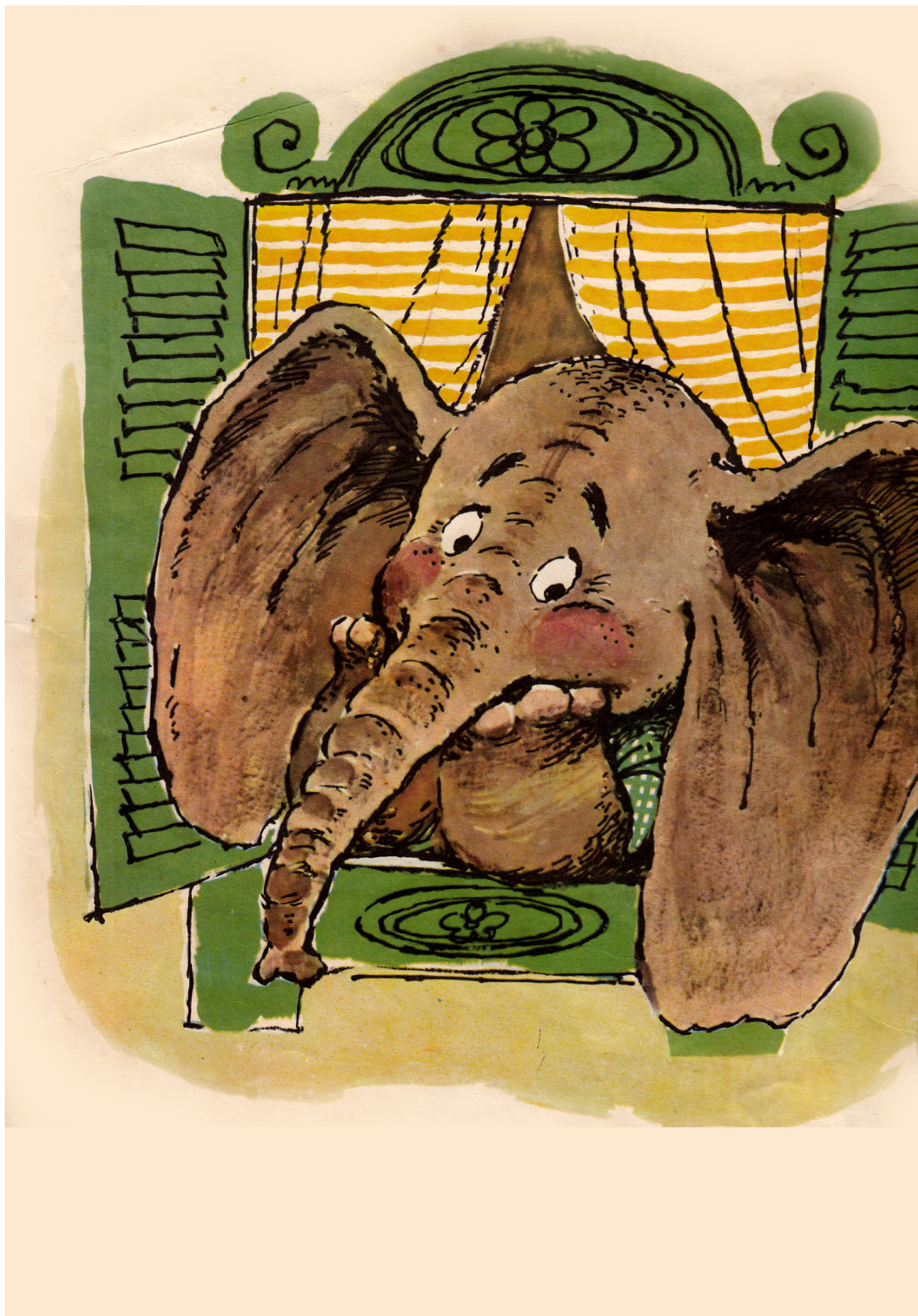
A detailed illustration of a man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a red jacket with a circular emblem on the left chest and a green and white checkered shirt underneath. He is holding a large, yellow, mechanical elephant. The elephant has a long, segmented trunk, a large eye, and a yellow bell around its neck. The background is a textured, brownish-grey. The entire illustration is framed by a torn, maroon-colored border on the left and top edges.

