

# Veeti the Seal Pup's Year

Text and illustrations  
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## It's a snowy winter.

Except for the biting and howling wind, it's quiet and peaceful at Lake Saimaa.

I, a small Saimaa ringed seal pup Veeti, am lying next to my mom in a sheltered snow cave. My thick light grey fur and the milk produced by my mom keep me warm and cosy.

I must drink a lot of fatty milk to become strong and grow up.



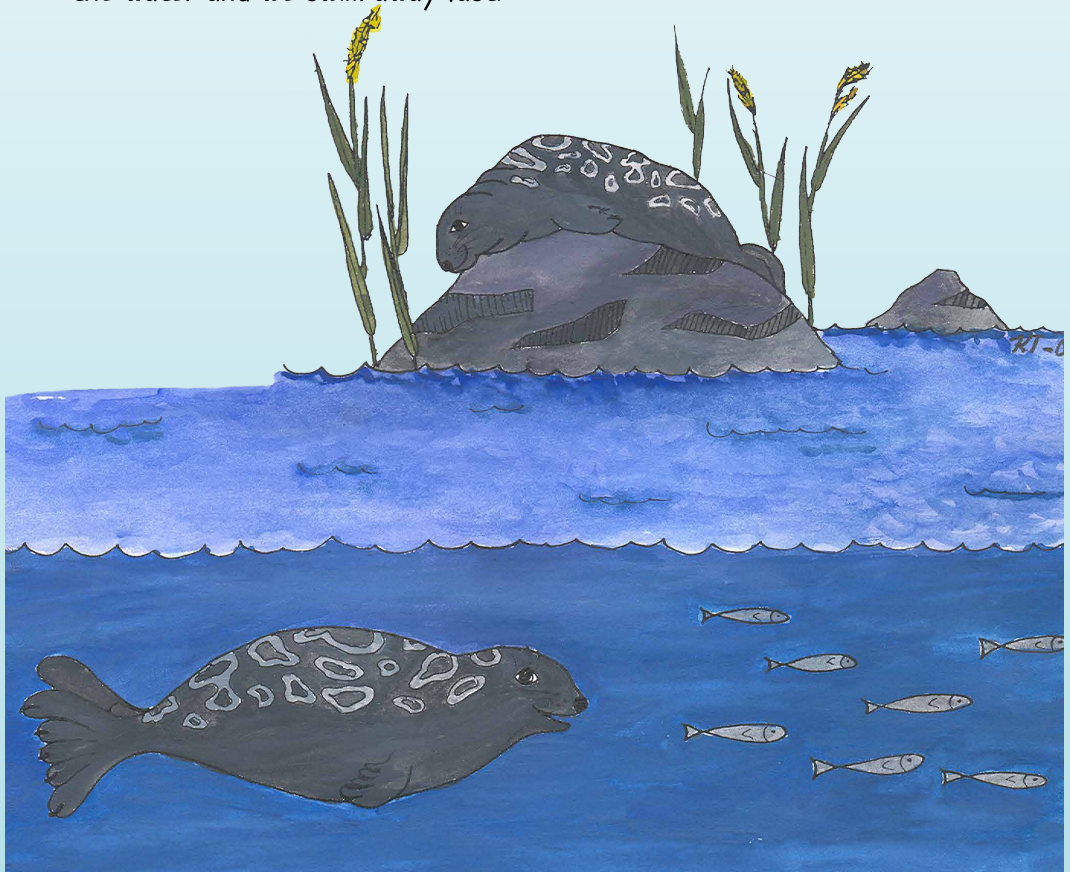
## It's late spring.

I have shed my pup fur and am starting to resemble an adult Saimaa ringed seal.

I've learned to swim, fish, and eat fish. I love doing all three! Where I live, people are not allowed to fish by using nets, so I don't need to worry about getting caught up in them.

My mom has climbed up on a rock and has stayed there for hours now. It's the moulting season and the rock provides a perfect place for drying the old fur and for scratching it off. It can look pretty funny at times.

My mom is always very watchful. If she sees a threat, she dives into the water and we swim away fast.

