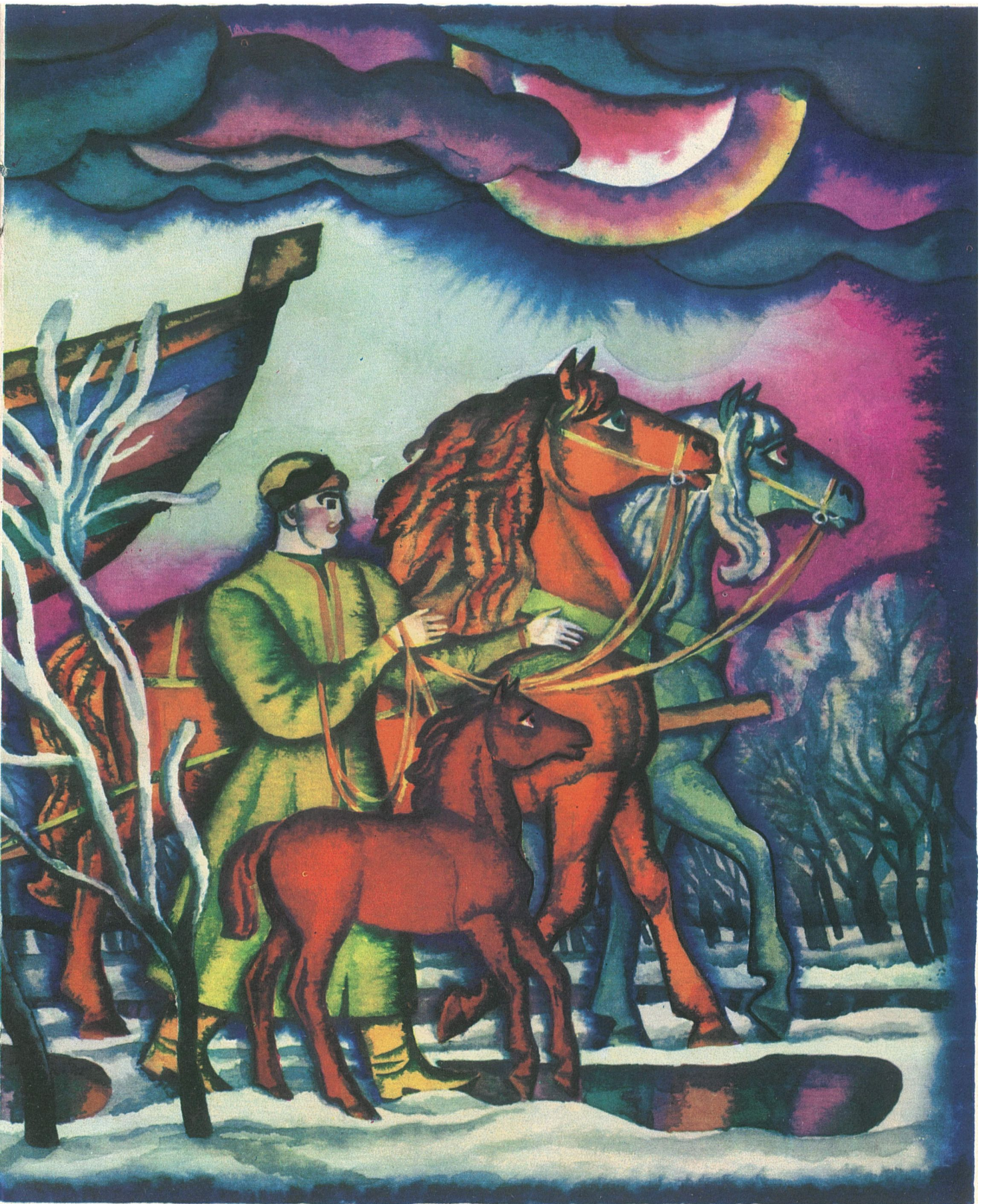


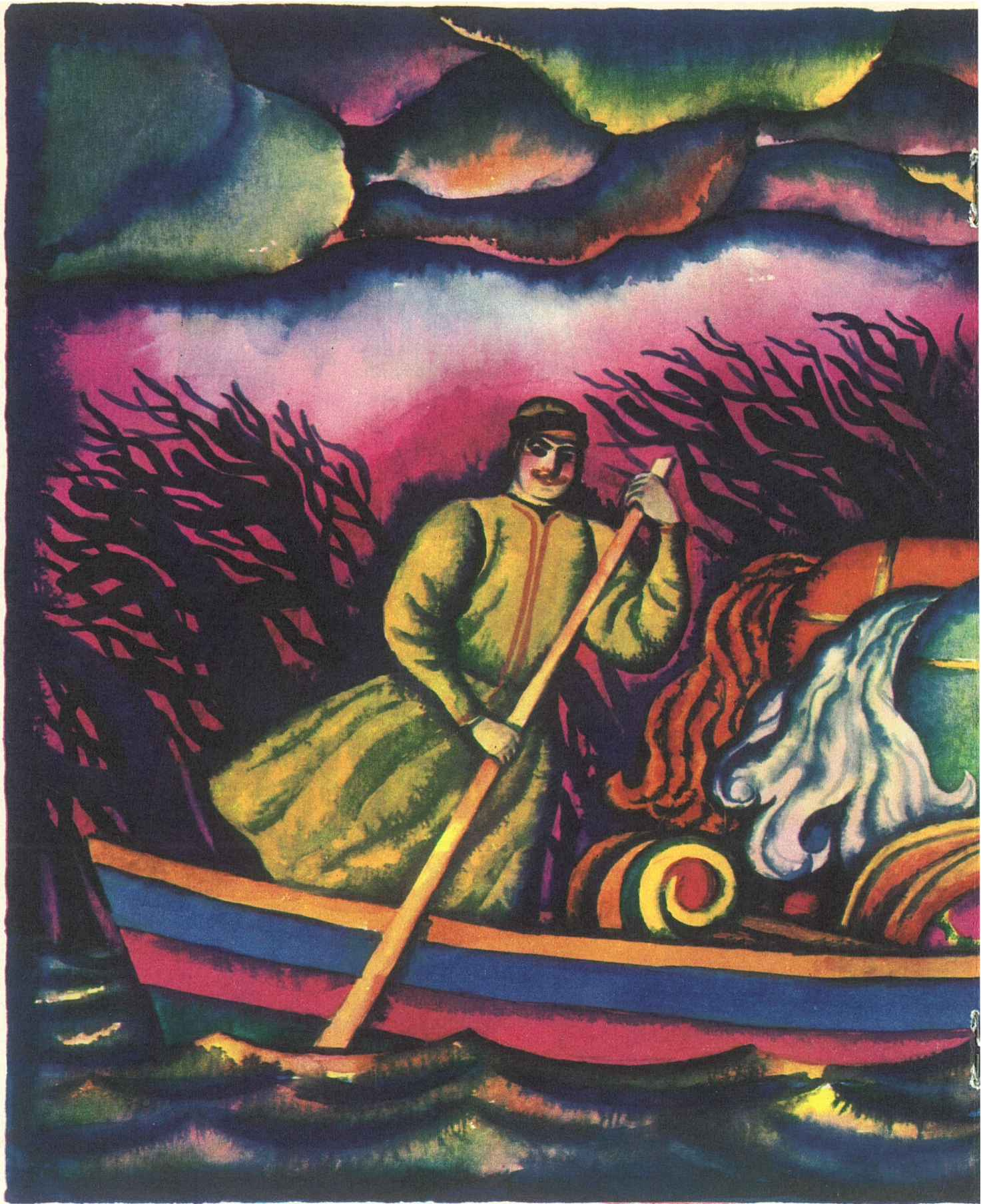


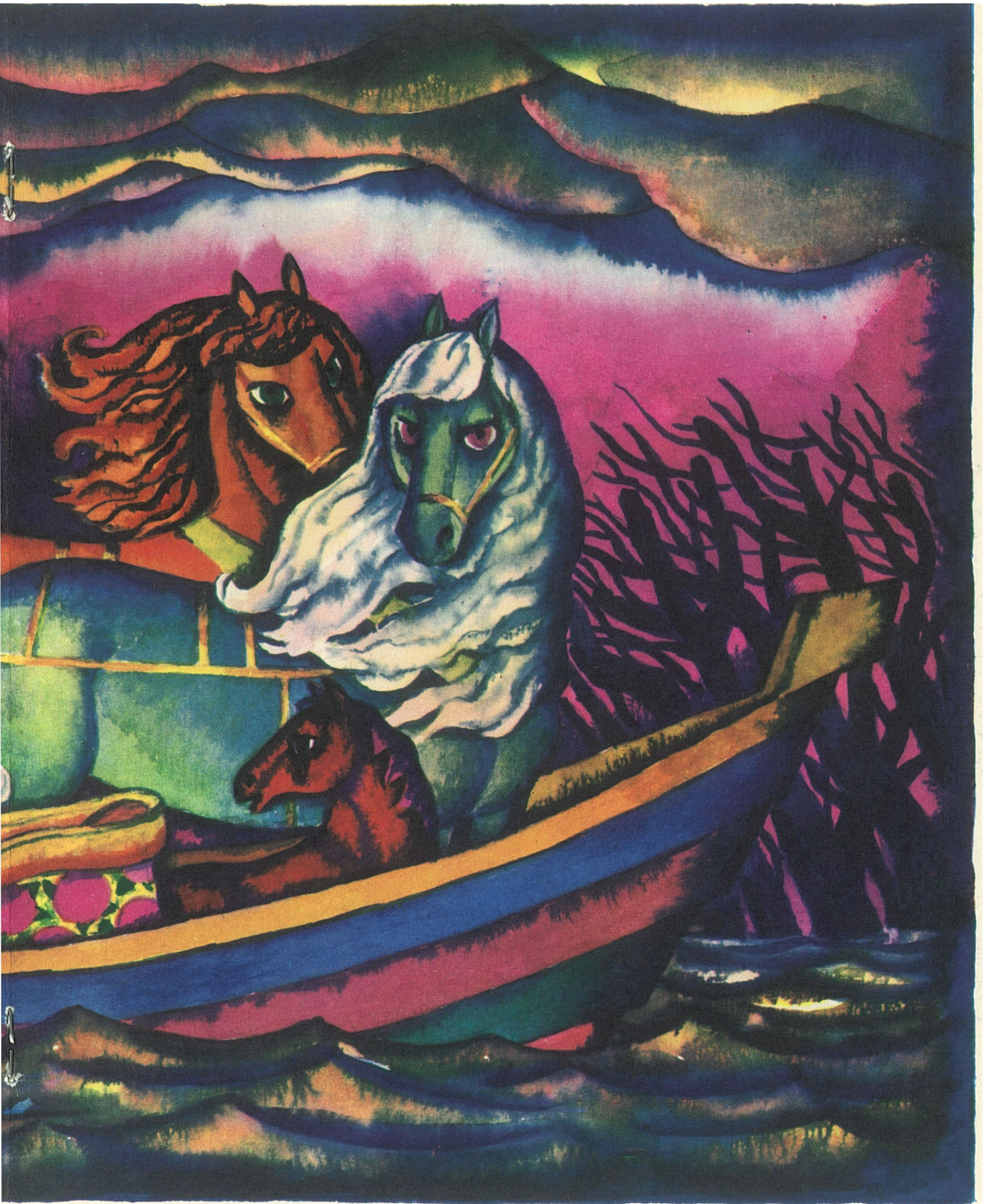


Straightway he harnessed his bright-painted waggon,
Put in fresh fodder, the best to be seen,
Snowdrops and violets, to feed his fine horses,
And decked himself out in his new suit of green.
“Hey, there! and where are you off to, then, brother?”
Someone in rather a childish voice cried.
April looked round, and on raising his eyebrows,
May, his young brother, he quickly espied.
May was a wonderfully handsome young fellow,
Eyes azure blue, like a summery sky,
Dressed and bedecked with all gay springtime flowers,
Scenting the air as he came walking by.
On his rich coronet hung pearly dewdrops,
Flashing like jewels by the bright sunbeams filled.
When he was speaking it seemed to the listener
That over the meadows the nightingales trilled.
April saluted young May, and in answer:
“I’m off on a visit to March!” he replied.
May all at once, for some reason, grew troubled:
“Do you know what, my dear fellow?” he cried,











Cloudless, quite clear and high are the heavens,
Primroses spread all around in the wood,
Birds in the warm springtime air are

a-chirping,

April's young heart beats in merriest mood.
Songs by themselves from his bosom come

pouring,

Over the fields, woods and meadows resound,
Wonderful notes to the sky go a-flying...