Gennady
Tsyferov

There Once
Was
an Elephant



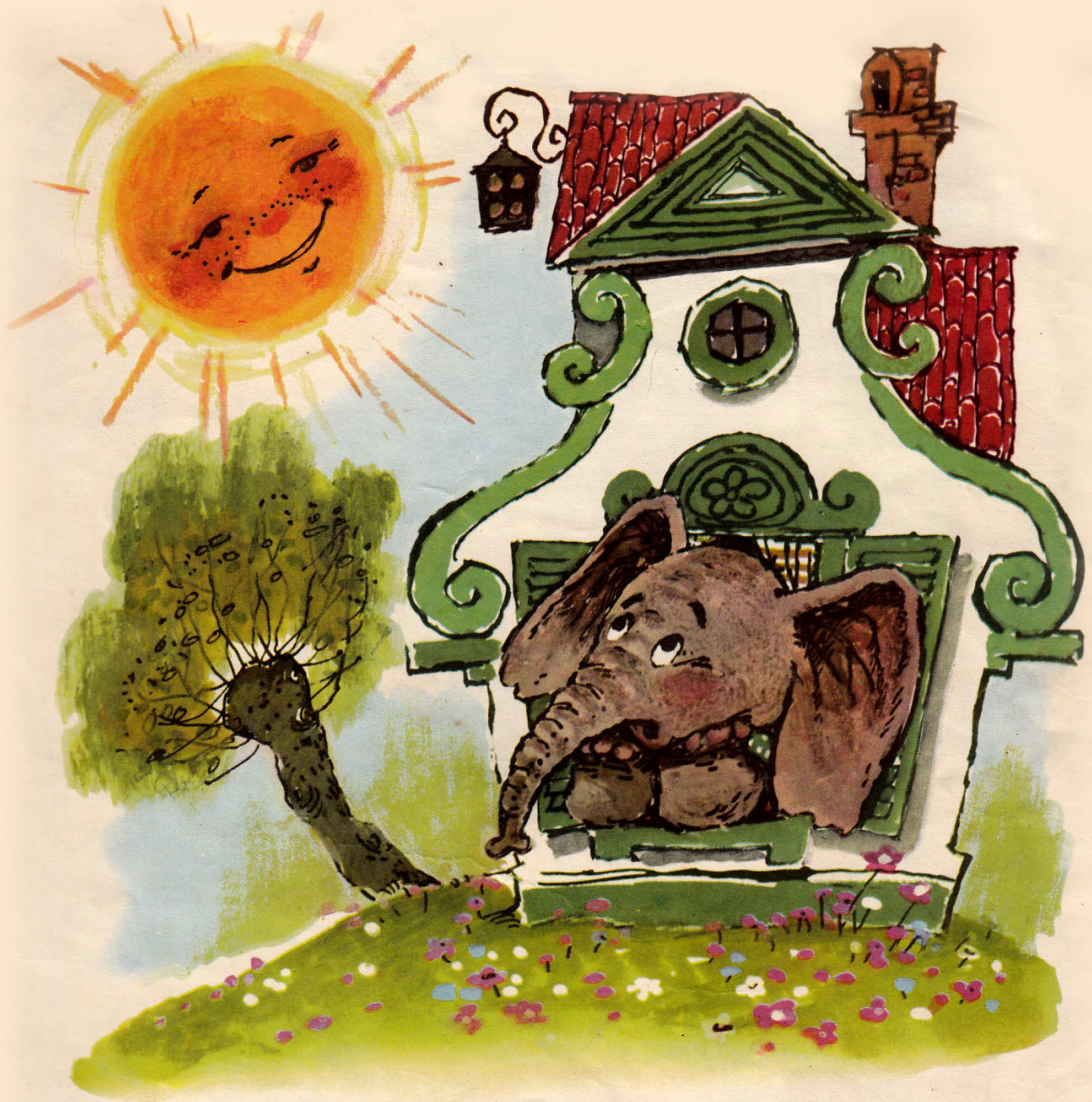
There once was an elephant.

He was a very good baby elephant, but he didn't quite know how to spend his time or what to do. So he sat by the window, sighing and thinking hard.

Suddenly it began to rain.

