

2024.03

vol. **68**

# K-Book Trends

offers Korea's highly informative publishing content  
to those in the global publishing industry.



[www.kpipa.or.kr](http://www.kpipa.or.kr)

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TOPIC

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## How Book Club Platforms Captivate Readers

Written by Kim Sae-Seom (CEO of Gmeum Inc.)

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It is the age of communities. From sneaker manufacturers to franchise cafes, companies are putting as much effort into building communities as they are into making things. Gathering loyal fans in one place to generate buzz and feedback has become a proven business strategy in an environment where we are bombarded with information and products. The publishing industry is no exception. Publishers and bookstores are opening cafes and book clubs, creating apps, and publishing newsletters. They reward book club members with exclusive editions of books and merchandise to give them a sense of belonging, or even let them choose the cover design of a new book.

Beyond the business strategy of the publishing industry, the importance of book-reading communities is growing every

day in the overall book culture ecosystem. There is something contagious about people's activities. If you are surrounded by people who talk about books, you want to read more books. If you are around people who talk about football, you want to watch more football games. And, if a book reader is surrounded by football talkers, the book reader will naturally spend less time reading and more time watching football. The opposite is also true. A book-reading community can be a space that preserves the shrinking number of readers. On top of that, they can be a place for writers and readers to meet, and a place for publishers with tight budgets to promote their books.

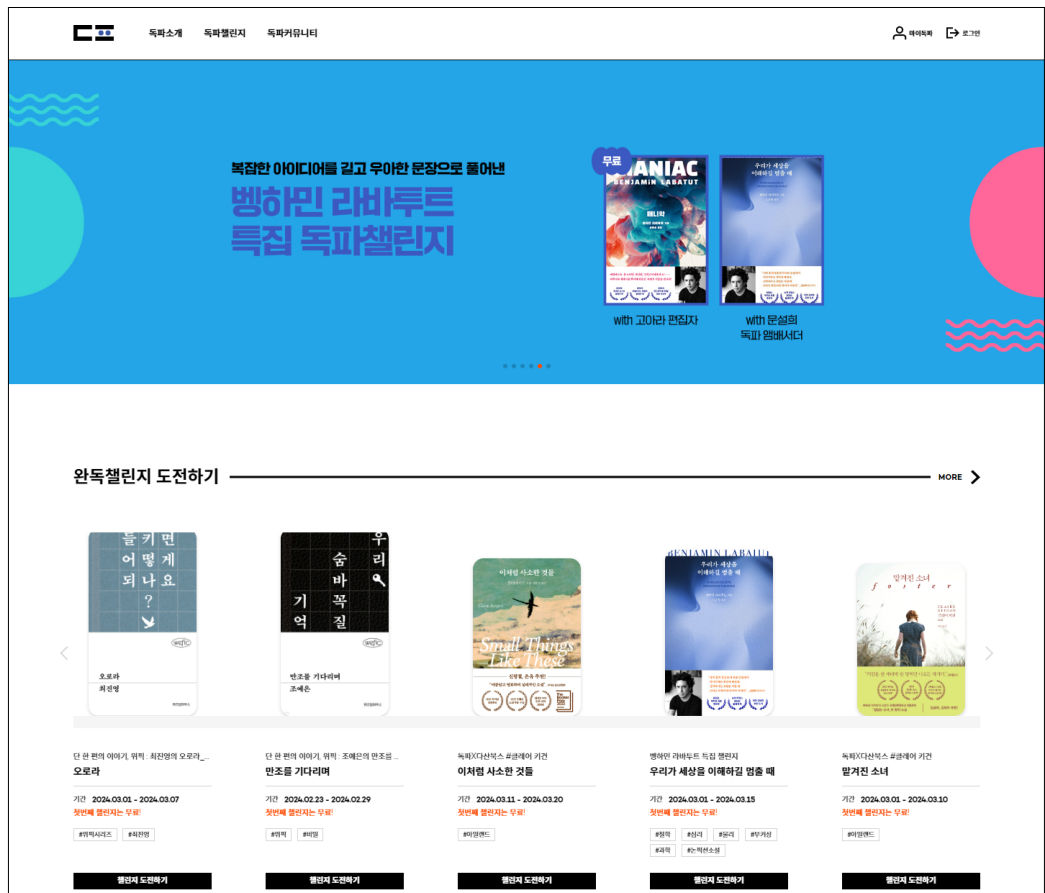
Book-reading communities can come in many shapes and sizes. They can be large, like One City One Book, where local residents read the same book, or they can be small, like clubs that are based on existing organizations, like schools or companies. We can also imagine a "gathering of book clubs," which is a gathering of various book clubs created by people with different characteristics and backgrounds. Here, we could call it a "book club platform" where anyone can easily find a book club they like or organize a book club with members to read together. If anyone can participate online regardless of physical location, it can be called an online book club platform.

In this article, I would like to introduce Dokpa, Fly Book, Gmeum, Steadio, and other online book club platforms in Korea, focusing less on their size and more on their capacity to serve as a platform. Sites like Trevari, Munto, Agreeable, and NFYG (read as

*netfleyeonga*) recruit members online, but the actual book clubs are mostly run offline. Naver Band and Kakaotalk Open Chat are sometimes used to organize book clubs, but the sites themselves are not really intended for book clubs. Video or audio-based book clubs using Zoom, Naver Whale, Google Meet, Clubhouse, and so on also have limitations in that they don't leave a text record and have a time limit - rather than a space limit - that requires participants to be online at the same time.

### **Dokpa - Set a goal to complete a book with a mate!**

Dokpa (<https://dokpa.net>) is a platform run by Munhakdongne publishing house. The name Dokpa is a combination of *dok* (meaning “to read”) and *pa* (meaning “to break through”). As its name suggests, it focuses on the “reading experience” of its users. It is a challenge-type platform where users can share their daily goals, such as waking up in the morning, losing weight, or exercising, on the app. When Munhakdongne chooses a book for the challenge, participants who buy or borrow the book keep track of their reading progress, motivating each other and sharing their impressions. In the beginning, only new releases from Munhakdongne were chosen, but since last year, books from other publishers have also been selected for the challenge. There are free challenges and paid challenges that cost 3,000 won to participate.



The main page of Dokpa

One of the best characteristics and benefits of Dokpa is that experts who have a deep understanding of the book, such as the writer, translator, or editor, become “Dokpa mates” and support participants in their reading. As a platform run by a publishing company, it makes full use of its strong writer network and internal resources. During the challenge period, Dokpa mates will give participants simple tasks called “missions” and post supportive videos.

When they chose Haruki Murakami’s new book, *The City and Its Uncertain Walls*, as their challenge book, they invited Lim Kyoung-Sun, a writer known for being a longtime fan of Haruki’s

books, and nearly 900 people applied. Also, online book talks with the writer or translator at the end of the challenge are a great incentive for participants.

\* *K-Book Trends* Vol. 61 – Go to the interview with writer Lim Kyoung-Sun

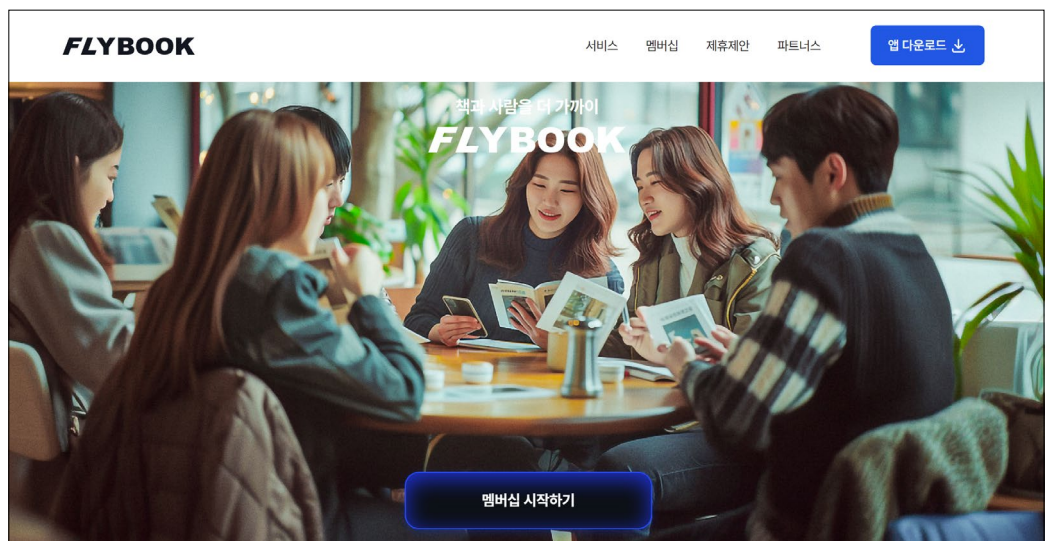
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Books for challenges are selected twice a month, with about 7 books at a time. The challenge period is usually 15 days, although it varies depending on the volume of the book. Books are usually literary, such as novels and essays, and many Dokpa members are serious literary readers. Some of them are even appointed as “Dokpa Ambassadors” and promote the platform. You can easily download the app and get started right away, and the UI is intuitive and easy to use. Still, the things that members can do on the app are limited. Munhakdongne has complete authority over the selection of books to read together and the scheduling of challenges.

### **Fly Book - Talk about books and get recommendations on social media**

Founded in 2013, Fly Book (<https://www.flybook.kr>) is a startup that tries various book-related businesses with the vision of “bringing books and people closer.” It started with a personalized book recommendation service, then introduced a regular shipping model that delivers the recommended books to your door, and now runs book clubs at offline bases (currently

on hold due to library preparations). It has also installed kiosks in libraries that use AI to make book recommendations. The company's app, Fly Book, with the same name, also has several features that allow users to interact with each other and form an online book community. Basically, it can be described as an Instagram for books. The main feed displays images, book reviews, and favorite quotes posted by members. Members can skim through the main feed and follow other members that they like to interact with.



The main page of Fly Book

In the Fly Book app, there's a tab in the menu called "*Moim*" (meaning "Book Club"). This is where various organizations and individuals can gather people to read together, whether it is a book review group organized by a publisher, an offline book talk, or a book club for regular members to read together. Unlike Dokpa, users can be much more active in creating a community.

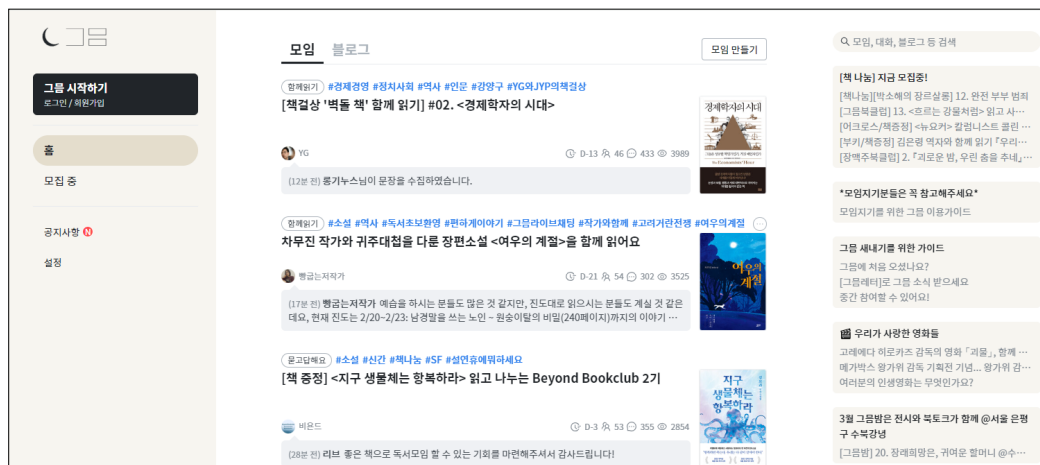
In 2023, Fly Book users joined more than 2,500 gatherings. Anyone can use the app and join a book club without signing up for a Fly Book membership or any other paid subscription service, such as book rentals.

With its CEO from the IT industry, the company's strength is that it quickly reflects the needs of its users and makes thorough data analysis. It is said that the company collects and analyzes more than 100,000 reading data per month on average, including gender, age, interests, genres, reviews, and search volume of users. Last year, the Fly Book app accumulated about 250,000 users, with about 118,000 posts. That is more than 320 posts per day. However, these posts have limited external impact because readers must have the Fly Book app to view them.

### **Gmeum - 1,000 book clubs created in just 1.3 years**

Gmeum (<https://www.gmeum.com>), which describes itself as a “knowledge community,” was a latecomer to the market, launching in September 2022. However, within a year and four months, more than 1,000 book clubs were created, and the publishing industry has begun to pay attention to it as the book clubs run by several publishers have garnered good responses. In particular, it has been recognized as having a large number of high-level, serious readers. In fact, people in the publishing industry often ask the platform, “How did you gather such a group of readers?”

Gmeum's greatest strength is its openness. Anyone can start a book club after a simple signup process, and you can “browse” and see what other users are doing even without signing up. The posts by members are not just out there; they are stored in a way that search engines can find them. In fact, if you search for a new book on a search engine, you can often find book clubs on Gmeum on the first page of search results. As such, Gmeum's book clubs can be a useful marketing tool for publishers as well.



