

# KOMPASGUIDE PUBLISHERS: NEW WAY OF READING RUSSIA



**КомпасГид**  
издательский дом

**CHILDREN'S  
AND YA BOOKS**



# “IT IS IMPORTANT FOR US THAT BOOKS COULD BECOME A CAUSE FOR A DIALOGUE”

Teenagers, despite all stereotypes, enjoy reading. But they want to read not the books from the school curriculum, but the ones that can speak their own language. And they are ready to actively partake in shaping the society they live in and belong to. In truth, they are looking for a dialogue.

We hope our characters have no ideology that we could forcefully promote through the book market. Our characters are mostly individualistic. And the topics they discuss are absolutely different. KompasGuide offers a concept of children’s reading. Our books are for thinking kids and teenagers. Any book, even if it’s written for 5-year-old kids, must help them understand something.

Most books for teenagers published by KompasGuide encourage them to ask adults for the answers. We firmly believe children have the right to know what is important to them. They must feel free to ask about things they are interested in. It is vital for children to understand what this world is really like and to be sure their family does not hide anything from them.

That is why KompasGuide has published books that are dealing with death. With the World War II. With the mass prosecutions of 1937. With diseases. With divorces. With troubles and joys of the complicated school life.



It is important for us that parents could see KompasGuide books not as just something you give a child to read, but as a link between the world of children and the world of adults, a cause for dialogue. No matter if this dialogue is easy or hard, it is essential for both sides. That is what we are working for.

**Vitali Ziusko,**  
*KompasGuide Publisher*

# SVETLANA AND NIKOLAY PONOMAREV:

RETRO FUTURISM AGAINST PREJUDICE



■ **THE CITY WITHOUT WAR**  
■ KompasGuide, 2019, 304 p.

Draft  
cover



Winter  
2019

14+

Tags: *dystopia, future, war, coming-of-age, survival, searching for yourself*  
Similar to: *Metro 2033* by Dmitry Glukhovsky

The postwar dystopia is seen through the eyes of a former military school student. His school is an excellent example of the institution whose graduates are true officers ready to die for the best City in the world and its Leader. But 15-year-old Sasha got expelled and charged with the betrayal: for saving his own life he had to call his best friend a traitor. Now he became a mercenary trooper to earn some money and does the dirtiest job — this is when he discovers the hard truth about the City.

The city is surrounded not by enemies but by residents of other degraded cities, similarly brainwashed and deprived of future. But rumors tell that if you get through the outposts you can reach a wonderful city where there is no war and the sun never goes down...

Svetlana and Nikolay Ponomarev's book has a retro futuristic setting: the characters are living in a world that reminds of Russia or Eastern Europe but their life is full of details and things typical for late 1970s. In this world, it seems the Internet and cell phones were never invented and military career is considered to be the most prestigious. But who is waging the war and for what reason? What makes the Leader and citizens waste more than 15 years shooting, building outposts and looking for spies?

Sasha faces many trials, end up on the verge of death and makes many reckless mistakes before he starts seeing the difference between real friends and hypocrites, valor and betrayal, his own thoughts and imposed stereotypes. For him, coming-of-age means getting rid of political, psychological and common prejudice of any kind.

SVELTANA AND NIKOLAY PONOMAREV LIVE IN OMSK; BOTH HAVE A DEGREE IN SOCIAL PEDAGOGICS AND PSYCHOLOGY. THEY ARE RAISING FIVE CHILDREN, BIOLOGICAL AND ADOPTED. THE PONOMAREVS WON 2008 SERGEY MIKHALKOV AWARD FOR BEST TEENAGE FICTION. THEIR NOVELS GOT RECOGNITION FOR BEING BOTH ENTERTAINING AND PROFOUND AND DESCRIBING ANY COMPLEX SUBJECT WITH THE RIGHT WORDS ALL TEENAGERS CAN RELATE TO.



# EUGENE RUDASHEVSKY:

TRAVELLER, ADVENTURE-SEEKER, MASTER OF WORDS



EUGENE RUDASHEVSKY (BORN 1987) IS ONE OF THE AUTHORS WHOSE BIOGRAPHIES ARE AS EXCITING AS THEIR STORIES. HE WORKED AS A GUIDE IN THE SIBERIAN TAIGA, STUDIED IN THE US, HITCHHIKED AND TRAVELED THROUGH THE MOST AMAZING PLACES — AND AVIDLY READ EVERYTHING FROM CLASSICAL LITERATURE TO POSTMODERNISM. HE WRITES NOVELLAS, ADVENTURE NOVELS, FANTASY AND NON-FICTION

**I'm mostly interested in stories** addressed to a growing-up person, but I do not write specifically for teenagers. Every new book is an opportunity to sum up and share my personal experience.

**When I was working on Solongo. The Secret of the Lost Expedition**, I needed some of my characters to have a dialogue in the Buryat language, unknown to others. I can't speak Buryat, but I know a lama who studied in Ivolginsky dastan. I contacted him, he contacted the elders and altogether they translated the dialogue from Russian to Buryat. Obviously, few people will understand the parts in Buryat, but I'm very proud they were written with the help of the native speakers.

**Culture rests on three pillars.** Science explores the world. Philosophy helps to think over the results. Art grasps them and puts them into use. Teenage literature must cover all three dimensions to give its readers a better understanding of our world. The science pillar for me is the wildlife, animals and ethnical diversity of our planet. The philosophy pillar comprises emotions of a teenager trapped between the happiness of exploration and the suffering of loneliness. And the art pillar is the Russian language itself, its dialects and forms of expression it can provide.

**I discovered Kafka and Márquez in secondary school**, and back then they became the most important writers for me. I can't say Kafka is simpler than Dostoyevsky, but at that moment his prose resonated with me. And this is the case when the freedom of choice helped me to find the story I psychologically needed most of all.

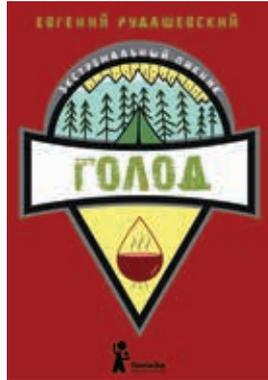
**Americans have a great quality**, often ignored by many in Russia: it's a nation of travelers, wanderers and nomads. Motels, trailers and bikers appeared in the US in the 1950s and became the part of their culture, captured the spirit of the age. Capote- or Kerouac-styled travels are uncommon for us; Russians are more prone to running in circles and self-analysis. Americans have an easier way to deal with the problems: they get at the wheel and on their journey decide how to sort things out.





# OVERWHELMING NON-FICTION FOR ADVENTURE SEEKERS

- **THE EXTREME PICNIC: BONFIRE, HUNGER, THIRST, SHELTER**
- KompasGuide, 2018, 178 p.



In 2018, KompasGuide starts new series by Eugene Rudashevsky called The Extreme Picnic. It is a collection of short encyclopedias addressed to children and adolescents from 9 to 13 which provides lifhacks for those who go for a trip — or just want to go, maybe tomorrow, maybe some other time. 30-year-old Eugene Rudashevsky is an experienced traveler himself, therefore he has a lot to tell about this subject: from setting a bonfire correctly to avoiding wild animals in the forest or in the mountains.

The Extreme Picnic includes 4 books: Bonfire, Hunger, Thirst, and Shelter. Each of them is divided in three parts: green, yellow, and red. The green one describes typical situations like what kind of food you should put in your backpack. The yellow one deals with small difficulties, for examples, the heavy rain which destroyed your camp. And the last chapters, red ones, concerns the extreme cases like finding yourself lost in the woods without a drop of water.

Eugene Rudashevsky prepared huge amount of examples from all the adventure novels he ever read (probably he's read them all!), from his own experience, so every book itself becomes as overwhelming as a solid novel of Fenimore Cooper. Funny, wise, inspiring, informative — such adjectives could describe the style of these series.

10+ *Tags: survival, non-fiction, adventures, travelling, challenge*  
*Similar to: Everest by Alexandra Stewart and Joe Todd-Stanton*

## ■ THE CITY OF THE SUN. EYES OF DEATH

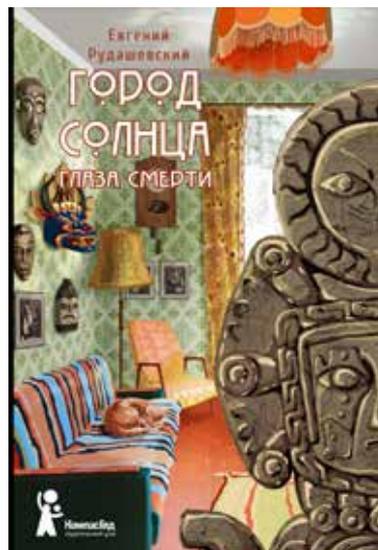
■ KompasGuide, 2018, 368 p.

A Mansion on Prechistenka Street is to blame for everything. As soon as Maxim found out his mother was selling this old painting, his life in a drowsy Moscow suburb had become dangerous. Why are some suspicious people ready for everything to find a work by unknown painter Alexander Berg? Is there a connection between the image of an ordinary house and the fate of Maxim's long-lost father, who loved mysteries, codes and hidden meanings?

The protagonist, a 19-year-old journalism student, while preparing a report about the painting as a home assignment, got accidentally involved into a detective story. And dragged his friends into it: his aloof groupmate Dima, energetic and ambitious Anya and Kristina, whom he met for the first time not so long ago but to him, it's like he has known her forever. They start their own investigation and soon realize there's a long way ahead of them.

The first novel of The City of the Sun tetralogy demonstrates that Eugene Rudashevsky is interested in almost everything in the world; art, nature, students' life, human motives — no matter what he writes about, his prose remains both informative and entertaining. With each new book the young writer's style is becoming more confident and mature while action-filled plotline is getting more intricately entwined with psychological depth.

In sequels planned for publishing in 2019, the protagonist will face a dangerous journey through the world's most surprising places: India, Peru, the Amazon Jungle. Just like covers of four books make a single image together, their plots unite in a single storyline filled with adventures, searching for your true self and endless discoveries.



December  
**2018**

14+ Tags: detective, codes, quest, journey, Moscow, students' life, friendship, first love, parents-children relationships  
Similar to: *The Body* by Stephen King

### EXCERPT

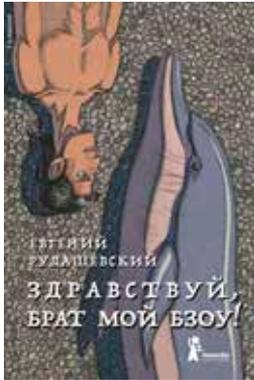
«The thing is, don't tell me where you're heading. They shouldn't know. Trust me, I care about you. And I know what I'm doing. This is our best chance. If you think I like this, you're wrong. But I have to pay my father's debt. I hope when it's over we can forget about it once and for all.

You'll worry, I know. But this is the only way.

You'll get mad. But I have to do this on my own. Trust me.

I thought everything over. This is the only option».

Maxim kept rewriting the message, cut it down to a couple of lines, extended to several pages. Deleted and wrote all over again. He wanted his mother not to make mistakes and do as he said but realized nothing would sound convincing to her. This is why he decided to send a copy to his stepfather».



## ■ HELLO, MY BROTHER BZOU!

■ KompasGuide, 2015, 192 p.

It is the first book by the young author, which was published by KompasGuide in 2015 and immediately became a teenage fiction sensation. The novel tells a story of an unusual friendship between Amza, an Abkhazian boy, and a dolphin; and their fates are surprisingly entwined. Full of details of life in a the Black Sea fishermen's village, rich in folklore and mythology elements, this heart-warming story gained many fans: KompasGuide is currently selling its third print run.

12+ *Tags: wartime, coming-of-age, animals and people, sea, touching novel*  
*Similar to: Life of Pi by Yann Martel*



## ■ THE PATH OF KUMUTKAN

■ KompasGuide, 2016, 224 p.

The author continues to develop his style, which is becoming his trademark, in his 2016 novel, The Path of Kumutkan. Just like Hello, My Brother Bzou!, it is set in an exotic for most Russian readers location — this time, on the shores of the Baikal Lake. Rudashevsky weaves together astonishing in their uniqueness Buryat beliefs, tales about the golendrds — Siberian German Dutch descendants, and urban legends and pop culture of the 2000s. But again, in the focus of the writer's attention are rare animals: kumutkans, Baikal seals, whose fate is linked to the fate of the main characters.

11+ *Tags: coming-of-age, animals and people, survival novel, Siberia*  
*Similar to: Black Beauty by Anna Sewell*



## ■ THE RAVEN

■ KompasGuide, 2017, 176 p.

14-year-old Dima, the main character of The Raven, joins three grown men on their trip to taiga, hoping they will teach him all the subtleties of sable hunt. Uncle Nikolay Nikolayevitch can read traces on the snow like J.F. Cooper's characters. Artemykh can masterfully crack jokes and keep up a mundane urban conversation; but nevertheless, the taiga feels like home to him. Vitya has a tragic past, a remedy to which he seeks in sable hunt. With the help of these people, Dima strives to undergo a sort of initiation and prove himself he is not a child anymore. The novel was included in the list of White Ravens Festival, held by Munich International Youth Library, and was awarded "Commander's Choice" at V. Krapivin Prize.

10+ *Tags: coming-of-age, animals and people, Siberia, adventure novel, children/adults relationship*  
*Similar to: Never Cry Wolf by Farley Mowat*



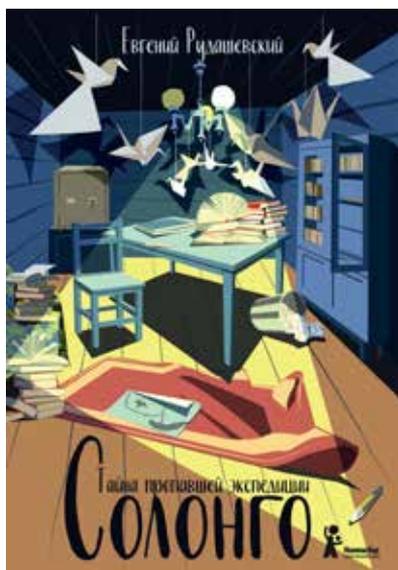


■ **INSOMNIA**  
■ KompasGuide, 2018, 224 p.

The author proves his strength in a completely new genre: “campus life novel” with an obvious homage to Jack Kerouak (especially *On the Road*). Dan, 19-year-old student from Moscow, moved to Chicago, forced by his father who wants him to become a lawyer. Dan makes amends with people all around him, reluctantly falls in love, writes a diary, skips most of the classes — and hides something extremely special in a black parcel. He decided something of high importance, but he wouldn't reveal what till the very end of the trip to Amish village he and three of his friends has attended.

The atmosphere of this novel borrows something from J.D. Salinger, but the main influence is definitely the music of Johnny Cash, Kris Kristofferson, Bob Dylan and other singers of the freedom and the youth. Dan is lost somewhere between the teenage and the adulthood, he doesn't want to live the life his father prepared for him, but also he cannot find his own path. He just wants to go somewhere, move in the sake of moving, look around and admire the world. Is it possible for him? For other young men longing for freedom?..

16+ *Tags: young adult, campus life, children/adult relationship, road novel, USA*  
*Similar to: The Catcher in the Rye by J. D. Salinger*



■ **SOLONGO.**  
■ **THE SECRET OF THE LOST EXPEDITION**  
■ KompasGuide, 2017, 368 p.

