

2026 Hans Christian Andersen Award Nominee
Republic of Korea



Writer

Lee Geum-yi



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Biographical Information

"More than anything, children's books tell stories of hope. Since I was a child, I have liked stories that say 'nevertheless, the world is worth living in.' As a grown up, I was able to live with faith in the world thanks to those stories that I read as a child and the power they had. So just as I learned about the world, and learned to put faith in people, and was comforted through books, I wish that the children who read my books will have such experiences, too."

- Lee Geum-yi



Lee Geum-yi was born in 1962 in a picturesque countryside village located in Chungcheongbuk-do, Korea, and later moved to Seoul in 1968 where she was raised. Even after relocating, she would often visit her hometown to see her grandmother who used to tell her old folk tales when she was little. The stories her grandmother told her took root and nourished the future writer in her ambition to become an outstanding storyteller in Korea's children and adolescent literary scene. Lee Geum-yi also attributes her earnest aspiration to become a writer to a children's collection of world literary works that her father bought for her; in particular, after reading *Heidi* by Johanna Spyri, she was compelled to become a writer that created similar work. Lee says, "I didn't choose to write children's literature; it chose me."

It is worth noting that Lee Geum-yi's work has evolved in decade-long cycles. 1984 is the year Lee started her professional career as a children's book writer. She did not go to college but continued to write practice pieces on her own before winning the Saebeot Literary Award with a short children's story, effectively launching her debut at a relatively young age. The following year, in 1985, she was awarded the JoongAng Children's Literature Award and in 1987, the Kyemongsa Children's Literature Award. For four decades leading up to 2024, Lee has worked tirelessly, publishing more than 50 books.

In 1994, *Keundori in Bamtee Village* was published, a bestselling children's book that put Lee Geum-yi's name on center stage. She had married and moved from Seoul to a rural village

in her hometown in 1986, and there, she raised her two children while serving as an active member of farmers' and women's rights organizations. During this time, she got a glimpse of a rural reality that no longer resembled her childhood and was shaken. This was a time when Korea's rural communities were experiencing growing disparities in wealth and also family dissolution which resulted in children being marginalized. Witnessing these circumstances triggered within Lee an awareness about children, women, and family issues in the rural community, which led to the creation of various works including the *Bamtee Village* series and *You Too Are a Twilight Lily*—stories that take place in rural communities and feature children who have been scarred by family dissolution.

Moving back to the big city in 2000, Lee saw that her once-young readership was transitioning into teenhood, and expanded her creative scope to write teen novels portraying adolescent life. In particular, her 2004 young adult novel *Yujin and Yujin* focused on the social and psychological problems stemming from the trauma of sexual violence against adolescent girls. This beloved novel has become Lee's most representative piece of work and is lauded as the best young adult novel in Korea of the past two decades, becoming a spiritual bible of sorts for young women and girls in Korea. The book was also made into a musical and is still regularly put on stage as of 2024. Lee wrote many more outstanding teen novels including *The Whale in My Pocket*, capturing the life of teenagers with all their pain and dreams, making the author a pioneer of the teen novel genre in Korea.

From 2014, Lee shifted from writing about teenage life and made a new mark with the successive publication of two extensive historical novels *Can't I Go Instead* and *The Picture Bride* which were set in modern Korean history and expanded the author's temporal and spatial scope. Set in the early 20th century, both books brought to light the issues of sexual violence and diaspora during the World Wars. Lee shed light on the lives of young women and girls in war time, drawing a bold picture of adolescents struggling to resist their fate. *Can't I Go Instead* was nominated for the 2018 IBBY Honour List, writing category; *The Picture Bride* was made into a musical, enchanting audiences on the stage.

Following her first nomination in 2020, Lee Geum-yi was selected again as the Korean nominee for the Hans Christian Andersen Award author category in 2024 and was shortlisted the same year to the great delight of children's literature fans in Korea. With *Mari in Bamtee Village*, Lee resuscitated the 40-year-old *Bamtee Village* series which started with *Keundori in Bamtee Village*; it was met with enthusiastic praise from adult readers who fondly remembered the original series, and gave young readers the opportunity to reflect on the lives of other children elsewhere with whom they would have to share this world.

Having dedicated 40 years to writing children and young adult literature, Lee Geum-yi is arguably the best-known face of Korean literature with many of her works becoming Korean bestsellers and her stories included in national textbooks. Lee, however, does not rest on her laurels but continues to experiment and challenge her limits, expanding her creative world with new material and stories. The author has won the most prestigious children's literature awards in Korea including Socheon Children's Book Award, Yun Seokjung Literary Award, and the Bang Jeonghwan Literary Award. May Lee Geum-yi's works transcend borders to meet children's literature readers worldwide.

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2 Contribution to Literature for Young People



The perfect storyteller whose work entrances young readers

Children's stories are required to meet the dual challenge of being fun and having high literary quality. Lee Geum-yi is an author whose stories fit the bill. As a storyteller, she weaves stories in a compelling way, reeling her young readers into her books. Her powerful storytelling stands out in her works. She takes prototypical narratives and masterfully interprets them.

The children's book *A Night with Dad*, which won the Bang Jeonghwan Literary Award, one of the most prestigious literary awards in Korea, features children of today and illustrates the power of stories spanning generations. One evening, Dad pitches a tent in the living room and tells his children the story of one particularly special night he had. Dad unpacks his story which holds another story, which contains yet another story. This storytelling seamlessly interweaves past and present. Dad's story starts with how, during a late-night fishing trip, he follows a carp to the Dragon King's palace. There, an adventure ensues as Dad attempts to get his three wishes, a familiar motif that is often found in folk tales. Lee, however, takes this ancient tale and recreates it, thus introducing young readers to the prototype while also telling a tale of a single night and eternity, life and death, and the treasures that can be earned on the way. While listening to the fascinating stories, readers are naturally exposed to deeper literary metaphors.

Lee has done the same with *Like a Roughneck Princess*, taking a traditional princess story and turning it on its head to create an original tale. The book features an unlikely princess, Princess Roughneck as well as Princess Aengdu who hears of Roughneck's story, and her friend Jadu who joins Aengdu to create a world of their own. Lee takes an existing familiar tale but features young girls who liberate themselves from traditional gender roles in their

search for freedom, garnering an enthusiastic response from readers.

In 2024, *Mari in Bamtee Village* was published as the fourth installment of the *Bamtee Village* series to commemorate the 30th anniversary of *Keundori in Bamtee Village* which, since its publication in 1994, has become one of Korea's most famous children's books. The series is much loved by Korean readers across generations. The reason behind its success can also be found in the characters and the solid story. The stepmother featured in the *Bamtee Village* series is named Patjwi's Mom after the stepmother in *Kongjwi Patjwi*, a Korean Cinderella folktale. This new character, however, is not framed as a villain but instead shows the strong and beautiful love of a stepparent.

In fact, many of Lee Geum-yi's books, which were originally published as stand-alone works, have been followed by sequels and become series in response to requests from her readers. The bestseller *You Too Are a Twilight Lily* which was first published in 1999 features three sixth graders as the main characters; their stories as teenagers are later taken up in *So-hee's Room* and *Searching for the Hidden Path* after fervent requests from readers who were eager to know what happened next.

As such, Lee Geum-yi's children's stories entrance readers by the manner with which the author plays so effortlessly with the characters, events, and prototypical narratives. Her work compels the reader to fall in love with the story, making it impossible to put the book down. The delight of a fun and engaging story is perhaps the greatest gift a children's story writer can give her young readers.

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Adolescents and minorities as agents in the face of the hardships of war

The messages that are found in Lee Geum-yi's work inevitably direct us to significant themes. From the 2010s, the writer has transitioned from portraying the lives of contemporary teenagers to investigating adolescent life in modern Korean history by expanding spatial and temporal boundaries. These efforts resulted in outstanding works such as the full-length historical novels *Can't I Go Instead* and *The Picture Bride*. These stories are linked back to the World Wars at the turn of the 20th century as they beg the following question: in the face of the immense adversities of war and colonial rule, how did the youth of that era create lives for themselves? Lee, in particular, throws light on the lives of girls and young women and creates strong female characters who stand up to their given fate.

Contribution to Literature for Young People

Can't I Go Instead is a human drama of two women. At the forefront of the story is Sunam, the enterprising and proactive protagonist who overcomes constant obstacles by facing them head on despite her disability. The young characters are depicted as bold figures who ride the waves of change and find their own way forward despite a war that changed their fate and transformed their lives. This book has been translated into English and resonated universally with a global audience.