The main page of Gmeum

One of the reasons Gmeum quickly gained so much support from readers without doing much promotion is that, from the beginning, it designed its features and design to make online book clubs the best they can be. For example, Gmeum has a “spoiler protection” feature. Sometimes, people in a fiction book club might reveal plot points from the back of the book while discussing their impressions, but this feature blurs the text so that it is not readable until you click on the sentence. This way,

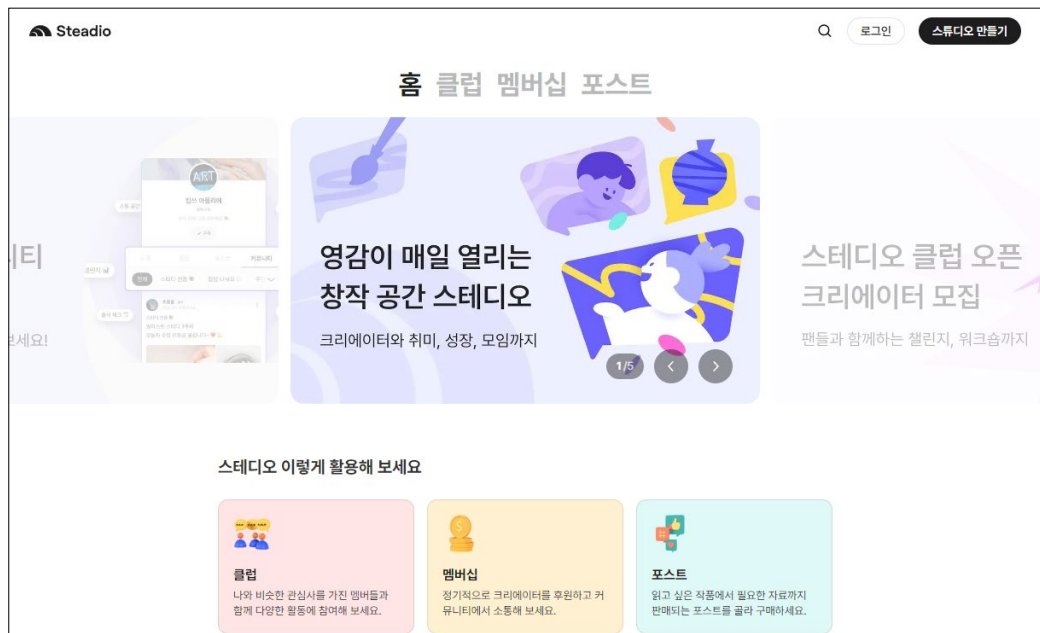
people who have read the later parts of the book can post their thoughts without the concern that they might spoil others, and people who haven't read the book can join without worrying about getting spoiled. Other popular features include the option to add other books mentioned in the discussion to a virtual book club or personal bookshelf, and the option to turn the collected quotes into Instagram-ready images.

As such, Gmeum has put a lot of thought into these seemingly insignificant details. Gmeum doesn't have a "like" button like most online communities. This is because it believed that users would be hesitant to post their thoughts that were not likely to be well-received if they were mindful of the number of likes, and that such an impact would be critical in a book club where diverse opinions should be freely exchanged. Other features, such as the maximum 29-day limit on the duration of book clubs, were designed with the idea of maintaining a healthy reading community. The tempting idea that you can meet sincere readers and have in-depth conversations has attracted many writers to Gmeum. Writers such as Hwang Bo-Reum, Kang Yang-Goo, and Cho Young-Joo are voluntarily running their own book clubs.

### **Steadio - Sponsoring and book club in one place**

Steadio (<https://steadio.co>) is a monthly sponsorship service created by Tumblbug, a crowdfunding platform. It imported a successful business model from abroad, where artists and

creators organize meetups and fans pay to subscribe. While it is not just for readers, book clubs can also be organized using the platform. In fact, there are already book clubs such as “Reading Le Monde Diplomatique with the Publisher” and “100 Days of Miracle Morning Reading Challenge.” While there are not many of them yet, the good thing is that anyone can organize a paid book club, and it is easy to make payments.



The main page of Steadio

It is a bit of a burden to introduce an online book club platform in Korea when the concept hasn't even been defined yet, let alone proven profitable. There are some communities that have failed to cross the critical point and have gone inactive. However, I believe that the potential of online book club platforms remains huge. This is because online book club platforms are the best medium to serve the role of a reading community, as described

above. In particular, they hold the potential to be different from offline book clubs in that the voices of readers can be transcribed into text and, when accumulated, become a community of critics. So, I'm excited to see the many conversations that will take place in the online space around books.

## SPECIAL PROJECT

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[Book × Animal]

# For Planet Earth, Where We Coexist

Written by Lee Youme (Writer and animal communicator)

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By their very nature, books are vessels of knowledge encompassing all fields. Endless topics can be written about depending on the material and message. In the [Book × \_\_\_] series, experts recommend Korean books in their respective fields that you've been curious about but had trouble discovering more about. Now, let's jump into the infinite world of books through the collaboration of books with various fields.

The vegetarian diet is a decision for animal rights and the environment

It doesn't seem that long ago that the curriculum for students in Korea started covering animal rights. Especially in a country that went through a period of famine, animals were just a source of food for humans. Asking if someone has had a meal is a

normal greeting for Koreans. People still commonly say, “How can you afford to take care of animals in a world where there is not enough food for humans?” The idea is that animals are just animals, and we don’t have to take care of them or think about their rights.



*Vegetarian Diet and Animal Rights for Future Generation*

However, in the book *Vegetarian Diet and Animal Rights for Future Generation* (Chulsu & Younghee Co.) by Lee Youme, she argues that this view of animals has triggered the current global crisis. It may sound abrupt to those of us who have lived through wars and hunger, but the idea is that the post-industrial development of large-scale confinement of animals in livestock farms has led to many unforeseen problems. Even if it was then, the writer says that we should now be thinking differently. In fact, we have so much food that the cost of dealing with food waste alone is reaching astronomical numbers. There are

people starving on the other side of the world, and if you look at some of the countries around us, there are still people dying of starvation. And with all the talk about the global climate crisis in the news, she says it is time to get to the root of the problem and do something about it. Our future generations, children and young people, have many more years to live on this planet, and it is important for them to be aware of this issue. It gives them one more important subject to learn and practice beyond what they are taught in school.

The term “doomsday” has begun to be heard in the context of the climate crisis. Technically, it is not the end of the planet, but rather the end of humanity. But, since the end of humanity is something we haven’t experienced, it is hard to imagine the actual terror. For some, the end of the world is just a rumor that’s been around for a long time. However, by now, we all know that it is no longer a rumor. Realistic fear kicks in once it becomes rational reasoning based on accurate facts.

The book is organized into three main parts – Earth’s past, present, and future. It begins with the birth of Earth as a planet in our solar system and shows how, through all the turbulence, nature has worked to perfect it. At this point, humanity lives peacefully as a small part of life on Earth. Human beings gather plants and fruits that grow and wither in the mountains and fields, and hunt animals to sustain their lives. It was a peaceful coexistence, not the growth and development we commonly talk about. However, with industrialization, people began to engage

in competition to have more, eat more, and own more. Here, the writer mainly focuses on “animals” as the biggest victims. Due to human greed, ecosystems lost their balance, and life, which is intimately connected to each other, began to be treated like a commodity, manipulated by artificial manipulation, rather than through natural birth and death. Eventually, the harmony and balance of the ecosystems were disrupted, leading to a global crisis.

It is not that students should feel intimidated by this book. In the last chapter of the book, titled “The Future of the Planet,” the writer chooses to speak in a rather warm and hopeful language. She points out that the world is not only powered by huge systems of countries and societies, but by our everyday lives. It shows how, if we look closely, we can make choices that contribute to a healthy planet right now. It reminds us that the climate crisis is not something that happens in some faraway country, but rather hinges on our own healthy consumption, choices, and habits. Through this book, students will see a planet of hope, not a future of despair.



*Dining Table of Peace*

The meals we have every day mean so much more than you might think. We often start our day and end a long day with a meal. It connects the morning to the afternoon, the afternoon to the evening, and even our everyday lives. We celebrate good things at the table, and we comfort ourselves when things get tough at the table. Many of our interactions also take place around the table. Whether it be with family, acquaintances, coworkers, or loved ones, we build relationships over a meal. Meanwhile, the meals we enjoy are the product of someone's labor, and through them, we connect with others we don't know the face or name of. This connection can also extend to the vast expanse of soil, sunlight, and water that produced each grain of rice, fruit, and vegetable. This sense of connection at the table invites us to imagine the process by which a bowl of food arrives in front of us, and the writer asks whether that process has been peaceful, and whether peace is in our meals.

Peace is the opposite of violence, and a peaceful society is also a society without violence. The writer argues that while it is important to speak out against the various forms of violence that exist in our society, we also need to think about what violence is also present in our everyday meals. Peace comes from the absence of painful cries and bloodshed in the process of getting a bowl of food in front of us, and that is how daily revolutions are connected to social revolutions. If we think about the process of how a plate of meat, a fish, a glass of milk, and an egg come to us, compared to a bowl of brown rice, a plate of lettuce, or an apple, the answer to what we should eat becomes clearer. The overarching theme of this book is that peace of mind and body, as well as peace in the world, can come from a meal of peace.

*Dining Table of Peace* (Rye Field) is a collection of columns posted on *Peaceful Dining Table*, which was serialized in local media, articles she wrote for various publications, and diary entries she kept for more than a decade after she started eating brown rice and plant-based diets. The writer's desire to create a sustainable and peaceful world is reflected in her daily life and writings. The book is organized into four chapters. Chapter 1, "The Meals I Want to Prepare for My Children," is about her heartfelt desire to prepare healthy meals for her children as a parent; Chapter 2, "From the Earth Under the Sky to the Sun and Wind," is about her gratitude for the plants that grow in nature; Chapter 3, "A Plant-Based Diet for Peace," is about the importance of plant-based food that she has learned through

her many relationships and encounters; and finally, Chapter 4, “Coexistence Learned at the Table,” is about the realization that the value of peace and coexistence can start at the table. Each chapter ends with recipes from the writer, who has been studying natural plant-based meals, divided by season.

### Things you can see as you get closer to animals



*Only the Stolen Pig Survived*

The three writers of *Only the Stolen Pig Survived* (Rye Field) - Hyanggi, Eunyeong, and Seomnari - are activists in the animal liberation network Direct Action Everywhere (DxE). Their different lives were connected under the common goal of animal liberation. When they rescued a piglet born at a pig farm in Gyeonggi-do in July 2019, they named him “Dawn.” The book’s title reflects the fact that only one pig, Dawn, whom they saved

from the farm, survived until the end. Countless more pigs like Dawn would have died for human food. The title is a stark, realistic reminder of how tragic the activists' work was, how pitiful and precious Dawn's life was, and how much other lives would suffer.

The pigs depicted in the media are fat and greedy, sniffing around for food all day. Nothing about their eyes looking out at the world and connecting with other living beings is ever discussed. When they held Dawn in their arms, felt his body temperature, and made eye contact with him, he was no longer a farm animal, but a life not unlike our own. Even so, the situation was not easy: even with the 3600 square feet of land they had set aside to create "Dawn's sanctuary," the best the activists could do was to protect this one tiny life, which was comparably small. Still, they believe it could be the beginning of a world-changing animal liberation.

Animal rights activism is taking place in all corners of the world and is connected to every aspect of our daily lives. It is a world in which we take for granted a system that kills animals and profits from their hides, flesh, and milk. Created by big capital, this system makes most people unwillingly part of the abuse of animals. Individual efforts can be easily overwhelmed by the magnitude of the system. Yet, these activists are confident that it is always worthwhile and important to pay deeper attention to the realities of suffering animals, to ask what should be common sense, and to imagine what the future might look like.



Dawn, the stolen pig

The first chapter of the book tells the story of the activist who rescued Dawn and spent the next year in the closest relationship with him. It describes the process of learning, albeit imperfectly, about the existence of farmed animals. Chapter 2 shows how Dawn's rescue led to the creation of Korea's first sanctuary. It talks about the activists' worries, concerns, and anxieties about establishing a sanctuary from scratch. Chapter 3 takes us back to the time when activists decided to openly rescue Dawn, as well as the testimonies of numerous victims beyond Dawn, and Chapter 4 summarizes follow-up actions and discusses the meaning of this struggle.

Our society has always grown better through all the confusion, turmoil, tumult, and chaos. Perhaps, through what the little life symbolizes, we can dream of a better world than the one we have now, because a world where animals are happy is no reason for humans to be unhappy.



*We Will Meet Again*

The book *We Will Meet Again* (Go Tomorrow) is a collection of conversations that Lee Youme, an animal communicator, has had with the spirits of animals. Talking with animals is strange enough, but talking with spirits that have left their physical bodies is even stranger. At the same time, it is fascinating. The writer started out as an animal communicator, but she expanded her perspective beyond the pets we love and adore. This is because when we really get to know the minds of animals, we discover that there are no such things as pretty animals, dirty animals, or animals we consume for meat.

Connecting with the spirit of animals spans 22 episodes, starting with a puppy who is about to leave us, followed by cats, rabbits, and more. It teaches us that there are countless connections we never knew we had with the beings who live with us under the same roof as our pets. For those who love animals, their meaning will become even more significant, and they will be able to

realize the noble mission given to each life. Also, readers will be further reminded of the meaning of life and death through the story of a stray cat's death, which the writer witnessed while writing the book.



An illustration from the book *We Will Meet Again*

If we had known what it meant to live with them, we would have cared for them more and loved them more. Although we are left with regrets and remorse, this can also be regarded as suffering and a practice that the human soul must undergo. Through the stories of their pure souls, including the roles they each fulfilled, we might be able to learn some of life's greatest lessons.