With this novel, Eugene Rudashevsky reaches a new level of creativity: with more than a dozen of meticulously developed characters with their own fates and personalities, multiple storylines, hundreds of action-packed pages, the book seems a full-fledged adventure novel! The novel starts like an ordinary quest, but soon turns into a pursuit novel, a detective, a story of pathfinders and traitors and a parable about curiosity as a driving force. Each genre shift brings new surprises, just like mountain passes: on your journey, a walk through a picturesque valley will be followed by a risky climb or even a face-off with a beast or a human being.

37000  
copies sold

12+ *Tags: Siberia, adventure novel, children/adults relationship, lost world*  
*Similar to: The Pathfinder, or The Inland Sea by James Fenimore Cooper*

# OLGA GROMOVA:

GIVING VOICE TO THE CHILDREN OF THE 1930S

FOR MANY YEARS, OLGA GROMOVA (BORN 1956) WORKED AS A LIBRARIAN AND EDITOR OF BIBLIOTEKA V SHKOLE (SCHOOL LIBRARY) MAGAZINE AND BECAME A WRITER BY CHANCE. HER FRIEND STELLA NUDOLSKAYA TOLD HER THE STORY OF HER LIFE — THE STORY THAT DESERVED TO BE WRITTEN DOWN.

**I never planned to be a writer.** If a decade ago somebody had told me I would become a writer, moreover, a children’s writer, I’d have called them insane. I worked for many years as the chief editor of Biblioteka v Shkole magazine, so I wrote a lot, but this was non-fiction only.

**When I was seven, my grandfather took me for the first time to the Tretyakov Gallery,** and his first phrase was: “This is not the last time”. Thus, he taught me that a normal person does not go to a museum a couple of times, but returns again and again looking for something new — there is no point trying to see the whole Gallery in one visit. And I grew up with this feeling — this is not the last time you hear the music and you’ll always have books and museums.

**I believe Sugar Child** is about staying strong in the inhumane conditions. And to me, the main character is not Elya, but her mother, who helped her survive in these conditions. Because how could a 5-8-year-old child make it, were it not for the parents? It would’ve been impossible for the girl to live, if they had not given her the willpower and if her mother hadn’t supported her the best she could. That is why it is the story of staying strong.

**Literature was an integral part of our family life.** I’ve been reading for as long as I can remember. Also, we used to read aloud in our family, even when we were big enough to read ourselves. When I became older, the book that helped me a lot was, surprisingly enough, Jane Eyre. To me it was first of all the book about self-respect and staying strong, and love story was only secondary.

**It’s harder to write for children** than for adults. As someone great once said, rephrasing Stanislavsky, “You must write for children just like for adults, but much better”. The way I see it, you must be more transparent, pure and subtle without condescending or lecturing. Children will never forgive that.



# SUGAR CHILD: A BIG STORY OF A LITTLE GIRL



■ OLGA GROMOVA  
■ SUGAR CHILD  
KompasGuide, 2017, 160 p.



In the modern Russian literature, especially in the children's literature, few books become a sensation. Not every year it is possible to find a book, which is read and discussed almost by everyone.

Olga Gromova's *Sugar Child*, first published in 2014, has been reissued several times, and its 2017 reissue differs from the others: it's a "grown-up" version, it has new cover. The author of the new cover is Ksenia Dereka. Her illustration won the reader's competition held by KompasGuide and Illustrators.ru site in social networks in June 2017.

*Sugar Child* tells the story of a 5-year-old girl Elya, who was sent with her mother to a camp in Kirgizia as family members of an "enemy of the people". Settling into a new place is hard, looking back on happy days in Moscow is painful and getting to know strange people is scary. However, this novel, despite its difficult subject, is in its own way bright and optimistic: new place will be settled into, a grown-up Elya will see Moscow again and good people can be found anywhere.

 71 000  
copies sold

rights  
sold to  Belgium  
Netherlands  
Bulgaria  
France

10+ *Tags: true story, ethnic, survival, history drama, coming-of-age*  
*Similar to: The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas by John Boyne*

## WHY IS SUGAR CHILD BELOVED BY READERS?

**BASED ON A TRUE STORY.** Elya — whose real name is, in fact, Stella Nudolskaya — was only five at the beginning of *Sugar Child*, this is why her memories are vague. Her mother's stories and grown-up contemplation helped a bit, but getting rid of this vagueness completely is impossible. The memory grasps episodes that happened 70 years ago, and this obvious uncertainty brings a special charm to Elya's/Stella's story. The character seems to talk to the reader at this very moment and we are listening to her speech, sometimes confused and self-contradictory.

**OPTIMISTIC DESPITE THE SITUATION.** *Sugar Child* is full of scary and cruel scenes, but none of them overcome its overall light and inspiring tone. It is not just a set of disjointed episodes from the 1930-40s, with storyline substituted by character development, but it serves as an effective antidepressant: no matter what challenges Stella's family has to face, good people are always around. This tragic story inoculates its readers against self-doubt, dispassion, stereotypes, inability to see the other side of a horrible era.

**HEART-WARMING WITHOUT BEING TEAR-JERKING.** The protagonist is surrounded by characters causing various emotions, from sympathy to pride, but she seldom deals with disgusting or unpleasant people. The immaculate balance between sentimentality and ability to make the readers feel moved, the superbly described "spirit of the time" and its rich and realistic characters make *Sugar Child* a work that deserves to be reissued over and over.

## WAR CHILDHOOD SERIES: NEW WAY OF UNDERSTANDING WWII

FOLLOWING HEROIC WAR LITERATURE, “THE LIEUTENANT PROSE” AND THE MYTHOLOGIZATION OF THE 1930–40S, POSTMODERNISM ADDED A NEW VOICE, A VOICE OF A CHILD, TO THE LITERATURE. BUT CHILDREN GOT THEIR VOICES ONLY MANY YEARS AFTER THESE EVENTS; MAYBE THIS IS WHY THEIR STORIES BECAME SO ORIGINAL AND DISTINCTIVE AMONG NUMEROUS BOOKS ABOUT THE WAR.



■ STANISLAV OLEFIR

### ■ WHEN I WAS A KID, THE WAR WENT ON

KompasGuide, 2017, 152 p.

Stanislav Olefir’s (1938–2015) short story collection is set in a Ukrainian village, occupied by the Germans, and also covers post-war years. Big issues like war, cruelty of Nazi soldiers, collectivization and famine are depicted through personal stories and sketches about astonishing people living next to him. Vivid characters seem to come from Shukshin’s stories, like Fedya, a railroad mechanic, who refuses to work until he gets his borscht.

It’s hardly possible to imagine life in a village without animals, so they become the characters of half of the stories: friendly dogs, voiceless hens and an amiable piglet Sherstyuk maneuvering through a minefield in search of potatoes turn out to be as interesting as people. Thanks to human characters and likeable animals, this harsh time feels diverse: no matter how tragic this period was, daily life went on and funny things kept happening.

10+

*Tags: true story, existentialism, occupation, Ukraine*  
*Similar to: Fly Away Home by Christine Nöstlinger*



■ EDUARD VERKIN

### ■ CLOUD REGIMENT

KompasGuide, 2015, 296 p.

Cloud Regiment is a modern book about the war and its heroes, about fates, duty and the courage to live. This book follows the canons of Russian prose for teenagers, but at the same time breaks their limitations. Due to its lack of excessive heroism, simplicity, understatement and demonstration of war routine, this book can be easily compared to the best works of fiction of the 20th century.

The characters lived such a dangerous and eventful life, that each day felt like three. They had to grow up, or even grow old, faster: it can hardly be any other way, when the death keeps following you, waiting for a perfect moment to take your life away. Long passages through marshes and untrodden paths, ambushes and firefights, brief moments of joy in the endless nightmare — this is what Cloud Regiment is about. Every ordinary detail hides an attempt, no matter how feeble, to understand the people, who were ready to sacrifice themselves in the Pskov woodlands.

12+

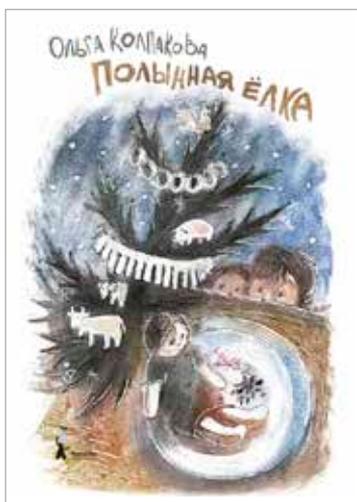
*Tags: soviet mythology, guerilla war, postmodern, coming-of-age*  
*Similar to: The Railway Man by Eric Lomax*

 **30 000**  
copies sold

# OLGA KOLPAKOVA:

TOUCHING AND POETIC

OLGA KOLPAKOVA (BORN IN 1972) IS ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR NON-FICTION AUTHORS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS IN RUSSIA. HER ENCYCLOPEDIAS ARE WELL-KNOWN ALL AROUND IN THE COUNTRY, AND HER BOOK SAGEBRUSH FIR TREE IS BASED ON THE TRUE STORY TOO — BUT IT IS TOUCHING AND EVEN POETIC WORK OF FICTION NEVERTHELESS.



## ■ SAGEBRUSH FIR TREE

■ KompasGuide, 2017, 88 p.

The protagonist, a girl named Mareike, her sisters Mina and Lily, their mom, aunt Josephine and cousin Theodor are Russian Germans, just like their friends and neighbors in Rovnopolye. Although before the war Father told they are “good Germans” and not “Nazis”, they are restricted to live in their homeplace: what if they switch to the enemy’s side? The Soviet government sends such “unreliable” people to Siberia — and the novel describes this journey and the first months in a new home.

A short, but evocative novel and a brief, well-structured historical reference — this is the formula that works for every compassionate reader. Olga Kolpakova has a great experience in writing children’s encyclopedias — she wrote books like Natural Science for Children, The Underwater World, Ancient China and others. She is capable to explain both complex and simple things.

rights sold to  Belarus Kazakhstan (German Language)

 15 000 copies sold

12+

Tags: Siberia, true story, ethnic  
Similar to: *The Wartime Lies* by Louis Begley

### EXCERPT

*“We were attacked by a country named Germany. There lived Germans. Lilya couldn’t get it. We are Germans, too. Our boys sometimes fight the boys from other villages. Ukrainians live in a khutor across the river. And on the other side there’s a Cossack slobodka. The boys speak different languages, go to different schools, but sometimes play and fight together. After that they make peace, go to pioneers’ meetings and sports competitions, march together and sit around campfires.*

*Lilya’s mother told her that a long, long time ago — even our Grandma can’t remember this — some Germans moved to Russia and settled in. And a long time ago — this our Grandma remembers well enough — Russia became the Soviet Union. It is the biggest country in the world and many nations live here. Most people are Russians, but there are many Germans as well.*

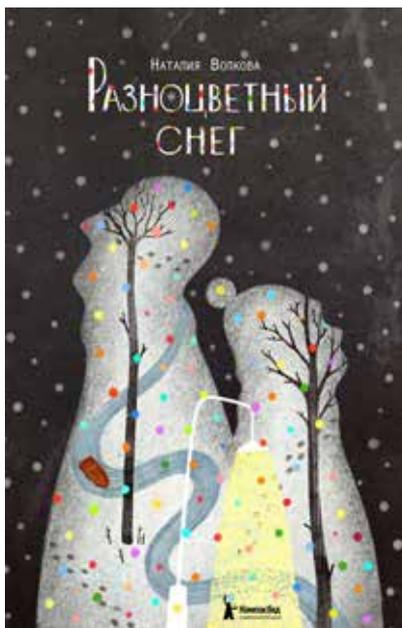
*We are Germans. And we are attacked by Germans, too. Because every nation has people that are good and bad, generous and greedy, kind and evil. Bad Germans are called Nazis. That’s what Father told”.*



# NATALYA VOLKOVA:

PROSE WITHOUT AGE LIMITS

NATALYA VOLKOVA (BORN 1977) IS A POPULAR RUSSIAN WRITER CAPABLE OF TAKING ON THE MOST COMPLEX THEMES AND DELIVERING THEM IN AN EXCITING MANNER. HER MUCH-AWARDED BOOKS ARE AVIDLY READ BY TEENAGERS AND GROWN-UPS ALIKE — HER PROSE SHOWS NO GENERATION LIMITS.



## ■ MULTICOLORED SNOW ■ KompasGuide, 2018, 160 p.

13-year old Stasya gets to know Yakov Semyonovich, a new librarian, and he offers her to join the book club. Naturally, Stasya invites her good friend Roma to distract him from a family tragedy. One of the first tasks of the club is to look up the story of Andrey Startsev, the traitor whose name has been known to everyone in O-zhsk (a town near Voronezh) since the war. It seems like nothing new can be found about Startsev, but Yakov Semyonovich manages to reach out to the teens and ask the right question: “Was Startsev really a traitor?” — and the desire for justice invigorates the friends.

Natalya Volkova wrote a book that covers multiple subjects: growing up and saying farewell to childhood, daily routine of a small town, attitude to the past, eternal questions about duty and betrayal, a generation gap. But obviously this novel can't be described simply by listing its themes — it is much richer and deeper.

The book that borders between a school novel and historical detective can be recommended to readers who prefer realism over fantasy, are interested in facts about the war and, most of all, can't be satisfied with trivial and simplistic fiction. All characters of *Multicolored Snow* are ambiguous: none of them is flawless or horrible beyond belief, just like in the real life. The story is set in familiar 2010s and the characters actively use computers, smartphones and social networks that serve not as symbols of the age but as plot-building elements.

12+

Tags: school, history, World War II, grown-ups and children's relationship  
Similar to: *The Secret of the Old Clock* by Carolyn Keene



# MARIA MARTIROSSOVA:

THE VOICE OF A TRAUMATIZED CHILD

RUSSIAN-ARMENIAN AUTHOR MARIA MARTIROSSOVA CAPTURES THE ZEITGEIST OF ARMENIAN-AZERBAIJAN CONFLICT OF 1980S. HER NOVEL THE PICTURES TO REMEMBER HAS BEEN INCLUDED IN THE WHITE RAVENS BOOK LIST BY THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH LIBRARY (MUNICH, GERMANY), AWARDED A. GAIDAR PRIZE AND SHORT-LISTED IN NATIONAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE PRIZE IN RUSSIA, TRANSLATED IN FRENCH AND RECOMMENDED AS A STUDY MATERIAL IN RUSSIAN SCHOOLS



## ■ THE RED, YELLOW AND BLUE ONES

■ KompasGuide, 2016, 160 p.

The Pictures to Remember, the first novel of the book, is an attempt to capture and save the details from the late 1980s in Baku, the feelings and the atmosphere which distinguished this exact époque, this exact place. But it is also the text which poses the difficult question: How could such a friendly world turn into hostile and unpredictable? Even as a grown-up, the main character isn't able to find the one and only appropriate answer, but at least she collects small pieces of knowledge about the conflict. Could this prevent further ethnic hassles, murders, intolerance? Maybe not, but we definitely need to try.

This novel follows the childhood, adolescence and twenties of a girl born in Baku which used to be diverse and tolerant for everybody. But at the turn of the 20th century situation changed, and hatred to all "others" has become the leading trend in people behavior. The scale of violence forces Armenian girl and her mother to escape from the country — for several months, they hope, which then become the whole life.

The seventh grade (from another novel), that used to be calm and friendly, splits into groups. The first one is for "Azerbaijanis" only, the second one is for "Armenians" and the third group is made of all the others: Russians, Tatars, Jews, Georgians. One student refuses to join any group: with her Russian first name, Armenian last name and an Azerbaijani father, Sveta Avanesova is a stranger in any company.