The long-form history novel *The Picture Bride* is another literary piece that expands the spatial and temporal boundaries of Lee's literary world and offers a global lens through which the reader can see from a diaspora's perspective. Spatially, the story takes us to the American island of Hawaii; temporally, it transports us back one hundred years or so when the entire world was suffering from the World War. Based on the real story of so-called picture brides, the novel illustrates the lives of 18-year-old adolescent girls who left their homes for Hawaii with dreams of a bright future, a single picture of their future grooms in hand. It is a story of migrant workers who relocated to Hawaii, a story of first-generation diaspora. This epic drama spans generations—tracing the lives of girls who leave as 'picture brides', and later become mothers, in turn followed by stories of their daughters—and is a widely relatable story for the migrants of the world; anyone who has left home for another land, starting a new history by putting their roots down in unfamiliar soil. The book reminds us that the events that unfolded are not isolated to the picture brides of Korea a century ago; the same grave story is being repeated even to this day to girls in certain countries.

Lee Geum-yi says completing the diaspora saga, *The Picture Bride*, was what enabled her to write *Mari in Bamtee Village* which, published in 2024, tells the story of a Nepalese family that settle in Korea. In this era of frequent cross-border migration, the book helps readers reflect on the meaning of hospitality towards neighbors from afar. On top of all this, Lee's work always takes note of the lives of women; feminism is a keyword in the author's literary world.

As such, the characters featured in Lee Geum-yi's work represent diverse voices coexisting with us in our communities. As of 2024, various minorities feature as main characters in literary works, showcasing intersecting perspectives and building friendly solidarity. During the past four decades, Lee has been at the forefront of such efforts, pioneering challenging territory. Through dense sentences, she has portrayed children and adolescents boldly living out their lives at the easternmost tip of the Eurasian continent over the past century. And these stories resonate universally with readers worldwide. That is why discerning readers have their eyes on Lee Geum-yi's literature and where it will take us in the future.

How do young readers access digital space?

The children and youth who were born in the 21st century are citizens of the digital world. Compared to the analog world that the older adult generation has lived through, social networks and platforms such as YouTube have expanded beyond anyone's imagination. Magical devices such as mobile phones and tablet devices have long since burrowed their way into the core of children's lives. We live in a world where people share their personal lives with others on the internet through social media platforms, where fake images and videos are also created. Despite these dangers, related laws and institutions regulating the digital world lag well behind, including ethical aspects of how our children and youth should use digital devices. The issue of minors and digital device use, in particular, has become a severe and acute global issue.

Lee Geum-yi has not ceased to ponder on what ethical discourse we should share with the children and adolescents of today. In the early 2000s, the author blazed a trail in Korean adolescent literature with her first teen novel *Yujin and Yujin*. By dealing with the deep trauma inflicted on adolescent girls through sexual violence, Lee provides a scathing critique of outdated concepts of gender held by adults, and how such bias can devastate young lives. The book created great waves in Korea, becoming a launchpad of the newest wave of feminism. Since the 2000s, it has been revered as a spiritual bible for adolescent girls who have grown into strong feminist women unafraid to speak out.

Recently, Lee has committed to writing her observations of adolescent children engaging with the digital world. *Deleted Scenes for You* features Sunwoo as the main protagonist, a boy with a knack for video editing. At the request of four friends to edit videos of their everyday lives, Sunwoo creates a wonderful video of their friendship. When the relationship amongst the four friends is revealed, however, he goes back for a closer look at the scenes that were cut out of the final edit. The 'deleted scenes' tell the truth about the nature of their relationship and reveal an incident that they had tried to cover up. Faced with this truth, how should Sunwoo respond?

In Korea, children and adolescent youth are increasingly dependent on digital devices, with digital gender-based violence such as deep-fake videos becoming a social problem. Nonetheless, there is still a grave lack of education on digital use as well as related laws and education. With great sensitivity, Lee Geum-yi reflects the reality of this situation in her work and throws light on the dark side of today's popular culture to which our children and youth are exposed.

Literature that embraces the creases and the shadows

Nudging society forward for the past four decades

The kids who once grew up reading Lee Geum-yi's children's book have now grown up, many of them in their 40s raising children of their own. The author's literary career has made major shifts in decade-long cycles. Since launching her professional career in 1984 with the Saebeot Literary Award, she has written over 50 books as of 2024. The first ten years were spent exploring various realms of creative writing and culminated in the publication of her first long-form novel *The Heart Tree* (republished as *Be the Bridge*) and first short story collection *Younggu and Heukgu*.

She kicked off the second decade of her career with the publication of *Keundori in Bamtee Village* in 1994. With this series, Lee's literary work took another turn, thematically, honing in on themes of family and women, and stylistically, showing unique changes. A total of four books were published in the *Bamtee Village* series featuring Keundori in the first installation, followed by Yeongmi, Bomi, and finally, Mari who features as Yeongmi's young next-door neighbor in *Mari in Bamtee Village*. Ultimately, the series spanned 30 years, setting an unprecedented record in Korean children's literature.

It was around this time that the traditional family system collapsed, and the social status of Korean women started to change. March 8, 1997 marked the start of a movement to carry both parents' surnames (instead of taking one's father's name as legally stipulated), leading to a nation-wide awakening about the patriarchal family system; On July 16 of the same year, the Constitutional Court of Korea ruled the common surname marriage ban unconstitutional. Soon thereafter, the Civic Group for the Abolishment of the Hoju System was established (the Hoju System, or *Hojuje*, being the patriarchal family registry system which legally recognizes the man as the "Master of the Family", or *hoju*) and in 1991, they joined forces with other advocacy groups such as Korea Legal Aid Center for Family Relations and Korea Women's Associations United.

With broader internet access, these groups received more and more online reports from women who had been scarred by the Hoju System as well as domestic troubles involving divorce and remarriage. This led to changes in perception and sparked a social awakening, ultimately bringing about institutional changes; in 2000, appeals were filed for courts to examine the constitutionality of the Hoju System, and in June, 2004, a draft amendment to the Civil Act which removed the Hoju System was submitted to the National Assembly. The movement to abolish the patriarchal family system culminated in substantive institutional changes; the Civil Act amendment of 2005 scrapped the provision titled ‘Hoju and Family’, revised related regulations on the surname and family name origin of children, and introduced a full-adoption system. It is during this period that Lee Geum-yi, through her *Bamtee Village* trilogy, was sharing her ideas on the dissolution and re-configuration of families as well as various forms of family—it is truly significant that the author’s message on family system changes resonated so strongly with readers.

2004 marked the start of the third ten-year cycle for the author during which the teen novel *Yujin and Yujin* was published, providing an important turning point in changing the perception towards sexual violence against minors. This book takes a truly realistic approach to the different memories held by two different Yujins on a sexual violence incident that took place within an early childhood education facility, proving that literature could generate social agenda. In 2008, four years after the publication of the book, the Act on Special Cases Concerning the Punishment of Sexual Crimes was enacted, a law which dramatically increased the statutory punishment for crimes of sexual violence against minors under 13 and expanded the scope of actions punishable as kinship rape. In 2009, the existing Juvenile Protection Act was revised and renamed Act on the Protection of Children and Juveniles from Sexual Abuse, and in 2012 the related regulation stipulating that crimes of sexual violence are subject to complaint was removed. *Yujin and Yujin* is significant in that the work saved the two Yujins from victim blaming which was prevalent at the time and provided readers the story from the perspective of the victims. The book empowered other authors to write other stories of children standing up against sexual violence. Literature stepped forth, put important issues on the social agenda, and ultimately succeeded in changing social perception.

This wave of events led to the next ten-year cycle which was triggered by an online accusation of sexual violence posted by a victim on October 19, 2016. This grew into a movement denouncing sexual violence within the cultural sector at the center of which was a group of brave teenage girls. Online accusations were posted on the Twitter account ‘Whistle-blower 5’ on October 22, and a subsequent press conference was held by an alumni group named ‘Derailment,’ both of which exposed incidents of sexual violence that took place in Goyang Arts High School; this later triggered a school-focused Me-Too movement in Yonghwa Girls’ High School in 2018. The feminist reboot coincided with such exposures of sexual violence against minors and accusations of aiding and abetting these crimes, and perpetrators were put on trial and punished. During this time, *Yujin and*

Yujin was on the mind of many readers, many of whom were now in their 20s; they remembered the courage of Big Yujin and Little Yujin, and took action to turn their lives around. In response, Lee Geum-yi published *Like a Roughneck Princess*, a children's book on female solidarity and also embarked on an overhaul of most of her previous works, including *You Too Are a Twilight Lily*—a piece which is included in Korean national textbooks—to meet the gender sensitivity standards.

The fourth decade of Lee Geum-yi's career also features the following keywords: *women*, *history*, and *migrant life*. These three keywords, which have become important themes in children's and youth literature around the world in the 2020s, have been symbolized in the intense historical novels *Can't I go Instead* and *The Picture Bride*. Time and again, Lee has shown that literature does not merely walk in the footsteps of social change but in fact foresees things to come, with society enacting them later on. This is thanks to the courage of the author as she does not hesitate to capture the pending needs of women and children in her literature. Thanks to her, young readers around the world now have a more concrete understanding of the past century through the voices of the Asian females portrayed in her work.