Beyond communing with pets and departed spirits, the writer has gone further and is active in animal rights and vegetarian activism as well as writing about it. She says that we have become a threat to the ecosystem because we have categorized

living beings by need and treated them recklessly. She claims that the climate crisis is not a natural disaster, but a man-made disaster because humans have been dominating the world with their greed. Hence, she persuades us that how we treat lives will naturally provide clues to solving the climate crisis that the planet is facing today.

## EXPORT CASE

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## More and More Chinese Readers Are Starting to Pay Attention to Korean Literature

Written by Li Xiang  
(Responsible for the right business of Korean Literature at Xiron Books)

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First, let me introduce Xiron Books. Xiron Books is one of the representative brands of China's mass book companies, and it is also one of the book brands widely loved by readers. Xiron Books always adheres to the value of "good book = social value + cultural value + commercial value" and is committed to providing "good copyright, good content, and good products." Xiron's first publication of Korean literature was *Kim Jiyoung, Born 1982* (Minumsa), a Korean novel published in simplified Chinese in 2019, which portrays various issues women may encounter through the life of the protagonist Kim Ji-young. In the increasingly heated gender discourse, it quickly became a bestseller.

Starting with *Kim Jiyoung, Born 1982*, in recent years, Xiron has

established a Korean literature editing studio, publishing *The Crucible* (Changbi) in 2020, *Please Look After Mom* (Changbi) in 2021, internationally renowned Booker Prize winner Han Kang's representative works *Vegetarian* (Changbi), *The White Book* (Munhakdongne), *I Do Not Bid Farewell* (Munhakdongne), *Greek Lessons* (Munhakdongne), as well as the stalwart force in Korean literature Kim Young-ha's *Diary of a Murderer* (Bokbok Seoga), Kim Tak-hwan's *I Must Live* (Booksfear), the new generation female writer Choi Eun-yung's *Bright Night* (Munhakdongne), and the hugely successful healing novel *The Uncanny Convenience Store 1* (Namu Bench)··· introducing relatively unfamiliar Korean literature to Chinese readers.

*My Crazy Feminist Girlfriend* (Nabiclub) is a somewhat special work published in 2023. When it comes to Korean female literature, we have read many novels where women are usually in a more passive position as victims of “men,” such as *Kim Jiyoung, Born 1982*, *To My Big Sister, Jeya* (Changbi), *A Different Person* (Hankyoreh Publishing Company). These works often feel very oppressive, filled with despair and a suffocating atmosphere. However, *My Crazy Feminist Girlfriend* gives me a completely different feeling. So far, I believe that among the Korean works introduced in China, *My Crazy Feminist Girlfriend* stands out without any similar content in my opinion. It is a rare perspective of feminist literature introduced in China, written by a female author from a male perspective in a love story. Every word feels like a bomb, filled with combat power. Female readers who

open it will observe ordinary male yet confident moments in a valuable observer posture, feeling very refreshing while also being full of unique lightness and humor. This surprised me. In the Chinese market, many readers share the same feelings as me. Besides the existing readers of feminist books, this book has attracted many new readers who are encountering feminism for the first time, and they enjoyed the book, willing to further understand feminism because of it. There are many interesting interactions among female readers, and even some male readers are actively participating in discussions about this book.

This has made all of us responsible for this book very happy and excited that more and more people are paying attention to these issues. Xiron hopes to continue attracting more diverse readers to participate in discussions and reflections on feminism. So far, this book has over 11,000 marked as read on the most authoritative film and book review community 'Douban (www.douban.com),' with over ten thousand people clicking 'Want to read it,' over 8700+ reviews and comments, and has been on the Douban's 'Weekly Popular Books rank' for 20 consecutive weeks. Its best rank was third on the Douban 'Weekly Popular Books rank,' and second on the 'Weekly Popular Novels rank,' and third on the 'Weekly Popular Fiction Books rank,' achieving excellent results.

In terms of marketing, we collaborated with many influencers on mainstream SNS platforms in China for promotional activities, promoted the book through a campaign linked with

the movie “Barbie,” published an exclusive interview with the author in *ELLE CHINA*’s November issue, featured author and editor interviews on the TOPYS official website ([www.topys.cn/article/33803](http://www.topys.cn/article/33803)) with 3 million readers worldwide, discussing the author’s creative ideas and challenges for female creators in East Asian society, how female creators change the discourse system of female aversion in their expressions and works, and the public opinion generated by this book, etc.

Take *My Crazy Feminist Girlfriend* as an example—currently, the entire Chinese market is very focused on feminist topics, and in recent years, Korean female literary works have gradually received more attention in China. This is related to the similar cultural backgrounds of the two countries and the fresh writing materials and styles of Korean writers. Women in East Asian societies face common pressures, so their texts with high emotional intensity evoke empathy from Chinese readers, garnering more and more attention.

Therefore, such Korean literature continues to be introduced and published. In 2023, the writer Choi Eun-yung’s *Bright Night*, which we published, achieved second place in the annual book rank and first place in the foreign literature novel rank on the aforementioned Douban platform. After its release, not only did the editorial and marketing teams within the company highly praise this work, but colleagues from other companies and even some young domestic writers also had very positive feedback on this work. After winning the award on Douban, the sales of

*Bright Night* also increased significantly, recently entering its fifth printing.



*Bright Night* won second place in the annual book rank of Douban, *Bright Night* won first place in the foreign literature novel rank of Douban

Furthermore, the work *A Different Person* we introduced ranked fifth on the foreign literature novel rank, and *Greenhouse at the End of the Earth* (Giant Books) which we also introduced achieved seventh place in the annual science fiction and fantasy book category, receiving good results.



*A Different Person* ranked fifth on the foreign literature novel rank of Douban, *Greenhouse at the End of the Earth* achieved seventh place in the annual science fiction and fantasy book category of Douban

More and more Chinese readers are starting to pay attention to Korean literature, so in our planned Korean literature product line for the future, we mainly focus on works that meet the following criteria; 1. Regarding the selection of authors, we prioritize works by established classic authors and new authors who have gained significant attention in Korea in recent years. 2. We consider the relevance of the work's subject matter to the Chinese market. 3. Works by young authors describing contemporary urban life or the state of young people, or works that reflect current social phenomena or popular cultural

themes in China (such as feminism) are given priority. 4. Market performance and potential for adaptation into film or television will also be important factors to consider. 5. We do not only publish fiction works; we will also consider introducing excellent non-fiction works (currently focusing on works related to Chinese social phenomena and psychological self-help). In 2024, we will be publishing many outstanding Korean works such as *The Uncanny Convenience Store 2*, *On the Origin of Species and Other Stories* (Arzaklivres, by Kim Bo-Young), *A Thousand Blues* (EAST-ASIA, by Cheon Seon-Ran), *Strange Land* (Munhakdongne by Hwang Suk-yeong), *Dusk* (Munhakdongne by Hwang Suk-yeong), *Familiar Things* (Munhakdongne by Hwang Suk-yeong), *Welcome to the Hyunam-dong Bookshop* (Clayhouse by Hwang Bo-reum), *Whale* (Munhakdongne by Cheon Myeong-kwan), etc. We are very excited about introducing more excellent Korean literature to Chinese readers.

## BOOK TRIP

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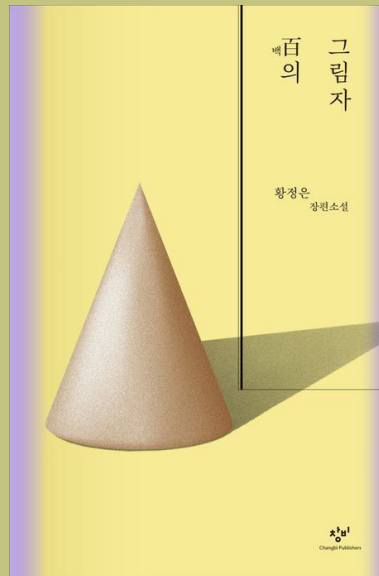
[Into the Book ③]

# Warm Hope in a Cold City

Jongno-gu, Seoul: What's still with us today

Written by Choi Ha-Yeong

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*One Hundred Shadows*

As I thought Mujae was somehow looking shady when he said,  
“Don’t follow shadows,”  
I strained my eyes and looked again,  
and there was a sunshower falling like a spider’s web.

Hwang Jung-Eun's first full-length novel, *One Hundred Shadows* (Changbi), is the story of Eunkyo and Mujae, two characters working in an electronics store in the center of the city. The cold cityscape and the old, desolate electronics mall are the backdrop of the novel, but the two protagonists' youthful love story is what makes this novel so appealing, with just the right amount of heaviness and lightness. Also, the story of "shadows" in the title is not to be missed - the unrealistic occurrence of shadows rising up on their own is very familiar in the novel's worldview. The separation of shadows experienced by characters who have experienced pain in their lives and the way they suffer or die while following their separated shadows, gives off a strange and frightening feeling.

*One Hundred Shadows*, which won a literary award shortly after its publication in 2010 and was revised in 2022, still poses meaningful questions for the Korean literary scene today. The reconstruction of buildings, the grief of losing loved ones, and the loss of jobs in the story resonate even today, more than a decade later, as they remind us of similar events happening around us. Eunkyo and Mujae's workplace, where they begin their romance, is an old electronics store awaiting reconstruction... The contrast between the two makes each situation more emphatic, and as you read, you will be able to picture a specific place in your head. And at the end of the story, the writer even mentions the real-life place where the story is set in the afterword, making *One Hundred Shadows* very much in touch with reality. We traveled

to Jongno-gu, Seoul, where the love between Eunkyo and Mujae is depicted with warm hope, like a flower blooming in a cold city.



Sewoon Plaza in Jongno, located at the center of Seoul

## From a mecca for electronic goods distribution to a cultural complex!

I'm working in an electronics store in the city center. (...)  
The mall was originally five separate buildings,  
but they have been renovated here and  
there over the course of forty years, making it impossible  
to tell at first glance where and how they are connected.

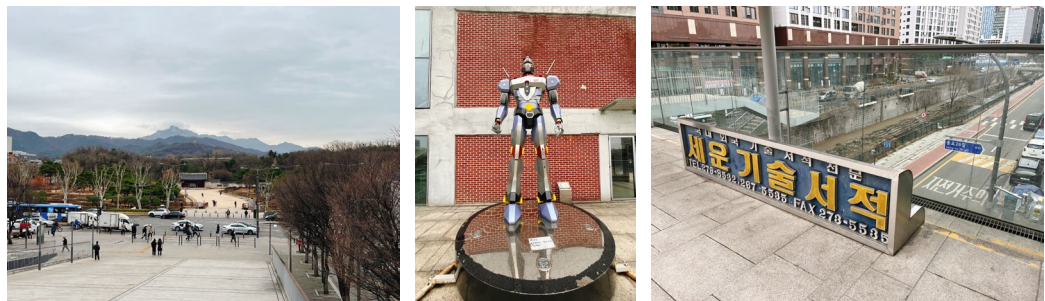
The electronics store where Eun-gyo and Moo-jae work is, as the writer revealed, Sewoon Plaza in Jongno. Sewoon

Plaza ([sewoonplaza.com](http://sewoonplaza.com)) was built in 1968 as Korea's first comprehensive electronic shopping mall, with the purpose of "gathering the energy of the world." Located in Jongno, the center of Seoul, it boasts 56 years of tradition and has been home to many prominent companies, including TriGem Computer, Hancor, Commax, and many more. Over time, Sewoon Plaza, like the electronics mall in the book, gradually declined as the building aged, e-commerce grew, and the number of customers dropped. In 2017, as part of Seoul's urban regeneration project, it was remodeled to include a sky walkway, an electronics museum, and a tech book lounge. Today, the newly created cultural space coexists with the old electrical and electronic parts shops that still stand.

Each floor from the 1st to the 4th is categorized by the products it sells, and you can go directly up to the 3rd-floor sky walkway via stairs from the 1st-floor Sewoon Plaza. If you want to explore the newly built electronics museum, tech book lounge, and others, just head straight up to the third floor. We took a moment to take in the view of Seoul from the top, and it was refreshing to see some of the city's most famous landmarks, such as Jongmyo and Gwangjang Market, closer than you can from a tall building. If you walk around a little further, you can meet AH-BOT, the mascot of Sewoon Plaza. You can also take a break by sitting on a bench made from an old signboard and enjoying the view of the Cheonggyecheon stream.



5Stores in Sewoon Plaza where you can find electrical and electronic parts and products as if you were on a treasure hunt



Jongmyo, mascot AH-BOT, and a retro-style bench overlooking Cheonggyecheon stream from the 3rd floor of Sewoon Plaza

Once you have had enough of the view of Seoul, head inside the Sewoon Electronics Museum to learn more about the history of Sewoon Plaza. Here, you can learn about the history of Sewoon Plaza, from the time when junk dealers gathered along Cheonggyecheon stream before the establishment of Sewoon Plaza, to the golden age of Sewoon Plaza when people were so busy working that they didn't have time to eat, to the newly renovated Sewoon Plaza today. It's also fascinating to see electronic components and products from the past that can only be found in history books. The Sewoon Tech Book Lounge, located across the sky walkway from the electronics museum, is also a must-visit when visiting Sewoon Plaza. Decorated like a

hotel lobby, with fluffy sofas and a cozy atmosphere, the lounge is a small public library with a collection of technical books. It is open to everyone, and you can take some time to relax while reading a book that interests you.