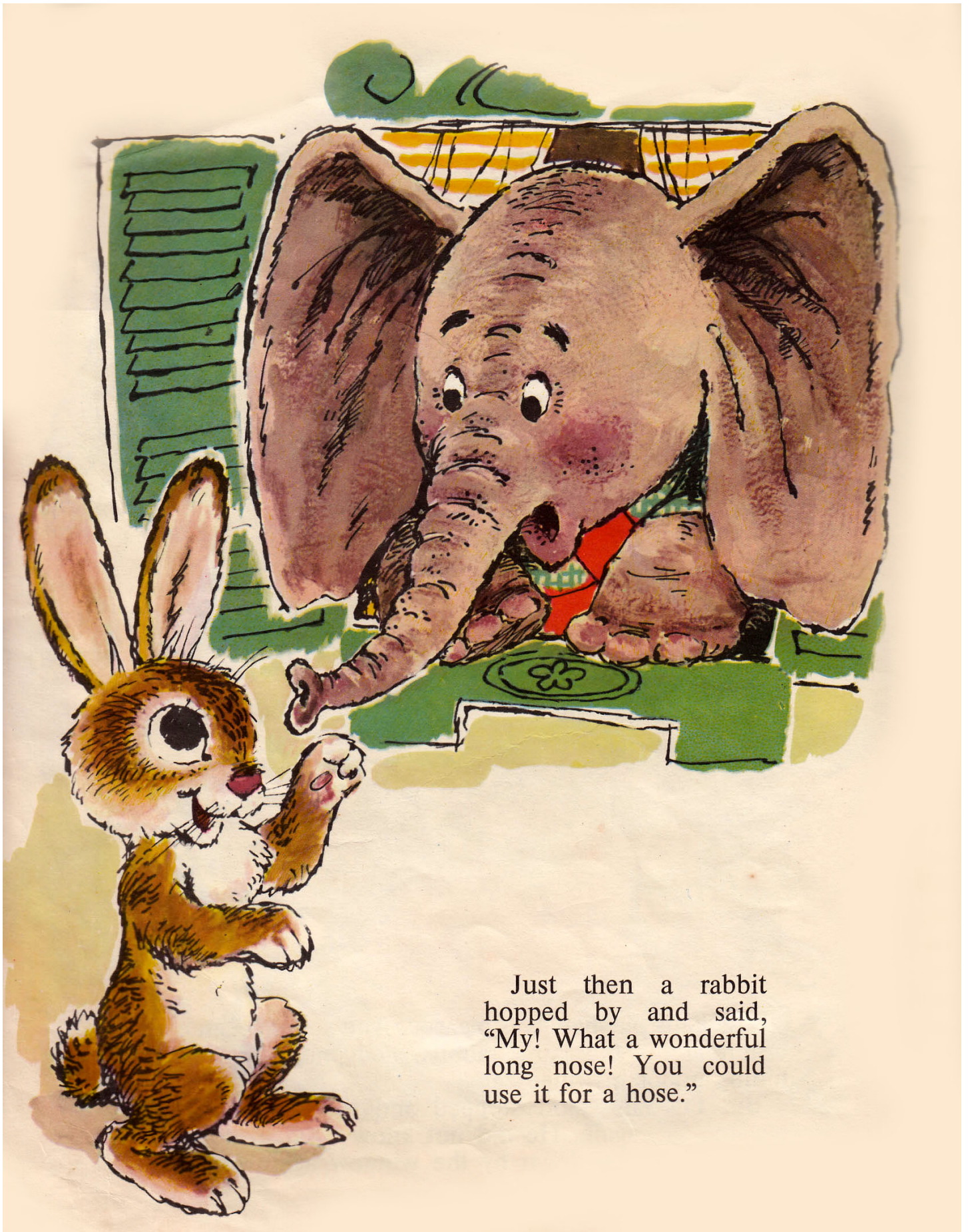
"Hey!" a wet fox cub shouted when he saw the little elephant in the window. "Look at those big ears of yours. Why, you would make a fine umbrella!"





The baby elephant was pleased. And so he became an umbrella for the baby rabbits, hedgehogs and foxes hiding under his huge ears.

