







THE EGG TREE











KATHERINE MILHOUS






















 It was  early  on Easter  morning. So  early that the  children were  still

 asleep in the  small  red  house and the  animals were quiet in the  big

 red  barn. All  except the  rooster.  Cock-a-doodle-doo! The  sun  came up

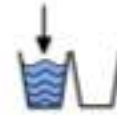
 over the  hill. All  the  animals  woke up, and then  Katy and  Carl  woke up.

 "Get up,  Carl,"  said  Katy,  "maybe  we  can  see  the Easter  Rabbit  bring

 the eggs." The  children  looked  out of  the window. "The  rabbit  hasn't  come

 yet!"  said  Katy.

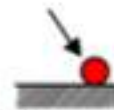




Carl and Katy leaned out of the window. The morning was full of sounds. Birds



twittered, cows mooed, horses neighed, pigs grunted, geese honked and



hens clucked. Suddenly Katy pointed "There's the rabbit, in the garden!"





The rabbit bounced about the flower beds and burrowed under the bushes.



"Come on Katy!" said Carl, let's wake everybody up." In a few minutes



all the children were dressed and out in the barnyard. The egg hunt



had begun.



At first Katy and Carl thought hunting for coloured eggs the greatest



fun in the world. But somehow their cousins found all the pretty eggs.



Katy and Carl just did not know where to look. Who would think that the



Rabbit had left eggs in the feed bin, in the watering can, and even in the



hayloft? At last Carl found a nest of 3 eggs in a tree.









  Now Katy was the  only one who  had not  found an  egg. She  began  hunting








for  eggs in the  kitchen. The  Rabbit had  left  eggs in the  strangest

places. By the  clock, in the  cookie cutters and even  under the  butter churn.



"Hurray! I  found  another  egg!"  shouted  Carl,  running out of the  stair

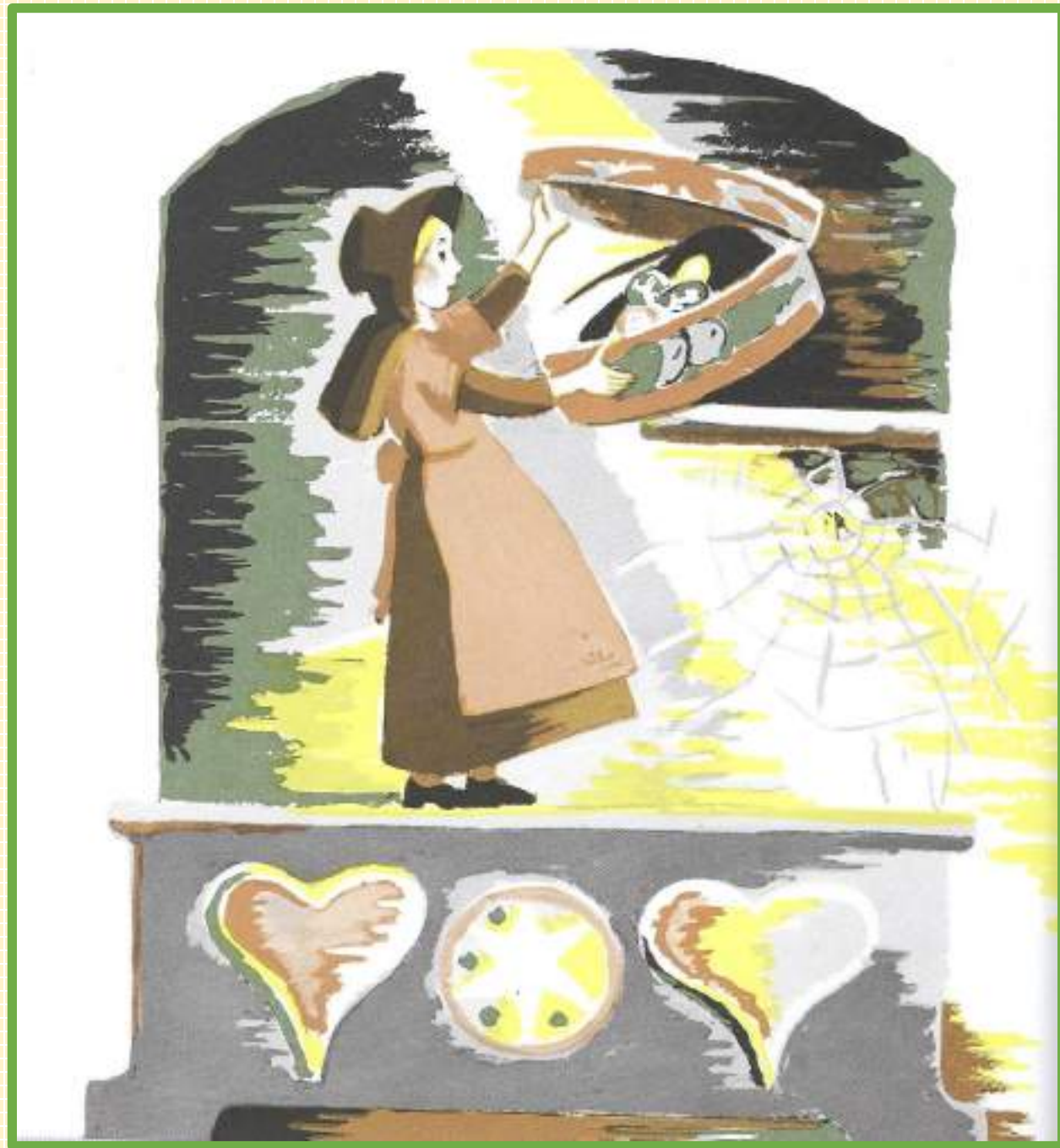
 cupboard. "I  have the  most!"