Exhibits at the Sewoon Electronics Museum, where you can trace the past and present of Sewoon Plaza



Views inside Sewoon Tech Book Lounge, a small public library specializing in tech books

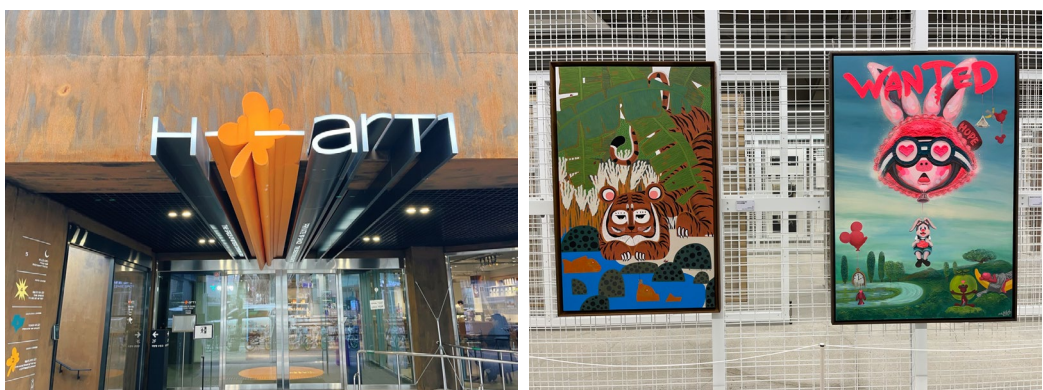
## Unique spots to see the transformation of Seoul

Euljiro Street, also known as *hipjiro* (Hip+Euljiro) by the younger generation, is a 10-minute walk from Sewoon Plaza. Like “Omusa” in *One Hundred Shadows*, it is lined with old lighting and electrical and electronic parts stores, but there are also cultural

and art exhibitions, restaurants worth visiting and cafes hidden throughout. One of them is H.Art 1, an exhibition space near Euljiro 4(sa)ga Station, where artworks are carefully selected and displayed based on generations, regions, and seasons. The 1st floor is a cafe, and the 2nd floor is an exhibition room where visitors can enjoy a wide variety of works. The exhibits are changed periodically. As Euljiro Street looks so different at night than it does during the day, it is worth spending some time exploring the hidden hot spots in the alleyways.



The day and night in Euljiro Street, where the new and the old coexist



Views inside and outside “H.Art 1” on Euljiro Street

**On Sundays, I would ride my bike down the stream to get some air,  
and then turn toward my father's house.**

If you are looking for another spot to experience the vibrancy of Seoul's changing landscape, head down to Sewoon Plaza and walk along the Cheonggyecheon stream. Cheonggyecheon stream, where Eunkyo rides her bike and gets some fresh air in the book, underwent a major renovation from 2003 to 2005. Another fun part of the stream, which hosts various cultural events and is sometimes used as an art space, is the Cheonggyecheon Secondhand Bookstore Street. Walk leisurely for 20 minutes from Sewoon Plaza, and you will find the secondhand bookstore street near Dongdaemun Pyounghwa Market. Old secondhand bookstores and books that are probably even older are waiting for new owners. Time will fly by as you walk along Cheonggyecheon stream, where the old and new neighborhoods of Seoul intertwine. Seoul's transformation is still ongoing.



Cheonggyecheon Stream walkway leading from Sewoon Plaza and Cheonggye Stream, where you can feel relaxed in the center of the city



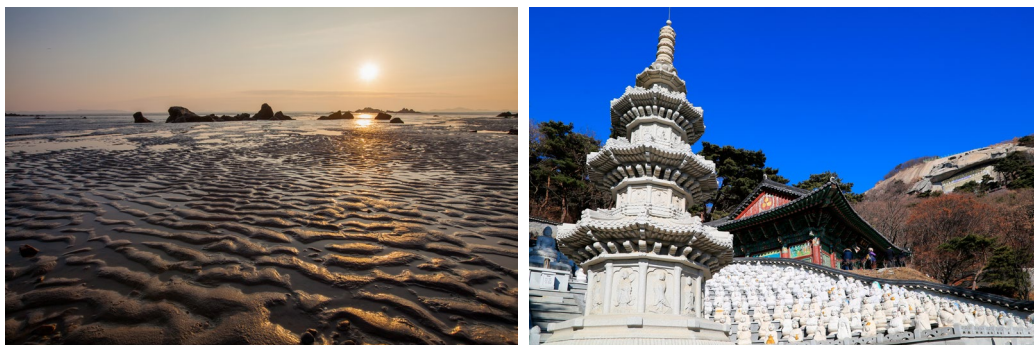
The Cheonggyecheon Secondhand Bookstore Street, where old books are waiting for new owners

## Nevertheless, the song of hope goes on

Eunkyo, it's dangerous to stick your head out like that.  
It's because I can see the ocean.  
There's a better place you can enjoy.

At the end of *One Hundred Shadows*, there is a scene where Eunkyo and Mujae go on a trip in an old used car. Their destination beyond Seoul is Seokmodo, an island off the coast of Ganghwado, Incheon. Eunkyo and Mujae have a great time on Seokmodo, eating delicious food and exploring the temples. As they watch the sunset, they miss the boat off the island and find themselves stranded, but they are able to rely on each other because they are together. After the publication of *One Hundred Shadows*, Seokmodo got a bridge - meaning people can now travel to and from the island by car. If you have a long travel itinerary and want to see the sea near Seoul, why not take a spontaneous trip to Seokmodo, just like Eunkyo and Mujae did? Your cold heart will be warmed by the blue sky and deep sea,

and before you know it, you will find yourself humming a song like the two lovers in the book.



Sunset at Seokmodo Island and Bomunsa Temple on the island

## ONE-LINER QUOTES

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# The Wisdom to Survive in the Ever-changing World

Professional investor's pick

Written by Yeom Seung-Hwan  
(Director of the Retail Department at EBEST Investment & Securities)

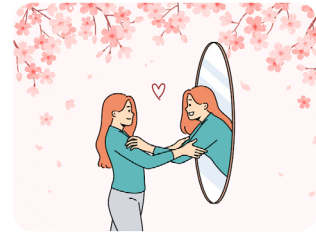
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Yeom Seung-Hwan is the director of the Retail Department at EBEST Investment & Securities and has worked in securities firms and broadcasted on stock investing. He has written *The 77 Most Important Questions for Novice Stock Investors* (One & One Contents Group Publishing).

The first book I would like to introduce is *Forecast of the Times: Era of Nuclear Individuals* (Kyobo Book Center). Song Gil-Young, the writer of this book, is a “mind miner” who reads and interprets the human mind from big data, which is an accumulation of millions of people’s records. He has spent the last 20 years observing people’s daily records to understand the meanings they are looking for, and using them to predict future currents and trends.



*Forecast of the Times:  
Era of Nuclear Individuals*  
Song Gil-Young, Kyobo Book Centre

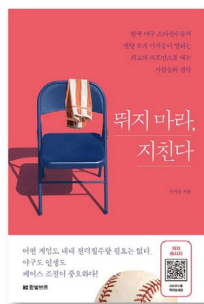


You were not born to be great,  
you were not born to be a tool for caretaking.  
The end of caretaking is independence and  
the end of independence is me leading my life well.

I chose this book not because of the reputation of the writer, Song Gil-Young, but because of the title. I was so curious to know what a “nuclear individual” was, so I purchased the book and read it. The book was written in an easy-to-read style, and I really got into it as it was filled with various examples of what we are going through. The core of the book is this: the top-down authoritarian system that has been ingrained in our society for decades is collapsing, and a new era of the individual is emerging, where individuals are self-reliant through the power of mutual networks.

This is due to intelligence and aging. With the ability to utilize tools like AI, individuals are becoming more intelligent and no longer relying on past knowledge or authority. In the aging era, where people are expected to live to 100 years old, the concept of a workplace that requires lifelong loyalty is disappearing, and each individual’s capabilities are becoming more important. The age of the “nuclear individual” has arrived, where the individual is more important than the collective. In the book, the writer

discusses the language skills we need to have to survive in the age of the nuclear individual, how to embrace diversity, and how to age wisely. He also emphasizes the importance of storytelling, or “narrative,” which is your own personal story. It is said that one’s narrative can never be manufactured in an instant, but only with time and authenticity. In the age of the irresistible “nuclear individual,” I hope this book will give you the wisdom to survive in an ever-changing world.



***Don't Run, You'll Get Tired***

Lee Ji-Pung, Hanbit Biz



A baseball coach is like holding a pigeon in his hand.

If you hold it too tightly, the pigeon will die,  
and if you hold it too loosely, it will fly away.

- Tommy Lasorda -

The next book is *Don't Run, You'll Get Tired* (Hanbit Biz) by Lee Ji-Pung. Lee Ji-Pung is a training coach who helps professional baseball players with weight training, injury prevention, diet, and mental management. Based on his 20 years of experience in professional baseball, he shares his strategies for players who perform at their best.

As the book title suggests, writer Lee emphasizes the importance of rest. In order to achieve our goals in sports, study, work, and so on, we obviously have to work hard. Hitters have to work

hard on their batting practice, and pitchers have to work hard on their pitching form. While this doesn't guarantee success in professional baseball, everyone agrees that only constant training can help you survive in the professional baseball world. However, writer Lee goes against this perception. He emphasizes the importance of "rest," that is, proper rest, not constant training, is the key to success. This is not to say that you should not train and rest only. He stresses that you can become an outstanding player in professional baseball if you take care of your physical fitness through proper rest along with customized training for your goals. I think that's something that the average person needs to hear. If you work all the time, 365 days a year, you will burn out, get sick, and possibly die. I believe that the balance between work and rest is the most important thing that can make our lives last for a long time, and I hope this book can make people think that taking a break is just as important.

## KNOWLEDGE

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# Publishers and YouTube: Current Status and the Future

Written by Cho Ah-Ran  
(Team Leader, Content Planning Team at Marketing Department, Minumsa)

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Content types of  
publishers'  
YouTube channels



Channels starring  
publishers' staff



Various attempts  
to promote books

### Publishers start their own YouTube channels

When Minumsa first started YouTube in early 2019, YouTube's influence was already at its peak, with teenagers perceiving it as synonymous with the internet, and creators being at the top of

children's future career lists. In the Korean publishing industry, the term "YouTube-seller" emerged, with books introduced on YouTube becoming bestsellers. Naturally, it became the main task of publishing marketers to find influential booktubers to advertise or endorse new books. In order to proactively respond to this environment, many large and well-funded publishers have started to launch and operate their own YouTube channels.

At this point, most publishers' YouTube channels can be characterized by three types of content – 1) interviews with authors, 2) book trailers, and 3) educational content utilizing the content of books. These types of content were the most popular because they could be produced independently of subscriber demand and utilize the infrastructure and know-how of the publisher running the channel. However, except for a few special cases, these types of content often sit in the corner of a YouTube account, receiving fewer views than would be typical for the writer or book being featured.

In this period of investment and trial and error, Minumsa, which had gotten off to a bit of a slow start, had to make some new moves: one of them was to create videos starring its staff members, and to stop promoting the book outright.

### **Brand channels starring staff members**

The rise of the YouTube platform has been driven by the popularity of relatable, friendly, and diverse stories created by ordinary people like you and me, rather than off-the-shelf content

created by professionals. Therefore, the growth of a YouTube channel typically starts with a single person sharing personal and honest aspects of their life, creating a variety of content, and engaging with their subscribers. In the process, the creator gains influence from their subscribers based on relatability and trust.

Therefore, the most important part of planning your channel according to the YouTube rules is how you choose this particular “face” (your channel’s persona) and what you want to talk about. However, most brands approach their channel operations from the perspective of a product or service, rather than people, which makes it difficult to provide the “human connection and relatability” that subscribers expect from YouTube videos. Moreover, since each book tells a completely different story, it’s hard to maintain consistency in content if you plan videos around books. Without a trustworthy “face” and consistency, an ad-driven channel will struggle to gain subscribers in the long run, even if each video is of high quality. This is one of the biggest challenges companies face when planning their channels.

So, from the very beginning, Minumsa TV ([www.youtube.com/@minumsaTV](http://www.youtube.com/@minumsaTV)) set the most important rule: “We don’t make videos just to advertise books.” Secondly, to establish the most trustworthy “face” of Minumsa TV, they conducted a kind of A/B test by uploading videos featuring some of Minumsa’s most popular writers and staff. Surprisingly, the number of views of the videos featuring ordinary people (employees) who were not well-known at all talking about jobs and daily tasks was

overwhelmingly higher than the videos featuring popular writers. This kind of testing process shaped the direction of the company's current content.

### **Entertainment and Liberal Arts, the Rule of 8:2**

In addition to this feature of staff-led videos, one of Minumsa TV's biggest identities is its entertainment-type content, which accounts for about 80% of the videos uploaded to the channel. With the principle of making videos that are more "entertaining" than "advertising" books, this trend was further solidified in the early days of the channel, as videos such as employees' tips on how to get a job at a publishing house, introductions to their roles at a publishing house, and visits to book fairs became popular. Representative series include "Editor's Ellipsis," "Marketer's Living-a-full-life," "Mun-Boxing," and "Minumsa Life." The videos feature a variety of entertainment-type content, including food binges from books that the editors have enjoyed reading, marketers' recommended items for new employees, interviews with genius book designers, weekly team meetings, interviews with employees, unboxing of packages delivered to the office, and interviews with employees who have left the company. There are even quite a few videos that don't talk about books at all. On the surface, you might ask, "Why so, while they are a publisher?" Here, the strategy is to keep the channel's identity consistent by keeping the people making books at the center. These videos

make it easy for people who aren't immediately interested in books or reading to be drawn into the stories surrounding the books, lowering the barrier between the keywords, books, and reading.