April is glad as the wheels roll around.

Suddenly, who knows from where, came the
stormclouds,

Robing the sky in the gloomiest hue,
Down on the earth came a sleety cold shower,
Chill grew the air, and the rough winds blew.
Muddy grew marshes, and tired grew the horses.
Hark! In the valley there's something gone

wrong...

Nearer... yet nearer... you hear that strange
gurgling..





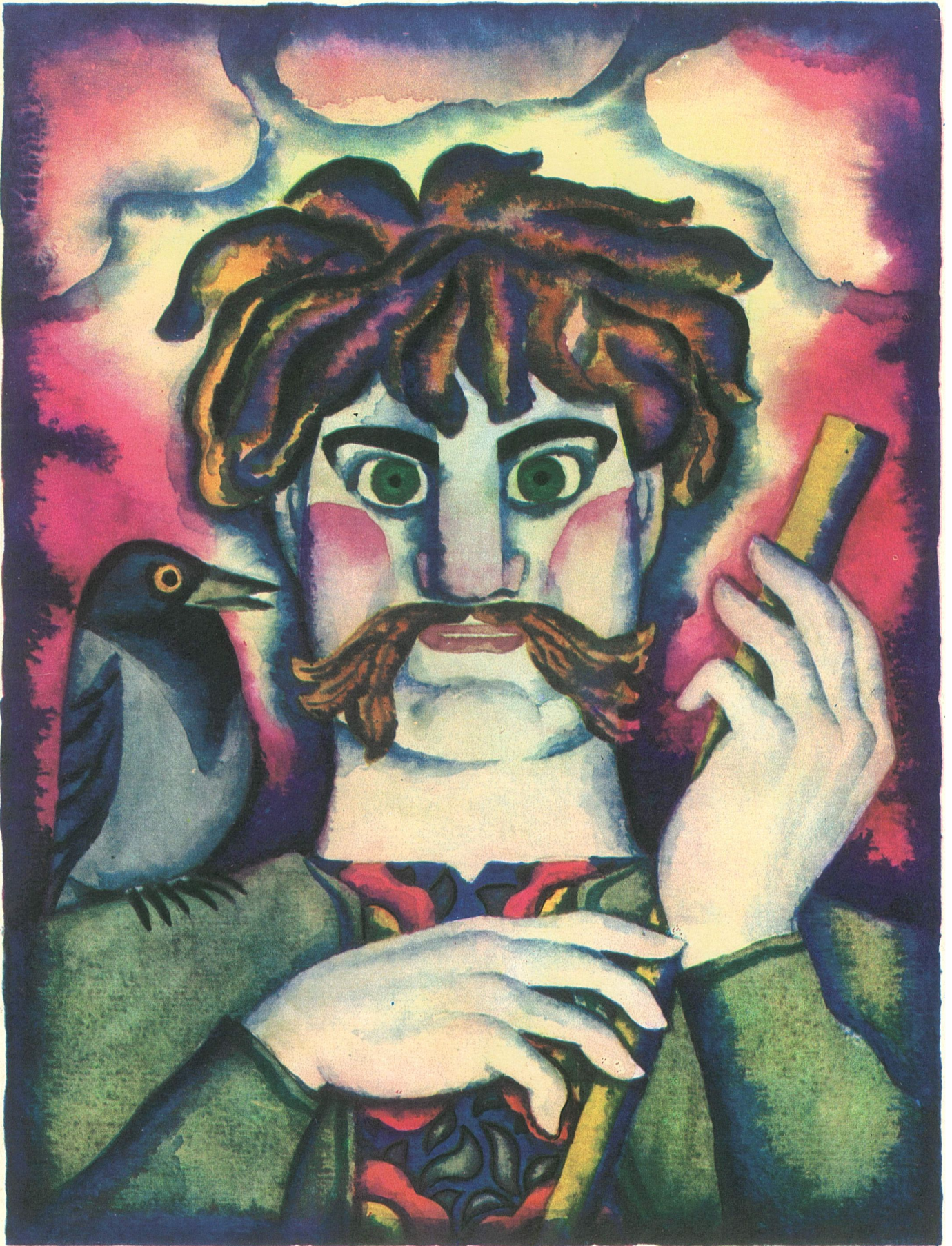
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See, it is waves wildly rolling along — !
Yes, it's the river, in floods overflowing!
April, alarmed, sees misfortune ahead.
Quickly he lets down his boat on the water,
Taking his horses on board, and his sledge.
In his strong hands the stout oar begins bending,
Off glides the boat with the water all round.
Straight on its planks roll the waves of the river
And, with a splash, from its prow they rebound.
Ice-floes enormous from all sides come floating,
Wind-driven snowflakes lash straight in his eyes...
April still strains with the oar 'gainst the current,
With his last powers the flood he defies.
On to the shore leaps the boat from the tumult.
April looks round — finds the banks gleaming white!
Beats with his hands, in despair, his coat-flaps.
Only the drift-covered steppeland in sight!
What's to be done? Surely things can't get worse now —
Harness the sledge up, and further we go!
In the deep snowdrifts the poor horses flounder,
Blizzards conceal the real highway below.