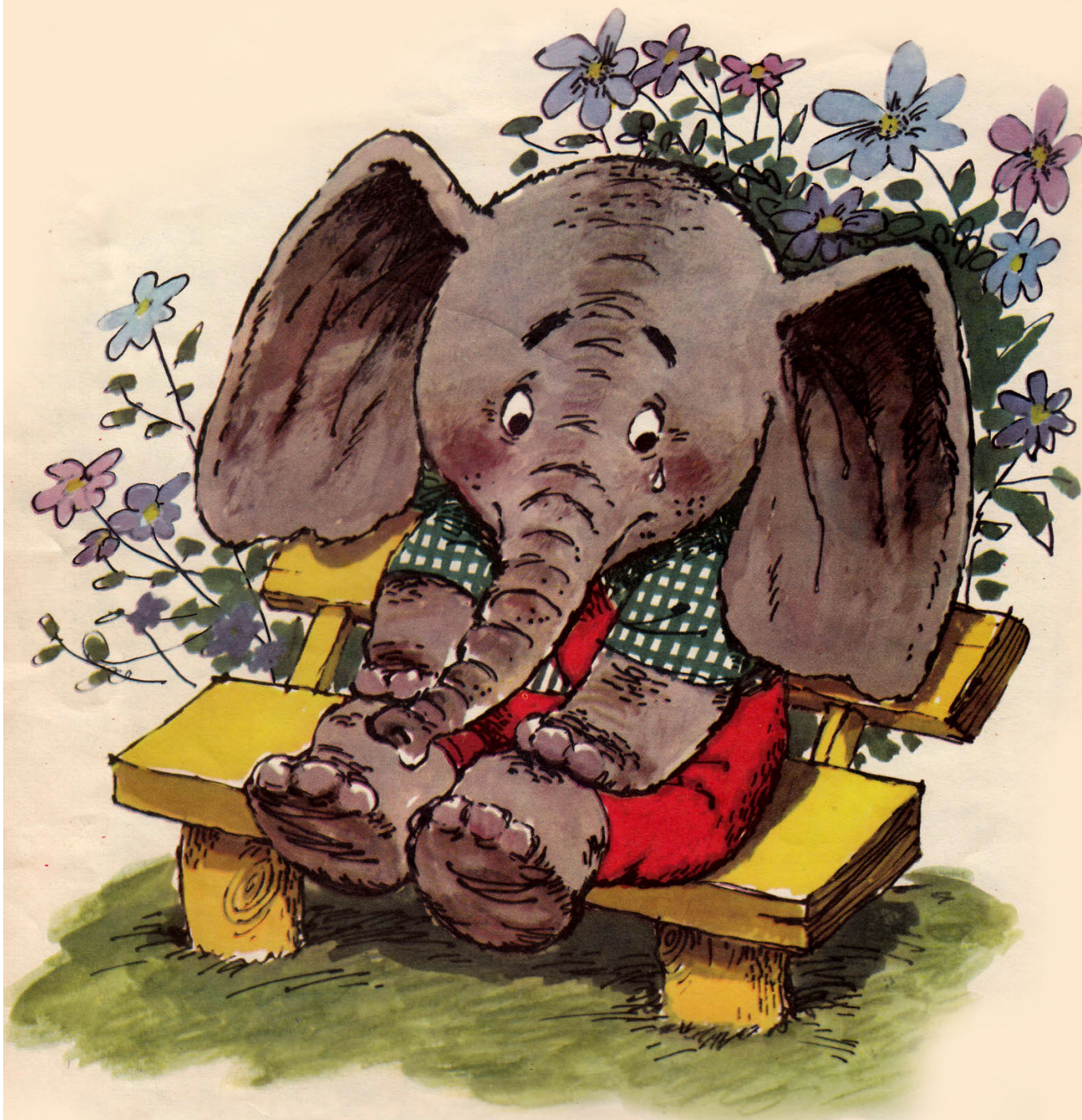
But the rain soon stopped and the little elephant became sad again. He did not know what to do once more. So he sat down by the window again to think.



Just then a rabbit
hopped by and said,
"My! What a wonderful
long nose! You could
use it for a hose."

The baby elephant
was pleased. He went
out and watered the
flowers, the grass and the
trees.