As for the other 20% of the videos, they continue to produce videos that focus on introducing books, such as "Minuma Tells You" and "World Literature Collection World Cup." These videos cover topics such as masterpieces and entire works by writers like Albert Camus, Osamu Dazai, Kazuo Ishiguro, and Virginia Woolf in under 10 minutes, or tournament-style book introduction battles between classic titles chosen by topic. Of course, the people delivering the information in these videos are editors publishing books in their respective fields. Whereas the previous entertainment-type content was all about unexpected fun, this type of content meets the expectations of more serious readers and is highly sought after by those who want to learn more about books.

Each content's role can also be seen in the number of views it receives. Entertainment-type content is characterized by a high average number of views and initial reactions, resulting in a large influx of new subscribers, while liberal arts content is characterized by a steady influx of subscribers over time, rather than immediately after uploading, resulting in a solid fan base.



Thumbnail of videos uploaded on Minumsa TV  
 (www.youtube.com/watch?v=5\_y0MDRuEFQ, www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2ZWwW3B2t8,  
 www.youtube.com/watch?v=McaD-l05SOw, www.youtube.com/watch?v=-OHi4bBC7YQ)

## Lessons learned from running a YouTube channel

By running a YouTube channel, the faces of the people that were hidden behind the book or brand logo began to be known to the world, breaking away from the traditional marketing method of communicating with readers only through the “message” or “writer” of the book. And the subscribers of the channel, who are directly or indirectly involved in the process of creating the book or service, are not only introduced to various books through the channel, but ultimately experience the lifestyle of people working with books.

Over the past five years, Minumsa has released more than 570 videos and amassed 180,000 channel subscribers. While some of this is directly attributable to increased bookstore sales of the books featured on the channel, the number of subscribers to

Minumsa's paid membership has increased by more than 40% over the course of its operation, and the time it took to gather subscribers has decreased by 1/3. The interesting part is that the list of books selected by paid subscribers (paid members of the Minumsa book club get to choose three of Minumsa's books), which has remained roughly the same over the past decade, has diversified to include books featured on YouTube. The fact that the channel has created a small world where readers brought in through the channel can continue to use Minumsa's services to read, and the diversification of the types of books that are recognized by readers is an important point, and I believe that this trend will strengthen as the channel's influence grows.

And finally, another asset Minumsa gained from running a YouTube channel are the editors and marketers from the brand that grew up with the channel. As of 2023, nearly 40 of our employees - almost 40% of our total staff - appeared on YouTube during the year to talk about the books or services they were working on and to share some of the work they were doing. Aside from the company's own channel, these individuals have been promoting their books and work both inside and outside of the publishing industry, publishing, broadcasting, writing for publications, and posting on platforms.

## Limitations and challenges

But, obviously, the sustainability of employee-led YouTube channels remains a limitation. How to keep employees who have grown into influencers and manage burnout will become more important issues in the future. In addition, how to refine and maintain the direction of the channel's influence in a rapidly changing media environment is also one of the concerns of the channel entering its 5th year.

Since launching our YouTube channel, there have been a lot of questions from publishers about how to run a YouTube channel and whether or not they should. However, the question remains - is it right or possible for all brands, especially publishers in different situations, to run a YouTube channel? In the case of Minumsa, the company was able to get to this point due to a combination of factors, including the management's determination not to produce videos aimed at short-term results or direct book introductions and sales, a production environment where young and talented PDs can showcase their planning and skills without censorship, and, most importantly, a company culture that encourages and supports employees who are willing to appear.

## New challenges and the future

The crisis of text-based books as a product, and the influence of YouTube channels with images and videos as weapons, are

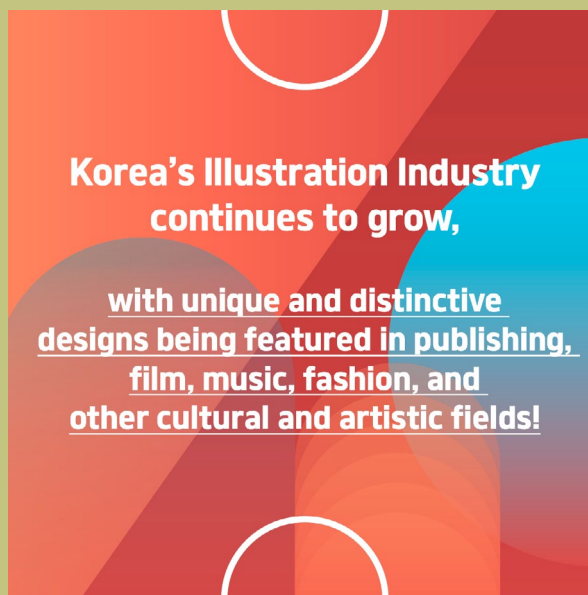
perhaps similar all over the world. Despite the analysis that the rise of video consumption has led to the decline of text consumption, or perhaps because of it, publishers in Korea and abroad are willing to jump into the world of YouTube and TikTok and try different things to promote books again. This is why I continue to root for more diversified, fun, and unexpected initiatives. I look forward to uploading videos of meeting “book makers” in other countries to Minumsa TV someday.

KNOWLEDGE

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\* [www.k-illustrationfair.com/index.php](http://www.k-illustrationfair.com/index.php)

## KOREAN PUBLISHERS

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# Jumping Books Publishing House

The joy of jumping into books

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The adolescent period shines brightly because it's a time when the doors are wide open to whatever you can dream of. And Jumping Books Publishing House, which publishes books for teenagers, has also been shining in a variety of fields, including fiction, non-fiction, humanities, and liberal arts. In addition to publishing books for teenagers, Jumping Books Publishing House is special in that it is a one-man publishing company. It is because the publisher's CEO does not fear changes and has a love for books - as a film major, he has moved from a film company to a broadcasting station to a publisher, and from an editor to the head of a one-man publishing company. Following is an interview with Lee Hye-Jae, the CEO of Jumping Books Publishing House, who has already published 17 titles since its founding

in 2021, enjoying the joy of “jumping into books,” interacting with readers on social media, and running the Jumping Books Publishing House Book Club.



Mascot “Pori” and the logo of Jumping Books Publishing House

It’s a pleasure to have you with us on *K-Book Trends*. Please introduce Jumping Books Publishing House to our international readers, along with the meaning of the company’s name.

Hello, everyone. I launched Jumping Books Publishing House in December 2021 intending to capture the moment of “jumping into books” in a more meaningful way. With the number of people reading books decreasing year by year, I realized that it would be great if everyone could experience the joy of “jumping into books.” That’s why I chose the name “Jumping Books Publishing House” for this publishing company.

While Jumping Books Publishing House is a one-man publishing company, we heard that you worked as an editor at another publishing house before founding it. What made you decide to leave the publisher you were in and start Jumping Books Publishing House?

First off, I should probably start with a little bit of the long past, because I realized that my background was a little unique during my time at the publisher. I majored in film in college, and my first workplace after graduation was a film company. I then went to work for a TV station in the drama department, where I was in charge of “discovering original stories” and meeting with various publishers for their adaptations. That’s when I “discovered” the job of an “editor.” People working with books seemed so cool, and I loved the quiet atmosphere of publishers. That’s how I became an editor in my late 20s and started making books.

Going through the rookie days when I was clumsy at everything, I slowly learned the hands-on skills such as proofreading and editing, and the process of planning and scouting for writers, exploring trends, and sketching out content was very fun and interesting. I realized that I wanted to take more ownership of my work, so I decided to fulfill my resolution before it was too late - this is how Jumping Books Publishing House was founded.

What are some of the advantages of being a one-man publishing company compared to working as an editor at a publisher, and conversely, what are some of the challenges of being a one-man publisher?

To be honest, if you only compare it to working as an editor, there are a lot of disadvantages to being a one-man publishing company. (Laughs) There are so many things to do outside of editing! When you are part of a company, each role is assigned to different teams, such as marketing, administrative support, design, production, and so on, but when you are literally running a publishing company by yourself, there are so many things that you have to do every day - like online promotion, bookstore sales, paying bills, sending money, ordering production, and so on - besides editing. And then when you think, “Oh, I should probably be looking at the manuscript now,” and look at the clock - it is already dusk. (Laughs)

However, the advantages of being a one-man publishing company are so powerful that I don't think I could ever go back to working for a company. As I mentioned earlier, the main benefit is that I can have more self-governance, and I think it is related to the sense of responsibility. The writers I scouted or the books I planned while I was working became nothing but memories of my hard work when I left the company. Of course, that hard work produced the result, but in the end, everything is owned by the company. In the case of a situation where the

writer quits the company before finishing the book, I feel even more sorry for the writer, because I can't help but feel guilty and sorry that I couldn't maintain the responsibility for the writer and the manuscript until the end.

Running my own company instead of leaving and switching jobs has been the biggest difference in being able to take full responsibility for this aspect of my work. Being able to communicate with my writers without being anxious, which leads to a more solid "trust" between us, has also been a good influence on the efficiency of my work.

Since your founding in 2021, you have already published 17 titles. What drives you to keep publishing books so steadily?

I never thought that I would be publishing books constantly like this. (Laughs) When you have your own company, you tend to have more romantic, idealistic ideas, such as having a relaxing morning, balancing personal development and work, and having a full evening. But habits are weird, because it feels awkward to take a break because I was always part of a busy team in the company, working so much. Before I knew it, I was working on things, starting new projects, scouting for writers, and working on the publishing list.

I think the big driver is the fun that I have in my work. As a working mom, it's not always easy to have free time for myself, but when I'm working, I'm able to focus on myself and put all of

my thoughts, ideas, and concerns into it. So, for me, the time I devote to my work is actually my own fuel and energy.

**Jumping Books Publishing House primarily publishes books aimed at teenagers. Is there a reason you chose to target teenagers as opposed to general readers?**

The first genre I worked in as an editor was teenagers (young adult). When I was in my late 20s, I thought I wanted to make books for a wider range of readers, such as essays and foreign literature, but as I worked on one book after another, I realized that there are countless kinds of books for teenagers. Liberal arts books about humanities are easy to read and give you the confidence to “learn” even if you don’t know much about the subject. I also like the messages that don’t lose the warmth of life under the keyword of “growth,” as well as the rebellious view or perspective on society’s contradictions that can only be captured in adolescence.

I have fallen in love with the young adult genre as I have continued to make books about humanities and society, novels, essays, and comics for teenagers. And it is probably because I keep seeing myself in it. I have always felt like I was caught in a “gap” between everywhere, so I often wonder if that gap, which is neither being an adult nor a child, was destined for me.

You are publishing the “We Are Young,” “Just YA,” and “Polpol” series. How did you come up with these series? Can you tell us a bit about each of them?



The “We Are Young” series –  
*The Story of My School Night With You and Spring, the Heart to Start*

Jumping Books Publishing House started its first book with the “We Are Young” series. I wanted to create a colorful collection of stories about a chapter in life that everyone has been through, is going through, or is in the process of going through. So far, there are four books in the series, with anthology essays on winter vacation, summer vacation, evening self-study sessions, and the spring of back-to-school. Each story will bring back memories for both teenagers and adults - some will relate, some will empathize, and some will learn something new.



The 'Just YA' series – *I Am Not Destroyed* and *Finding Hidden Superpowers*

“Just YA” is a literary series by Jumping Books Publishing House. A total of 8 novels have been published so far, focusing on both teen literature and young adult literature. Each work has a distinct message, such as gaslighting, sexual violence, self-identity, superpowers, ecological environment, climate crisis, juvenile labor, and science fiction. I have been trying to publish high-quality literary works through various writers, from literary award-winning writers to new writers.



The “Polpol” series – *Remember, One Day It Will Be Your Voice* and *Time to Read, Write, and Become Myself*

The “Polpol” series is a series of knowledge and culture books by Jumping Books Publishing House. The first book featured words of courage from 38 women to commemorate International Women’s Day on March 8th. The series publishes liberal arts books that deliver knowledge that is useful in real life, such as ChatGPT, intellectual property rights, reading, and writing.

The books *I Couldn’t Say I Liked You* is about winter vacation, and *We’re In the Summer Now* is about summer vacation. It seems that vacations and adolescence have something in common in that they are short, and you miss them more once they are over. Could you please introduce the two books to our international readers?



*I Couldn't Say I Liked You and We're In the Summer Now*

Yes, that’s exactly where the idea came from. (Laughs) When you grow up, you don’t have a vacation like that (unless you give yourself one). Similarly, adolescence becomes a short, memorable time in your life, and the books I produced with the

writers were designed with the hope that everyone would be able to look back and reminisce about their winter and summer vacations.

The book *I Couldn't Say I Liked You* is a collection of winter vacation-themed stories by 8 writers - a filmmaker, a human rights lawyer, a novelist, a brand marketer, a bookseller, an illustrator, and a banker - who look back on their own teenage winter vacations. The stories capture the nostalgia and warmth of their memories.

The book *We're In the Summer Now* also features essays from 8 different writers. Everyone goes through adolescence, but everyone has a life of their own. So, I gathered writers from all walks of life to give readers a glimpse into that “colorful” life. This book is a collection of the hot, green, and fresh memories of summer vacation.

Besides the two books above, what other books from Jumping Books Publishing House would you like to introduce to our international readers?