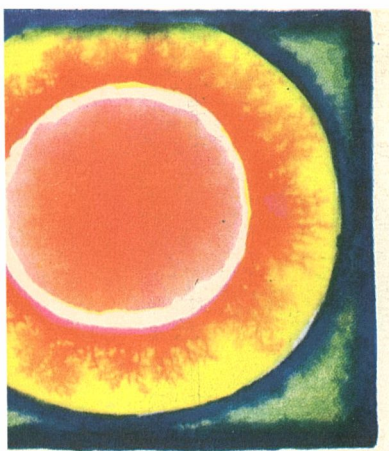






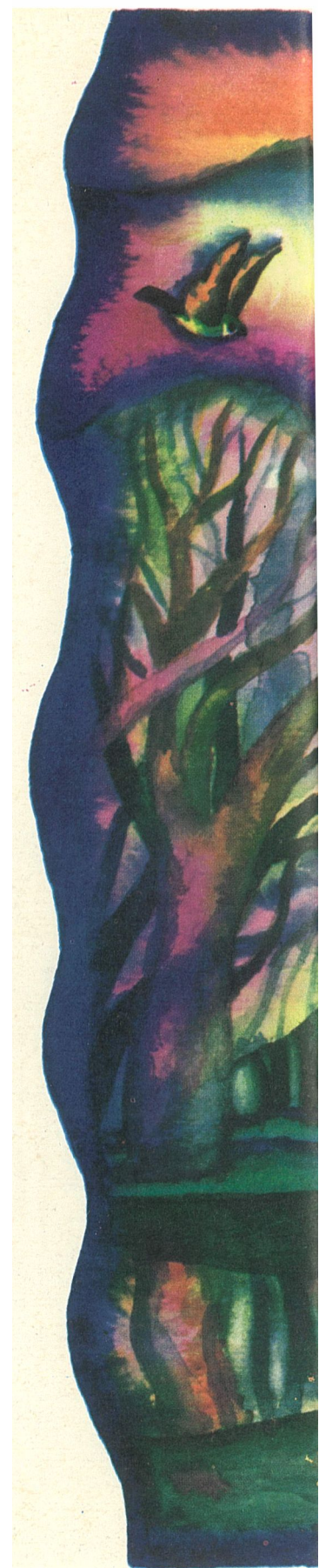
Look near and far — the world's plunged into darkness!
Night comes — in terrible frost they are caught,
Cruelly shriveling the snowdrops and violets,
Which for his horses young April has brought.
And through his coat comes the cold penetrating,
Making the traveller shiver and shake.
Day dawns — it seems to become slightly warmer,
Snow starts to thaw, all is mire, like a lake...
As in the east the pale sky started blushing,
Reddening the cloudbanks around rim and rand,
March left his bed and he went off inspecting
His earthly kingdom — the cold, frostnipped land.
There, by the road, on his long cudgel leaning.
Fixing his eyes on the scene, looking glum,
Red-faced himself with the wind, and with anger,
Glanced round and cried: "I see April has come!"
Then all the blustering winds soon fell silent,
Dark clouds were scattered and fled from the sky.
Out came the sun, and again started shining,
As the two brothers met there, eye to eye.





March listened silent to April's adventures,
How May advised him to travel well-stored.