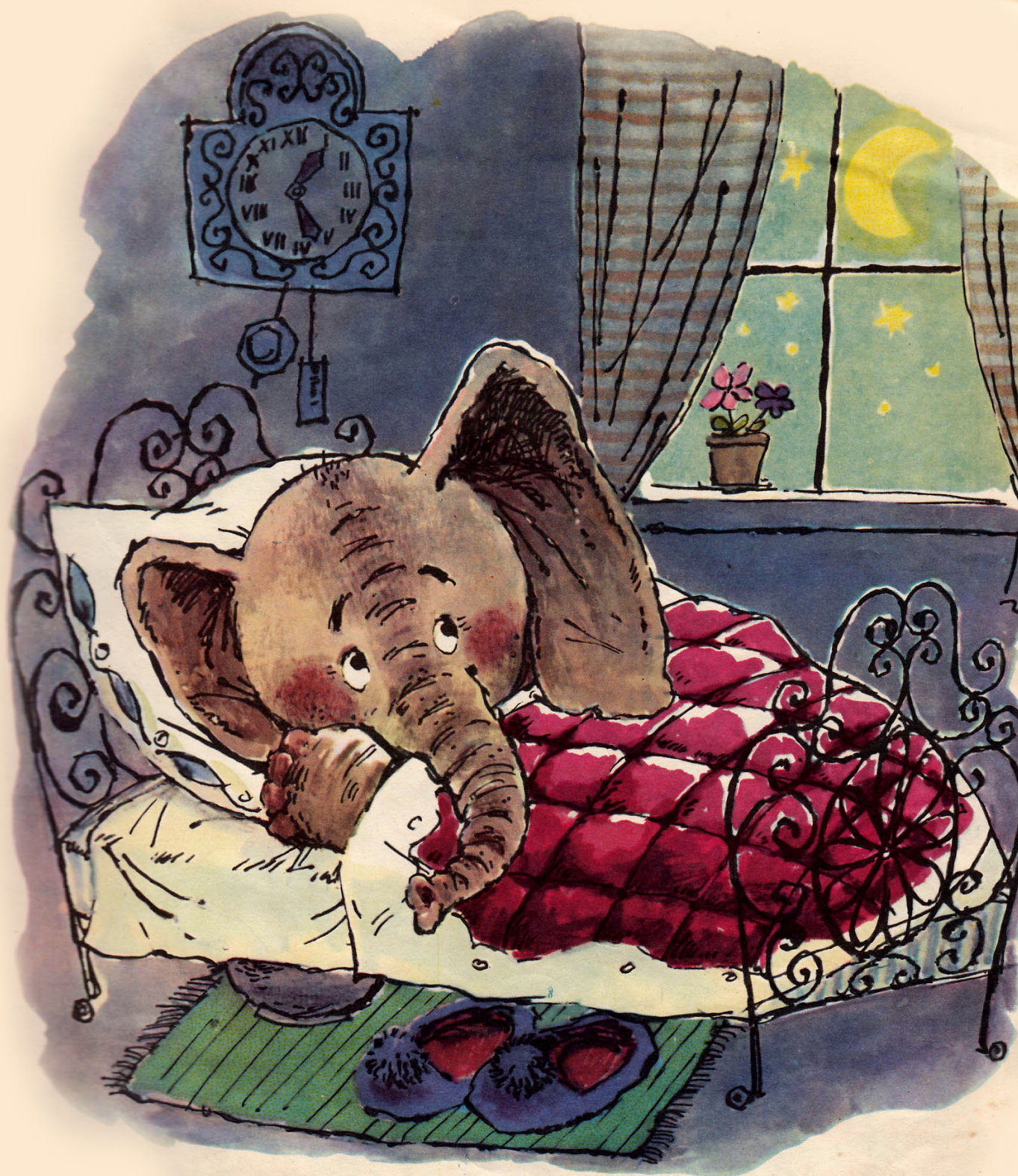
When there was nothing more to water
he became sad again.

Evening came. The
sun set, the sky turned
dark, and the stars came
out.



All the little animals
were fast asleep in their
beds.





The poor baby elephant could not sleep. He kept wondering what to do.

Suddenly he saw flames amidst the trees. "It's a fire!" he said. Then, remembering how he had watered the flowers, he ran to the river, drew in as much water as his trunk could hold and put out the fire in the old tree.





When the animals awoke, they saw the little elephant by the smoking tree stump and thanked him for having put out the fire. They decided he would be the forest fireman.

