

Mists on the River: Folktales from Siberia by Yeremei Aipin, Illustrated by Gennady Raishev

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THESE ENTERTAINING FOLKTALES from Siberia—portraying heroes reminiscent of the classic Russian fairy tales—are sure to delight a broad range of readers, from children to adults. Gifting us with voices of indigenous storytellers from the Arctic Circle and beyond, Yeremei Aipin ushers forth animal spirits and characters from folk history and brings them into the now. Through the beloved Bear or the Cuckoo we learn significant and foundational life lessons. “Paki the Bear” lends a window into the loyalty of true friendship. “The Cuckoo” shows us, with wings of flight, the possibility of freedom from oppression. In “Plump Rosy Cranberry and Wispy Braided Grass” we learn the importance of respecting one another. With “Lanny the Fisherman” we are given a glimpse into the pitfalls of not pursuing one’s own path, despite the promises and temptations of others along the way.

Vividly told, each story features an innate dramatic conflict. Some, such as the poetic riddles of “Birdie-Birdie’s Bow and Arrows” and “The Sandpiper,” offer a more playful tone. Dynamic watercolor illustrations invite us into a space of reverence and wonder, linking the folk tale heroes of Siberia to the natural world. Each tale will readily capture the imagination and questioning mind of young readers, taking them on a journey to the past, while imparting timeless and necessary truths. Adults will be reminded of familiar concepts—the touchstones in life that matter most—from respect for the rhythms of the natural environment to the animals and people in it.

Translated from Russian to English by Aipin’s daughter, Marina, *Mists on the River* was

edited by Claude Clayton Smith. Along with the late Alexander Vashchenko, to whom the book is dedicated, Smith was co-editor and translator of *The Way of Kinship*, the world's first anthology of Native Siberian literature in English, which introduced Yeremei Aipin and other Native Siberian writers and artists to American readers.

—Yvonne Gleason