 Round and round the  kitchen  ran  Katy but  now she  only  wanted to  run

 hide. She  felt so  stupid. Just then she  saw  the  attic stairs.  Maybe








the  Easter  Rabbit had  left  eggs for her in the  attic.  Katy  began to

 climb the  stairs.







       
The big attic was dark and lonely. Katy shivered. A spider was spinning

      
a web in the corner. What was that on a shelf? It was a hat box.

        
Could the Easter Bunny have left eggs in a old hat box? She








        
climbed up on a chest and lifted the lid. And there were eggs - all












       
packed in an old hat! Katy took out the eggs carefully and counted



      
them, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. What beautiful colours! Katy took the eggs and










       
went down stairs. The Easter Bunny hadn't forgotten her after all. She was











   
sure she had won the prize.















 But there was Carl in the kitchen with a whole pile of eggs on the














 table. He was very excited. "I've found 12 eggs! I've won!" "I found



 - 6," said Katy.










 Grandma stopped laying the table. "I'd forgotten all about those eggs! I'm











 glad you found them Katy. And now for the prize. Carl has the prize








 for the most eggs, but Katy has won the prize for the most



 beautiful eggs."













 Grandma gave them each a big cookie rabbit with an egg baked in its


 middle.




       
Grandma sat down, holding the eggs Katy had found in her lap. "I painted

    
these eggs myself when I was a young girl. Right here in this kitchen










  
I painted them. They turned out so pretty that I kept them all








   
these years. But now each of you may choose one for you own to





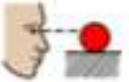





keep always."









 Carl  chose  first. He  picked  out an  egg with a  picture of a  galloping  horse

 on it. Katy  chose an  egg with a  lovely  bird  sitting on a  branch. Katy

 held  up  her  egg and  looked at it  closely. She  turned it  round and  round

 to  see  all the  bright colours.







       
The children put their eggs in a row on the window seat. "Now, what

 shall we do with them?"     "We don't do anything with them,"

   said Katy. "They are so beautiful  we just  look at  them."





















        
Grandma did not say a word. She put on her shawl and went out the kitchen

 door. In a few  minutes  she came back  carrying a  small  tree. She fixed

 the tree so that it would  stand on the  table. Then she  ran  a  thread

 through  each of the  beautiful  eggs and  hung  them on the  tree.



     
"It's an Easter Egg Tree!" said Katy. It was a lovely tree, but it was so
         
very small. Carl asked Grandma "please show us how to make eggs
      
with pictures on them. Then we can have a bigger tree."







The next morning when the children came downstairs they found Grandma



dyeing eggs. Grandma drew designs on paper. Each picture had a name -



The Bright and Morning Star, The Deer on the Mountain, The Cooing Dove,



The Pomegranate, and The Horn Blowing Rooster. All the children painted



pictures on the eggs. Soon the table was as beautiful as a flower garden









with all the painted eggs. Now they had enough eggs to make a big



tree.