Intersecting gazes, solidarity of friendship

Then where does the powerful persuasiveness of Lee Geum-yi's literature come from? It boils down to a structure of 'overlap' and 'intersection'. Readers who open the book follow a central character into the heart of the story and witness their conflict in a manner that is up close and personal. They then encounter another character who prompts an unexpected turn of events, pushing the reader away from the heart of the action. Then, following the story from a new perspective, which is that of the second character, readers are once again pulled into the story, but this time get to see the conflict from a completely different point of view. In Lee's full-length sagas, this approach and retreat overlaps. The emotions that the reader felt from the main character's perspective alter and appear to thin out as the story is reexamined from a new viewpoint, and from there, sometimes the perspective shifts again to a third character. This narrative structure resembles the interchanging ebb and flow of the sea, a structure which can be seen throughout the four installments of the *Bamtee Village* series. In volume 1, readers relate to the story of Keundori which takes on a different tone in volume 2 as Yeongmi's perspective is introduced. Through volumes 3 and 4, readers follow the gaze of Mari and see Yeongmi's emotions in a different light. Mari has a more independent viewpoint from the others, and this grants Mari a strong position in the center of the series in volume 4. It is also at this point that the reader fully embraces *Bamtee Village*. The author takes all of the interchanging perspectives and the resulting range of emotions, and skillfully stitches them together into one like someone with a crochet needle. The resulting tale leaves readers satisfied as they close the book as they not only understand the individual characters, but also feel a deep intimacy with *Bamtee Village* itself and

everyone in it.

Lee uses an overlap structure again in *Yujin and Yujin* where we follow the gazes of Big Yujin and Little Yujin as they look back on a sexual abuse incident. In *Can't I Go Instead* the author takes this approach a step further, overlapping more intricate storylines and intersecting diverse perspectives as the two main characters, Sunam and Chaeryung switch places with each other. In this structure, the reader needs to track the contextual truth of each point of view as they read through the piece. When you take note of the shifts in perspective, you are able to see the difference in the layers of events, and the narrative expands. In *The Picture Bride*, the viewpoints of Hongju, Beodeul, and Songhwa intertwine into a triangular web. The story is centered around an event that takes place in Powa (布哇, the Japanese transliteration of 'Hawaii') but is told from three different perspectives with the same advance and retreat structure. In the second half of the story, the gaze of Pearl, the female protagonist of the next generation, is superimposed. While Pearl is Songhwa's daughter, it is Beodeul and the other mothers in the book that raised her. Pearl is, in essence, a child raised by multipleparental figures and overlapping helping hands. Soon enough, the reader feels that they themselves have become part of the community of mothers standing outside of the book who have done their part in Pearl's upbringing. Lee Geum-yi uses fundamental and fluid elements such as kinship, friendship, migration and settlement as keys to creating these intersecting narratives. Giving birth, leaving a particular child behind, forging relationships and then parting ways, going far away and then coming back are the most familiar and universal ways in which we shift our lives.

Literature that embraces the creases and the shadows

The characters featured in Lee Geum-yi's books are contemporaries who represent diverse voices of our communities. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, polyphony and perspectivism drew increasing attention as literary theories. And as of 2024, many minorities feature as main characters in literary works, showcasing intersecting perspectives and building friendly solidarity. During the past four decades, Lee has been at the forefront of such efforts, pioneering challenging territory. Through her works, Lee has steadily invested artistic energy into what is often neglected: rather than focus on the forehead of a pioneer, she cares about the crease behind their knee; rather than focus on the spark of light that encourages you to take an adventure, she sees the cold shadow that drives people forward. And this is what makes us look forward to the next season of Lee Geum-yi's literature, to where the fifth, sixth, and seventh decade of her work will take us.

Kim Ji-eun (literary critic of children's literature)

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Interview with Lee Geum-yi 1



Q Tell us about your childhood and how you practiced writing.

A. My grandmother was illiterate but loved stories. Every night, she would carry me on her back and visit an old lady in the neighborhood who would read books out loud for us. I spent my childhood immersed in stories and as I entered elementary school, we moved to Seoul. I started to dream of becoming a writer after reading a collection of world literature for children that my father had bought for me. After graduating from high school in 1980, I went all in on writing practice pieces of fiction. My father who, at last, realized that writing professionally was my dream, told me to stop fantasizing, that you can't become a writer with just a high school education. But I couldn't understand why you had to go to university to learn how to write. I thought I was writing novels but after reading the winning pieces of the JoongAng Children's Literature Award, I realized that my writing was closer to children's stories. At the time,

Sonyeon JoongAng was in charge of selecting the best children's stories on behalf of the JoongAng Ilbo spring literary contest. I submitted a mid-length children's novel which was 105 pages long and to be published in three parts. The piece *The Bird and the Child* which I had written as a short novel could pass as a children's novel and it was suitable in length. I sent it in for the JoongAng Children's Literature Award just as a test and out of the blue it made the shortlist. This achievement affirmed the material that I was writing, the genre of writing that I wanted to continue working on.

In 1984, the same year, my short story *Younggu and Heukgu* won the Saebeot Literary Award. I tried out for the JoongAng Children's Literature Award again in 1985 and won with *Uncle Bongsam*. At last, I had become a writer. My dream had come true.

Q After becoming a writer, you got married and left the city for rural life, writing stories about that community. What led you there?

A. After starting my literary career, I met and fell in love with a man who was a rural activist. As you are aware, college students were at the center of the 1980s democratization movement against the military dictatorship. Not going to college, I could not be part of that scene and so I had a vague sense of yearning as well as indebtedness to those who were committed to democratization. Against my family's wishes, I got married to this man and moved to the countryside.

The countryside was a utopia for me; it was where I spent a happy childhood, built joyful memories each school break, and, as a professional writer, chose to be there to focus on my writing. Living in the country didn't scare me one bit. I loved that I could raise my children in the countryside, too. But the rural community I met as an adult was tough. Up till then, I had been recognized and valued for my work but the environment there was entirely different. Women in the rural community had to labor just as hard as the men and, on top of that, take on the sole burden of housework. I didn't farm but helping my husband, doing the housework and taking care of the kids by myself was more than enough. With the material and subject matter that I found in my everyday life, I made time to write, sometimes carrying a child on my back, sometimes sleeping fewer hours.

Before getting married, I had published two books. Not only my first books *Younggu and Heukgu* and *Uncle Bongsam* but also my first full-length children's story *The Flower-Scented Wind Blowing at the Ranch* and *The Heart Tree* were all stories set in rural communities. But they were based on fond memories of the countryside, when it was a utopia and not a place where life was lived out. The same goes for my first children's story collection, *Younggu and Heukgu*, which came out after I got married. I only started to depict the rural kids as I do now after my children were born. That was how *Keundori in Bamtee Village* was written; its sequel, *Barefooted Children*, was written with a sense of duty, even.

Q What inspired you to take on the new genre of young adult fiction?

A. In the late 1990s, young adult literature emerged as a new genre in Korea. I had been writing a lot of works with children in upper elementary grades as the main characters. Reading foreign works of young adult literature sparked a strong desire to write stories about Korean teenagers. The problem was, I didn't know what teenagers of today were like. Before my son entered middle school, the only teenagers I got to see were delinquents on the news or the kids on the streets. Those that made the news were committing crimes as terrible as adults, and the kids I saw on the streets were good-for-nothings. All of them looked like juvenile delinquents or potential troublemakers. I couldn't write about teenagers with that mindset, so I waited until my son went into middle school. And then I volunteered as a library assistant, as a test proctor and so forth so that I could have access to my son's school and observe the teenagers there. Up close, they were just as lovable as my own child was.

My first teen novel was *Yujin and Yujin* which was published in 2014. It was about sexual violence, a topic that I had pondered on for a long time but was difficult to write about in a children's book. Starting with that book, I've now written a total of ten teen novels so far. The first five years or so coincided with my children's teenage years. I was never the kind of mom that fixated on my children's school grades. I believed that setting your life in the right direction was more important than your grades, and that a parent's job is to help their children find their own way for themselves. My second teen novel *The Whale in My Pocket* is a book along those lines. And everything was fine and dandy up until middle school.

Things started to go awry after high school. My children went off to high school and I noticed that it was almost like boot camp to train for the college entrance exams. I grew skeptical of the situation these high schoolers were in, having to put their lives on hold for university entrance. The author in me and the mother in me clashed all the time; it was confusing. Even my children declared that they wanted to quit school. My son wanted to enroll in a private academy devoted to exam preparation to focus entirely on university entrance, while my daughter wanted to study what she wanted freely without being forced to work for college entrance. And while it made me anxious and worried that my children were stepping away from the usual path, in the end, I had no choice but to respect their choices and give them my support. The concerns that I had during that time have been captured in *The Cliff*, a novel collection published in series form. Writing teen novels reignited my joy in creative writing and truly helped me to understand my own kids. If I hadn't been writing teen novels, there would have been great conflict and strife between my children and myself. That is because writing is rooted in your life but ultimately becomes a mirror in which you see yourself.

Q You took on a new challenge and wrote a full-length historical novel *Can't I Go Instead*, drawing much attention in Korea. Could you share your experience on that project?