The main character of The Red, Yellow and Blue Ones fails to understand why ethnicity has become of such importance to grown-ups and children alike — while the others seem not to care about the question itself. The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan forces Sveta and her mother to move from Baku to Erevan — only to become "aliens" again. The author focuses on people and irreversibility of things they have said or done.

12+

Tags: ethnic conflict, tolerance, school life, cosmopolite, coming-of-age, Armenia, Azerbaijan  
Similar to: Days Without End  
by Sebastian Barry

 **White Ravens**

 the whole  
**FRENCH**  
translation  
is available



# SERAPHIMA ORLOVA:

YOUNG VOICE OF RUSSIAN LITERATURE

SERAPHIMA ORLOVA (BORN 1989) IS WELL-KNOWN IN HER HOMETOWN OMSK DRAMATIST: HER PLAYS WERE STAGED WHEN SHE WAS ONLY 25. A FAN OF JOHN GREENE WITH VAST KNOWLEDGE IN RUSSIAN AND FOREIGN LITERATURE, SHE SKILLFULLY EVADES ALL PITFALLS OF WRITING A DEBUT NOVEL: HER SOURCES OF INSPIRATION ARE EVIDENT, BUT HER PROSE IS INIMITABLY UNIQUE AND ITS LANGUAGE IS RELATABLE.



- **TINHEAD**
- KompasGuide, 2019, 256 p.

It all starts with a metal roach running along the megamall. It leads Zhenya, a bored teenage girl, to the robotic club hidden among boutiques and stores. The club turns out to be more than just an interesting spot. It influences Zhenya, who feels devastated after a long-term sickness — she got a serious injury when exploring an abandoned building in the city outskirts.

Her problems must seem familiar and important to every teenager: unsuccessful first love, parents' misunderstanding, conflicts with brother and mocking classmates — and now it all is aggravated by a recent trauma. In the robotics club Zhenya begins to get herself together and slowly reassemble her life back. And eventually becomes a new person. Seraphima Orlova's novel is overwhelmingly sincere; as the story unfolds, its edgy protagonist gradually reveals her true personality to the reader earning their sympathy and attention. Orlova's characters live not in a made-up fictional world but in the present-day reality: scenes in the megamall, school and apartments are written with utmost precision.

As the writer notes, in regions, especially cold ones like Omsk, shopping malls become the cultural hub and the main place for meetings and first dates — this is why scenes in the mall are probably the most charming in the novel. The author poeticizes everyday life of teenagers — and finds responds among this audience: the book was short-listed by Kniguru Award teenage jury and received a Lyceum Award nomination.

Spring  
2019

14+

*Tags: coming-of-age, searching for yourself, overcoming difficulties, friendship, robotics, sick-lit*  
*Similar to: Everything, Everything by Nicola Yoon*



# EUGENIA OVCHINNIKOVA:

THE DEBUT WORTH DISCUSSING

EUGENIA OVCHINNIKOVA (BORN 1983) IS A YOUNG WRITER, WHO GAINED ATTENTION OF RUSSIAN AUDIENCE WITH HER STORIES ABOUT CHILDHOOD IN THE 1990S. SHE MASTERFULLY TURNS AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ELEMENTS INTO ENJOYABLE AND WITTY TEXTS FILLED WITH DETAILS OF THE AGE.

## ■ MORTAL KOMBAT AND OTHER 90S

■ KompasGuide, 2018, 144 p.



Mortal Kombat and Other 90s feels not like a collection of stories but a small novel set in two periods: 20 years ago and the present day. While initially these two settings seem completely different, as the plotline develops, more and more similarities can be found between them. And this moment of “reconciliation” at least gives a worthy lesson: “Look, daughter, your mom lived in this time — and she had the same worries you do!” For parents of late 2010s teenagers this book may become irreplaceable.

Eugenia Ovchinnikova writes about life in Kokshetau (Kazakhstan) twenty years ago and intentionally blurs the line between reality and fiction: the main character is also named Zhenya, and when she grows up, she, just like the author, moves to Saint Petersburg to do business. Readers find it out in the frame story, in which Kirill, Eugenia’s nephew, visits her and discovers on a top shelf her manuscript with titles like “Mortal Kombat” or “Rotting Corpse”.

The girl sells New Year trees and pursues a thief who sneaked into the market. Gets ready to perform in front of Mikhail Gorbachev himself. Tries to catch a cow that ran away from the village. Crosses her fingers so that the lights won’t go out when Mortal Kombat movie begins. Hunts for the 240th Turbo bubblegum insert. Rushes to a video store to get a desired tape. All in all, does nothing special – at least nothing that seems to be worth remembering after many years...

12+

Tags: growing up, memories, 1990s, poverty, short stories, humor  
Similar to: *The House at the Edge of Night* by Catherine Banner



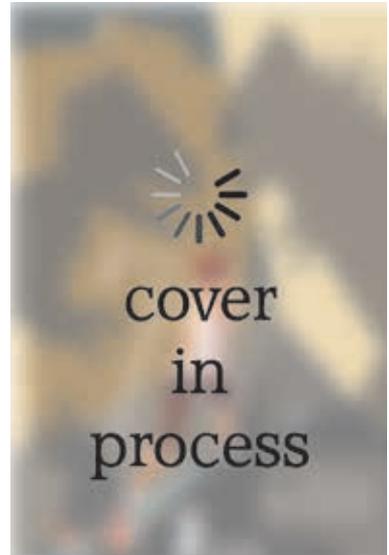
LEAVE AND RETURN TRILOGY STARTS OFF AS A DETECTIVE PAGE-TURNER. BUT THIS IS NOT A TYPICAL NOVEL WITH A CRIME AT ITS CORE BUT A PSYCHOLOGICAL DETECTIVE BUILDING UP RELATIONS BETWEEN CHARACTERS AS THE PLOT UNFOLDS.

■ EUGENIA OVCHINNIKOVA  
■ **LEAVE AND RETURN**  
KompasGuide, 2019, 256 p.

“after reading this message delete it”. No capital letters or punctuation marks — that’s how Mom always writes! But how could it be because she...No, she’s not dead; for Nina, she’ll stay alive forever. Mom went missing five years ago when the girl was only nine. Her father, her friends and the police couldn’t find any clues or leads.

Now Nina’s fourteen and the mysterious message instigated her to start her own investigation. Everyone’s holding something back: her father with his never-ending “you’re just a kid”, the detective overburdened with other cases, Mom’s colleagues from the science lab — for no apparent reason. And in every person passing her by on the streets of Saint Petersburg waking from its winter sleep, Nina sees their personal monsters: basilosaurus, prognathodon, archelon. And she draws them this way.

Eugenia Ovchinnikova’s Leave and Return trilogy starts off as a detective page-turner. But this is not a typical novel with a crime at its core but a psychological detective building up relations between characters as the plot unfolds. The new book of the young writer is aimed at a wide audience: Nina’s coming-of-age story will be hard to put down for both teenagers and grown-ups.



12+ Tags: detective, family relationship, missing person, Saint Petersburg, child’s imagination, science  
Similar to: *L’aube sera grandiose* by Anne-Laure Bondoux



## EXCERPT

*Umbrellas, bags and shoulders were hitting me. In the middle of the avenue I collided with a fat man and fell down to be trampled by hundreds of feet — but suddenly someone I couldn’t see pulled me by the hood. When I stood up I lurched to the side where I had seen familiar eyes under the bight umbrella.*

*“What are you doing? Watch out!” An old lady tried to block my way with her arm. I pushed forward and she nearly fell on her back but people behind her caught her just in time.*

*“You’re insane!” I heard her yelling behind.*

*I felt no shame. I was carried by a wave of love, longing and fear of being wrong again.*

*The rally moved me to the right. Finally, I jostled my way out of it and rushed to the left hitting passersby but I couldn’t see the umbrella. I hurried back trying not to lose it out of sight before it swerved to Pushkinskaya. I sped up scaring people on a restaurant’s porch and went running as fast as I could while words were drumming in my head like a war march: was it her? was it her?*



■ TAMARA MIKHEEVA

■ **YANKA**

KompasGuide, 2018, 200 p.

The title character had to move to seaside town Posyolok, leaving behind all her friends, grandmother and father. Actually, her father left Yanka with her mother and brother — and the 15-year-old girl is holding a grudge. Not because he “ruined the family” (she accepts the parents’ divorce more or less calmly) but because Yanka’s old life disappeared and a new one is still shaping.

The story begins when Posyolok, a resort, “hibernates” after a tourist season. For the first time Yanka doesn’t need to get back to school in the big city: now she studies here and has to find new friends. Things are not working out well until the girl meets Gleb — an inspired photographer and traveler, who immediately charms her with compliments she never heard before.

14+ *Tags: young adult, moving to another place, first love, parents’ divorce, losing your close ones*  
*Similar to: Die Mitte der Welt by Andreas Steinhöfel*



■ TATYANA SERGEEVA

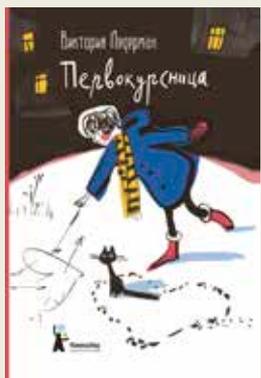
■ **FLOOR EXERCISES**

KompasGuide, 2018, 112 p.

15-year old Anyuta is a professional gymnast. 35-year old Irina is her coach, who has trained her for a decade. They are preparing for the most important competition in the girl’s career — the European Championship. However, Anyuta and Irina are going through hard times: the young athlete ran away home several times, was way below her training schedule and seems lost in her personal problems. Anyuta is torn apart between helping her alcoholic mother and gymnastics, Irina — between her desire to push harder and make her trainee a champion and understanding the girl should be the sole master of her life.

The novel establishes a kind of a dialogue between the two characters because its chapters are written in turns from the viewpoint of each of them.

12+ *Tags: coming-of-age, artistic gymnastics, relationship with parents, choosing an occupation*  
*Similar to: Stealing Parker by Miranda Kenneally*



■ VICTORIA LEDERMAN

■ **THE FRESHMAN**

KompasGuide, 2016, 256 p.

On the first page, the 17-year-old student Alexandra declares that she is in love. Guena from the same class is ideal in all aspects, except one: he has a girlfriend. They are as close as if joined at the hip, and have been dating for so long! On the sixth page, Alexandra cuts off her long hair. To spite her mother first, but mostly — to impress Guena. No, to IMPRESS. Alexandra has a plan of winning Guena’s heart, and her haircut is just the beginning.

She revels in her new-found freedom after entering the university. New acquaintances, studies, crushes, and parties — the book captures all of these distinct events. Every day brings the discovery of herself and others. Life is full of events that sometimes she can’t even believe in.

16+ *Tags: student life, coming-of-age, first love, friendship, psychological novel, young adult*  
*Similar to: Norwegian Wood by Haruki Murakami*

rights  
sold to **Lithuania**

**20 000**  
copies sold

# PAVEL VERESHCHAGIN:

ESSENTIAL TEENAGE SATIRE

PAVEL VERESHCHAGIN (BORN 1959) BEGAN HIS CAREER IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE MUCH LATER THAN MOST WRITERS. HOWEVER, THIS "DELAY" HELPED HIM TO DEVELOP A UNIQUE STYLE: HIS *THE RECIPE OF WAR* IS NOT ONLY AN ENTERTAINING TEENAGE NOVEL BUT A DEEP AND WISE ALLEGORICAL STORY REVEALING VAST LIFE EXPERIENCE AND ATTENTIVENESS OF ITS AUTHOR.



## ■ THE RECIPE OF WAR

■ KompasGuide, 2019, 160 p.

Milchenburg is a quiet little town that lies in a piedmont valley on the banks of a beautiful river. Citizens from the left bank make the tastiest chocolate and citizens from the right bake inimitable wafers. Wafer fans are making fun of chocolate supporters and vice versa — then the whole town laughs together at this century-old rivalry.

But once mysterious Dorothea Guderian moves to the “wafer” side. A talented teacher, she quickly charmed local schoolkids and persuaded them to join the Iron Fist Warriors. From that day, innocuous jokes about the “chocs” became much sinister; and crossing the river is getting more dangerous for young Julie, who reaches out to her beloved Jean-Jacques...

Pavel Vereshchagin's novel depicts the life of imaginary Milchenburg in its tiniest details — due to such precision, the town seems real and its residents feel like someone we know for a very long time. But as the plot unfolds, fine observations and memorable descriptions build up readers' surprise while the story turns into an allegory novel.

Generalization is the strongest point of Pavel Vereshchagin, V. Krapivin Award winner. Characters and situations he describes will seem familiar for every high school reader — and in Julie and Jean-Jacques' worries they will recognize themselves, just like young lovers recognized themselves in Romeo and Juliet, Antony and Cleopatra, Henry and Blessed Margaret.

12+

Tags: *allegory novel, dystopia, first love, satire*  
Similar to: *The Wave* by Todd Strasser

Spring  
2019



# NADYA PAPUDOGLO:

“CARRIE BRADSHAW ON MATERNITY LEAVE”, AS VOGUE RUSSIA PUT IT

NADYA PAPUDOGLO (BORN 1979) IS AN EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE LARGEST RUSSIAN WEBSITE FOR PARENTS, MEL (CHALK), AND AN EXPERIENCED JOURNALIST. AFTER BECOMING A MOTHER, SHE STARTED HER OWN BLOG FOR MOTHERS WHO ARE LONGING FOR A PIECE OF ADVICE, AND IT LATER LATER TURNED INTO A BOOK. NADYA’S IRONY MAKES HER BOOKS SOOTHING FOR THOSE WHO ARE AFRAID OF THEIR FUTURE AS MOTHERS — OR OF THE MOTHERHOOD ITSELF.



■ #MOTHERING.  
■ MOTHERHOOD BY THE RULES AND NOT  
■ KompasGuide, 2016, 216 p.

★ Best ebook  
of 2017

■ #MOTHERING. HAMSTER WHEEL ■  
■ KompasGuide, 2018, 216 p. ■



The hashtag points out the source of these short texts (originally, they were posted in Nadya’s personal blog) and the author’s sense of irony. This irony makes it easier to understand and trust the book: finally, we’re dealing not with a robotic mother from educational literature or cuteness-obsessed moms from online forums, but with a living and thinking person.

For six years Nadya Papudoglo has been writing in her blog Kokomyboy, beloved by its readers for her original style, nontrivial ideas and worthy remarks, including psychological ones. In her blog and in her book the author laughs at herself and her stereotypical assumptions and admits her weaknesses — and we all have our own. This creates the effect of mutual therapy: even if the reader has opposite views, she gets involved in the dialogue Nadya invites to join.

Irony and witty observations come together with an amazing ability to rationalize, explain and systematize. Nadya Papudoglo even finishes her book with a table “What to Expect and How to Cope with It (Young Mom’s Guide)”, where she describes the biggest problems she faced and the solutions she found. Her motherhood experience, meticulously structured and divided into small chapters, becomes an example that is not obliged to be followed, but certainly deserves attention.

These books can be recommended not only to typical “young moms” — girls in their 20s with a baby — but to women of other age groups as well, including those who have children already.

#mothering. Motherhood by the Rules and Not is definitely not a collection of breastfeeding tips and recommendations on teaching the kid to read. The main thing about this book is the way its author sees herself as a mother. And this is worth learning despite age or experience differences.

