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Spirit of the Turtle: An Unkechaug Boy's Adventures aboard a 19th-Century Whaling Vessel

Lara M Strong

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The year is 1848. The sea beckons——a vast unexplored world of adventure and opportunity. But for 14-year-old Solomon Ward, a boy from Long Island's Poospatuck Reservation, the call of the sea stirs deeper ambitions. Inspired by the tales of Absalom Boston, the great Wampanoag whaler who captained his own vessel, Solomon signs on to the Maryann, a ship sailing out of Cold Spring Harbor. He aspires not only to ease his family's financial burdens but to honor the whaling traditions of his forefathers and attain similar glory. First, however, he must unravel the secrets of the ship——unexplained blue lights in the dark of night, macabre noises, and the furtive conduct of his fellow crewmembers. He inadvertently becomes embroiled in a search for lost ambergris——worth its weight in gold. But it's on a whale hunt that he ultimately discovers his true capabilities and desires. Join Solomon on his journey from Long Island to the distant ports of Rio, Valparaiso, and Honolulu and on to the Arctic Ocean. History, culture, and the natural setting are deeply entwined in this magical tale of adventure aboard a 19th-century whaling ship. Anyone who has enjoyed Sue Monk Kidd's The Anatomy of Wings or the novels of Scott O'Dell will love Spirit of the Turtle.

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