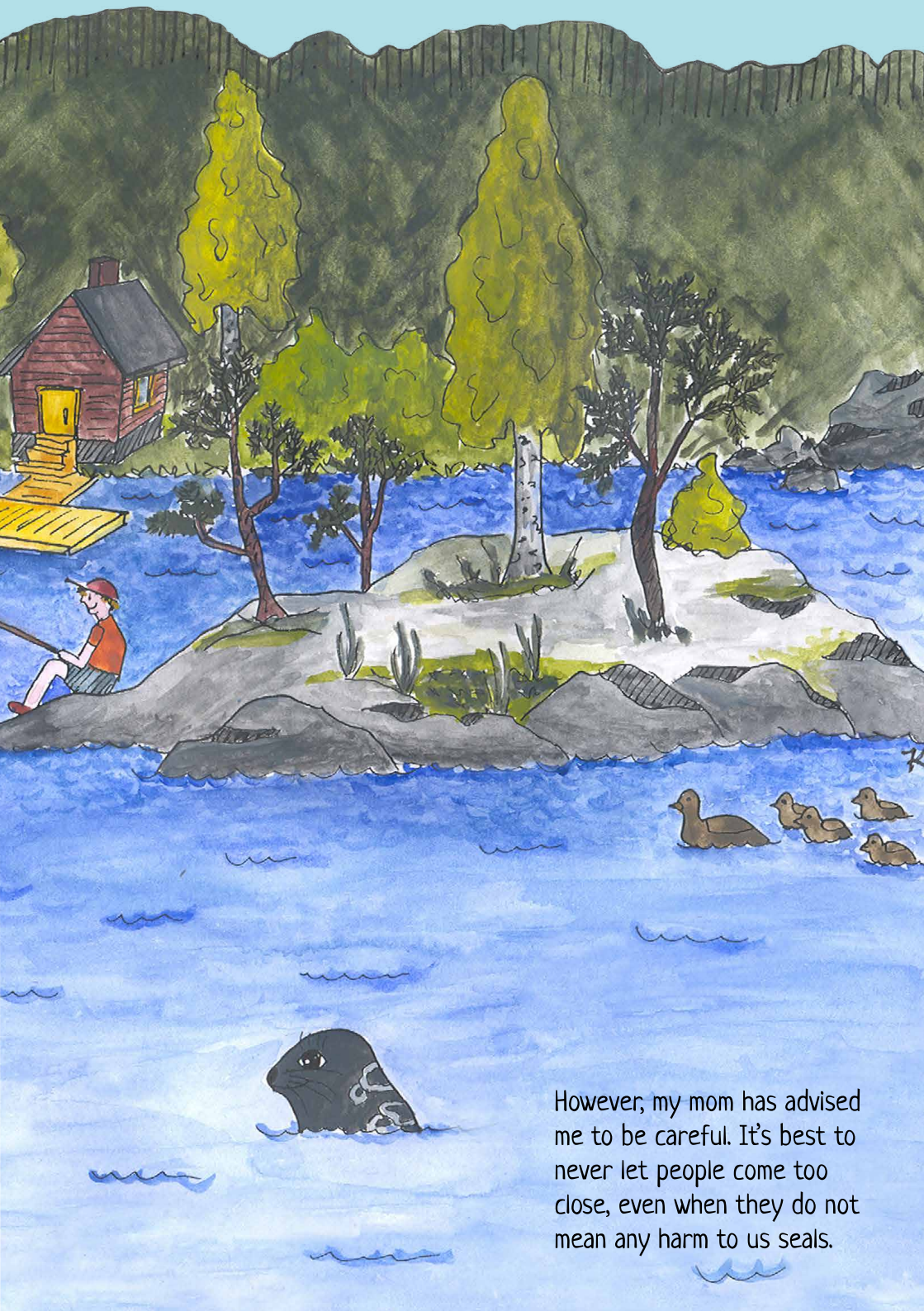




Phew, it's hot!

I can't believe how hot it gets in summer. Even the water is very warm!

It's not as peaceful here as it used to be. People have left their city homes to spend their vacation by Lake Saimaa, and there are boats everywhere. All of this scares me a little, but usually curiosity wins. I like to watch people – especially when they go on fishing trips.