18+

Tags: motherhood, essays, true story

Similar to: *French Children Don't Throw Food* by Pamela Druckerman



# VICTORIA LEDERMAN:

SCHOOL NOVELS YOU CAN'T PUT DOWN

VICTORIA LEDERMAN (BORN 1970) CAME TO RUSSIAN LITERATURE OUT OF NOWHERE WHEN SHE APPLIED FOR A FICTION CONTEST AND WITH HER VERY FIRST BOOK, THE MAY(A) CALENDAR, BECAME A BESTSELLING AUTHOR FOR AUDIENCE AGED 8-15. HER BOOKS ARE ALWAYS EXCITING AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY PRECISE — EVEN IF THEIR CHARACTERS TRAVEL IN TIME.

**I need troubled characters.** And they must deal with these troubles. If everything was nice and smooth in their lives, they'd just get in and out of situations. This would be dull. Because in the book the kids both fight against time and face their own problems, family matters or any psychological issues. That's the kind of books I like to read, so that's the kind of books I write myself.

**I'm an introvert.** I'm a reticent person and feel most comfortable in a small familiar company or at my workplace with the laptop. The perfect working environment for me is when I sit at the computer, the TV and radio are off and there's no one around in the apartment. But this doesn't happen often, so eventually you have to work in any condition.

**I'm interested in a specific character and a specific situation,** in which they succeed or fail. That's all. I tell everything I want and turn the page. I never write sequels about further life of my characters.

**I loved reading most of all when I was a kid.** I was mad about it, brought piles of books home from the library and dreamt of living in a library or in a bookstore to get closer to books. All my life I've had three biggest passions — cats, books and foreign languages.

**I've always liked school.** I even played school when I was small. I wanted to teach everyone. So I sat my friends in a circle and taught them something. They were complaining because they didn't want to have even more classes after school. And I couldn't understand it, to me it all was so exciting!





6+ *Tags: school life, student/teacher relationship, funny stories, children psychology*  
*Similar to: Like Myself! by Karen Beaumont*

## ■ HEY, NO CLASSES TODAY!

■ KompasGuide, 2017, 104 p.

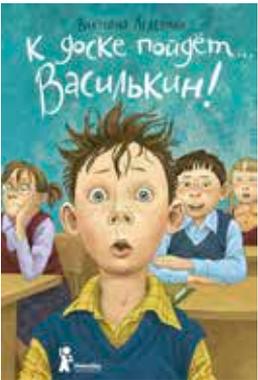
 **50 000**  
copies sold

Margarita, a first-grader, does not plan to go to school at all: what's the point, if you have to stay for three hours without mom and obey an evil teacher? There're better ways to spend time: walking, shopping, going to attractions — and her mom knows that, too! Her neighbor, Mr. Pirate, knows that as well, otherwise he wouldn't have left his job.

Ivan Tsarev from the second grade has another problem: his parents don't want to go to school! It would be okay if they tried to avoid a parent's meeting or a call from the principal — but they don't want to go to school on Sunday to play a family quiz with him. This hurts a lot...

Third-grader Roma Oreshkin is one of those who screams with joy, when their French class gets cancelled. But this time his scream is short and awkward: his favorite teacher broke her arm. That means she'll be replaced by someone less kind and forgiving. Does it mean he has to cram and learn to r-r-roar!?

Going to school is a challenge for Sveta from the fourth grade: she hates Miron Solomatin. She hates him so much she wants to learn a martial art, no matter, which one. He gave her a nickname — “Plushy” — and she wants to pay him back! She'll get her chance, but not in school...



## ■ VASYLKIN...TO THE BLACKBOARD!

■ KompasGuide, 2017, 112 p.

 **120 000**  
copies sold

The collection of funny stories from the life of a third-grader, which comprises a composite novel and reveal their character. Although the readers know this character well enough: Vasytkin is just like any nine-year-old student. His adventures are familiar to any third-grader: Vasytkin and his friend think up the funniest prank for April Fools' Day, he decides to learn to play the guitar by the end of the year, or he personally experiences what “a weight off shoulders” expression means.

7+ *Tags: school life, student/teacher relationship, funny stories, children psychology*  
*Similar to: The Class by Boni Ashburn*



## ■ ELEVEN Y.O. ONLY, OR AMOURETTE IN FIFTH GRADE

KompasGuide, 2017, 128 p.

 **99 000**  
copies sold

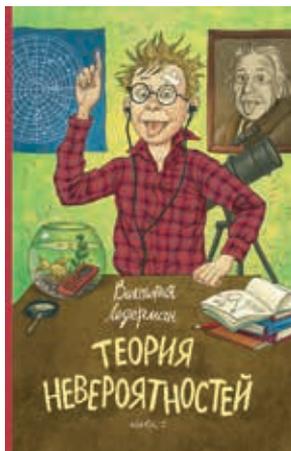
 **rights sold to** Lithuania

Egor and Nikita, the novel's main characters, are surprised to see Angelina, a new girl in class. A couple of weeks later, both fall in love with her. What will happen to their friendship that lasts for — just think of it! — eleven years and who will conquer Angelina's heart?

10+ *Tags: school life, love triangle, first love, friendship, children/parents relationship*  
*Similar to: The Summer I Turned Pretty by Jenny Han*

## TEENAGE FANTASY WITH PROFOUND MEANING

VICTORIA LEDERMAN'S NOVELS FOR TEENAGERS ARE NOT JUST PAGE-TURNERS: THEY HAVE HIDDEN MEANINGS AND MESSAGES FOR THE AUDIENCE. EVEN IF A CHARACTER GETS INTO PARALLEL UNIVERSE, THE BOOK WILL FOCUS ON FRIENDSHIP, RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS AND BELIEVING IN YOURSELF.



### ■ IMPROBABILITIES THEORY

■ KompasGuide, 2018, 376 p.

 **25 000**  
copies sold  
in 3 months

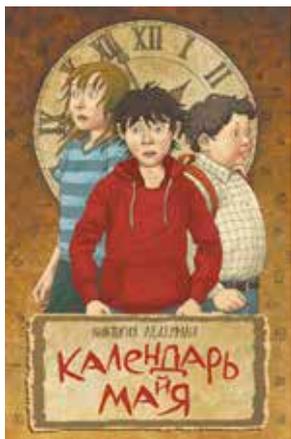
Matvey is in the 7th grade and he's edgy and arrogant like many kids of his age. He cares only about computer games and he goes to school only because "they make him do it". The world pays him back: his friends eventually disappear and his mother is always arguing with him. There's no surprise that after a horrible morning the Internet went off Matvey meets street bullies and has to flee.

The escape suddenly ends up in a parallel universe: Matvey hid in a concrete pipe somewhere at the end of the city and dived out in a world where Matvey Dobrovolsky never existed. Here, in this new world, Matvey's mom gave birth to a girl named Miloslava!

The protagonist needs assistance of Venya Vatrushkin, a boy from his school. Only this outcast who keeps getting himself in troubles can believe in Dobrovolsky's fantastic story. Making friends with Venya once seemed to Matvey as the most impossible thing ever but only this friendship might save him. He'll have to change his life and attitude to it as well; but according to school novels' traditions, this is why he got in such troubles in the first place.

**10+** Tags: school novel, parallel universe, children-parents relationship, friendship, urban fantasy

Similar to: *Pivot Point* by Kasie West



### ■ THE MAY(A) ■ CALENDAR

KompasGuide, 2016, 224 p.

rights  
sold to  Lithuania

 **110 000**  
copies sold

It is the teenage novel at its old-fashioned, classical best. There is everything in it: adventures, psychological insights, eternal questions and deep yearning for true friendship. It is a genuine page-turner. Who would have thought that three very different schoolchildren would be united by a common problem: one day they simply start going backwards in time. There's no tomorrow for them — only yesterday. The three are not heroes; they are normal teens who don't even like each other much. Now they will have to put all this aside and play as a team — otherwise they will become babies again and then disappear completely. Victoria Lederman teaches English and French and loves traveling. "The Ma(y)a Calendar" is her prize-winning first book.

**10+** Tags: time travel, school life, coming-of-age, friendship, overcoming difficulties  
Similar to: *The Girl Who Leapt Through Time* by Yasutaka Tsutsui

# MARINA BABANSKAYA AND NATALYA KARPOVA:

## INFORMATIVE STORYTELLING

WRITER MARINA BABANSKAYA IS IN LOVE WITH WILDLIFE AND EVERY SUMMER SHE TRAVELS ALONG SIBERIA OR FAR EAST COLLECTING FOLKLORE AND INFORMATION ABOUT LOCAL CULTURE. THESE MULTIPLE TRAVELS RESULTED IN A BIG BOOK ILLUSTRATED BY NATALYA KARPOVA, WHO VISUALIZES ALL RELEVANT DETAILS AND MAKES THE STORY EVEN MORE ENTERTAINING.



Spring  
2019

### ■ FROM EAST TO WEST: ■ JOURNEY OF A MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

Illustrated by Natalya Karpova  
KompasGuide, 2019, 152 p.

Writer Marina Babanskaya and illustrator Natalya Karpova joined their efforts in an ambitious and unique project: a richly illustrated encyclopedia of Russian indigenous people, which chapters are united by a common storyline. The plot device enabling to visit many unusual places is... a bottle in the sea.

The message in the bottle was sent by Pyotr Kruglov, a lighthouse keeper. He asks everyone who found his letter to add a small message telling about themselves, the place they live, the way they spend their time and the traditions they live by. On its voyage, the bottle will travel all over Russia from Vladivostok to Saint Petersburg and will appear in regions most readers have never been to.

Strange traditions of Kalmykia and Kabardino-Balkaria, rare skills essential for survival in Yakutia and Tuva, cultural habits in old cities like Kazan and Tutayev — all of this got the authors' attention. Every location and every person are depicted with love and respect; the authors emphasize the value of ethnic and regional diversity, point out how indigenous people are adapting their traditional lifestyle to the new age and describe details even few grown-ups heard of.

Although this encyclopedia is aimed for 10-year-old readers, it will certainly entertain grown-ups and due to unique visual style of its illustrations it will become a worthy item in every book collection. The subtle storytelling gives the book a special charm: epistolary narration feels natural and helps to put together multiple elements.

8+

Tags: non-fiction, encyclopedia, ethnic studies, geography, Russia, indigenous people, culture studies  
Similar to: *Nils Holgerssons underbara resa genom Sverige* by Selma Lagerlöf



# YURI NIKITINSKY:

RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN CONFLICT THROUGH THE CHILDREN'S EYES

YURI NIKITINSKY (BORN 1970) WROTE OVER 20 CHILDREN'S BOOK THROUGHOUT HIS 25-YEAR CAREER. *VOVKA WHO RODE THE BOMB* WON KORNEYCHUKOVSKY AWARD IN 2015 AND NEW CHILDREN'S BOOK CONTEST IN 2016, AND NOW IT IS THE MOST ANTICIPATED TEXT FOR CHILDREN AMONG RUSSIAN LIBERAL PUBLIC.



November  
2018

## ■ *VOVKA WHO RODE THE BOMB*

■ KompasGuide, 2018, 88 p.

Vovka and his best friend Vlad never get bored therefore every day they start a new adventure. Once, while playing soldiers, Vovka accidentally gave Vlad a black eye and later was dying of envy: being a wounded soldier is so honorable! Next time the boys organized a stable supply of canaries to the pet shop — if you take a proper care of the birds, they breed on their own. Later the shop got closed. It was destroyed by a missile, but not the one Vovka rode. And he really rode one, sitting on it and crying this was not a bomb, just a shell. How come no one could tell the difference?

Yuri Nikitinsky's novel, although following the educative and entertaining traditions of Soviet children's literature, handles other topics as well — first of all, the war. Attentive readers will surely realize, through landscape descriptions and toponyms, that the story takes place in the eastern part of the present-day Ukraine. But this knowledge does not alter the perception of this story, it goes beyond any certain place or time period. Never-ending artillery attacks change the lives of the boys, but remain on the background and do not influence them for a time-being. This is the saving attribute of the child's mind, masterfully captured by the author.

We have read a lot about the war, KompasGuide even has its War Childhood series, but this subject is delivered differently in this book — sharper and, for apparent reasons, devoid of nostalgia. The war is a part of daily routine for the main characters, but not the most significant one: thinking something up, playing and having fun is much more important to them.

10+ *Tags: tolerance, school life, coming-of-age, wars of the 21st century, boyhood*  
*Similar to: Green On Blue by Elliot Ackerman*



# ALENA VODOPYANOVA AND EKATERINA KRIVICH:

FROM DAILY ROUTINE TO KNOWLEDGE THROUGH GAME

WRITER ALENA VODOPYANOVA AND ILLUSTRATOR EKATERINA KRIVICH DISCOVER LOTS OF INTERESTING THINGS ABOUT VEGETABLES THAT CAN BE FOUND IN ANY KITCHEN. PERHAPS THEY WERE INSPIRED BY CLASSICAL ADVENTURES OF CIPOLLINO, BUT THEY BROUGHT VEGETABLES TO LIFE NOT FOR A SOCIAL COMMENTARY BUT FOR MAKING AN INFORMATIVE BOOK.



Winter  
2019

## ■ SECRET LIFE OF VEGETABLES: ■ FUNNY STORIES, TASKS AND TALES

KompasGuide, 2019, 208 p.

Illustrated by Ekaterina Krivich

Why is it restricted to look in the mirror on the Cabbage Ball? Will detectives Cherry Holmes and Dr. Tomato Watson solve the case of disappeared vegetables? Why did Grandpa Potato change his pirate outfit for a general's uniform? Why is Uncle Chip so bad? The book answers these questions — and many others as well.

Its characters get into funny and enthralling adventures and discover something new about themselves. And if something remains unclear, they ask the wisest vegetable in the whole world for help. Who could it be? Auntie Pumpkin that lives on the cupboard's top shelf is rumored to remember the history of vegetables from the days of Bean King. And she is always ready to share her knowledge.

The book for elementary students by Alena Vodopyanova and Ekaterina Krivich is an encyclopedia, a collection of puzzles, a picture book and a story with an action-packed plot. The authors share implicitly through their tales about kitchen vegetables the basics of biology and demonstrate what it feels like to see this world through someone else's eyes.

To do this, they created characters with familiar personality types: funny and attentive Zucchini, hardened sea-wolf Eggplant, fearless and lively Pepper. At the end of each chapter readers will find puzzles and tests: some of them can be solved by carefully re-reading the text while others require extra knowledge and imagination.

8+

Tags: non-fiction, encyclopedia, gamebook

Similar to: *The Canterbury Puzzles* by Henry E. Dudeney



# ANTONINA MALYSHEVA:

A JOKE EVOLVED INTO AN ALLEGORICAL NOVEL

ANTONINA MALYSHEVA (BORN 1990) GRADUATED NOVOSIBIRSK STATE UNIVERSITY, WORKED AS AN EDITOR IN CHILDREN'S MAGAZINES AND ONE DAY, JUST FOR FUN, WROTE HER OWN NOVEL. THE MANUSCRIPT WON ACCLAIM OF KNIGURU TEENAGE JURY, REACHED THE FINAL STAGE OF THE AWARD AND IS NOW PUBLISHED BY KOMPASGUIDE.



## ■ THE OBLIVION CAT ■ KompasGuide, 2019, 128 p.

Never look at the white cat. If you stare in its huge eyes for ten seconds everyone in this world forgets about you. Your friends unfollow you, you disappear from school lists and even from your parents' memory becoming an invisible man.

Gosha didn't believe in this urban legend until the day the white cat crossed his path and caught his eye. Like in trance, the boy gazed in the void of its pupils and lost his home, friends and classmates. Soon enough he realized he was not the only one — dozens of cat's victims formed a big community searching for a way out. But some were living in the House of the Forgotten for fifteen years...