A. When I first started to write young adult fiction, illustrating the reality of their lives was an urgent task for me but in the process of writing nine books, I was left frustrated. Depicting the everyday lives of teenagers meant that the scope of my work was limited. These kids were just wandering from their homes to school and evening prep academies, and it was just as suffocating for me as for them. It was time for me to finally put on paper a story that I had been thinking about for a long time, perhaps even since my childhood. Taking on a new challenge opened up a new path. As my interest in and understanding of the Japanese occupation deepened—the time period and the social circumstances—I came across stories of that era that I wanted to explore further. It was nice to revisit the life of my grandma, who was just a humble country woman, as well as the lives of the women of that era through the writing process. I became acutely aware that when writing historical novels, your imagination is just as important as research and fieldwork. When I took rich material and let my imagination go free with it, I discovered that space and time, people and events took on a life of their own and escaped my grasp as a writer. The next step was to put my trust in the characters. This particular work was nothing more than me tracking the characters' tumultuous lives, recording their ups and downs. No matter what role they played in the novel, whether they were important or not, all of the characters lived intense lives. I was able to complete the long journey safely because I relied on and put my trust in each and every one of those characters. I am grateful to all of them.

Q When writing long historical novels for young adults, is there anything in particular that you have in mind?

A. My first priority is, of course, “FUN”. Teenagers have to read a lot of boring books such as textbooks, reference books, books related to schoolwork and so forth. A story from 100 years ago is bound to be a far-off tale to these busy students who are tired from schoolwork and assignments. From the very beginning, that is, the conception stage, I put a lot of thought into the characters, story, and plot, looking at them from different angles so that young readers will find it entertaining. I also try to make sure that my fiction doesn't stop at capturing the history of 100 years ago but also gives the teenagers of today a story through which they can reflect on their own lives.

Q We can find feminist perspectives in your books like *The Picture Bride* and *Like a Roughneck Princess*, and you have also republished some of your older works to reflect gender-sensitive concepts. What inspired you to do this?

A. I think I was inspired to write feminist works because of my daughter. From a very young age, my daughter was assertive and had to speak her mind, quite the opposite of the feminine

image that our society demands from women and girls. I had trouble relating to her because I suffered from eldest daughter syndrome, the good girl complex, which made me comply with social norms growing up. It worried me to think that she would suffer disadvantages or be hurt because she was at odds with the world. The two of us would sometimes clash but my daughter spared no effort to get through to me and I also tried to understand her. In the end, I cultivated a proper awareness of and interest in women's issues. Naturally, this feminist perspective found its way into my work.

The reason I republished my past work was because I felt some serious qualms reading them with my new perceptions and perspectives. I was even ashamed to think that children and teenagers were reading those books today. I believe that it is the duty of a writer to not lose sight of how social perceptions change and evolve and reflect them in one's work, which is why I set out to republish my work. In my revised versions, my focus isn't limited to gender sensitivity but I also comb through my writing for expressions or content that contain any bias, discrimination, or hate against different genders, generations, diverse types of families, immigrants, and the disabled, and make the necessary corrections.

Q There is a sense of challenge in your literary work, a constant renewal. How do you keep challenging yourself?

A. I aspire to write something that is—in any aspect—more fresh, different, and shows growth when compared to my previous work. So, I strive to steer away from things that have grown familiar and comfortable in my writing, but I often finish a manuscript unsatisfied, nonetheless. I don't get too disappointed even when a new challenge doesn't turn out as planned because I know that the challenge I took and the effort I put in this time will serve me well and nourish my next work.

Q Any words you would like to say as a writer?

A. The process of taking the stories that have planted themselves inside you and giving birth to them as a finished work is often arduous and excruciating. However, writing as a profession is tremendously appealing and fulfilling and it makes the pain worth it. I still have many stories in me that I haven't yet shared with the world. The older I get, the stronger my aspiration and sense of responsibility to share these stories that have matured with me and to get them right. I also feel very strongly that it is the readers that give those books a reason to exist in the world. Through my writing, I want to give back the comfort and happiness I got from books as a child to the children and young adult readers of today.

Oh, Se-ran (literary critic, children's and adolescent literature)

Interview with Lee Geum-yi 2



Q First, I must ask you how it feels to have made the 2024 HCAA shortlist for writing alongside five other renowned writers.

A. This may sound like a cliché, but I didn’t expect that I would be shortlisted yet now that I made it, it is an extraordinary feeling. So many people work hard to make a nomination possible starting from the application stage. A national nominee is selected first, after which there is a process where they prepare and send off piles of material on behalf of the nominee, so there is a lot of hard work that goes into it. That’s why, when I heard that I was shortlisted, I was thrilled and relieved at the same time. I thought, at least I’ve given back.

It’s a personal pleasure and honor. While many Korean picture books have been recognized worldwide, other literary works had trouble overcoming the obstacle of translation. In that sense, I’m glad that I was able to introduce Korean children’s and youth literature to the rest of the world. As someone who has been writing children’s stories for a long time, I’m also quite proud of myself. I’m delighted that I was able to do my part.

Interview with Lee Geum-yi 2

Q You have been writing prolifically and consistently for the past 40 years. How do you feel when you look back on that time?

A. It reminds me of how hard I worked, how intensely I've lived, but I don't feel that I suffered. Everybody goes through some hardship or another, and we get hurt. As for me, writing has helped heal those wounds. The struggles I went through were sublimated into my writing. Rather than feel that I struggled or suffered, I believe that I was able to come this far in a joyful way because I had literature.

I have been a professional writer for more than half my life now. I am at a point where literature is inseparable from my life. I just think that literature is me. Plotting stories and writing is not a special thing I do, it's just a part of my life. My life could well have been challenging and boring, but all of that was channeled into writing and I think I had fun with it.

Q When you say that your struggles were sublimated into your writing, I feel your strength as a writer, and an energy that keeps you going.

A. I suppose it's the power of stories. Sometimes seeds of a story float around and then take root in my mind. Not all of them sprout, but as for the ones that do take root, I continue to think about them. There are several of these stories growing in my mind as we speak. As I go about living my life, they grow as well and develop into their own stories. The story that ends up growing to its full potential in my mind is the one that gets to see the light of day first. So, they come in a natural sequence, and I think to myself, 'I'll write that one next'. When that thought comes to mind, I start to write.

So, I feel a responsibility to pull out these stories, the seeds that have grown into their own story. It's not a heavy burden but a joyful obligation. I write because there are still things I want to write about, and I think that is the fundamental driving force that keeps me going. No matter how hard I think about it, the thought that I want this book to become a bestseller and reach many readers has never been a priority. It has always been about being interested in a story, finding a story that I wanted to tell, and writing about it.

Q Of the many, many stories out there in the world, are there particular topics that catch your attention?

A. I think my priority is on the lives of children. Even when I go through something that has nothing to do with children, if I feel like writing about that experience, I end up turning it into something that happened to my storybook characters. That's how I write.

Q You've said that you are happiest when writing stories about children, even saying "I didn't choose to write children's literature; it chose me." You've also been quoted saying, "Growing up, I thought that children's books were the most fascinating and greatest literary scene there was." What is it about children's literature that makes it so appealing?

A. I have dreamed about becoming a writer ever since I was a child. When I started to practice writing as a grown up, I kept writing stories about children. Of course, there are adult novels that feature children as main characters, but I had no idea I was doing it. It later dawned on me that not only did I want to write stories about children but that I wanted my primary readers to be children as well. So, I realized later on that it was children's books that I wanted to write. When I said that children's literature had chosen me, I had the following thought. Well, all writers love books, as do I. You can imagine how many books I have read till now. Of those books, I realized that it was the children's stories I read as a child that made me the person I am today. Back then, most of them were foreign children's books, but still universal stories of human life were what built me up. More than anything, children's books tell stories of hope. Since I was a child, I liked stories that said "nevertheless, the world is worth living in". As a grown up, I was able to live with faith in the world thanks to those stories that I had read as a child and the power they had. So just as I learned about the world, and learned to put faith in people, and was comforted through books, I wish that the children who read my books will have such experiences, too.

Q That's also why I love children's and adolescent literature. There are, of course, stories of hardships, sadness and struggles in there, too, but I'm always comforted by the direction the stories take, as if pointing to an open exit amidst all of the trouble.

A. You're right. I get that even when I'm writing. I'm not writing because I have all of the answers. In the end, I get to reflect on myself through my writing, and through the characters in my work. I am being comforted and healed as I write.

Q Your work often features parents getting divorced, kids running away from home, and even death. You also have diverse characters including people with disabilities and foreign immigrants, and also address environmental issues and the aging population. You have a knack for naturally depicting the gritty reality of our society.

A. I could write stories about children who don't go through any pain or sadness, but literary work is also about depicting human life with all its wounds and darkness. So naturally I end up portraying children in precarious situations. I believe that if I can draw a vivid picture of their pain, then readers will open their hearts and truly relate even though they may not be in the

same situation. We all go through numerous ordeals in life, even young children. It is my hope that young readers will be able to find a character going through the same emotions as they are and be able to relate. I know I did go through this when I was little.