I would like to introduce the works in the “Just YA” literary series. First, *The Spell to Become a Witch*, published last year, is a full-length novel by Danyo, a young Korean writer currently on the rise. Set in a futuristic society, this SF novel is about a young girl named Seo-Ah who enters a game server as a “witch” with a secret account, uncovering the conspiracies and secrets of the

world. It is a work that introduces the world of writer Danyo, who unfolds dense narratives with a high degree of completeness.



*The Spell to Become a Witch and Picnic of Tomorrow*

Another book is the most recent novel titled, *Picnic of Tomorrow*. It is a new work by Kang Seok-Hee, who won the Changbi Edu Growing-Up Fiction Award. It seems that Kang Seok-Hee, who is also a high school Korean language teacher, has a sharp yet compassionate view of the reality of teenagers living here today. The book describes how the protagonist, a child who was released from a shelter and a student at a specialized high school, faces the harsh reality of life and lives harmlessly without succumbing to it. Although the subject matter is a bit heavy, the book ends up as a beautiful and dazzling novel in the “fantasy romance” genre.

In addition to fiction, you are also publishing non-fiction books for teenagers on topics such as ChatGPT and parenting. Since you must have a wide range of interests to publish non-fiction books, was there a specific reason for expanding into non-fiction? What topics are you interested in these days?



*What If ChatGPT Steals My Thoughts? and When Parents Need a Break*

When I was younger, I used to worry a lot about being a generalist, not a specialist, because I had so many different hobbies and interests. (Laughs) I used to envy people who were able to fully immerse themselves in one thing and love it. I used to think, “Why do I like everything, and why do I have so many interests?”

And then I realized through my work that that kind of personality fits well with the nature of my job (designing and creating books): I’m constantly interested in trends, there’s a lot I want to know, and there’s a lot I want to keep learning about. So, I think it led naturally to publishing in nonfiction as I have a lot of curiosities

about the world, about society and people. Lately, I have been focusing a lot on “climate,” which seems to be a growing concern as I read more and more pessimistic news reports from home and abroad about the crisis.

We heard that you will be hosting the Jumping Books Publishing House Book Club in 2024. Could you please tell us a little bit about the book club and what inspired you to start it?

Last year, Jumping Books Publishing House Readers, a support program for readers, was organized, and this year, Jumping Books Publishing House Book Club is being held. The difference is that last year’s “Jumping Books Publishing House Readers” was divided into the first half and second half of the year, following the publication flow, while the “Jumping Books Publishing House Book Club” is organized irregularly, centered on the literary books published by Jumping Books Publishing House. The Jumping Books Publishing House Book Club was launched in 2024 with the intention of sharing a deeper and more expanded reading experience by reading works by other publishers with similar topics in addition to the literary works published by Jumping Books Publishing House. In other words, rather than just reading books by one publisher, Jumping Books Publishing House Book Club hopes to share a reading experience that extends from one book to another, moving from just supporters to a “group that reads together.”

We are very excited to see the next step of Jumping Books Publishing House, which captures the moment when you “jump into books” in a multitude of ways. Lastly, can you tell us about your future plans?

Thanks to my hard work in the past (!), I have a long list of upcoming books. My biggest goal is to keep my plans on track this year and publish each one successfully.

Also, a number of literary works by great writers are awaiting in 2024. I’m working on an interesting short story collection with a K-Occult theme, a heartwarming “feel-good novel” set in a cottage in the forest of Jirisan Mountain, a first essay by a wonderful conductor based in Germany, and many other diverse books. I hope to deliver each of them to you in fine quality! It would be very helpful and appreciated if you could check out and discover more of Jumping Books Publishing House.

## KOREAN AUTHORS

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### Writer Kim Hwa-Jin

The mind of reading, writing, and making books

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At the start of every year, Korea searches for new stars of Korean literature through *Shinchunmunye*, an annual spring literary contest organized by Korean media outlets that openly accepts literary entries and promotes new writers. As long as the program has existed, it has discovered many outstanding literary figures and reflected the characteristics of each era. Writer Kim Hwa-Jin, who debuted in 2021 through *Shinchunmunye* and won the Today's Writer Award in 2023 with her first short story collection, including the work that won the contest, is recognized as a young writer who best captures the current era. As a reader, writer, and literary editor, she is a person who is sincere about reading, writing, and making books. That is what makes Kim Hwa-Jin's appearance all the more welcome to literary readers.

The following is an interview with Kim Hwa-Jin, who works diligently and wholeheartedly to publish books. We heard about her work, life, and future goals.



It's a pleasure to have you with us on *K-Book Trends*. Please say hello to our readers and briefly introduce yourself.

Hello, everyone. I'm Kim Hwa-Jin. I'm a literary editor at a publisher, and I also write books. I published *About Naju* (Munhakdongne) and short story sequence *The Migratory Path of Dinosaurs* (Swimming Kul). It's good to meet you all.

Last November, you won the 47th Today's Writer Award for your first short story collection, *About Naju*. As you began your career after winning the 2021 *Shinchunmunye* with the same-titled story *About Naju* included in the collection, it must be a very meaningful work for you. Please tell us more about the award and what the book is about.



*About Naju*

While I love short story collections, I am very happy to have won the prize that is only given to writers' first book with my short story collection. I didn't expect anything like this, and it made me feel the joy of something unexpected approaching me. Each work is a little different in what I wanted to capture, but in general, *About Naju* is a collection of stories that I have been preoccupied with for years: the subtle and intricate distances between people and minds. We may or may not accept others depending on our age, situations, circumstances, and conditions. I have always been curious about the invisible timing and the relationship

between people who exchange influences. I guess you can say it's a collection of stories about the different minds that "only matter to me."

You are both a writer and an editor at a publishing house. Was there a particular incident that inspired you to become a writer?

I have loved the form of novels since I was about 20, because I liked the idea of something that seems similar to reality but feels a little different when you are inside it. And the sense of being contemporary with the people who create it was a sort of strange relief for me in my 20s. I joined a publishing house thinking I wanted to be one of them, and I started writing fiction after work for my own pleasure. I had thought I wanted to be a writer, but I think it was more like wanting to make use of things I created. And I didn't expect it to actually happen, although I liked the "writing me" better than the "not writing me."

Making a book as an editor must feel different from making a book as a writer. Are there any differences in your mindset or approach to working as an editor and a writer?

It's completely different, but there is a pretty good separation. I feel a little more tense when I work as an editor and a little more free when I write fiction as a novelist. I like that transition - going back and forth.

The books you want to make as an editor must be different from the books you want to write as a writer. As a writer, what is the message you want to convey through your books?

It is not that different. I only want to make it into a book when the manuscript I read is good literature. There are as many reasons why some literary works are good as there are writers, and I want to make good literary works into books for their own reasons. I want my novels to be published on that basis. So, in that sense, as an editor and as a writer, I think there are two messages I want to put in my books: There are so many other people in the world, and books come to you at the right time.

As a part-time writer, it must be important to balance your day job with your writing. We are curious to know how you allocate the time for writing and how you balance the two jobs.

I don't really have any other hobbies, so writing fiction in my spare time after work is still good enough for me. As long as I have the willpower and stamina, I can write the story I like and eat what I want for dinner with a sense of satisfaction. I don't really need a certain kind of space, or it has to be quiet, or anything like that. I just have ideas for stories in my head, take notes on my phone, go to a cafe near my house and write them down in a notebook, and organize what I have written in greater detail on the days I have my laptop with me. But, that is just the

way it is on the days I write, and usually, when I get off work, I just lie down. It is a bit of a shame because I don't write super hard and frequently.

Your short story collection, *The Migratory Path of Dinosaurs*, published last year, is a sequence about the relationships between friends told through four main characters. Each story resonated as if it were the story of someone close to you. Do you usually find inspiration for your work from your surroundings?



*The Migratory Path of Dinosaurs*

I think I slowly reflect on moments like the air of one particular day that I can't forget over time, or moments when everyone else seems to be natural, but I'm the only one who feels unnatural. There are many things that make me feel unnatural: feeling angrier, sadder, nervous, happy for no reason, or disappointed more than necessary when I'm with people. I don't remember

what the other person was like in the memory, but the emotions were clear - I realized that I was creating characters as I thought about what those emotions were and why. So, I think I often find ideas for my works around me and within myself, as you said.

You have been mainly writing short stories until now, but do you also have plans for full-length novels? If so, what would it be about?

Yes, I'm thinking about it. I think full-length novels will likely be about similar topics and characters as short stories. One of the things I'm sure of is that I have been very awful at making friends for more than half my life. I think that's something that I have been thinking about all along, and now that I'm writing novels about them, I'm thinking about doing a little bit more of it. I want to write about people who wanted to be friends and people who had trouble being friends. But, because I think I have written a lot of short stories about people who didn't end up being friends, for full-length stories, I would like to write about people who do end up being friends.

"Being around what you love. That is all I want," you once said. What are some of your favorite things these days?

I don't know why I feel so happy and satisfied when I find a book that makes me happy to read, especially novels. Recently, I read *The Eccentric Family* by Tomihiko Morimi (森見登美彦) upon

recommendation, and it was the best novel that fit my current state of mind perfectly. It's about a family of raccoons that are cute, funny, sad, and even daring. And for comics, I loved Tomoko Yamashita's (ヤマシタトモコ) *Different Country Diary*. For some reason, when a novelist is featured in fiction, I find myself rooting for them. It's about a novelist aunt who takes in her nephew who suddenly loses his parents in an accident, and it was just the right blend of sweet, supportive, and ideal story for me. These are some of my recent favorites.

Please tell us about some of your favorite writers or works.

The novelist whose next book I'm looking forward to reading is Lim Seon-U, who has published short story collections such as *Through the Mind of a Ghost* (Minumsa) and *Green is Anywhere* (Jaeum & Moeum Publishing). When Lim writes, you can't help but nod your head without a second thought, even if people would turn into camels, jellyfish, and trees in his story (all of these are things that happen in Lim's novels.) I think he is a writer who is good at capturing things like sadness and love that are deeply embedded in the hearts of people who don't seem to expect anything special from life through exquisite fantasy.

We look forward to your next books as you delicately capture our society through your straightforward sentences. Last but not least, tell us about your plans and goals for the future.

On a small scale, I want to write more entertaining and reckless novels, and on a larger scale, I want to do what I want to do. To do that, I think I need to be a person who likes good things and is tolerant of other people's judgments. I think what I write in fiction and who I want to be are probably very similar. I want to be a person who has things that matter to me, even if they are only important to me. I want to be a person who can think that other people also have such things, and I want to write novels about them.

LET's TRY

## Paper Play - A Great Way for Emotional Development, Concentration, and Creativity!

Event

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*Kkumteuri Teacher's Paper Play*

- Written by Kkumteuri, published by Real Books



A paper play book loved by elementary school students!  
 Helps children improve essential skills of  
 concentration, creativity, and brain development.



We have all played with paper as children, creating airplanes, flowers, stars, houses... just about anything with paper. Here's a book that brings back those fun memories and the joyful things we made with paper. The book *Kkumteuri Teacher's Paper Play*

is both a template and a kit. It will be the perfect nostalgic gift for adults, and a source of hours of entertainment for children. You don't have to worry about it being too difficult, as the book's writer, a teacher herself, has designed fun activities at a child's level. What's more, in 2022, her designs were selected as a great product and are being used in elementary school classes and after-school programs in Korea!

*Kkumteuri Teacher's Paper Play* offers kid-friendly designs with easy-to-understand instructions, as well as QR codes for watching Kkumteuri's videos. Among them is her most popular design, "A Dream of an Octopus," which has over 5.2 million views on YouTube. Paper play is a great way to improve concentration, creativity, and fine motor control, and it also helps children socialize through role-playing! With Kkumteuri, you can have a lot of fun, too. So, why not gift a copy of *Kkumteuri Teacher's Paper Play* to your nieces, nephews, younger relatives, and other children around you? They will surely be delighted, just as we were as children!

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## K-READER

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Are you a Korean reader of *K-Book Trends*?

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Please send us **a short book review and a quote** from the Korean book that impressed you.

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\* 1,000 characters or less in Korean  
(a quote from the book that impressed you and why you recommend it)

\* Book reviews that have already been published on other websites  
(personal blogs, bookstores, etc.) cannot be submitted.

The winners will receive a gift voucher!  
We look forward to your participation.

NEW BOOKS

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Surrender, Earth Creatures



**“We  
must live  
together.”**

***Surrender,  
Earth  
Creatures***



**Bora Chung,  
shortlisted for the 2022  
International Booker Prize  
and the 2023 National  
Book Award,**

**released a new title  
that we all have  
been waiting for!**

**The first autobiographical  
SF novel by Bora Chung,  
who fiercely resists and loves**

Octopus, snow crab,  
shark, ocean sunfish,  
jellyfish, and whale...  
Six chapters named  
after the marine life  
on Earth.

**Writer Bora Chung's  
peculiar and unique  
imagination of marine life**

...