Antonina Malysheva explains the origin of her novel combining funny and philosophical moments:

"The Oblivion Cat was written from inside out. Its protagonist loves word plays. So do I, and everything began with a game: in social network group for children's writers my colleagues posted craziest titles and the task was to write stories for them. Just for fun, I decided to choose the most childish and awkward title and write something darker. I picked the title The Oblivion Cat.

I imagined a cat that never forgets anything but everyone who sees it lose their memory. I could already visualize the snow-covered sanatorium and the main characters but I couldn't build up the storyline. Then I turned the plot inside out: it's you who gets forgotten. Everything worked and I realized I wanted to tell a lot. Soon the text stopped being a simple joke, became longer and more serious — and eventually made it to Kniguru Award final stage."

Summer  
2019

10+

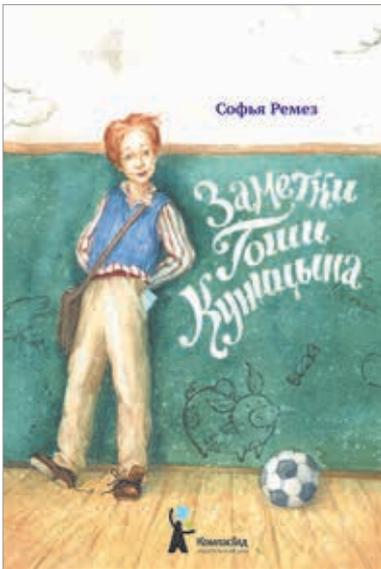
Tags: school, friendship, magic realism, grown-ups-children relationships, fantasy, amnesia  
Similar to: *Harold and the Purple Crayon* by Crockett Johnson



# SOPHIA REMEZ:

CREATIVITY AGAINST BOREDOM

SOPHIA REMEZ (BORN 1983) GRADUATED ART HISTORY DEPARTMENT OF MOSCOW STATE UNIVERSITY AND BEGAN HER CAREER IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE WITH CREATIVITY-FILLED SHORT STORIES. HER CHARACTER MANAGES TO TRANSFORM DAILY ROUTINE WITH THEIR IMAGINATION.



Summer  
2019

## ■ NOTES OF GOSHA KUNITSIN, ■ A FOURTH GRADER

KompasGuide, 2019, 128 p.

Gosha wrote his first story when he was in the fourth grade. Actually, it was not a story but a fairy tale about the Gingerbread Man that escaped from the fox. It also featured the three little pigs and Harry Potter: finally, these great characters have the chance to meet! But Mom and Dad didn't like Gosha's writing — parents can be so boring, right? But you'll surely appreciate the talented kid! Moreover, Gosha learned his lesson from his Gingerbread Man story: best characters must be real. This time he writes about himself, his parents and baby brother. It turns out characters like these can have fun and exciting adventures any talking animal or a wizard could only dream of!

The collection of short stories about Gosha Kunitsin builds up a coherent tale showing how creativity can turn ordinary life into a wonderful fairy tale. Vivid imagination prevents Gosha from getting bored — and readers as well: Notes can be compared to of Dennis by Victor Dragunsky set in the present day.

Several stories from Sophia Remez's (born 1983) book were already printed in Chizh and Yozh magazine but for the first time they are published in a single volume. Classical stories about school and family inspire and give advice to their young readers how to act in unfamiliar situations.

8+

Tags: school life, children art, family, sibling relationship  
Similar to: *The Fourteenth Goldfish* by Jennifer Holm



# DMITRY ISHCHENKO:

FINDING THE GOD OF BOYHOOD

DMITRY ISHCHENKO (BORN 1971) IS YET UNKNOWN TO A WIDE AUDIENCE BUT HIS DEBUT NOVEL DEMONSTRATES PROFOUNDNESS WORTHY OF CLASSICAL CHILDREN'S WRITERS. THE WRITER LIVES IN MURMANSK AND USED TO WORK AS A JOURNALIST, SCREENWRITER AND DOCUMENTARY DIRECTOR.



## ■ **SEARCHING FOR THE GOD OF BOYHOOD** ■ KompasGuide, 2018, 160 p.

Vanya spends his holiday with his father in Tsyp-Navolok, a settlement on the shore of the Barents Sea with population on 30-40 people — this is a real location and can be clearly recognized in the text. Here there is nothing but a meteo campsite, a military base and an old lighthouse, so Vanya will remain without the Internet, shopping malls or at least a patch of asphalt to skateboard. The boy expects three months of boredom but soon begins to realize this place has its special charm.

In one of the book's climax moments a radio operator tells Vanya: "If you have the drive to discover, to move on and to explore the unknown — the god of the boyhood is with you". You need to find your god of boyhood, the grown-up man tells him and casts aside his "grown-upness" when he takes guitar and starts to play his own songs. Vanya contemplates this notion wandering along the rocky shore, climbing up the lighthouse, watching fishermen in the sea and finally getting to know Misha, his only peer in the settlement. Together the boys embark on a dangerous and exciting journey to an abandoned military bunker.

Searching for the God of Boyhood enthralls with its cinematographic beauty: either journalism experience or love for the movies help the author to enrich the novel with vivid details avoiding excessive phrases and lengthy descriptions. With swift strokes Ishchenko creates a breathtaking landscape of Northern Russia that at its best reminds of Andrey Zvyagintsev's *Leviathan* or Alexei Popogreb-ski's *How I Ended This Summer* and serves as the background for personal growth of the teenage protagonist who finds himself on the threshold between childhood and grown-up life.

 **15 000**  
copies sold  
in 3 months

11+ *Tags: North, coming-of-age, summer break, children-parents relationships*  
*Similar to: Hearts in Atlantis by Stephen King*



# NINA DASHEVSKAYA:

MUSICAL PROSE WITH MULTIPLE LAYERS

NINA DASHEVSKAYA (BORN 1979) — MOSCOW CONSERVATORY GRADUATE, WINNER OF ALL RUSSIAN LITERATURE CONTESTS WORTH MENTIONING AND THE REGULAR NOMINEE OF ASTRID LINDGREN PRIZE. HER PROSE IS ACCLAIMED FOR ITS MUSICAL SENSE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ACCURACY — THE WAY SHE GIVES VOICE TO HER CHARACTERS' THOUGHTS IS LITERALLY FLAWLESS.

**I love my work** in the theater and I really love writing. But in the orchestra, I have my notes, a conductor and a certain task. Writing gives me freedom to do what I want.

**I cannot create antagonists.** Every book needs them, but somehow, I manage to do without them. I'd like to give my readers an impression that grown-ups they could talk to actually exist.

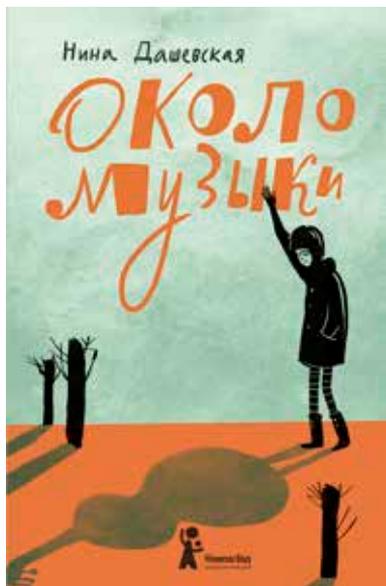
**Sometimes it's good to get an on a journey** without any opportunity to use a computer. Are parents ready for this trial? In fact, it's a good way of relaxing and returning to real-life communication only — it's a kind of informational detox. And surely, books are read much better on a journey.

**I got my bicycle when I was 30.** My husband gave me two bicycles as a present, because it's better to ride together. I don't have time to ride for fun, though. I ride to work and these are one of my happiest days. The joy you feel when you ride a bicycle can't be compared to joylessness of being stuck in a traffic jam or seeing grey faces around you in the subway. You speed along the Moscow River embankment seeing lots of young people on bicycles and it feels like everyone around you is happy and in love.

**Gadgets are not evil.** They're a tool and the point is how to use them properly. First of all, it's a communication tool. And if our children, instead of reading a book, write a letter to a living person, maybe we have something to learn from them.

**I enjoyed Gary Schmidt's Okay for Now** a lot. It precisely describes how a "troubled teen" sees a work of art, is fascinated by it and his life begins to change. It's a very honest book. I believe that's how it happens in reality.





12+ *Tags: teenagers, coming of age, music, school life, psychological prose*  
*Similar to: Nine Stories*  
*by J.D. Salinger*

**rights sold to**  **Lithuania**

## ■ ABOUT MUSIC

■ KompasGuide, 2017, 128 p.

In her About Music collection, Nina Dashevskaya successfully tells a captivating story in such a way that afterwards you want to read the text again, paying attention to its smallest details and savoring its best moments. This is the Russian language at its most beautiful, devoid of lengthening, with thought-provoking subtleness, rhythm and melody. Those who are questioning the talent of contemporary writers must read Nina Dashevskaya, the Russian nominee for Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award in 2018.

Characters of all the stories feel like our neighbors, friends or ourselves. Their thoughts are as scattered and feelings as controversial as ours, and making decisions is just as troublesome to them as it is to us. It is hard to believe that Nina Dashevskaya did not live these lives and just imagined them.

Arkady Kalina loves the violin, but he loves the sea even more. Perhaps, he does not love the violin at all: love is always complicated, when you are fourteen (Dublin and the Sea). This “it’s complicated” is too familiar to gloomy Anton, who seems to be ignored by his classmates (alas, including the girls). But thankfully they can’t hear him singing a folk song at music school — this would be such a shame! (Ah, It Is Not Yet Evening). Lelya, who got her head shaved, feels strange in a new neighborhood and does not like people around her. Only a guy nicknamed John is cool, but he is a skater boy, so he would not care about her and her stupid piano (Spring Sonata). Oska from the 7th grade finally finds a soulmate in his classmate Nikita — they have been studying together for six years and finally became friends. This friendship changed Oska, who used to be a loner, but eventually it suddenly began to tear apart... (Headphones)



## ■ THE SECOND

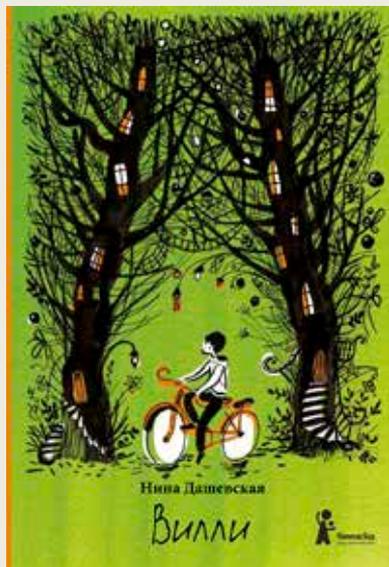
■ KompasGuide, 2018, 128 p.

What moves our lives? Accidental meetings, kind words and unexpected discoveries all of a sudden make us shudder, look back and make amends. Knecht, an artist, takes a new look at the tiresome “city hall — cobbled streets — quay” landscape. Dominic overcomes his fear of heights and is no more overshadowed by his father — a brilliant tightrope walker. Olya understands who really sent her the bouquet of flowers. And Prokhor from the title story becomes a true musician capable to play the greatest and indomitable Mozart!

Short stories from this collection tell the same message in different ways: you’ll never always feel you’re the first, but being unique is way more important. Comparing yourself to someone more successful, talented and ambitious is pointless: your past can be the only tuning pitch for you in the present.

11+ *Tags: shorts stories, growing up, musicians, artists, circus*  
*Similar to: The Little Man by Erich Kästner*

NINA DASHEVSKAYA'S BOOK IS AN OBVIOUS DESCENDANT OF ALICE IN WONDERLAND BY LEWIS CARROLL. IT ALSO BEARS RESEMBLANCES TO PIPPY LONGSTOCKING BY ASTRID LINDGREN, CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY BY ROALD DAHL, AND PETER PAN BY JAMES BARRY.



■ **WILLY**  
 ■ KompasGuide, 2015, 112 p.



Tian Vorobyov has never had a bicycle. He sits during class, dreaming of this — before the teacher scolds him for having his head in the clouds. After school, he heads home through a park, sits on a bench to eat his snack, and spots a newspaper next to him with this announcement: “Will give bicycle to good hands.” The only requirement is to go to Pendulum Lane and find the owner, Augustina Blyum.

Tian does not know where Pendulum Lane is located. Wandering around the city, he goes into a bookstore and asks for a map – but even on the most detailed one, there is no such place to be found. The owner of the store, a lover and collector of maps, is confused. This address is marked only on an old map of the city; as it turns out, Pendulum Lane is very close by.

On the sought-after street, Tian meets a tall, high-school-age boy, who treats him to homemade cookies and leads him to a lovely garden in the courtyard — there stands a bicycle, looking for its new owner. “Hi. My name is Willy,” the bicycle says to Tian. “Can you hear him?” the older boy asks Willy. “That means that Willy is now yours!” Tian asks about where Augustina Blyum is and the other boy laughs, saying, “Augustina Blyum — that’s me. People often mistake me for a boy because I am very tall.” They sit on the steps and chat; Tian complains that he does not like his full name, Sebastian. “What a beautiful name! I will call you that from now on,” answers Augustina.

Tian never knew how to ride a bicycle, but he has barely climbed on top of Willy when he starts cycling, confidently and easily. With his talking bike, he circles around the neighborhood and, the next morning, he rides on it to school. For the first time, he is not late; the strict teacher even smiles at him! But it’s only the beginning of his wonderful adventures...



**25 000**  
 copies sold

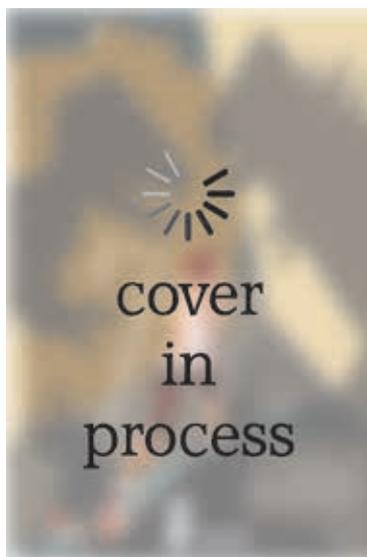
7+

Tags: bike, fairy tale, school, city maze, children/parents relationship  
 Similar to: *When the Robbers Came to Cardamom Town*  
 by Thorbjørn Egner

# ANNA IGNATOVA:

A MODERN APPROACH TO THE CLASSICAL CONFLICT

ANNA IGNATOVA (BORN 1973) IS ONE OF THE AUTHORS WHO BECAME FAMOUS WITH THE HELP OF THE INTERNET: HER POEMS GAINED ATTENTION ON A POPULAR STIHL.RU WEBSITE AND SOON THE YOUNG WRITER APPEARED IN FONTAN AND CUCUMBER CHILDREN'S MAGAZINES. LATER SHE BEGAN TO WRITE PROSE AND IMMEDIATELY FOUND THE AUDIENCE AMONG TEENAGERS — THE PEERS OF HER SON.



## ■ HURRICANE FOR PRESENT

■ KompasGuide, 2019, 176 p.

What present an average 10-grade student could dream of? Smartphones, skateboards, computers and sneakers are definitely not an option for Borya Rakitin. The most popular guy in school thinks bigger than that: he craves for a forest hike with all his friends. He gathers a big crowd — big enough to have a place even for Misha Luckin, world's champion of getting in troubles.