Q What do you consider when you try to reflect such realities? Do you have criteria?

A. I always take great care. I try hard not to objectify. To be honest, when I first started writing, there was hardly any discourse about sensitivity to human rights as we have now. Still, I was careful back then, too. I wanted to make sure that my young readers, those that were in the same shoes as my characters, did not feel hurt all over again through my books. But I have to admit that I wasn't as sensitive or attentive as I am now, and so when I read those books today with this new awareness, there are many parts that don't sit right with me.

That's why I am revising my work now. They are books that I wrote twenty, thirty years ago, but children today are reading them. If it was adult literature, you could just shrug it off and say that's what it was like in those days, but I felt a bit of shame leaving the books as they were for kids to read today. That's what made me start revising.

Q Because when you think about it, writers don't exist in a bubble cut off from the current world. It's inevitable that you discover things in the past that don't align with the present. So, you are trying to be conscious of your past self and striving to change.

A. That's right. The revision process is a time to really face yourself. You get to see your thinking, your perception of society at that time with new eyes, and I often feel remorse as I rewrite. I'm the one that wrote the book but to think that the manuscript went through the editor and was also read by people, yet still those parts went undetected. In the end, it means that society tolerated it all. Looking back, I can't shake the thought that writers, especially those writing for children and young adults, should have a sharper eye for such aspects. After all, it's our children who are going to read it. I believe literature should play such a role.

Q You mentioned that you try not to objectify. What in particular are you cautious about?

A. My first priority is my principal audience, the children and young adults who read my books. As I mentioned, I try to be careful with insensitive expressions as well as the overall theme of the work.

Also, there is quite an age difference between my young readers and myself now. So, I'm really scared that these young readers will read my book and say, "this story doesn't look anything like our lives or the reality we live in." I'm scared that whenever someone opens my book, they'll say, "the person who wrote this doesn't have a clue who we are." It's quite challenging

because cultural trends change so fast nowadays, but I still try to not lose sight of the essence of their lives so that the readers won't say that I don't know what they are going through. That is ultimately what I strive to cling on to, no matter what. I consider it to be crucial.

Q You're right. The essence of the human heart isn't all that different just because you're a child.

A. I think adults tend to see children as immature, and, as an extension, they view children's and adolescent literature as being immature, also. But when I think back on when I was young, that is far from the case. Think of when you were in the fifth or sixth grade, the mixed feelings and complex thoughts that you had. Grown-ups say that children are immature, but in fact children have just as many thoughts about what adults are like. It's not just the precocious ones. It may be expressed differently because kids have different ways of expressing themselves, but they all have these deep thoughts. People like us, those who write children's stories or young adult fiction, are able to see into and read their hearts.

Q What is something that children's literature should not lose sight of?

A. That children are whole persons. Of course, they are not fully mature in all aspects, but this doesn't mean they are immature. I try not to lose sight of the fact that they are fully complete beings for their age. Children can only express so much because they are still young and have more to experience in the world. On the inside, they are whole persons unto themselves. But we consider them to be immature if they aren't of age.

I think that children are complete beings for their particular age. So, when I portray my characters, I don't see them as immature kids. Depending on their home environment or other circumstance, some characters are exemplary children who can speak their minds respectfully, whereas others are rough around the edges and rebellious, or are unable to express themselves well because they don't know how to. But that is just how I highlight these aspects of the character—when I depict the characters, I never think 'they're immature so they don't know.'

Q Now I understand why your characters are so complex and multi-layered.

A. Complexity, that's important, too. Nobody is entirely good all the time. We all have a million thoughts in our minds, and children also walk the line between good and evil, don't they? That's why I try to create multidimensional characters.

Of course, if you go back to my early works, you find some characters that are less complex. I started writing in my early 20s, after all. As I've grown, I'm sure that the way I see people has also evolved. It's also a lot of fun, taking a dive into the characters and creating multiple layers

and the different aspects of them. Writing about the multitude of desires and emotions people have, and about the good and evil that coexist within, has allowed me to gain an understanding about what it is to be human. Because I am also like that. In some way, I have found comfort in depicting such complex characters and thinking, ‘okay, this is what people are like.’

Q I would like to discuss the ‘caring heart’ that is found in your work. In *Looking for Cha Daegi*, the main characters take care of stray cats, and in *You Too Are a Twilight Lily*, So-hee takes care of her grandmother. We find these caregivers in many more of your books. What is the thinking behind these characters?

A. We are used to seeing children as people who need to be taken care of. The children featured in my books are of course young and vulnerable and in need of care. But they also look after others in their own way. I wanted to tell the world that children are also contributors to our society, that they are pure of heart and willing to care for others. There may be limits to what they can do practically speaking, because they are not adults yet. But through my work, I wanted to show that children are fully capable of caregiving within their means, wherever they are.

Nowadays, you hear this a lot: kids these days are so selfish. Along those lines, reading one of these books could help young readers realize that they in fact can be a helping hand to someone else. It could be a classmate who is being bullied, or a kid with a disability, or you could help your teacher even though you are a child. I wanted to share stories of finding people around you who are in need of help, not necessarily because they are weaker or smaller than you. Because taking care of someone or something else takes courage. I want to show a lot of this, at least in children’s books. When children understand that they are not only at the receiving end but that they can also be a provider of care to someone, I believe that it will give them more confidence and self-esteem.

Q I can’t stop thinking about how you have been doing this for 40 years. It must have been a joy to watch your readers grow. What was it like?

A. I think it’s a special happiness that we get to enjoy as children’s book writers. As I wrote in the preface of *Keundori in Bamtee Village*, when I go on book tours to talk about my work, I meet many people who tell me that they grew up reading my early works. One particular person who left a strong impression on me was a teacher. She was pregnant at the time and had brought an early edition of *Keundori in Bamtee Village*. Even I don’t have that copy. (*laughs*). She said it was her favorite read in elementary school and asked me to sign the copy for her unborn child using the baby’s prenatal nickname.

I often receive messages from people saying that my books got them through their teenage

years and that it moves them to see how I'm still in my place writing books. I think it's a special happiness reserved for the writers of children's literature.

Q I'm sure there are many stories growing inside of your mind as we speak. I wonder what kind of stories you have brewing inside of you.

A. I'm currently working on part 4 of the *Bamtee Village* series and it will be out soon. It's set in Sakhalin during the Japanese occupation and tells the story of the Korean diaspora living there and their life struggles to survive. If I had stuck to plan, I would already be writing away but there have been many engagements keeping me away from my desk. I can't wait to get back to my routine so that I can start writing as soon as possible. All I want is to not think of anything else and just focus on writing.

Q You've been doing this for 40 years and yet you are still searching for something fun and bursting with desire to write about.

A. I don't think I *could* write otherwise. You can't write something if it isn't any fun. When you put a book out, the readers all have different responses, as do the critics. So, unless I'm completely immersed in the writing process, I probably wouldn't be able to keep this up. It would just be an arduous job. I am always living in this self-created world of mine with these characters I developed, feeling the full range of their emotions with them. I hope the readers stay tuned to the stories that I have to share. Thank you.

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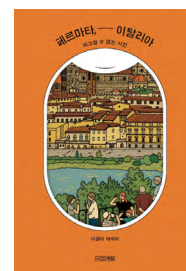
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6 Representative Books

A Night with Dad

Sakyejul Publishing, 2016.

96 pages | ISBN 9788958284468

Early Reader Book



This is a short children's story for lower elementary grade readers. One evening, Dad pitches a tent in the living room and starts to tell the children the story of one special night that he had. When he was a child, Dad went night fishing with grandpa and caught a carp who begged Dad to be let go in exchange for three wishes. Dad followed the carp to the Dragon King's palace but far from having his three wishes granted, the King's servants tried to punish him severely. The story unpacks the events of a single night starting with shared memories between father and son that lead into a wonderful adventure in the Dragon King's palace. The spellbinding tale of adventure has hidden gems such as Dad's fond memories of his father, themes of life and death, and precious life lessons that are learned in between. Using old folklore as a motif, the book introduces children to narrative prototypes while also presenting an entertaining tale with literary meaning.



●○○ Review



The winning entry *A Night with Dad* is a children's story inspired by the folklore of the Dragon King's palace, which touches on the theme of familial love. It is structured as a frame narrative but is not merely "a story inside a story"; rather, it is a so-called "nested story" where there is a story inside a story embedded in yet another story.

While Mom is away on a business trip, Dad pitches a tent in the living room to put the kids, Junseo and Yuna, to bed. Dad attempts to tuck them in by reading them a children's story but the kids complain that the book is boring, and Dad resorts to telling them a story from his childhood. His childhood story opens up into another story featuring Dad as a little child again who travels to the Dragon King's palace. This nested narrative structure functions as a device that pulls the readers deeper into the enthralling story.

By using the father as a narrator telling the story, past and present naturally intersect, a technique which allows the reader, a passive onlooker, to identify with Junseo and Yuna, the primary audience of the storytelling. The story is made more captivating as the reader is willingly drawn into the heart of the story; the objective reader becomes a character featured in the story.