Full of attention he listened, then shouted:
"Thanks, May my brother, you'll get your reward!"
Loudly he shouted, like boiling steam rising,
Soared from his home to the dark clouds above.
To his young brother, to blossoming April,
Left his whole kingdom — this earth, field and grove...
And to this day, March is cross with his brother.
Stealthily, early, his gardens creeps through,
Flowers and grass with his frosty feet tramples,
So that poor May weeps and weeps tears of dew...





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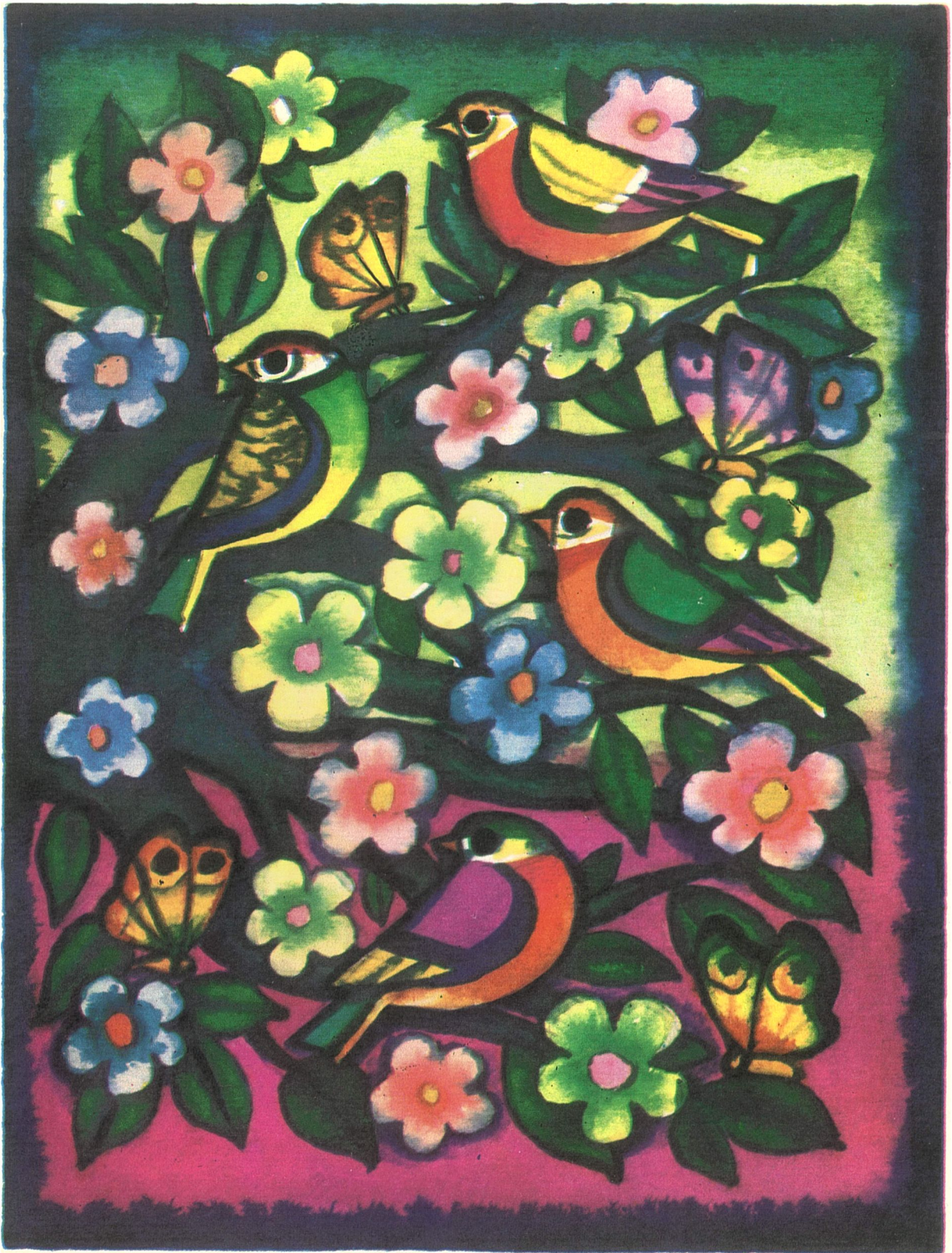
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