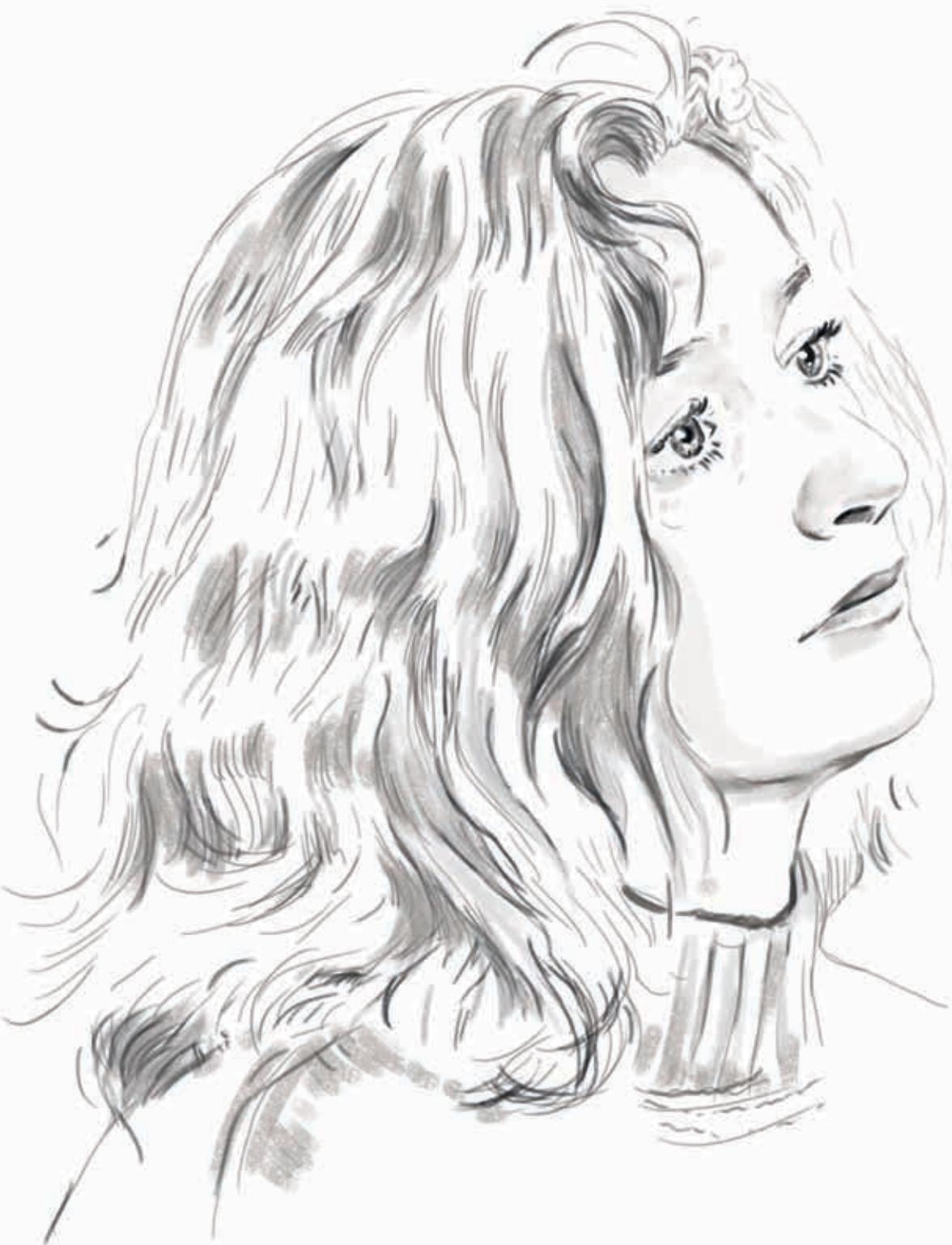
Call it Misha's luck, karma or just a coincidence but the journey to the pine forest on the bank of the Lisya River goes not according to Borya's plan. Grilled meat and the birthday cake, a forest quest and sitting at a fire — everything fails because of a sudden hurricane. But the most interesting thing is that the forces of nature reveal more about party members than Truth or Dare or Spin the Bottle ever could.

Anna Ignatova's book follows the traditions of Anatoly Aleksin's and Yuri Sotnik's school novels and creates a gallery of psychologically precise portraits: every reader can find among their classmates someone like "princess" Goldina, sarcastic Ryabinin, over-responsible Arsenyev. But they'll hardly have a chance to see them in an extreme situation — the one that unveils hidden personality traits.

Summer  
2019

12+

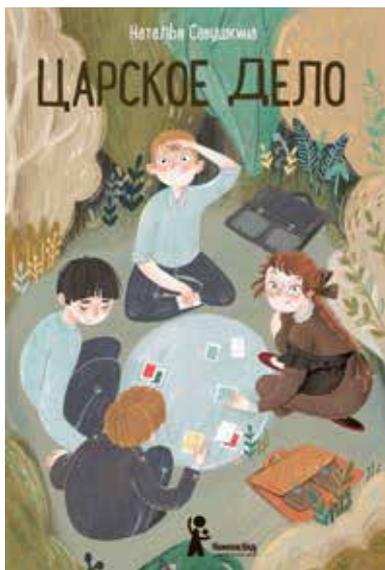
Tags: school life, coming-of-age, first love, friendship, test, nature  
Similar to: *Play Dead* by Stefan Casta



# NATALYA SAVUSHKINA:

A KIND BOOK ABOUT DIFFICULT TIMES

NATALYA SAVUSHKINA (BORN 1976) HAS WORKED AS A CHIEF BIBLIOGRAPHER IN RUSSIAN STATE CHILDREN'S LIBRARY AND IS A RENOWNED LITERATURE CRITIC. BUT HER OWN WORKS GAINED RECOGNITION AS WELL: IN 2018 HER THE CAP OF INVISIBILITY NOVEL WAS SHORTLISTED BY KNIGURU AWARD.



Winter  
2019

## ■ A KING'S DEED

■ KompasGuide, 2019, 128 p.

In real life, Natalya Savushkina's characters have already grown up and finished universities; some of them even became leaders influencing our life. But in *A King's Deed* they are still children growing up in a unique period that can be called "timeless": in the 1990s the Soviet Union collapsed a new country appeared with its new laws, rules of behavior and even children's games. Living in a time of changes is hard but exciting.

The main fun for local boys is playing with chewing gum inserts: with a sleight of hand the player must turn the inserts so they fall face-up to the ground. The more inserts fall this way the bigger is the prize. Taya from the second grade feels a little bored in the company of boys and does not care much about their games — but oddly enough, boys accept her. Mishka even invited her to his birthday party!

Natalya Savushkina's novel could easily top any rating of kindest children's books: mainly, it is a story about friendship, understanding and forgiveness. Masterfully interwoven storylines and accuracy to historical details make this book captivating and heartwarming. And for its grown-up readers it can become a key to understanding the mindset of millennials, who are starting to play an important role in modern social and political life.

8+

*Tags: friendship, first love, millennials, 1990s*

*Similar to: The Year the Swallows Came Early by Kathryn Fitzmaurice*



# TAMARA MIKHEEVA:

FAMOUS RUSSIAN FAIRYTALES  
AND COMING-OF-AGE STORIES AUTHOR

TAMARA MIKHEEVA (BORN 1979) IS A WRITER, TRAVELER, MOTHER OF FOUR, SPECIALIST IN CHILD PSYCHOLOGY AND ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR CHILDREN'S AUTHORS IN RUSSIA. SHE SUCCESSFULLY WRITES FAIRY TALES, SHORT STORIES AND YOUNG ADULT NOVELS — ALL OF WHICH ARE POPULAR AMONG CHILDREN AND GROWN-UPS ALIKE.

**When you write you need to close your eyes,** try to forget everything and write like no one taught you anything. Even when you learn to write “correctly” for a long time, at some point you need to go beyond limits. Unfortunately, I can’t do this all the time. Sometimes I think “They’ll say the ending is too sad for a children’s book”. But if I am seriously annoyed I say “So what? I’ll do it my way!”

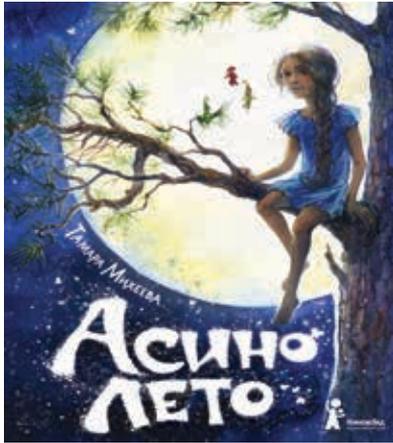
**It’s okay if books make children cry.** If children feel sorry for the characters, these are good tears. Otherwise how can they learn about compassion? Afterwards they’ll feel for the weak and protect them in real life. But of course, books should be different — happy and sad.

**At school, teachers failed to inspire me.** Tough luck. I had a bad literature teacher who couldn’t even pronounce words right. My best literature teachers were my mom and sisters — they avidly read and discussed books. In the 9th grade I left school because I was bad at physics, chemistry and math. I moved to another city to study. I got my first degree in pedagogics and managing recreation activities for children and teenagers, worked as a CIT in a school and a summer camp.

**I can’t create villains.** This is why in my books most characters are good and there are no sudden twists. Plot twists demand a conflict, some kind of tension. It’s hard for me. I can’t write someone like Voldemort.

**Writing a short story is like catching the wind with a kite** and watching it float for a while. When you write a novel, you have to keep in mind lots of things: names, connections, plot-lines, relations...And stay true to the language and style. A short story is something different, it’s like a poem. You need to check every word is in its place and at the same time maintain the “air” of the story, its spirit.





 **50 000**  
copies sold

## ■ ASYA'S SUMMER

■ KompasGuide, 2015, 256 p.

Miracles can be different. In a small forest near the summer camp you can find not only typical woodland critters, but sun squirrels and sun goats that can heal grazes and other injuries. Asya, 8-year-old girl, tries to help a sick boy by going deep into the forest where the fairies and gnomes live.

She makes friends with dwarf brothers, visits the Forest King's daughter's ball, helps the fairies, gets from them the ability to fly as a present. Her whole summer is like a fairy tale until bad things started to happen: Asya's friend Kolya has fallen from the cliff and now he's bedridden. Asya thinks it's her fault and she tries desperately to find a cure for the boy.

Tamara Mikheeva's magical realism is just a metaphor for what's going on inside Asya's mind, and all the fairies and dwarves could be seen as a projection of character's attempts to find her own place in life, to cope with the troubles the world sometimes brings.

6+ *Tags: summertime, sic-lit, coming-of-age, magical realism, overcoming difficulties, friendship*

*Similar to: To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee*



## ■ THE ISLANDERS

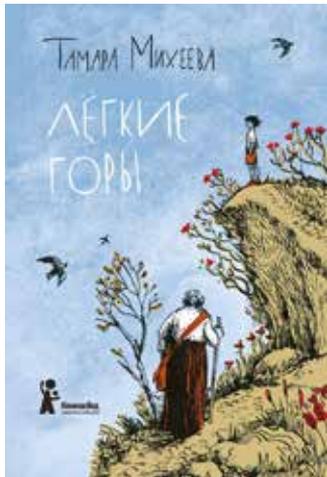
■ KompasGuide, 2017, 140 p.

Ruslan and Lisa are spending another typical summer: arrive to the countryside, read in a quiet shadowy place (cycling is not allowed), take care about the little ones or entertain dozens of relatives. But everything changes when a small kid nearly drowns in the river and this accident brings Ruslan and Lisa close. The rest of the summer won't be boring anymore because now they have a friend in each other. Or maybe even more than a friend?

The novel precisely demonstrates how this world is seen by a teenager. Initially the book takes turns between Ruslan's and Lisa's points of view but in the second half they merge together as if contradicting the character's feeling of desolation. Facing a borderline situation, a nearly fatal danger, Ruslan and Lisa learn not to oppose the world and they realize their loneliness is nothing but a delusion.

13+ *Tags: summertime, first love, survival story, friendship*

*Similar to: My Life Next Door by Frances Huntley Fitzpatrick*



## ■ THE GENTLE MOUNTAIN

■ KompasGuide, 2016, 176 p.

The novel's main character is a girl named Dina who lost her parents when she was 3 and lived in an orphanage. Now she's found a new family but soon unwillingly destroys it: "father" Seryozha felt unable to raise "someone else's daughter" and left his wife Katya. Katya moved with Dina to town Lesnogorsk, where the girl begins to go to school and fills her life with new impressions, people and emotions.

The author combines in this small book several important themes: attitude to adopted children, adaptation to a new place, ethnical tensions among children and teenagers. But the main thing is that Tamara Mikheeva achieved her artistic goals without getting too negative: the novel is light and enticing, and all the bad things it describes are simply inevitable aspects of life the child need to learn how to deal with.

10+ *Tags: adopted child, children/parents relationship, divorce, new family, new friends, moving to the new place*

*Similar to: The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett*



## ■ THE DOLPHINS' CHILDREN

■ KompasGuide, 2015, 208 p.

This is a story about unbelievable adventures of Seryozha, an ordinary boy, who lives on a small island in the scientific center studying the ocean and its habitants (primarily, dolphins). One day two more kids arrive to the island — Maxim and Roska. Together they explore the island and suddenly discover animals no one heard of before. Another time they get to a "restricted area". And it turns out the island is more interesting and more... populated than they could imagine.

The Dolphins' Children is not just a captivating fantastic novel. It tells about coming of age, finding friends and that at some point everyone has to take responsibility for their world to save it from disappearing forever.

10+ *Tags: summertime, children without adults, loneliness, animals, science fiction, friendship, first love, adventure novel*

*Similar to: Dandelion Wine by Ray Bradbury*

## Also by Tamara Mikheeva



## ■ SWIMMING TO THE CAVE

■ KompasGuide, 2018, 160 p.

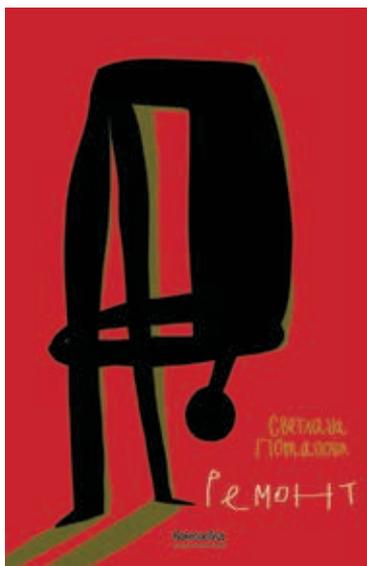
Everyone wants to find themselves. Some need a real endurance trial like stubborn "Piggy" Misha (Three Wishes), others have to cope with betrayal like "gluten-free" Galya (BG) and others must take on a long journey without telling parents or friends like overburdened with study Agatha (My Six Million Steps). Each story pinpoints one of multiple directions and tells how to stay strong when facing challenges.

12+ *Tags: short stories, coming-of-age, finding yourself, relations with parents, traveling, endurance*  
*Similar to: Into the Wild by Jon Krakauer*

# SVETLANA POTAPOVA:

GIVING VOICE TO TEENAGERS

SVETLANA POTAPOVA (BORN 1972) CLAIMS HER NOVEL *RENOVATION* ORIGINATED FROM A TRUE STORY OF A GIRL WHO RAN AWAY FROM HOME. THIS STORY INSPIRED THE CONTRIBUTOR TO *UCHITESLKAYA GAZETA* PEDAGOGICAL NEWSPAPER TO LOOK BACK TO THE WORLD OF TEENAGERS, ADOPT THEIR POINT OF VIEW AND TELL IT IN THEIR LANGUAGE.



Winter  
2019

## ■ RENOVATION

■ KompasGuide, 2019, 112 p.