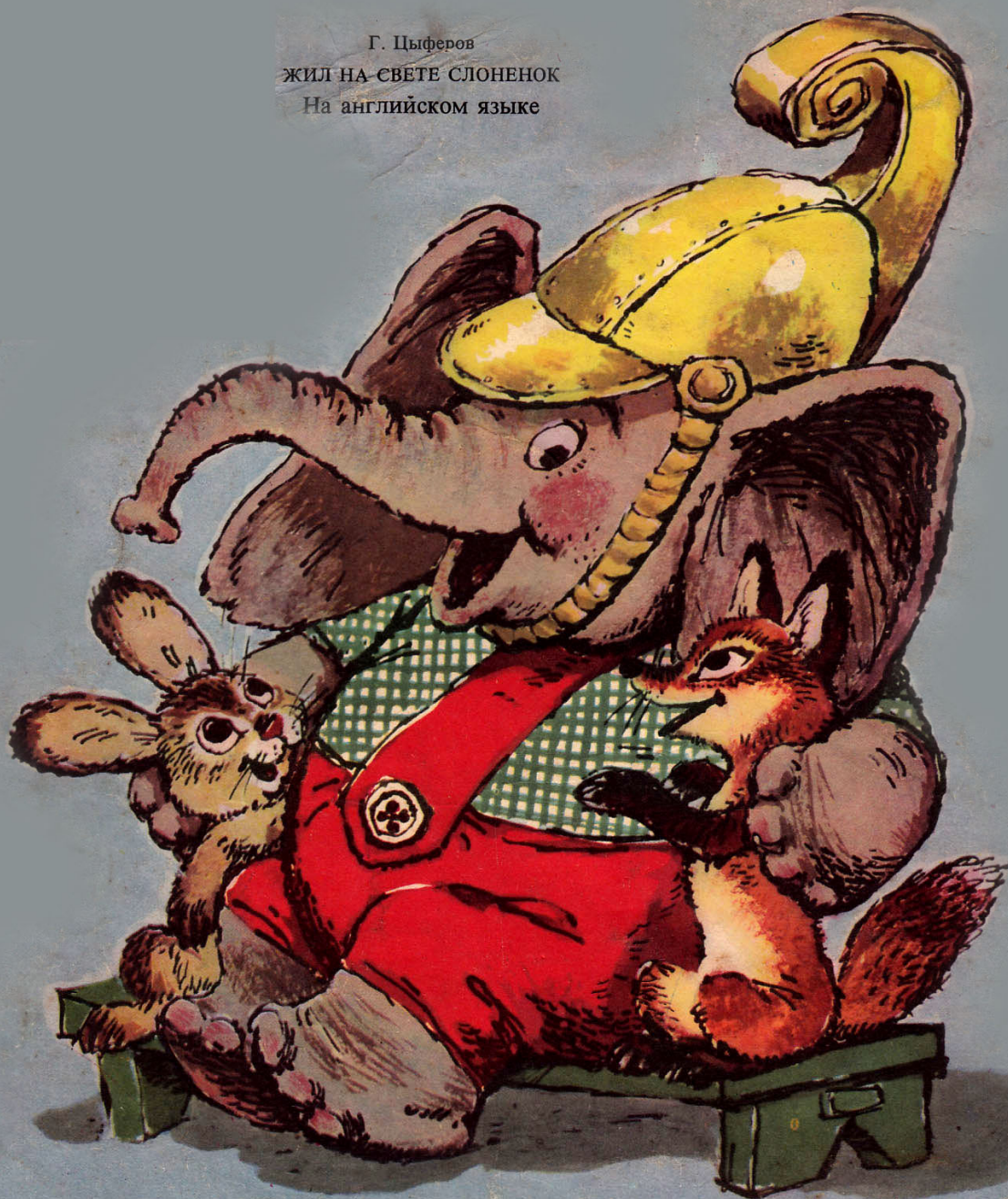


The little elephant felt very proud.
Now he has a shiny brass helmet and spends his days patrolling the forest, making sure that no fire starts up.

Sometimes he lets the
fox cub and the rabbit
sail paper boats in his
helmet.



Г. Цыферов
ЖИЛ НА СВЕТЕ СЛОНЕНОК
На английском языке



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