         
"Let's go and find a big tree," said Carl. He went into the woods

     
and found a young white birch tree. It was so large that it had to stand on

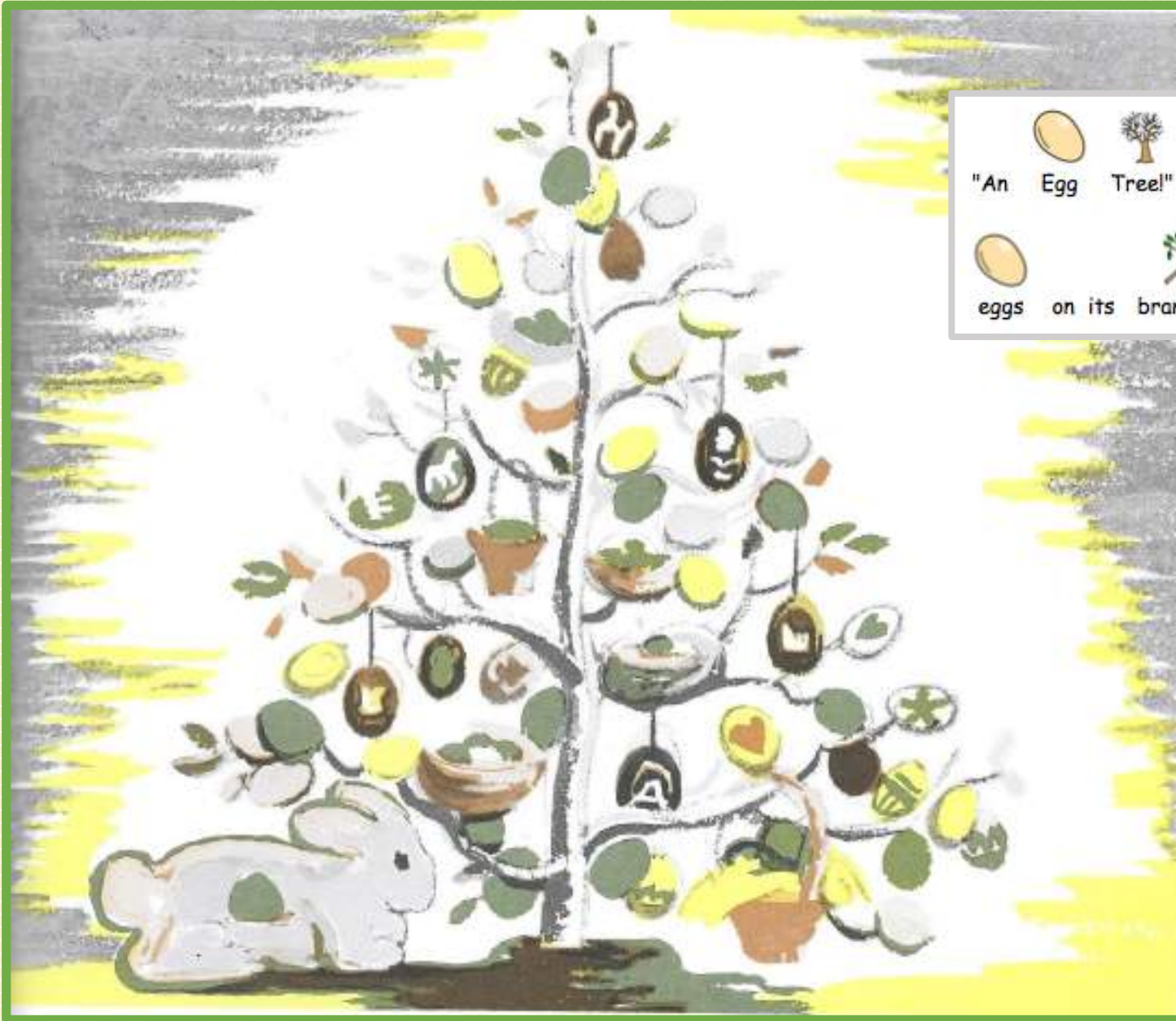
      
the floor. The children hung the eggs they had painted on the branches.

       
"It is such a beautiful tree!" said Katy. "Yes," said Grandma. "It makes it

      
feel like Spring has come into the house. We should have a party" So




       
Grandma gave a party for the tree. All the children from all the farms



 
around were invited.