Leave everything behind! Run far away! Live on your own, free from attempts to control you! Everyone dreamt of this at 15. Lyudmila — God, she hates being called “Lyusenka” — decided she couldn’t take it anymore and ran away from home. She moved to her late grandmother’s empty apartment and the first things she needs to do is to clean and renovate it. Fortunately, Lyudmila, *Renovation*’s main character, is not alone: her friend will surely help her way better than family ever could!

Lera has always seemed special to Lena. Even her full name — Valeria Andreyevna Rybkina — has an alien sound like a tremendous roar commanding everyone who dares stand in front of her. And on the catwalk Lera is looking so much better than Lena, as well. In a model studio all girls are rivals, no matter if grown-ups think otherwise. This is what *Alien Girl* is about — and also about ability to accept yourself.

Svetlana Potapova’s characters are teenagers whose lives can hardly be called happy. They are standing on the edge; their close ones feel like a threat to them and their future seems to hold nothing good. Almost every teenager had a similar desire to wreak havoc because everyone is prejudiced and life is unfair. Maybe this is why *Renovation* and *Alien Girl* are so heartbreakingly realistic even for readers who live a better life.

Svetlana Potapova defines the genre of her fiction as social drama. A degreed specialist in Pedagogics and a journalist of a pedagogical newspaper, she has a unique talent for capturing the way teenagers speak as it is, unadorned and uncensored. In 2017, *Renovation* was longlisted by Kniguru Award.

14+

Tags: children-parents relationship, coming-of-age, troubled teenagers  
Similar to: *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky



# JULIA KUZNETSOVA:

COMPLICATED THEMES WITH EASE

JULIA KUZNETSOVA (BORN 1981) IS THE WINNER OF THE SACRED DREAM PRIZE, KNIGURU PRIZE AND V. KRAPIVIN INTERNATIONAL PRIZE. HER BOOKS PROVE THAT CHILDREN AND TEENAGE FICTION HAS NO “COMPLICATED” THEMES: IT IS THE DELIVERY THAT MATTERS AND JULIA KUZNESTSOVA’S TASTE AND COMMON SENSE ARE PERFECT.

**You must combine two points of view:** the one of children and the one of grown-ups. Lack of children’s viewpoint makes an adult book while lack of grown-ups’ viewpoint makes a failed children’s book.

**The character must come to me in the morning or deep at night to tell their story.** The important thing is to grasp this moment. Very often my characters come to me when I’m walking or filling the tub. In this case I need to wipe my hands as fast as I can, find a notebook and write everything down.

**The most curious thing was when I saw in my head Grandma Jane** from R Home. She appeared in the subway: instead of my reflection in the door glass I saw a neat old lady in boxing gloves. It was a miracle. Grandma Jane showed up when I had too many troubles in my life and gave me support to overcome them all.

**I wish to write something both simple and philosophical.** Something easy to read and poetical, attractive to grown-ups and children alike, entirely fictional but reflecting real life. And I want this book to be full of adventures, sudden plot twists, secret discoveries and surprises.

**Many writers are annoyed with noise, talks, music, smelling food** but to me, this helps to relax. When you’re writing, it all unites in a single sound of an ocean and I feel like rolling on its waves. It’s hard to make it quiet at home and sometimes I go to a café. I prefer self-service ones; otherwise it seems to me waiters are looking at you and wondering when you finally leave. And if you’re ready to stand in a line to get your coffee and cake, this won’t happen.





## ■ WOODWORKING TALES ■ OR HOW GRISHA CRAFTED TOYS

Illustrated by Sergey Gavrilov  
KompasGuide, 2018, 84 p.

Grisha spends summer days in the country house — as usual, it's a bit boring here. But only until Grisha strikes on the idea to craft something. This impulse quickly evolves into a real dream to learn to use tools and become a great woodworker. This age-typical artistic drive gets full support from Grisha's parents — with their help the boy will find out how to build a birdhouse, work in a team, share responsibilities and stay calm with “colleagues” in frustrating situations.

0+ *Tags: crafting, picture book, sibling relations, children-parents relations, summer*  
*Similar to: What Do People Do All Day? by Richard Scarry*

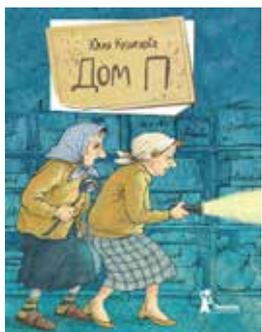


## ■ HOLIDAY IN RIGA

■ Illustrated by Anna Sheshilova  
KompasGuide, 2018, 168 p.

The main characters, Masha and her younger brother Grisha, spend a couple of weeks with their mother in Latvian capital. The zoo, the museum of chocolate, swimming in the cold Baltics — Masha, Grisha and their mother have a lot of fun. The more things they do the faster days in Riga go by, the more comfortable the initially unwelcome house feels. During these two weeks they will get to know another culture, find something special in each house they see and — most importantly — discover something new about people and themselves.

6+ *Tags: travel, sibling relations, the Baltic countries, sea*  
*Similar to: Little Women by Louisa May Alcott*



## ■ R HOME

■ Illustrated by Olga Gromova  
KompasGuide, 2015, 192 p.

Grandma Jane was a very modest grandmother, and, most of all, she was afraid of upsetting her son and the other family members. For example, she didn't tell them that she wasn't watching soap operas, but, in fact, loved boxing. One day, the father met his former classmate, who told him that he was the director of a wonderful place where old men and women can take a break from their labours. After hesitating a bit, the father then sent his mum to the Rest home, or the R Home (he somehow could not pronounce the whole phrase). Not wanting to upset her son, grandmother Jane agreed, though she didn't want to leave because she was not tired of looking after her beloved people.

rights  
sold to 

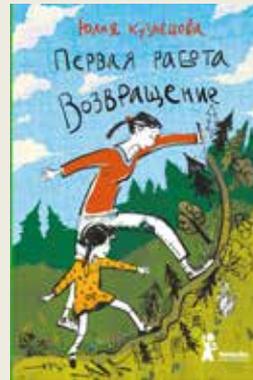
 37 000  
copies sold

10+ *Tags: children/grandparents relationship, freedom, fantasy world*  
*Similar to: One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest by Ken Kesey*

## JULIA KUZNETSOVA — RUSSIAN YOUNG ADULT MASTER



**THE FIRST JOB** ■  
KompasGuide, 2016, ■  
2017, 256–352 p. ■



15-year-old Masha needs to teach Spanish to Dana, a spoiled and fidgety 6-year-old girl. Masha gets involved into this because she wants to save money for language courses in Barcelona — and because of this unexpected teaching experience she begins to better understand herself and people around her. Disobedient Dana forces the young teacher to be interesting and improve herself to achieve her goals. Masha starts to see other people — the little girl, her ill-mannered babysitter, school teachers and even her own parents — from the grown-up perspective. This new role can give her a lot.

The second part of Masha Molochnikova’s story is full of summertime lightness. Three weeks of language courses in the capital of Catalonia promise many things and a new, unique experience. The girl will deal with Spanish classes, diverse groupmates and teachers that differ from the ones she used to know. At a certain moment the city itself will talk to Masha — and this will be the turning point for her.

The third part begins when Masha gets back to Moscow and her return turns differs greatly from she has expected. Her mom does not seem to be glad to see her again, and this is the reason: Masha is going to have a younger brother! The school year speeds up from the very beginning and every teacher threatens the students with upcoming state exams. 6-year-old Dana must be prepared for the first grade, and that means Spanish lessons are not enough.

12+ *Tags: teenage job, coming-of-age, inspiring, first love, friendship, children/parents relationship*  
*Similar to: The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate by Jacqueline Kelly*



■ **DADDY, WHERE ARE YOU?**  
■ KompasGuide, 2016, 208 p.

Out of all the people on Earth, Liza loves her daddy. But quite unexpectedly, there comes a verdict: five years of prison! The young girl has so many things to tell her dad: her new friend called Andrew and his stupid desire to join one bad company led by Fox, but most of all — about Andrew’s younger sister, Kiara. This two-year-old baby completely changes Liza’s life. At school Liza’s nickname is “Dumb”, but after meeting Kiara, Liza wants to laugh and chat happily, describing the days she spent with that little child. Teenage girls, the protagonists of Julia Kuznetsova’s works, are always confused with various controversies and reflections. Liza Makarova, the main character of *Daddy, where are you?* is an observant person. She keeps on comparing herself with the rest trying to understand the essence of her emotions as well as behavior of other people.

12+ *Tags: prison, coming-of-age, children/parents relationship*  
*Similar to: White Oleander by Janet Fitch*

# TATYANA MART:

CREATIVITY AGAINST BOREDOM

AN EXPERIENCED EDITOR WHO REVEALED CHRISTELLE DABOS' THE MIRROR VISITOR QUARTET TO RUSSIAN AUDIENCE, TATYANA MART HERSELF IS AN ENTERTAINING WRITER. EVERY READER AGED 8–12 WILL RECOGNIZE THEMSELVES IN HER CHARACTERS AND ACQUIRE A VITAL SKILL OF NOTICING EVEN THE SLIGHTEST DIFFERENCES IN THE WAYS THIS WORLD IS SEEN BY OTHER PEOPLE, GROWN-UPS AND OTHER CHILDREN.



- **ANKA M. AND ANKA P.**
- KompasGuide, 2019, 128 p.

Anka lives in Saint Petersburg and she has a sister. Anka lives in Moscow and has a sister too. They share the same name and have so much in common but there's a huge difference: the cities they were born and live in. The two cities are not polar opposites but are very different, indeed — and Tatyana Mart's characters begin to explore this difference.

One Anya visits the other and finds out 700 kilometers separating Russia's biggest cities is such a distance that people even speak a little strange. In Moscow they call a white bun "kalach", the Botanical Garden "the Apothecary Garden" and have the weirdest names for their streets. They named a street after a girl's name, Varvarka — how come there's no Anka Street in Moscow?

The two girls will deal with a chain of funny events caused by differences in Northern mentality of Saint Petersburg and Central Russian mentality of Muscovites. But behind linguistic and cultural barriers, anecdotal stories and awkward mistakes there's a subtle undertone: to understand someone, you have to walk in their shoes. This book will teach middle school readers how to do this.

8+

Tags: *friendship, travel, grown-ups-children relationships*  
Similar to: *11 Birthdays* by Wendy Mass



# TATYANA MENSCHIKOVA:

A NEW TAKE ON THE CLASSICAL FORM

TATYANA MENSCHIKOVA (BORN 1986) IS A PHILOLOGIST, EXPERIENCED MEDIA EDITOR, PERSON WITH WIDE KNOWLEDGE AND MULTIPLE INTERESTS. HER CURIOSITY ABOUT THE WORLD IS REFLECTED IN HER PROSE: SHE GRANTS HER CHARACTERS LOVE FOR NEUROPHYSIOLOGY AND ENTOMOLOGY, EXPERIMENTS WITH LANGUAGE AND FORM. THE RESULT REMINDS BOTH OF CLASSICAL SCHOOL NOVELS AND MODERN FICTION.



Winter  
2019

## ■ MY FATHER LIT THE STARS ■ KompasGuide, 2019, 112 p.

“Hello! Is there anybody there?” Snail suddenly noticed this writing when he was sitting on the stairs at his house. Holding his knees and nearly crying — and here’s a greeting left with a crayon on the wall. Snail offended his only school friend, his mom’s taken to the hospital and the only person home is father, who Snail hasn’t been in touch with for the whole eleven years! “I’m here! Will that do?” the boy wrote below.

This spontaneous reaction, trivial personal weakness pushed the slow and indecisive — Snail, indeed! — character to a world full of adventures, discoveries and new friends. Sometimes you don’t need much to change a lot: just answering a simple question could be enough!

My Father Lit the Stars, Tatyana Menshchikova’s debut, despite remained intentionally modern has no connection to any specific time period. All the difficulties the 12-year-old protagonist faces, psychological details the text is filled with and even nicknames given by schoolkids to their teachers and one another can be easily imagined in classical school novels. No wonder the book leaves an amazing impression: when you turn the last page, it seems this story has been with you forever.

12+ Tags: *friendship, children-parents relationship, single-parent families, school life*  
Similar to: *Herr Röslein by Silke Lambeck*



# MARINA AROMSHTAM:

ON THE WAY TO CURRICULUM

THE NOVEL OF MARINA AROMSHTAM (BORN 1960) *WHEN THE ANGELS ARE RESTING* BECAME A PHENOMENON IN THE RUSSIAN LITERATURE. THIS CAN BE EASILY PROVEN BY SALES, READERS' REVIEWS AND NUMEROUS AWARDS. THE BOOK IS RECOGNIZED ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL AS WELL: MUNICH INTERNATIONAL YOUTH LIBRARY INCLUDED IT IN THE WHITE RAVENS LIST OF DISTINGUISHED WORKS OF LITERATURE.



■ **WHEN THE ANGELS ARE RESTING**  
■ KompasGuide, 2011, 208 p.



The novel tells the story of Alina, an elementary school student, and her teacher Margarita Semyonovna, called Marsyom for short. Alina's father moved to France, and her mother has a new man, whose son she has to call brother now. Apart from this, she is worried about many other things: her class, her friends, her favorite teacher. Narration from Alina's point of view is interspersed with excerpts from Marsyom's diary — this original dialogue of the teacher and the student becomes the axis of the novel.

In 2017, Ukrainian Ministry of Education planned to include *When the Angels Are Resting* in the school curriculum. The preliminary list of books chosen for study at World Literature classes includes Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (Grade 5), Diana Wynne Jones' *Howl's Walking Castle* (Grade 7), Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Grade 9) and others. Marina Aromshtam's book is supposed to be studied in the 8th grade.

 **45 000**  
copies sold

**rights sold to**  **China  
Lithuania  
Ukraine**

**10+** Tags: school, teacher-student relationship, coming-of-age  
Similar to: *Up the Down Staircase* by Bel Kaufman

## MARINA AROMSHTAM ON HER NOVEL:

— *At that time, Angels summarized an important period of my life. I invested in it a lot emotionally and expressed what I wanted to say back then. This is how I treat this book — an expression of a certain life period, as honest and profound as it was possible for me. I took on writing this book when its inspirations were finishing school, and its release date coincided with my 50th birthday. My birthday become the day of its presentation, and it was attended almost by all my former students and their parents. On that day I dared to call myself a writer for the first time. As for the popularity of the novel, I believe, it's not about the text quality. Popularity means the text has many layers and different layers seem recognizable to different people. And perhaps, there's something consoling in the story.*



# ANASTASIA STROKINA:

NORDIC CHARM

ANASTASIA STROKINA (BORN 1984) SETS HER STORIES IN NORTHERN RUSSIA AND SCANDINAVIA FOLLOWING SELMA LAGERLÖF AND HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN. HER WONDERFUL FAIRY TALES ARE BOTH MODERN AND TIMELESS — THEY PERFECTLY FIT BOTH 19TH AND 21ST CENTURIES.

**No matter what they say about negative influence of Disney characters**, I don't care even if they're based on some serious research. If I say something bad about them it'll feel like betraying my childhood.

**Children and grown-ups are different.** It is essential to talk to kids about ontological matters like life and death, friendship and betrayal, finding your path in life. But grown-ups are physiologically different, so erotic things or something like this shouldn't be imposed on children. I'm not against freedom, everything is possible in literature and art. But seeing no difference between physical aspects of childhood and adulthood is unnatural.

**We lived beyond the Arctic Circle** in a small military town. We didn't have many children's books at home. Once, when my dad went someplace far he brought back Wilhelm Hauff's fairy tales. So they became my favorite. Then they were followed by The Wizard of the Emerald City and our hallway became the Yellow Brick Road. After that I got many books from all over the country but I still love magical fairy tales most of all for their ability to blend weirdness and wisdom.