**And the landscape of Pohang,  
the writer's hometown, and the  
humorous characters that resemble  
our family, neighbors, and friends!**

**A serious and reflective  
contemplation of issues such as  
labor, human rights, disability,  
and the environment**

**that arise in waves in our society  
as the book travels between  
the real and the unreal.**

**“Sometimes, reality  
can be more absurd,  
more magical,  
and more brutal  
than fiction.”**

- from the writer's interview

**The power of love and  
solidarity in the face of  
a broken world**

**A book about courageous  
people who have been  
changing the world,  
one step at a time.**

**For peace on Earth**



***Surrender, Earth Creatures***

Bora Chung, Influential (imprint Rabbit Hole)

**BEST SELLERS**

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**3rd Week, February 2024****Best Seller Trends in the Four Biggest Online Bookstores in Korea**

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Korean readers' enthusiasm for learning in the new year was apparent as several books for learning a foreign language made it onto the overall best seller list for the 3rd week of February 2024. The 4th place book, *EBS English for Beginners Vol. 1* (2024), is a book that helps you build your confidence to listen and speak English anytime, anywhere, by just studying 30 minutes a day. As it was published by EBS, the Korean Educational Broadcasting System, readers commented that it was helpful in learning English. The 5th place book, *The 100-Day Miracle of English Transcription*, includes healing messages in English that can change your life by simply transcribing them. Not only does it have space for you to transcribe, but it also provides free MP3 files recorded by native speakers to assist you - it is double the effect!

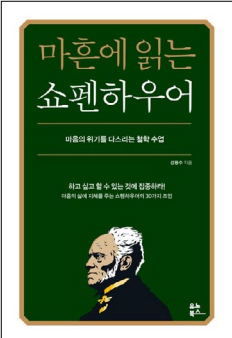
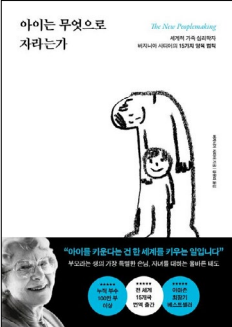
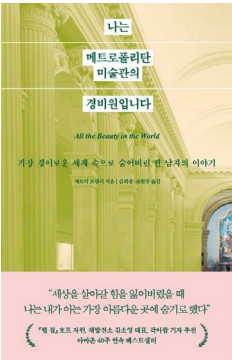
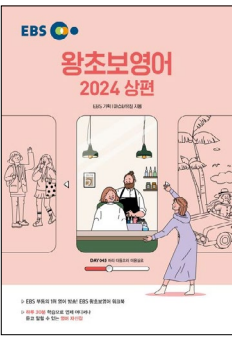
While many other books in various areas made the best seller list, *March for You* made the top 10 even though it was still on pre-sale,

indicating readers' expectations for the book. It is a photo essay by actor Park Seo-Ham, who is about to celebrate his 8th year of acting, that captures his daily life and thoughts, along with photos he has taken with his film camera, a favorite hobby of his. The month of March in Korea marks the beginning of spring. So, why not check out these new books that will make you feel as excited as a blooming flower?


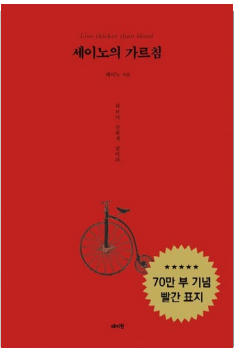
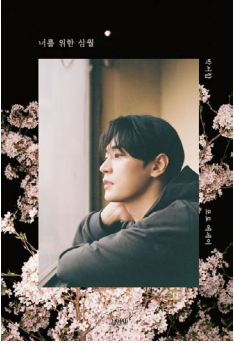
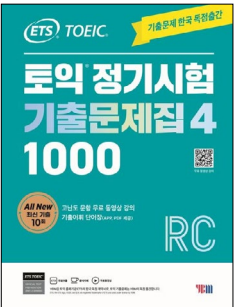
A couple of Korean novels made the top five in the fiction category for the 3rd week of February. *Marigold Mind Photo Studio*, the follow-up to *Marigold Mind Laundry* (Book Romance), which made a mark in the history of Korean fiction, came in 2nd place. It is filled with stories that everyone can relate to, with episodes that are more touching and comforting than the previous volume. In 5th place was *Contradictions*, a book that is constantly making a comeback, even though it was first published in 1998. YouTubers have deemed it a “book of life,” and young readers continue to purchase it, as word-of-mouth has shown that the story is still relevant today. So, how about welcoming the warm spring by reading a Korean novel that will make you fall in love with it?

\* The rank of bestsellers below was organized after integrating domestic best sellers in the third week of February from the four biggest online bookstores in Korea – Kyobo Bookstore, Aladdin, Yes 24, and Interpark.


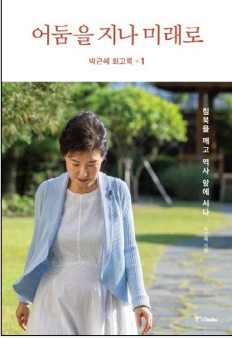
Top 10 best sellers for the 3rd week of February

<p>1</p>		<p><b><u>Reading Schopenhauer at Forty</u></b></p> <p>Author   Kang Yong-soo          Publisher   Uknowbooks          Genre   Humanities</p>
<p>2</p>		<p><b><u>The New Peopling</u></b></p> <p>Author   Virginia Satir          Publisher   Forest Books          Genre   Family</p>
<p>3</p>		<p><b><u>All the Beauty in the World</u></b></p> <p>Author   Patrick Bringley          Publisher   Woongjin Thinkbig          Genre   Non-fiction</p>
<p>4</p>		<p><b><u>EBS English for Beginners Vol.1 (2024)</u></b></p> <p>Author   EBS, Master Eugene          Publisher   EBSi          Genre   Foreign Language</p>

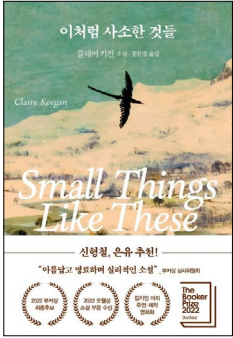



Top 10 best sellers for the 3rd week of February

5		<p><b><u>The 100-Day Miracle of English Transcription</u></b></p> <p>Author   Performance Coach Leah          Publisher   Nexus          Genre   Foreign Language</p>
5		<p><b><u>Sayno Love</u></b></p> <p>Author   Sayno          Publisher   Day One          Genre   Self-help</p>
7		<p><b><u>March for You</u></b></p> <p>Author   Park Seo-Ham          Publisher   Gimm-Young Publishers          Genre   Non-fiction</p>
7		<p><b><u>ETS TOEIC Regular Exam Prep: Vol. 4 RC (Reading)</u></b></p> <p>Author   ETS          Publisher   YBM          Genre   Foreign Language</p>

Top 10 best sellers for the 3rd week of February

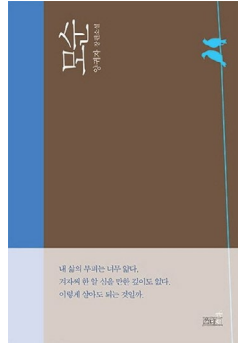
<p>7</p>		<p><b><i>Small Things Like These</i></b></p> <p>Author   Claire Keegan          Publisher   Dasan Books          Genre   Fiction</p>
<p>10</p>		<p><b><i>Park Geun-Hye's Memoir 1: Out of the Darkness and Into the Future</i></b></p> <p>Author   Park Geun-Hye          Publisher   Joongang Books          Genre   Politics &amp; Society</p>

Top 5 fiction for the 3rd week of February

<p>1</p>		<p><b><u>Small Things Like These</u></b></p> <p>Author   Claire Keegan          Publisher   Dasan Books</p>
<p>2</p>		<p><b><u>Marigold Mind Photo Studio</u></b></p> <p>Author   Yoon Jung-Eun          Publisher   Book Romance</p>
<p>2</p>		<p><b><u>Foster</u></b></p> <p>Author   Claire Keegan          Publisher   Dasan Books</p>
<p>4</p>		<p><b><u>Thought It Was Love, But It Was Arrhythmia</u></b></p> <p>Author   The National Association of Euro-Silver Towns          Publisher   Forest Books</p>

Top 5 fiction for the 3rd week of February

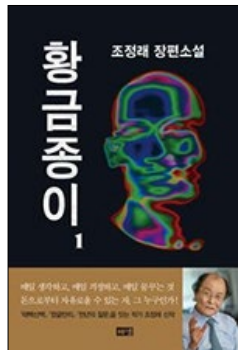
5



**Contradictions**

Author | Yang Gui-Ja  
Publisher | Write Publishing Co.

5



**Golden Paper 1**

Author | Jo Sung-Rae  
Publisher | Hainaim

## #K-BOOK

## #School

### KPIPA Introduces K-Books for Global Publishing Markets through K-Book Platform

#### *School Nurse Ahn Eunyong*

#### 1. Publication Details

Title | School Nurse Ahn Eunyong  
 Author | Chung Serang  
 Publisher | Minumsa Publishing  
 Publication Date | 2015-12-07  
 ISBN | 9788937473098  
 No. of pages | 280  
 Dimensions | 128 \* 188



#### 2. Book Intro

Chung Serang who has been beloved by readers for her unique imagination and heart-warming stories has published a new novel *School Nurse Ahn Eunyong*. The story centers on a school nurse Ahn Eunyong who is working at M private high school. Though neither her job nor her name is special, she is not just one of the school nurses. She always has a lot of work to do but carries out her duties as a school nurse faithfully. And at the same time, she dedicates herself to her vocation as an exorcist. Hong Inpyo, who is a Chinese character teacher and descendent of the founders of M private high school, has enormous energy which serves as an essential nutrient helping Ahn perform her duties. To replenish Hong's energy and protect peace in school, they collaborate as a team. Bizarre monsters, mysterious phenomena observed by students, and strange strength are witnessed inside the school... What secrets are hiding in M school? Above all, will Ahn and Hong become a couple?

As an exorcist and psychic healer, Ahn has seen something invisible to other people since birth. Some people may assume that she would be dark and cool,

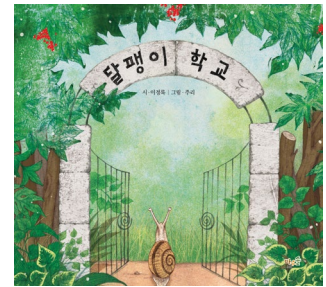
but she is not only an exorcist but also a woman who has her unique personality and work ethic as a school nurse. Ahn is cheerful, firm, funny, and also brave, and represents a strong female character that is not easily seen in most Korean novels. She exorcises evil spirits and phantoms with a plastic knife and BB gun and runs around in platform slippers. When she is in a rush, her stockings are torn. She also listens to the concerns of students and guides those who may go astray with her own method. While punishing severely those who abuse their power and monsters who hurt humans, she consoles the spirits with engaging stories. She is not passive but independent, not sentimental but sensitive. Her fatal attractions are the ectoplasm that leads the whole story.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=668](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=668)

## *Snail School*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Snail School  
Author | Lee Jeonglock  
Publisher | GrassandWind Publishing  
Publication Date | 2017-08-09  
ISBN | 9788983897114  
No. of pages | 40  
Dimensions | 260 \* 233



### 2. Book Intro

Snails have small bodies and move slowly. Although they run as fast as they can and move their entire bodies, the distance they move is not far. They end up peeing before reaching the restroom although it is just around the corner. Yet snails still firmly move forward with their friends.

It took one week for snails to go on a picnic to the neighboring barley field and return. At Snail School, it is okay if you move a bit slowly or make mistakes. Thanks to being slow, snails can leisurely enjoy eating grass blade by blade, and the world becomes closer and more valuable.

Lee Jeongrok, a poet known for his unique writing and speaking skills, delivers the story of snails in a cheerful plot and satisfactory manner.

Juri, an artist, beautifully expresses the school within nature in the midst of bright sunshine, green leaves, the swaying barley field, and snails with unique delicacy and colors. Juri also captures the facial expressions and facial features of the cute main character snail, who is full of confidence, and gives a personality to each snail by adding prints and colors to their shells.

Thanks to the pleasant and joyful sense of humor, *Snail School* is an easy read

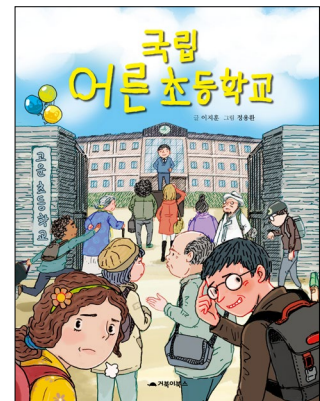
that still offers insights and messages that will ring true with many readers. Readers can rediscover aspects of everyday life that they unconsciously pass by through the attitudes of the snails, who work their way forward slowly but firmly. Readers can also gain courage and indefinite energy through empathy for the growing snails learning about the world bit by bit despite lacking skills.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=786](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=786)

## *A National Elementary School for Adults*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | A National Elementary School for Adults  
Author | Lee Jihoon, Jung Yongwhan  
Publisher | GOBOOKY BOOKS Co. Ltd.  
Publication Date | 2020-12-18  
ISBN | 9788966073641  
No. of pages | 172  
Dimensions | 185 \* 240



### 2. Book Intro

National Elementary School for Adults tells a story about children who teach adults however they please. Even adults aren't perfect. When trying new things, they're clumsy and make mistakes. Plus, there's much that they don't know. There are some things that children know much more about than adults. If you were to become a teacher at the National Elementary School for Adults, what would you most like to do first? What would you teach your adult students?

