

Russian diaspora children's

# The Whale Swims North

**Children's book.** KompasGuide. Moscow 2015  
45 norm pages (1.800 characters incl. spaces)

Illustrations by Irina Petelina

Age 6+ and adults

> philosophical tale, journey, ocean, North, indigenous peoples, fantastic animals

**Translations:** China, Croatia (full English translation available)

Written for the youngest readers, this philosophical tale gained many fans among older readers. It stands out among other texts for children because of the magical and unique atmosphere of the North it creates and the universal values it conveys.

Mamoru is a small fantastic creature with a very long tale. He has just finished his studies in a school of islands' keepers, and now he has to find his island to take care of it. He wasn't the best student, that's why a difficult condition was imposed on him: to recognize his island among hundreds of others, he has to first see it in dreams while sleeping. If he fails, he will turn into a stone.

Mamoru makes his journey through the oceans on the back of a whale. They go north, because in his first dream Mamoru saw that his island would be very far from all others, situated in hot climates, already occupied by other mamorus, who were better students. During their journey to the Bering sea, Mamoru and the whale will, partly in reality and partly in dreams, discover customs and legends of northern peoples, meet fantastic creatures and animals and help them to solve their problems.

Each encounter and dream deals, through parables, with an aspect of human life: friendship, family, hope, belief in one's self, kindness towards other beings. Friendship between Mamoru and the whale will be tested several times, and all their journey teach the reader that no one can find his island on his own but only being open to the world and other beings.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
3 languages

### awards

2023 Book of the Year Award  
finalist  
Internationale Jugendbibliothek  
Munich  
2022 Astrid Lindgren Memorial  
Award nominee  
2019 Arsenev Award  
2018 Krapivin International Prize  
2015 Kniguru Award

**sample available**  
full English

### other works

Pocket Dwarf Bead  
The Owl Wolf  
The Cloud Holder  
The Bongo's Dreams

Anastasia Strokina was born 1984 in the Murmansk region. She graduated from music school with a piano major, taught herself the cello and was a member of the Collegium Musicum Moscow chamber orchestra. Strokina not only writes books for children, she is also engaged in literary research and translates from English, French, Dutch and Italian. Born beyond the North Pole, Strokina sets her stories in Northern Russia and Scandinavia, following Selma Lagerlöf and Hans Christian Andersen. Her philosophical fairy tales have been awarded numerous prizes. Strokina is always travelling a lot to where her stories take place.

# Anastasia Strokina

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