**Even before school I wrote something about airplanes** - my father was a military pilot. This was because I couldn't write and kids need to express themselves somehow. Most kids do this though drawing but I had absolutely no talent and looked for another way of expression.

**When I was growing up they told us well we didn't read much because of videogames.** Every generation has something that distracts from reading. When the cinema appeared, people rushed to watch movies although they were silent. Before that people had concerts, music performances, markets, theaters. Tomorrow there'll be other distractors, some other gadgets we can't even think of. Yes, books have to compete for attention. It has always been like this. And great books have succeeded.





the whole  
**ENGLISH**  
translation  
is available

## ■ THE WHALE GOES NORTH

■ Illustrated by Irina Petelina  
KompasGuide, 2015, 96 p.

 **62 000**  
copies sold

“Never scorn your children for dreaming. They’re searching for their own island” — this is how Anastasia Strokina sums up the storyline of *The Whale Goes North*: a funny animal mamoru is looking for the island he is destined to reach, and he must make no mistake.

*The Whale Goes North* is a philosophical parable, comprehensible for children of 7-8 and entertaining for grown-ups. Like every good children’s book of the 21st century, it blends a fairy tale plot with a “morale” and educational elements. In Anastasia Strokina’s case these elements are stories about life on Bering Island, the Aleuts and their mythology. Vivid, metaphorical and impeccably stylish illustrations by Irina Petelina make this release the collector’s edition.

“Most of all I want this tiny book to make little readers think about friendship and loneliness, love and forgiveness, tolerance, avarice and betrayal. And trust me, my dear, little, kind, good-hearted ones: dreaming is fine. Dream on, while it lasts!”, encourages Anastasia.

5+

*Tags: indigenous peoples, philosophic tale, journey, North, fantastic animals*

*Similar to: The Wonderful Adventures of Nils by Selma Lagerlof*



## ■ THE BEAD OF THE POCKET DWARF

■ Illustrated by Oleg Braude  
KompasGuide, 2017. 160 p.

*The Bead of the Pocket Dwarf* continues these Northern motives: Anastasia Strokina is charmed with the North, and this time, the magic world she created becomes alive on the streets of Saint-Petersburg, in Finland, on the rocky shores of Iceland and Greenland and, most importantly, in the hearts of readers of all ages. *The Bead of the Pocket Dwarf* is full of adventures and is always in motion, but first of all, it is the story of discovering your true self. Illustrations made by Oleg Braude reflect both the adventurousness of the book and its inimitable atmosphere: cold but magical, with a well-earned happy ending.

*The Bead of the Pocket Dwarf* is an Andersen-like story: a girl Vera rushes headlong into the world of adventures to save her little sister Varya. Many dangers and surprises await her — but she won’t face them alone: her best friends, dog Lille and a bird nicknamed Bird, will help and support her. And there’s something else: the magic medicine that can save Varya, belongs to...a storyteller named Topelius. It’s him Vera must find — meeting the ghost couple and lots of other amazing creatures on her way.

5+

*Tags: journey, North, scary tale, illness, absurd*

*Similar to: Ole Lukøje by Hans Christian Andersen*

# PLAYING WITH STONES: THE WORLD OF ARCTIC CHILDHOOD



■ MARIA FEDOTOVA  
■ **PLAYING WITH STONES**

KompasGuide, 2019, 96 p.  
Illustrated by Irina Galkina

Once little Nulginet saw a tiny man and wondered why he was so small. “He’s only a kid, just like you are”, her mother laughed. And how was the girl supposed to know there were other children in the world? She was the only child around.

Nulginet enjoys playing with stones: you can ride big ones like a reindeer, and in big brown boulders you can place wolves and bears. They’re not real, but still scary. “Real” toys are different: they smell badly and make unpleasant noises when you press them. But the girl loves the ball most: it bounces happily, unlike any stones. This ball is her first contact with “the big world”.

Nulginet’s name means “born during migration”, and she lives in a family of reindeer herders who never stay in one place for long. The girl resembles a character of Mountain of Gems cartoon series: her life and herself seem so unreal and magical. This may sound hard to believe, but the stories collected under this title are not fairy tales, they are real memories of grown-up Nulginet. Now her name is Maria Fedotova, she is an experienced teacher and a popular Far East writer. She writes in Russian, Yakut and Evenki languages.

Playing with Stones was originally published in Evenki, and was translated to Russian by Ariadna Borisova. For this novel Maria Fedotova-Nulginet (born 1946) was awarded V. Krapivin Prize in “Small Motherland” nomination. Illustrations made by Irina Galkina perfectly capture the spirit of the book and enrich its content. For elementary school readers, Playing with Stones will certainly become a discovery: they will find out our world can be so diverse!



Winter  
2019

5+ Tags: ethnic groups, Northern, tribe culture

### Similar works of fiction:

— *Nanook of the North* (1922) — a film by Robert Flaherty;  
*Playing with Stones* pays as much attention to details of daily life in the North.

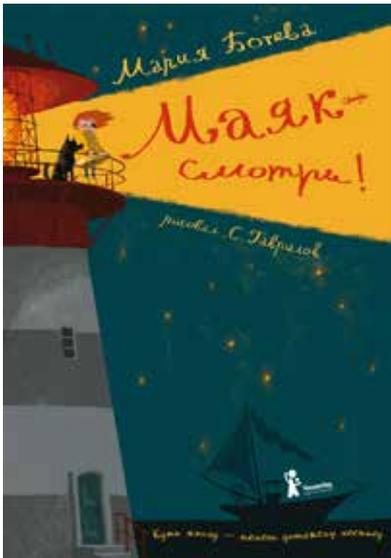
— *White Fang* (1906) — a novel by Jack London:  
in Maria Fedotova’s stories animals also play an important role.

— *Lost in the Barrens* (1956) — a novel by Farley Mowat:  
*Playing with Stones* also emphasizes the importance of friendship between different ethnic groups.

# MARIA BOTEVA:

INIMITABLE STYLE AND SUBTLE PSYCHOLOGY

MARIA BOTEVA (BORN IN 1980) IS WELL-KNOWN AMONG DEVOTEES OF MODERN CHILDREN'S AND TEENAGE LITERATURE. AND NOT ONLY IN RUSSIA: ICE-CREAM IN WAFFER CUPS COLLECTION WAS INCLUDED BY MUNICH INTERNATIONAL YOUTH LIBRARY IN ITS WHITE RAVENS LIST OF DISTINGUISHED AND ORIGINAL CHILDREN'S BOOKS.



## ■ LIGHTHOUSE — LOOK!

■ KompasGuide, 2017, 96 p.

Illustrated by Sergey Gavrillov

Everything about this book is unique: its characters, narrative and the chain of plot-twisting events. The readers will find themselves on a captivating journey through mists and storms in the open sea. But amidst the darkness and the splashing water there's a feeble, flickering light — it seems, the lighthouse requires some serious repairing. But the characters need it — so it can't fall to pieces, despite all tragedies and tempests.

There are many characters in the book: ginger Edwin, little Elisa, wolf Jackdaw Wader, father and son Kaporyaks, the ship Antonius and Sweet N., as well as pirates, prisoners and strangers. The fates of all these people, animals and ships are amazingly entwined on the lighthouse. The lighthouse, the symbol of the common aim people try to reach by taking various and sometimes uncanny paths, becomes the focal point of this original and entertaining narration.

Despite its lightness, Maria Boteva's prose is filled with vast emotional undertones, unpredictability and subtleness. Her style is truly inimitable: this is a unique language every reader falls in love with at first encounter. The author keeps a dialogue with the readers, deliberately taking a weaker role of a doubter, causing them to nod approvingly: "Yes, that's right, now continue!"

The text is divided into small chapters, each of them taking us from one place to another. Such "montage" makes the readers curious and keeps them intrigued: why did Edwin start his sail? How can Elsa repair the damaged lighthouse on her own? How to stop being allergic to pirates? Questions keep following one another, and the ending gives almost all the answers. This "almost" is the most charming element of the book: thanks to such evasiveness, the readers will think about the characters again and again and imagine follow-ups to their stories.

6+

Tags: funny, fairy tale, surrealism  
Similar to: *Comet in Moominland*  
by Tove Jansson





# MARIA BERSHADSKAYA:

NEVER-ENDING CHILDHOOD



MARIA BERSHADSKAYA (BORN IN 1970) IS AN AUTHOR OF THE MOST POPULAR KOMPASGUIDE SERIES. THE BOOKS WERE TRANSLATED TO VIETNAMESE, CHILDREN'S BOOK WEB-MEDIA PAMPAMBOOK MAGAZINE NAMED BIG LITTLE GIRL THE BOOK OF 2013, AND IN 2014 IT RECEIVED AN AWARD "THE BOOK OF THE YEAR: CHILDREN'S CHOICE" SO WHY DO READERS AGED 6-9 LOVE MARIA BERSHADSKAYA'S SERIES SO MUCH?



- Book 1. *How to Tame a City*  
 Book 2. *A Recipe of Wonderful Day*  
 Book 3. *Rabbit's Walk ...*  
 Book 4. *Seven and a Half Crocodile Smiles*  
 Book 5. *101 Ways to Get Lost in a Forest*  
 Book 6. *Pumpking*  
 Book 7. *Merry Blue Christmas*  
 Book 8. *On the Case of a Chequered Bag*  
 Book 9. *That's All About Love*  
 Book 10. *Pushkin & Co*  
 Book 11. *Polka-dotted Jeans*  
 Book 12. *Warning! There's a Birthday!*

over  
**150 000**  
 copies sold

**rights**  
 sold to 

## ■ **BIG LITTLE GIRL**

■ KompasGuide, 2012–2016, 32–48 p.  
 Illustrated by Alexandra Ivoilova

### 1. **Mischievous**

Although Zhenya is much calmer than Pippi Longstocking, she gets caught up in the center of events, and life keeps dragging her into adventures. Like any 7-year-old kid, Zhenya doesn't always act logically, in a grown-up way — and eventually ends up in trouble all the time. Give a bundle of hay to a sick Grandpa, so its smell could remind him of childhood? Operation “Finding Hay in a Winter City” has just begun!

### 2. **Honest**

It always goes this way: you start to show Mom and Dad all the crocodile smiles you know of: a cunning smile, a smile of love — and just when you're doing your sixth smile, Dad tells you have to go to dentist's. No matter how unusual Zhenya is — and she's taller than any basketball player — she has the same problems as the readers. And seeing her dealing with them is both exciting and useful.

### 3. **Unpredictable**

There's a secret under every cover. Titles like *Polka-dotted Jeans* or *That's All About Love* give nothing but a hint of what's going to happen in the books. That's what keeps the readers interested and makes them turn the page as fast as possible. Every new *Big Little Girl* volume is like a wrapped present: you've no idea, what's inside, but you already feel happy and excited.

### 4. **Storytelling illustrations**

Sasha Ivoilova's illustrations are so intertwined with the text that occasionally they start telling the story. Sometimes they turn into ideal charts and data sheets deserving to appear in serious journals for grown-ups: for example, “Five Signs of Love” is the best way to prepare for Valentine's Day!

### 5. **Likeable characters**

The series has no lackluster or obscure characters: all of them, including Zhenya's dachshund Vetka or friend Sonya's unnamed nephew, are individuals and influence the storyline. As TV series fans say, all characters must be psychologically developed and all story arches must be completed. Maria Bershadskaya succeeds in this, and her 12 books seem like a big novel about an eventful and meaningful childhood.

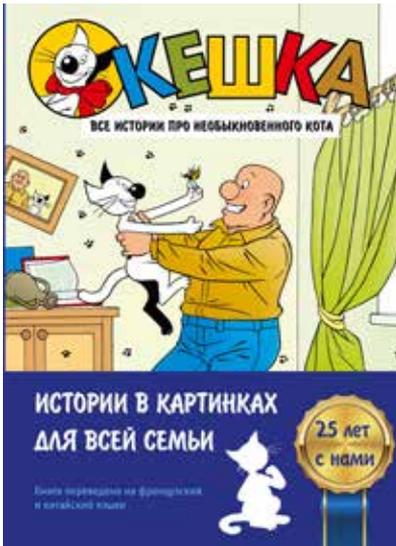
6+

Tags: junior school, friendship, children/parents relationship, siblings relationship, funny stories, overcoming difficulties  
 Similar to: *Pippi Longstocking* by Astrid Lindgren

# NATALIA AND ANDREI SNEGIRYOV:

## FIRST SOVIET COMIC STRIP

NATALIA AND ANDREI SNEGIRYOV'S COMICS ARE AN ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY (GROWN-UPS WILL ALSO HAVE A LOT OF FUN) AND A GREAT WAY TO LEARN TO READ. COLORFUL PICTURES, BRIEF AND EASY TEXTS, LOTS OF ACTION AND GOOD HUMOR MAKE KESHKA A PERFECT CHOICE FOR PARENTS LOOKING FOR A BOOK THEIR CHILD WILL GET IMMERSSED IN FOR A LONG TIME.



- NATALIA SNEGIRYOVA AND ANDREI SNEGIRYOV
- **KESHKA IN THE CENTER OF ATTENTION**  
KompasGuide, 2018, 192 p.

There's Tintin in France and Belgium, there are the Moomins in Finland, and there's Keshka in Russia. For generations, readers have been falling in love with the Russian comics' most popular cat, who recently celebrated his 25th anniversary. Funny, lively, cunning and slightly narcissistic, Keshka has not aged or changed a bit. He learned to speak other languages, though: in 2018, stories about him started to be published in Switzerland.

Short comic strips about Keshka first appeared in Soviet newspaper Semya ("Family") in January 1991. Since then, every week children waited for their parents to bring a new issue, cut out the strips, colored them and collected in folders — and as it turned out 25 years later, kept them with care. In the Internet there are several communities, where Semya readers, who are grown-ups now, share digitalized version of these strips.

KompasGuide Publishing House has reissued four Keshka strip collections in paperback, and in 2018 it releases the complete collection in hardcover. Especially for these collections, Andrei and Natalia Snegiryovs, Keshka's parents, colored the strips (the ones that were originally black-and-white), reworked the text and "smoothed" the visual style to create editions suitable for modern elementary school audience.

The full and detailed story of the feline explorer is comprised of over 90 short and long episodes: Keshka happened to hunt mice in his apartment, visit the North, time-travel and even make a journey to the Moon. He reminds of Tintin, Simon's Cat and Mickey Mouse simultaneously; however, Russian cultural features remain clearly distinctive.

4+

Tags: comics, animals, funny  
Similar to: *Garfield* by Jim Davis

rights sold to  Switzerland  
(French Language)

 68 000  
copies sold



## KOMPASGUIDE PUBLISHING HOUSE

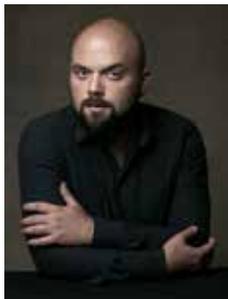
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DESIGNED BY VLADIMIR MUH-IN

The translations of Russian books are supported by various organizations:

- Support for translations into foreign languages of works written in the languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation established by the Federal Agency for Press and Mass Communication (Rospechat'), through the federal target program Culture of Russia (2012–2018) and the Institute for Literary Translation
- Program for the support of translation of Russian fiction, poetry and non-fiction, International Project of the Mikhail Prokhorov Foundation



# KOMPASGUIDE PUBLISHERS: 10 YEARS OF RUSSIAN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

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