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=4794](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=4794)

## *THE DAY THE SCHOOL DISAPPEARED*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | THE DAY THE SCHOOL DISAPPEARED  
Author | Gho Jung-wook, Heo Goo  
Publisher | Hansol Soobook publishing.co.  
Publication Date | 2017-11-20  
ISBN | 9791170281856  
No. of pages | 120  
Dimensions | 190 \* 245



## 2. Book Intro

Gho Jung-wook studied Korean literature as an undergraduate at Sungkyunkwan University and received a master's degree at the same institution. He made his literary debut through the annual spring literary contest held by Munhwa Ilbo, since which he has touched children's hearts with his books. He suffered from polio as a child and is physically disabled. Although he is wheelchair-bound, he travels to all parts of the country, giving lectures to children, parents, and teachers. A major children's book author in Korea, he has written about 280 books, which together have sold 4 million copies. His works include *Tansil, the Guide Dog*; *The Boy Who Carries Bags*; *My Very Special Older Brother*; and *Quick-tempered Jaeseok*. Dozens of the books he wrote practicing tax sharing, and over 240 books have a record of over 3.5 million copies. It has also won the Korean Disabled Culture and Arts Awards and the Sharer of the Month Award.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=1287](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=1287)

## *A Reading Expedition with Pinocchio*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | A Reading Expedition with Pinocchio  
Subtitle | Reading Pinocchio for elementary school kids  
Author | Cho Sunwoo  
Publisher | Noble with Books Publishing  
Publication Date | 2021-11-30  
ISBN | 9791190200608  
No. of pages | 240  
Dimensions | 150 \* 210



### 2. Book Intro

As it is said in 'To all the Pinocchios in the world', which appears on the dedication page of each book in the Pinocchio series published by Noble with Books, reading in one's childhood has a greater impact than reading a book as an adult in one's life. Books read during childhood can determine a person's future. What books one reads and what one thinks can determine a person's life. What kind of books you read during your elementary school years determines what kind of compass you have in your journey over the sea of life. Having the right compass is the only way to lead a right life. This book helps you learn the important meaning of "thinking" in life through a reading game. And it makes you realize that books and thoughts are like soul mates. Also, if you become close with books when you are in elementary school, you will

find that you can have a best friend who will protect you for the rest of your life, which will bring books even closer.

This book will guide our children on the path to becoming a reading master and teach them how to enjoy reading as a game.

The main character of this book, Pinocchio, is in the fifth grade of elementary school. Pinocchio doesn't particularly dislike reading books, but he struggles with reading, like a person stuck in a maze. He often finds it difficult to express his thoughts after reading a book.

Like Pinocchio, many children in Korea also have no fun reading books, and they have a hard time expressing their thoughts after reading one.

The reason is because they think that reading is connected to studying. So, if you change the circuitry of your brain to think that reading is not like studying, but like a game, you will open your eyes anew to reading. And, as an added bonus, you learn that this thought is the key to changing everything. In addition, fun pictures are also included to help enrich children's imagination.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=4349](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=4349)

## *A School in the Water*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | A School in the Water

Author | Lee Kyunghye, Kim Jungseok

Publisher | Baram Books

Publication Date | 2012-04-25

ISBN | 9788994475158

No. of pages | 40

Dimensions | 235 \* 220



### 2. Book Intro

This school with a red roof, white walls, and a ringing golden bell is just called "Ippeuni School" (meaning Pretty in Korean) even though it has a real name. This is because people in the village loved the school so much. The village people – mom, dad, grandpa and grandma – all went to Ippeuni School. The village community formed around the school and they lived a simple, happy life, in harmony with one another. Just the thought of this makes the story cozy. But, this picture book talks about the sad fate that Ippeuni School was facing just as the story starts. A huge dam had been built and Ippeuni School was about to drown, along with the village. All the village people had moved to the neighboring village and the school was empty. If you look at the drawings closely, among the villagers, only the children are looking back at the school with sad faces. Only the

children know how sad and lonely the school will feel when everybody leaves. This is probably why the children and teachers left notes all around the school after their last class ended.

Now, the school was all alone. But something surprising happened after Ippeuni School fell asleep weeping. Animals from the forest world gathered and filled up the classrooms. The hedgehog teacher said to the students, "It's like a dream come true, right?" The students replied, "Yes! Yes!" in loud voices and applauded. The animals had been very envious of the school and they were so excited to study there. Only then did the school start to feel better, chuckling secretly. But the school was about to be submerged. The animals had no choice. They had their last class, just like the people. Afterwards, all of them sang, "School, school, Ippeuni School, we will never forget you. Stay happy, even inside the blue water." The animals knew that the school was happy because of them. The school went underwater after the animals left. Then it filled up with fish. Now, Ippeuni School is happy, even under the water. *A School in the Water* is a cozy picture book with a relaxed and calm story that goes well with the warm pictures.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=6455](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=6455)

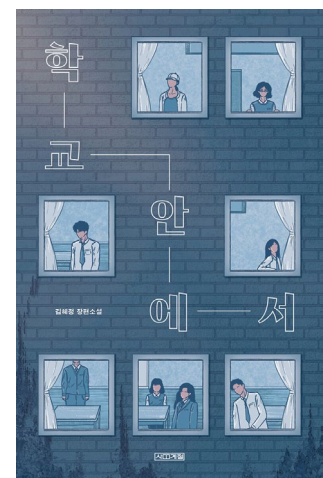
## In school

### 1. Publication Details

Title | In school  
Author | Kim Hye-jung  
Publisher | SAKYEJUL PUBLISHING LTD.  
Publication Date | 2021-05-26  
ISBN | 9791160947298  
No. of pages | 200  
Dimensions | 145 \* 225

### 2. Book Intro

Eight characters who are a teacher and teenagers with their own secrets. Perhaps, it is no coincidence that they are all trapped in school. Han Young Joo, the main character, used to be a temporary Korean teacher of Hyun Jin High School. Just one week before her contract termination, she argued with the vice principal and became unemployed. She thought she would never go back to Hyun Jin High School, but her package was accidentally delivered to the school because she chose wrong address while ordering cosmetics online. She tried to get her package while everyone was gone for a meeting, but she happened to get a phone call at the teachers' room. She couldn't ignore the call which was continuously ringing in the empty room. The caller mentioned that



he installed a bomb at the gate, so she had to be in the teachers' room with 'teenagers'.

At that very moment, there were only 7 teenagers in school. Due to the terrorist's message, they all had to be trapped in school. Jae Joon, Han Ah, and Ji Woo are the 1st graders. Seon Bin, Joo Ri, Ah In and Jin Sung are 2nd graders. Other 1st grade students already left for their school trip, and other 2nd grade students visited coding exhibition, and 3rd grade students went home after prep-test. Therefore, there supposed to be no one left in school. However, why did these 7 teenagers stay at school? Why this time, and why inside the gate the bomb was installed?

Among these 7 teenagers, some of them knew each other and others met each other for the first time. Even there were some students who hated each other. Joo Ri tried to avoid awkward encounter with her ex-boyfriend, Seon Bin, but eventually, she had to be in the same space with him. Jae Joon stayed at school due to his childhood trauma and now was trapped at school. Han Ah's cousin sister was violently abused and still suffered from trauma and her family also got hurt. Jin Sung became the worst student in school because he did not want to be isolated. What would it be that the terrorist was targeting for, the school? or these eight people? Will Young Joo and seven students be able to stay safe in school in the end?

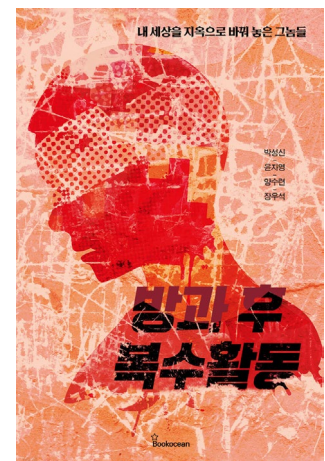
The server used to upload threatening message was turned out to be inside the school, so the police suspected Young Joo, the only adult and outsider. Therefore, the police asked Seon Bin to spy on Young Joo, because the vice principal recommended Seon Bin as the most trustworthy student. This suspicion became the seed of other suspicions, so these eight characters began suspecting each other and got angry when they were suspected by others. Who was the terrorist? Was it true that the terrorist was in school? Was it really safe in school?

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=7152](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=7152)

## *Revenge After School*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Revenge After School  
Author | Park Sung-shin et al.  
Publisher | Bookocean, Inc.  
Publication Date | 2022-04-08  
ISBN | 9788967996710  
No. of pages | 256  
Dimensions | 134 \* 200



## 2. Book Intro

School violence and social evils are inseparable from each other.

Revenge After School is an anthology of short stories about the bullying of high school students who can no longer be considered criminal minors. Their acts of deviance are not accidental; they are knowingly carried out with cruelty.

The school is a microcosm of society. In one of the stories, the student dominating the other students is the son of the director of the school's educational development committee. The social positions and wealth of parents create gaps and ranks among students.

"Nausea," the last story in the anthology by Jang Wuseok, is a carbon copy of reality. Taemin, the president of the math club and the son of a hospital director, makes Muyeong, the president of the boxing club and the son of a janitor at the hospital, use violence against Wuhyeon, a math genius, to make him score zero in a math contest.

Taemin, an intelligent but vicious boy who goes beyond bullying to hire the son of a janitor who works at his father's hospital to use violence against someone, without getting himself directly involved, is no different from grownups in society who act out of greed and corruption. Although Taemin drops out of school when the truth is exposed, he shows no penitence or remorse, and will probably find his way back into society in a few years, using his intelligence mind.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=7033](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=7033)

## Superhero School

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Superhero School  
Author | Lim Jihyoung, Kim Wanjin  
Publisher | goraebook library  
Publication Date | 2018-04-05  
ISBN | 9791187427650  
No. of pages | 176  
Dimensions | 152 \* 210



### 2. Book Intro

This is the sequel to *My Dad, the Superhero*. Following previous volume, which was about Sanha's dilemma in finding out that his father was the superhero Tigerman and the daily life of the superhero dad, this book shows what happens to Sanha when he is transferred to a superhero school for children with special abilities like him. Just because you have superpowers doesn't mean you can use them right

away. Real power is built through long hours of training and practice, and heroes are also trained. That's why young superheroes need school. This book shows the process by which children with superpowers that might seem like a blessing come to think about their strengths, train to use them accurately, and find things to help them. You can meet the worries, fluctuations and growth stories of young superheroes. Sanha is gradually becoming a superhero, tearing open car doors or leaping great distances. Tigerman, his dad, encourages him to enter superhero school. So Sanha goes to the new school, but he's nervous about the new environment. There, he meets various teachers: Jusarang, Jenny, Hagaon, and Shin Dong-yeop. Why does the superhero school look like an abandoned factory, the dormitories like cemeteries? Who are these mysterious teachers, all of the seniors? The children all have their own special abilities: human computers, invisible hands, mirrors of the mind. There is also Dong-yeop who is a martial arts buff. The children will form The Next Heroes, planning to help those in need...

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2094](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2094)

## *Because it's school*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Because it's school  
Author | Kim Hyeon, Hong Kihan  
Publisher | MIND BRIDGE  
Publication Date | 2019-01-05  
ISBN | 9791189010058  
No. of pages | 125  
Dimensions | 153 \* 215



### 2. Book Intro

We are healthy and go to a school close to our house, but why does my little brother, who is physically challenged, have to go to a school so far away? An empty space in the neighborhood where a school for children with special needs is supposed to be built. A conflict escalates between people who oppose the special needs school and mothers of children with disabilities. The conflict begins to affect the children and their classrooms, and Joeun, who meets Minseo came up with an idea... What will happen to the children's plan? As children learn more about the lives of disabled people, their hearts open up. This story sends messages about school education, the rights of disabled people and solidarity. Children's cute provocations to make a better life for disabled people "I've never thought about a special needs school."

“But you don’t have a younger sister with a disability.” “I don’t know what to do about Minseo.” “You don’t have to do anything for her.”

The main characters, Joeun and Yoonseo, exchange conversations about things that people without disabilities feel but can not speak out loud. As they do, they think about strangers who become closer once you get to know them, and are reminded that they will become closer with Minseo only if they get to know each other better. The children also touch on the issue of the right of disabled children to education as they discuss the special needs school and ask, “This is a school, right? Why do we have to kneel and beg for the students’ rights?”

This is a children’s story that depicts the reality of both disabled people and grown-ups

Joeun’s mom and dad said that the house was expensive, but once they bought it, they wanted the price to keep increasing. Neighbors living in Joeun’s apartment protest against the building of a special needs school. But because there is no such school nearby, the disabled child Minseo must travel three hours every day to commute. When she comes home after school and receives treatment, it is already late into the night. As such, the story reveals the behaviors and stereotypes of adults towards disabled people and clearly conveys different types of disabilities and the lives of families with disabled members.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2426](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2426)

## INFO

# Killer-content Exhibition at the 2024 Bologna Children's Book Fair

Bologna Children's Book Fair 2024, BCBF

Bologna Children's Book Fair 2024, BCBF

## Killer-content Exhibition at the 2024 Bologna Children's Book Fair



The Publication Industry Promotion Agency of Korea (KPIPA) has been running the "Killer-content exhibition at international book fairs" project

to promote high-quality  
Korean publishing  
content and boost  
copyright export.



This April, we open the  
"Killer-content Exhibition"  
at the Bologna Children's Book Fair,  
the biggest book fair for trading  
copyrights of children's books!



## 2024 Bologna Children's Book Fair

**Period** April 8-11, 2024 (4 days)

**Venue** Bologna Fiere

\* Scheduled to be held locally in Bologna

**Host** Bologna Fiere



A variety of interesting programs joined by  
Korean writers await you all,  
at the Killer-content Exhibition  
prepared by KPIPA!



Participate in various valuable programs at the book fair, attended by more than 1,400 publishers, illustrators, and officials from children- and education-related organizations from around 90 countries!

**We ask for your continued interest!**

Inquiries: KPIPA's K-book Content Team, [kbook@kpiipa.or.kr](mailto:kbook@kpiipa.or.kr)