"The river was flowing just like it was the night before. But I did not feel the same—me from the night before, and me this morning seemed different somehow." The hardships and extraordinary events that Myungsoo went through had changed him; the world he returned to seemed all shiny and new. The book offers pearls of wisdom as it depicts how the transformation of "I", the narrator, leads to courage and self-assurance. The intimate tales of a single night linger in the reader's mind long after the book is over.

Excerpt from judges' comments, Bang Jeonghwan Literary Award

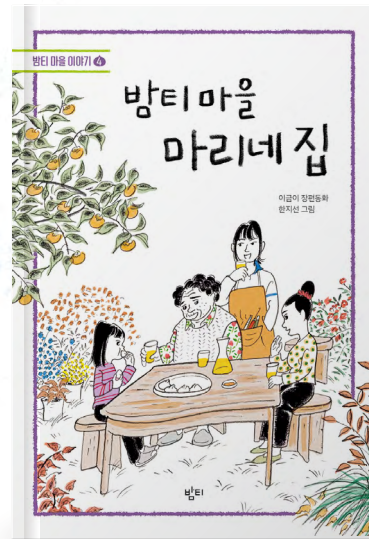
Representative Books

Mari in Bamtee Village

Bamtee Publishing, 2024.

200 pages | ISBN 9791191826371

Early Reader Book



Mari, the protagonist, is a child living in Korea, born to Nepalese parents. She is even named after the Nepalese goddess, Kumari. She has a happy life in Korea with her mother although she sometimes feels lonely when her friends leave her out.

This book is the fourth installation of the Bamtee Village series and was published to commemorate the 30th anniversary of *Keundori in Bamtee Village* which became one of Korea's favorite children's books after its publication in 1994. The series has become a favorite in Korea for generations.

The new book features a grown-up Yeongmi who, in a previous installation, was put up for adoption by her poor family and had to grow up with the wounds of rejection. She and Mari form a bond and help each other to heal. In many countries, there is an increasing number of migrant children coming from diverse backgrounds. This work is a good representation of the author's worldview as she welcomes the reader to be hospitable to the new faces we meet in our migrant communities.

●○○ Review

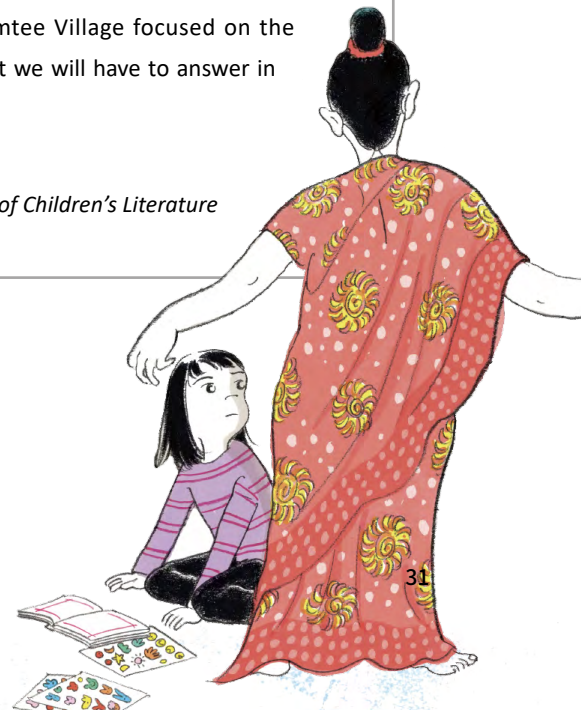
Mari in Bamtee Village tells the story of how Yeongmi, now all grown-up, and Mari, a Nepalese girl raised in Korea, forge a bond and look after each other. The two get off to a rocky start. The old lady who owns Mari's house suddenly moves away, leaving Mari hopeful that the new tenants will have a kid her age and that they could take care of the rooftop garden together. Her hopes are dampened when, instead of a friendly child, a grumpy lady turns up, claiming that the owner has granted her the rights to the rooftop, leaving Mari utterly speechless and crestfallen. This is not just any garden: Mari has given it the utmost care with hopeful anticipation that her father will visit from Nepal and with hopes to comfort her tired mother who is the sole breadwinner.

In this piece, the rooftop is not only a space where Yeongmi and Mari's desires collide but also where they build a mutual understanding. It is there where Mari—who has been treated like “a drop of oil on water” just because of her different nationality—and Yeongmi—who was treated like “an annoying burden pushed around here and there” because she was poor and motherless—see the holes in each other's hearts. Mari learns about the wounds that Yeongmi carries, and Yeongmi sees her young self in Mari's precociousness. Their deficiencies are the root of collision but also, ironically, the same deficiencies gradually bring them together, making them inseparable. The scene where Mari is finally invited up to the coveted rooftop table to share food with Yeongmi's nephew, Jinwoo, is a clear signal that a page has been turned in their relationship. (*ellipsis*)

It is a reminder that hospitality and caregiving are rooted in reciprocity not charity. Just as Yeongmi needed Mari and vice versa, Mari's household was indispensable to Bamtee Village. In a tottering rural community where the school is on the verge of shutting down and the local economy stagnant due to labor shortages, Mari's family has the right to proudly claim its place as a member of the community. Nationality does not become an obstacle whatsoever.

Mari in Bamtee Village is a gentle lesson on how families and even communities can be formed amongst people who care for one another. While the previous books in the Bamtee Village focused on the institutional family, Mari's story expands our scope and asks questions that we will have to answer in the near future, making it all the more special.

By Lee Chung-il, *Changbi Review of Children's Literature*



Representative Books



Bamtee Village series

Illustrated by Han Ji-seon

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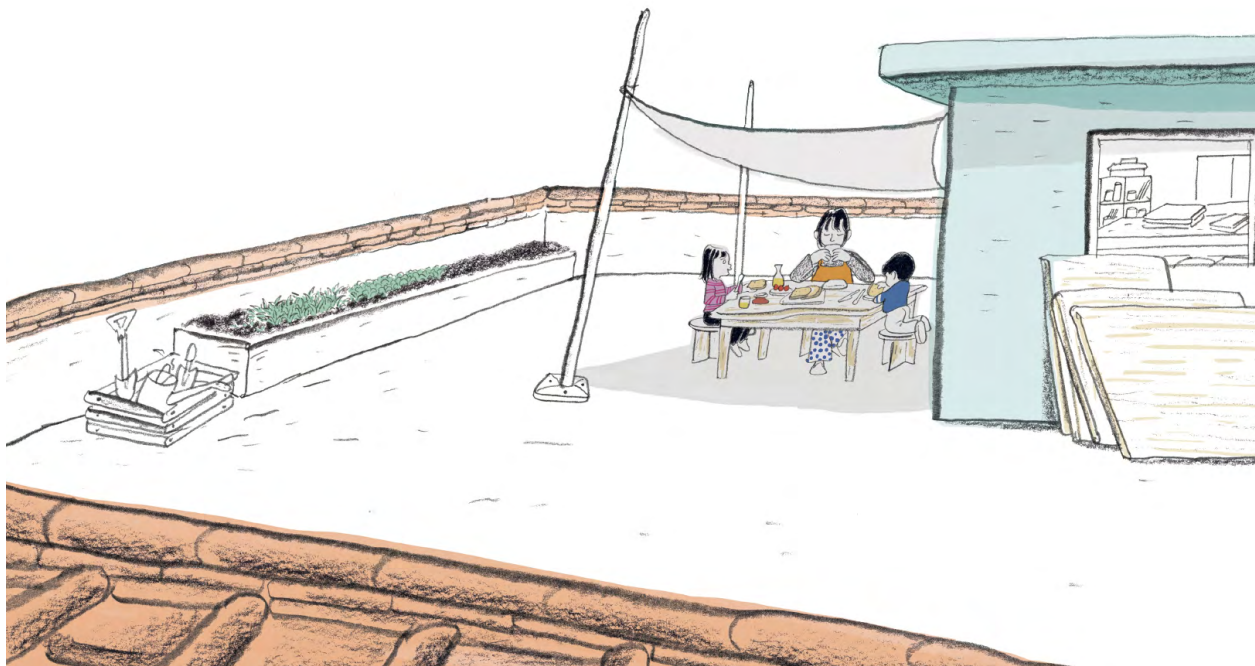
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144pages, ISBN 9791191826364, Bamtee Publishing, 2005/2024.

- Mari in Bamtee Village

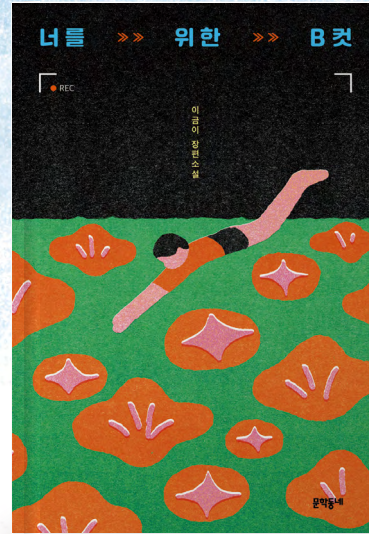
200pages, ISBN 9791191826371, Bamtee Publishing, 2024.