"An Egg Tree!" they said. "We've never seen a tree that grows
eggs on its branches!"



         
"Next Easter we will have a bigger tree," Katy said. "A really big

  
tree," said Carl.

       
Next year the children began weeks ahead of Easter to decorate the Egg

       
Tree. This time the tree was so tall its top touched the ceiling.

100       
Hundreds of eggs hung from its branches. When the sun shone the tree

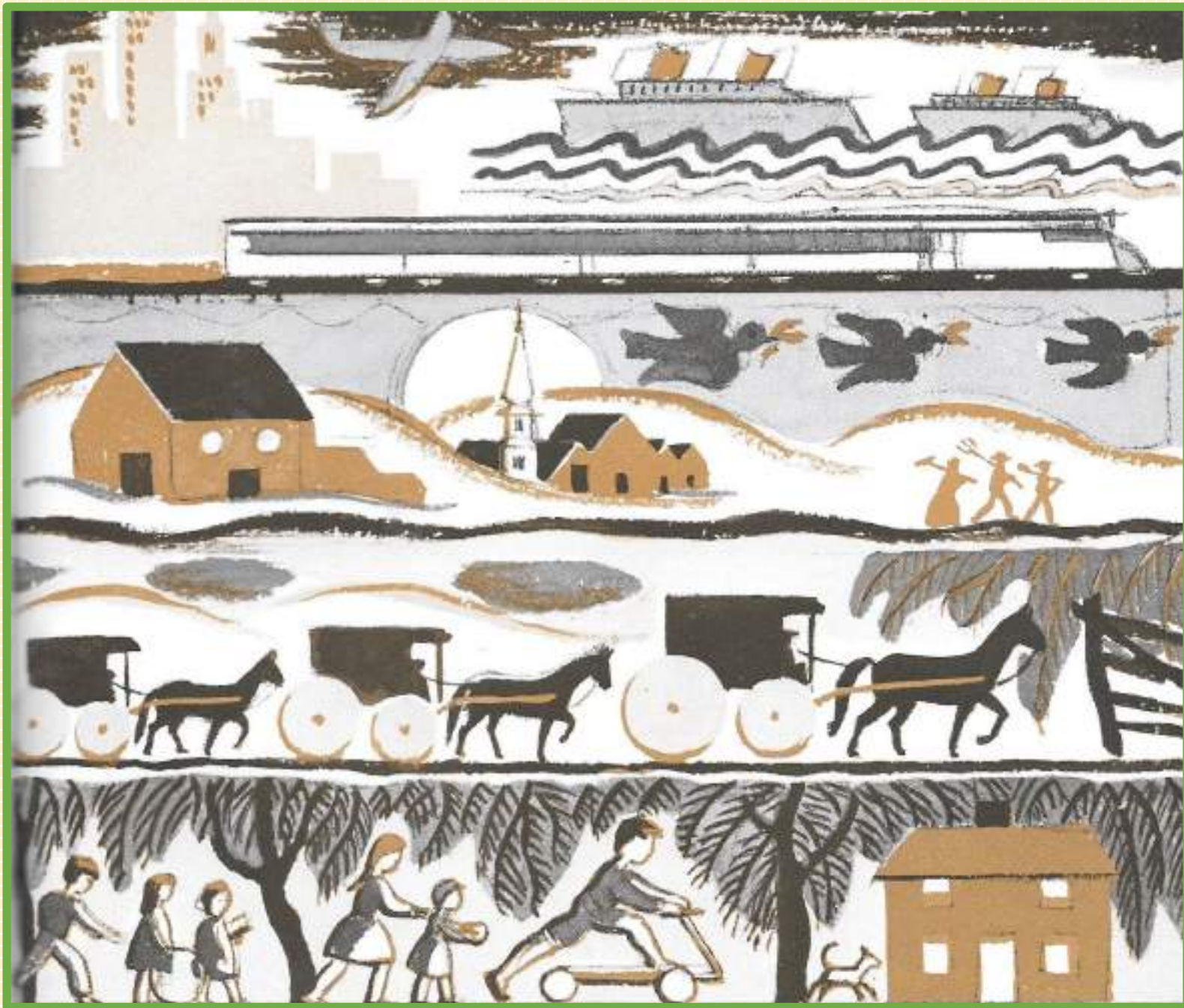
 
looked like a rainbow.