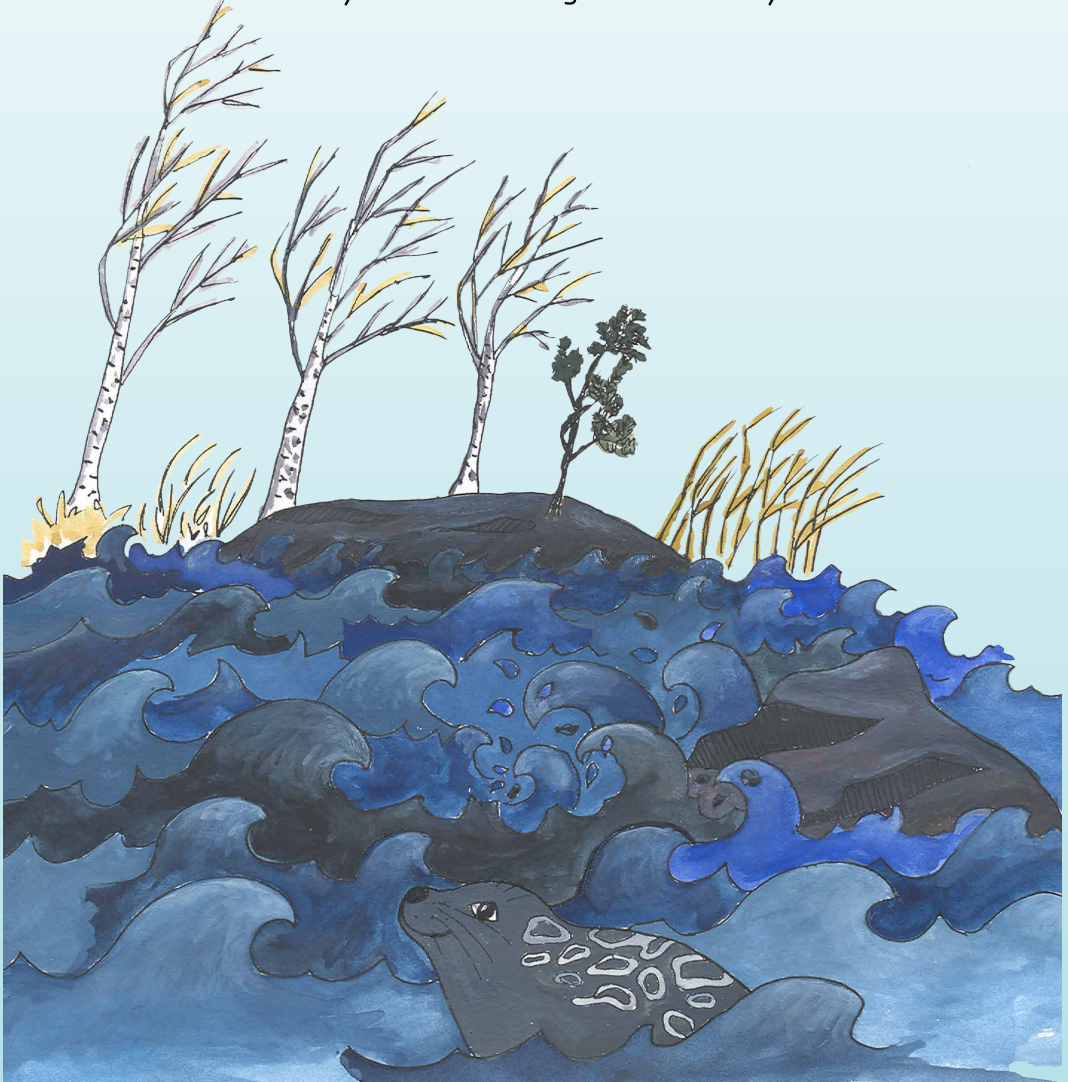
However, my mom has advised me to be careful. It's best to never let people come too close, even when they do not mean any harm to us seals.

## Autumn is an amazing time!

First, the beautiful and bright autumn colours take your breath away and in the next moment, the entire landscape has become grey and bleak.

The great thing is that it's peaceful again. The only noise is made by the restless waves, and it's not too hot either.

I must eat plenty of fish to thicken my subcutaneous fat layer. This will ensure that I'll be cosy even on freezing cold winter days.



## At Christmas time, the water is frozen.

Snow makes Lake Saimaa white and snow forms drifts on the shores of islands.

This is the perfect kind of winter for us seals!

I want to build myself a nest for resting. First, I dig a hole in the ice and then a nice little nest in a snowdrift where I can rest in between swimming trips. I also need to make holes in the ice for breathing, as I cannot stay underwater for long periods at a time.

Life is good on Lake Saimaa, I think to myself, and dive after a school of delicious vendace.





Hi! I'm Veeti the Saimaa ringed seal.

Hi Veeti! Nice to meet you. We are your cousins.



I'm Larissa  
the Ladoga ringed seal.



And I'm Inga  
the Baltic ringed seal.



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