Following Keundori in Bamtee Village, which was published in 1994 and became Korea's representative fairy tale, Yeongmi in Bamtee Village and Bomi in Bamtee Village were published at intervals of about five years, and recently, on the 30th anniversary of Mari in Bamtee Village was published. The series has been loved by generations of Korean children for many years because of its strong characters and stories. It is a masterpiece that speaks to the times and the hearts of children growing up in rural Korea.



Deleted Scenes for You

Munhakdongne Publishing, 2023.
168 pages | ISBN 9788954693479
YA Novel



The protagonist is Sunwoo, a boy who has a knack for video editing. One day, Sunwoo is asked by a popular group of boys in his class to edit some videos of the foursome going about their everyday lives. Sunwoo gets to work and makes a cool video showcasing their friendship.

But when Sunwoo learns that there is more to their relationship than meets the eye, he goes back to the scenes that he had deleted from the final cut. Perhaps the 'deleted scenes' hold the truth about the real deal and reveal a cover-up. What should Sunwoo do about this?

This book asks important questions to the teenagers of today about the digital space they navigate—an online world full of photos, videos, and images posted on social media and YouTube—and invites them to search for possible answers.



Representative Books

●○○● Review

Truths that cannot be deleted

Sunwoo is commissioned by Seobin, vice-president of the student body, to edit a video of his daily life for him, and, as requested, Sunwoo edits “the cursing and rough behavior” to make Seobin look “more good-natured and likable” or “stitches together just the attractive parts”. Although he notices some questionable aspects to the relationship among his classmates, such as how Junghoo is so withdrawn and is always the one who foots the bill for the boys, Sunwoo shrugs this off as an unspoken understanding within the group. All that matters to Sunwoo is to make his client Seobin look good in the final edit. The wider “the gap between the final image and reality”, the prouder Sunwoo is of himself and his work as Seobin’s V-logue becomes more popular than ever.

Deleted Scenes for You shows us how reality can be edited, and the truth can be concealed or distorted to fit a particular agenda. It also alerts us to the fact that bias and prejudice towards minorities are not inherent but may be edited and instilled in us as illustrated through Sunwoo’s female friend, Miho, who is attracted to girls. It’s also refreshing to see a young adult novel featuring teenage boys that accurately captures today’s changed reality without falling on the fist-fighting cliché. This book does not lose sight of the fact that violence amongst today’s students has become less physical and more discreet as it has moved to online media. This work is especially significant in this day and age where messages of hatred are tossed back and forth in online communities and social media platforms in order to reinforce self-identities. It poses the following question: ‘When you believe something to be true, can you be sure that it is self-determined and based solely on what you’ve seen?’

By Yoo Young-jin, literary critic of children’s literature, *Changbi Review of Children’s Literature*



Deleted Scenes for You

●○○ Review

*The truth that no one can edit...
What it means to live, change, and grow*

Deleted Scenes for You by Lee Geum-yi is a novel that reads like a rebellion of edited truths. The story starts with Choi Sunwoo, a second-grade middle schooler, who takes on the job of editing videos for his classmate Seobin, an honor student and role model to his peers, for his YouTube channel, *Seobin Login*. Sunwoo is an average student with mediocre grades who hardly stands out, but he gets to know Seobin and his group of friends—four popular, high-achieving boys who call themselves *Four-charis*—as he edits videos of their day to day lives: the ‘K-Middle Schooler Series’. Sunwoo’s first YouTube upload starts to trend, and he is put in full charge of the channel. And why not? The pay is not bad, and this side job could become a credential that he could put on his future CV. Plus, editing the videos gives him a surge of self-confidence.

As Sunwoo works his magic, Seobin’s real-life persona is transformed, and he becomes quite the hot guy online. Images of Seobin cursing have been used tactfully, inserted in just the right places so that he comes off as approachable and attractive, and awkward group dynamics have been cut out without a second thought. The number of subscribers soars and Seobin’s popularity goes through the roof. As the editor, Sunwoo becomes more and more engrossed in his story which features Seobin as the main character. And the more he edits, the more ‘instinctively’ he knows what to keep in and what to leave out.

While Sunwoo edits the original videos sent by Seobin, questionable scenes do not go unnoticed; nonetheless, Sunwoo chooses not to make much of them. That is, until he realizes that Junghoo, one of the group of four, is being bullied and that the abuse drove him to attempt suicide. Up until then, Sunwoo is unaware of what he has edited. After catching up with reality, Sunwoo agonizes over what to do and finally decides to re-edit the videos he created; only this time, they would reflect the point of view of Junghoo, the victim of school violence, and not Seobin, the perpetrator. He sifts through the ‘deleted scenes’ in search of the truth that was edited out. The protagonist, Sunwoo, comes to an important realization at the end of the book. This realization is that we all change and grow, and that this is a truth that no one can edit. What should be highlighted in this statement is not the inevitability of change and growth, but the existence of an inviolable truth. Sunwoo symbolizes the video editor, a universal agent in today’s world. His realization is a message that we, as editors, must recognize that there is truth behind the screen, one that no one can edit. Whatever we edit out can always turn on us. This is where the ethics of editing begins: knowing that what you edit may not be the truth.

By Park Hye-jin, literary critic, *Chosun Ilbo* (July 10, 2023)

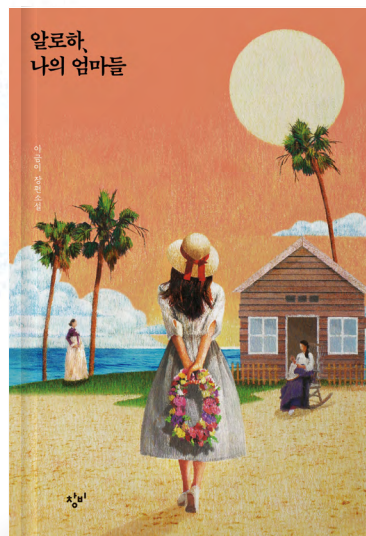
Representative Books

The Picture Bride

Changbi Publishers, 2020.

392 pages | ISBN 9788936456955

YA Novel



This piece illustrates the lives of Beodeul, Hongju, and Sehwa, three women who, at the age of eighteen, left their homes for Hawaii a century ago, each with a photo in hand. The story is based on the actual 'picture brides' and recreates the lives of immigrant workers who relocated to the American island of Hawaii. It is the story of first-generation Korean diaspora who uprooted their lives in Korea for America; it is also the story of women and their resilience in the face of struggles in a foreign land.

The book stirs strong emotions by showing a female community that the three women build together as they become friends and mothers to one another in a faraway land. Jinju, who grows up as Beodeul's daughter, is an adolescent girl who represents the new generation of women and depicts the life of second-generation immigrants. This book is meaningful as a reconstruction of diaspora life in the 20th century, full of motion; it is also a written record of young brides who are subject to such practices even to this day, somewhere in the world.

●●● Review

In the early years of the 20th Century, thousands of Korean workers migrated to Hawaii to work on sugarcane plantations.

With few unmarried women among them, they exchanged photos with potential brides back home, persuading them to come to Hawaii with the promise of a better life.



The *Picture Bride* is the first adult novel from this prolific and best-selling YA author from Korea, and her first to be translated into English. Beginning in 1917, it follows Willow, a girl from an isolated rural village, whose dearest wish is to go to school as her brothers did. When she's told by a matchmaker that accepting a proposal from one of the Hawaiian workers will enable her to both marry and study, it sounds like too good a deal to turn down.

Willow has grown up so sheltered that she is taken in by the tales that, in Hawaii, clothes and shoes literally grow on trees. But the fact remains that, even after her more fanciful notions are stripped away, Hawaii does provide more opportunities for her than staying at home. The status of girls in Korea at this time is so low that some aren't even given proper names.

She boards a ship with two other girls, the relatively well-off Hongju, who was widowed only two months after getting married, and Songhwa, who is of a shamefully low status, being the granddaughter of a shaman. All three, though, are bonded by their shared circumstances and pledge to be friends for life.

They arrive at their destination to find that not only is Hawaii not the paradise they imagined, but that it's a common ruse for men to lure brides there by sending out-of-date pictures of themselves. Hongju's husband is actually 39, Songhwa's in his sixties. Willow's husband, Taewan, does resemble his photo, but he's a cold, aloof man who feels tricked into a marriage he didn't want and whose real passion is Korean independence.

Nor is he the prosperous landowner she's been led to believe, and the matchmaker's claim that Willow can enrol as a student there turns out to be an empty promise. Nevertheless, the tenderness of her relationship with her new father-in-law, and her persistent efforts to break through Taewan's icy exterior are both touching signs that all might not be lost.