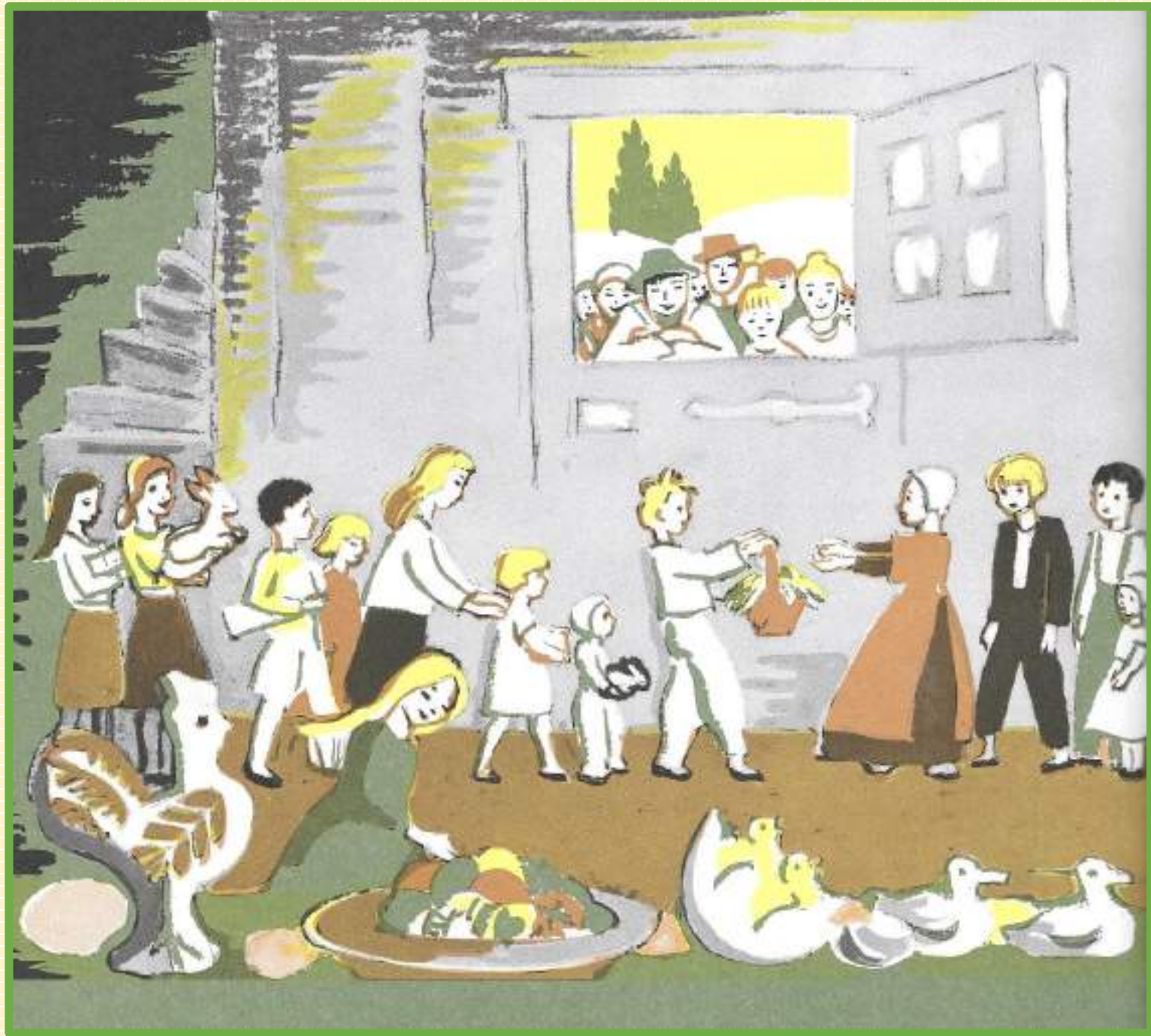
        
Grandma looked out of the window, "Who are all these people coming up










the driveway?"

       
They were people who had heard about the wonderful Egg Tree. The

    
little red house had become famous.



