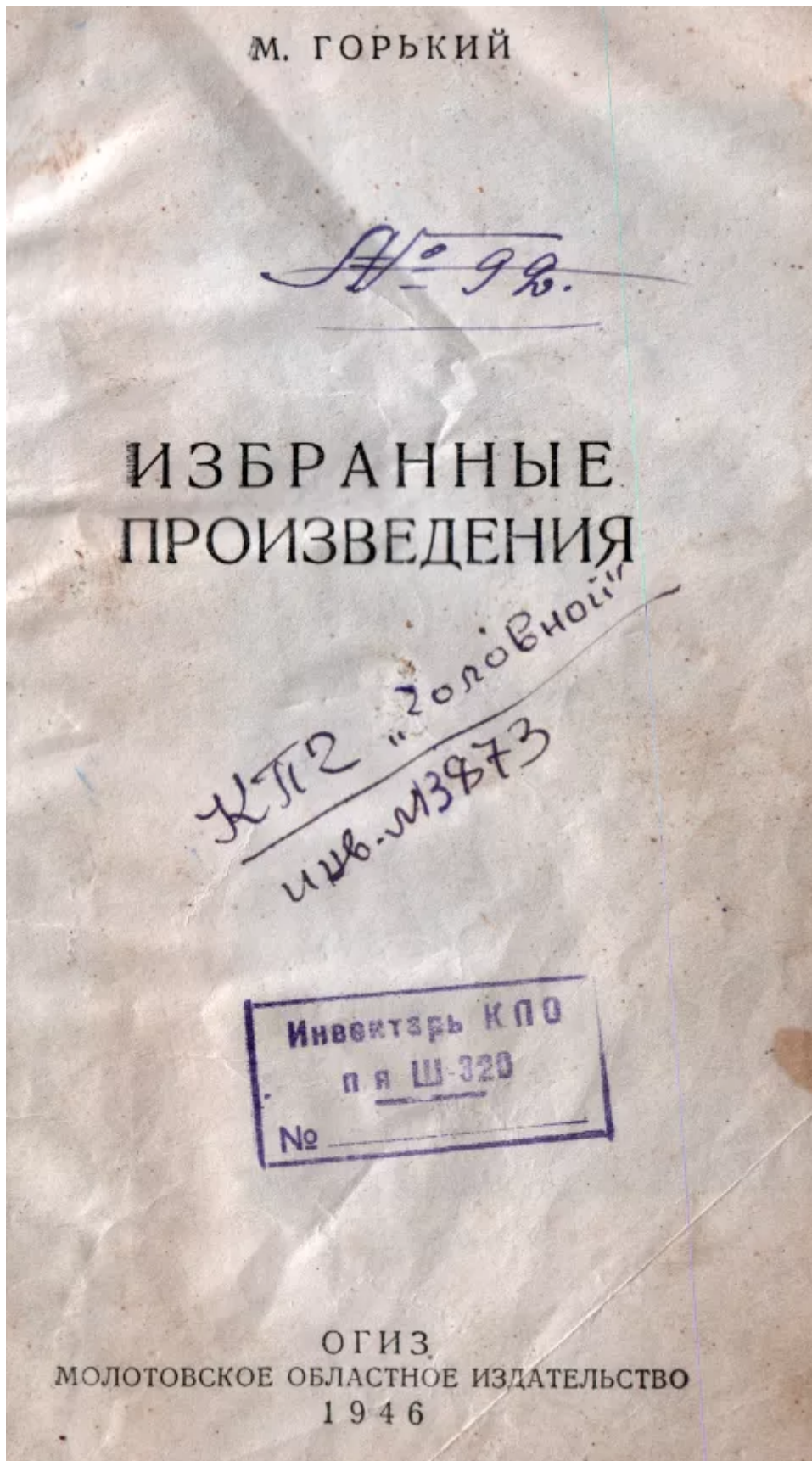


Title Page Of Book By Gorky



This is the title sheet from a book by Gorky from the library in the camp in Nyrob settlement, Perm region. I read aloud from it to the prisoners in 1952. They wrote it off from the library assets in the

same year and I was allowed to take it. There is a stamp of the cultural and political department on it. I've kept it since then. In 1951 I was arrested and kept in the cell with criminals in Nikolaev prison. In February 1951 they read my sentence that had been received from Moscow: 'For the unauthorized escape from her settlement location Dener Esfir Borisovna is sentenced to three years of imprisonment in work camps and further return to the location of settlement for an indefinite term'. I was sent to the transition prison in Nyrob settlement in Perm region and then to Shunia camp. I was kept in the barrack for criminals. This was terrible! They smoked makhorka tobacco and cursed terribly. They made lesbian love behind a sheet curtain, smoked hashish delivered from Central Asia. What was I to do?! Fortunately, there was a cultural/political unit where I could borrow books to read. I went there: there were bookshelves with books on them. I read in the evenings: there was a table and a lamp on it in the center of the barrack. I met political prisoners from another barrack. I was lucky to meet Nathalia Ilinichna Sats. We spent a few months together. She asked me whether I could sing. Hearing my answer was 'no' she asked me to recite something: 'You have a talent. I will work with you'. She taught me about stresses and pauses and about the vocal organ. After those classes she told me that I could perform on any stage. 'Why would I need to do this?' Her answer was: 'To make them loyal you will recite poems or tell them stories in the evening. Of course, you won't recite from Anna Karenina or War and Peace'. My fellow inmates called me 'friersha' - small fish - plus, I was a Jew. There was no anti-Semitism, but staying together in confined space provokes to entertain oneself or tease somebody. My nationality was as vulnerable as somebody's big weight, for example. So I recited poems or told them stories in the evening. The senior inmate, Zoya, ordered, 'Silence! Keep so quiet that we can even hear a fly buzzing by!' They teased me a little, but they listened to me.