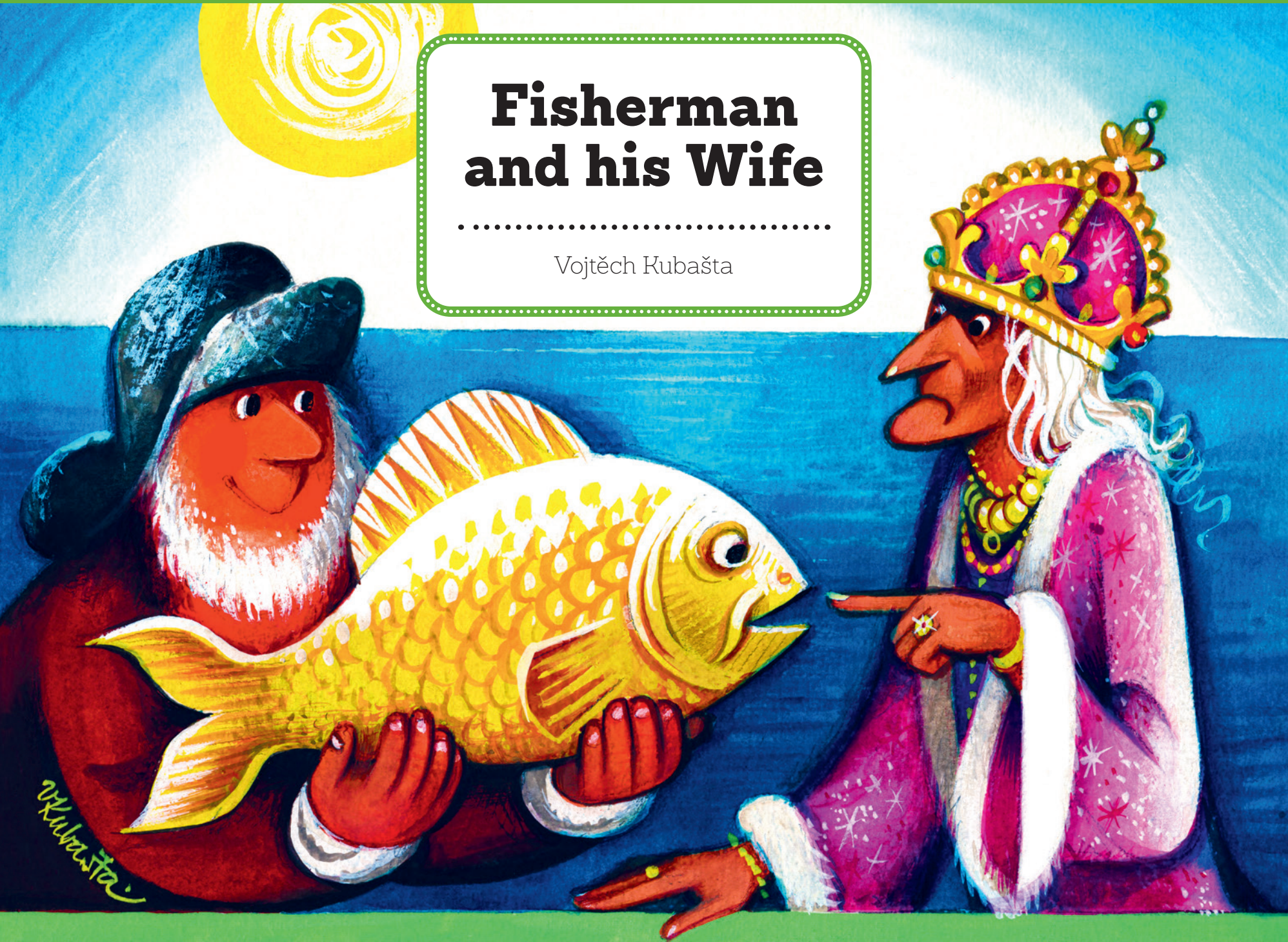


## Fisherman and his Wife

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Vojtěch Kubašta







**E**very day an old fisherman put to sea. Mostly he returned empty-handed to his wife, who was bitter from long years of poverty. On his best days, he caught a few minnows. Then came the day when his net picked up a truly unusual fish. It was all gold! Taking pity on the lovely creature, the fisherman released it. As it wriggled away, the fish called in a human voice:

"Your kindness deserves rich reward. I make human wishes come true!" That evening, the man told his wife about this. "Why didn't you make a wish, old fool?" she lamented. "Our cottage is falling to pieces! Go and ask for a new house, and don't come back without one!" The door of the hut slammed. The fisherman did as he was told.





**U**nlike humans, fish keep their promises. What the old man saw on his way home put a bounce in his step: in place of the dilapidated hut stood a lovely little house with its own backyard and orchard. His wife would stop her moaning at last! But instead of a smile she greeted him with anger and reproaches. "You fathead!" she

wailed. "Why ask the magic fish for an ordinary house? I demand a mansion fit for a prince! Back to the sea, old man, and get me one!" His heart filled with sorrow, the fisherman knelt on the shore and begged for a second wish. "Golden fish, my wife has taken it into her head that she should be a princess."





**T**he wife's second whimsy, too, was made real: the fish conjured up a mansion with two towers, thirty chambers and a troop of devoted servants. Dressed in a splendid gown, the wife floated along the marble corridors with her nose in the air. But her expression remained sour and dissatisfied. "Why, you stupid old man, am I but a princess?" she snapped.

"I should be ruler of this province! I should be a queen!" She stamped her foot and commanded the guard to escort the kind fisherman from the mansion. "If you wish to come home, make my wish come true!" his wife called after him. "That's no home of mine," he mumbled, as he waited on the shore for his scaly, golden friend to swim to him.



**I** imagine meeting a creature that will grant you every wish! What would you wish for? The fisherman who catches a magic, golden fish doesn't wish for anything. The same cannot be said of his wife. A beautiful house, a mansion, a palace, to rule the world – she wishes for and gets all these things, and still she wants more. If you would like to know what makes the greedy fisherman's wife happy, and how the story ends, follow the old fisherman to the sea, read this well-known tale, and lose yourself in Vojtěch Kubašťa's pop-up illustrations.



# Fisherman and his Wife

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TALES