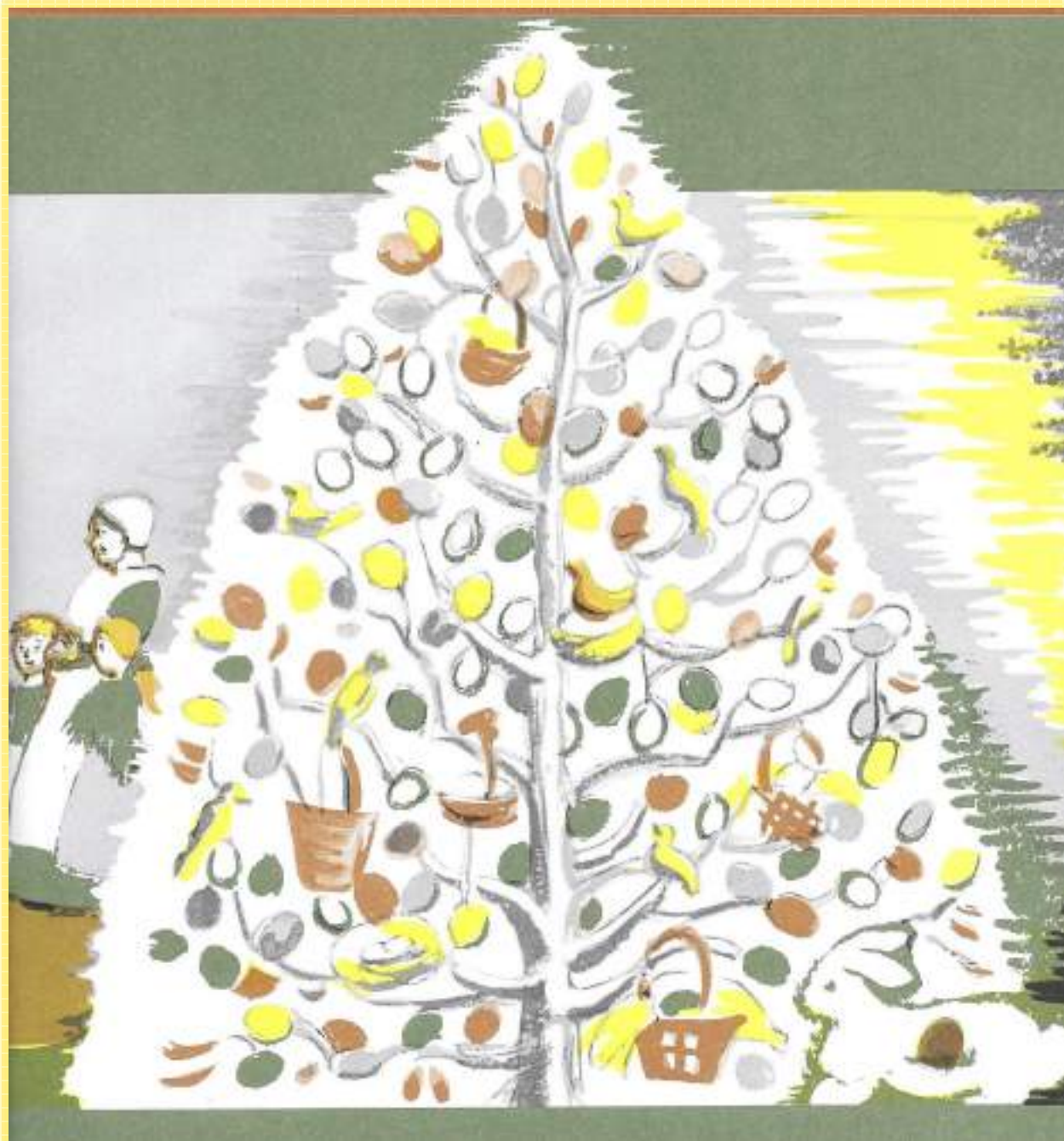


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MAKING AN EASTER EGG TREE

Perhaps you would like to make an Easter Egg Tree in your own home or in school or in your library?

First ask a grown-up to help you blow the eggs, with a little hole at one end and a larger one at the other.

Then dye the shells different colors with Easter Egg dyes. After that paint designs on some of them with dye or paint—you can use watercolor or showcard paints—or scratch them on. Perhaps you will want to leave some of the shells white, and paint on a white background. Some eggs may be plain colors.

All through this book are lovely designs that you may use, or you may prefer to make your own.

Hang the eggs on the branches of a little tree, outdoors or indoors. If the branches are bare, the tree will look pretty whitewashed or painted white. Under the tree put your candy Easter eggs and any gay Easter toys. Then ask your friends in to see it!