An impeccably written piece of historical fiction, *The Picture Bride* presents an exquisite portrait of womanhood and the bonds of friendship and family, depicting Willow, Hongju and Songhwa adapting to an unfamiliar land and learning how to take their dashed hopes and reshape them into a tolerable life.

It's set against the backdrop of a Hawaii-based Korean community that yearns to see the liberation of Korea from the Japanese, and the schism that has opened up between the followers of two opposed national leaders. Willow's father and brother both died at the hands of the Japanese, so she can understand her husband Taewan's passion and commitment. But how greatly can she let it impact on her marriage and the well-being of her family? And will the division in the community estrange her from the two women she's come to love like sisters?

Willow's mother used to say that "a daughter's destiny resembles that of her own mother". She's devoted herself to proving otherwise, and wants a different destiny for her own daughter, Pearl. But the closing section of the novel, set 18 years later and told from Pearl's perspective, brings to the surface a conflict that, even after all she's endured, maybe the hardest for Willow to resolve.

The Herald (Scotland)



Representative Books

Can't I Go Instead

Sakyejul Publishing, 2016.

612 pages | ISBN 9791160940602

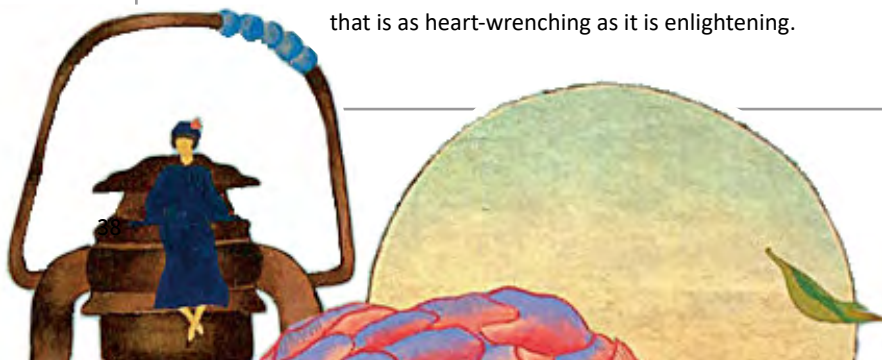
YA Novel

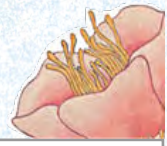


A work that sheds light on modern Korean history with the theme of sexual violence during wartime at the forefront. Both a historical novel and a coming-of-age story of two girls, this work deals with the tumultuous lives of Sunam and Chaeryung from the 1920s post-WW1 era through current times, providing a deep investigation of war which affected all of humanity in the 20th century. Through the lives of adolescent girls, the book vividly displays the agency of women and their desire to stand up to the wider world. It is touching to see the female characters march forth with their lives even in the face of insurmountable fate.

●○○ Review

In this intricate web of historical fiction, few threads are as captivating as the stories of two women, their lives entwined through the tumultuous events of World War II and the Korean War. Prolific Korean author Lee Geum-yi's *Can't I Go Instead* (2023), translated by An Seon Jae, is a mesmerising exploration of the harsh realities of class division in early 20th century Korea, offering readers a poignant narrative that is as heart-wrenching as it is enlightening.





The novel unfolds against the backdrop of a society marred by Japanese rule, where aristocracy and subservience define the roles of the privileged and their maidservants. At its heart, the story revolves around Chaeryeong, the daughter of a Korean nobleman, and Sunam, her devoted maidservant. Theirs is a complex bond forged by circumstances and duty but shadowed by inequality.

As the narrative begins, we are introduced to Chaeryeong's family, a wealthy and influential household in 1930s Korea. Her father, Viscount Hyeongman, is a staunch supporter of Japanese rule, and also has an illegitimate son destined to inherit the family fortune.

For Chaeryeong's eighth birthday, the Viscount took her to a quaint village, intending to present her with a unique gift: her very own maidservant. However, the child he has selected is reluctant to embark on this journey. Among the children watching, Sunam, a younger girl, stood out. She approached and boldly asked, "Can't I go instead?"

The village head, a stern figure, tried to discourage Sunam, but she remained determined, locking eyes with the Viscount. In a pivotal moment, the Viscount turned to Chaeryeong and asked, 'Which do you want?' Chaeryeong pointed at Sunam.

With that simple gesture, their complex relationship was born. Little did they know, this moment would set in motion events beyond their imagination.

"Chaeryeong couldn't hide her disappointment. She had never seen such a dirty and useless gift in all her life."

As Chaeryeong finds herself entangled in a perilous romance with a passionate Korean Independence activist, her choices weigh heavily on Sunam. In a cruel twist of fate, Chaeryeong is forced into an arranged marriage with a Japanese man and sent far away, leaving Sunam to shoulder the burden of assuming her identity. This heartbreaking turn of events thrusts Sunam into the nightmarish existence of a 'comfort woman,' a role inflicted upon countless Korean women by the Japanese Imperial army during World War II.

Meanwhile, Chaeryeong's journey takes her to the United States, where she confronts the harsh reality of prejudice harboured by Americans against Japanese residents. She finds herself caught in the web of cultural bias and discrimination, compelled to navigate a complex and challenging existence far from the life she had once known in Korea.

In this tale of two intertwined destinies, Chaeryeong and Sunam are both thrust into worlds filled with pain, injustice, and prejudice – each facing their own unique trials and tribulations. Their parallel experiences illuminate the profound human cost of war and the enduring scars it leaves on those ensnared in its merciless grasp.

Representative Books

"In her old life, Sunam had never thought about patriotism or Korean independence. Her only thought had been to do as she was told-and if she did not go hungry, all was fine."

Can't I Go Instead is Lee Geum-Yi's second foray into the epic saga-style narrative, and it doesn't disappoint. The experiences of Chaeryeong and Sunam are deeply moving, portraying the hardships they endure as the world around them evolves. Particularly poignant is Chaeryeong's struggle when Japan bombs Pearl Harbor, leading to her internment in the United States.

"Several times a day, she thought about running away."

The novel does meander at times, with prolonged stretches where not much transpires, but the eventual payoff lies in the profound understanding of the characters' journeys and their eventual reunion in an independent Korea post-World War II.

Geum-yi's narrative choices, exemplified by the captivating role reversal between Chaeryeong and Sunam, intricately layer depth and intrigue throughout the story, offering a testament to her creative and imaginative storytelling prowess. One moment from the novel crystallises this mastery, as Sunam, disguised as Chaeryeong, experiences a profound revelation regarding her assumed identity, the power it carried and the stark truth beneath it:

"She paled as she realised that everything she'd thought of the viscount had been a lie, that he'd sent her to this place knowing exactly what would happen—he must have."

This quote encapsulates the heart of Geum-yi's storytelling, where characters grapple with their convictions and perceptions, ultimately unravelling the intricate layers of the narrative and adding a profound richness to the tale.

Can't I Go Instead provides a window into a lesser-known chapter of history, one seldom taught in Western schools, making it a valuable addition to the world of historical fiction. If you're open to exploring translated works that delve into the lives of 20th century Korean immigrants and the profound impact of historical events, *Can't I Go Instead* is a book that will both educate and captivate.

Overall, the novel stands as a testament to the enduring strength of the human spirit, a tale of sacrifice, survival, and redemption that will linger in your thoughts long after you've turned the final page.

Aniko Press

Other Works



You Too Are a Twilight Lily trilogy

YA Novels

- You Too Are a Twilight Lily
228pages, ISBN 9791191826005, Bamtee Publishing, 1999/2021.
- So-hee's Room
316pages, ISBN 9791191826029, Bamtee Publishing, 2013/2021.
- Searching For the Hidden Path
212pages, ISBN 9791191826036, Bamtee Publishing, 2014/2021.

You Too Are a Twilight Lily, still set in an agricultural village, looks at single-parent families, which was a neglected topic in Korea though it was a part of modern families. Its sequel works show three teenagers suffering from changes in their families, revealing their psychological conflicts in the midst of family disintegration. For example, *So-hee's Room* portrays the protagonist Sohee's alienation and anxiety from her mother's re-marriage and encounters with new family members. The novel ends with how Sohee overcomes all the difficulties. *Searching For the Hidden Path*, on the other hand, shows three boys and three girls trying to find their goals and future careers after graduating middle school.

Other Works



Yujin and Yujin

YA Novel
304pages | ISBN 9791197120541
Bamtee Publishing, 2004/2020.

The story makes it clear that the parents of the two Yujins deal with their trauma differently. Big Yujin's parents help their daughter to deal with it openly, but Little Yujin's parents push it under the carpet as if it never happened. Given these different reactions and attitudes, the two girls grow up differently. The writer's message is clear: when a child or a teen experiences sexual molestation or violence, the reaction of the adults around them plays a crucial role in the child's overcoming the violence. When the adults react inappropriately, the child ends up blaming herself or himself and loses self-esteem.

Life Traveler

YA Novel
256pages | ISBN 9788954658263
Munhakdongne Publishing, 2019.

This story is about boys who grow up in the 1980s when capitalism and material success were considered most important in people's lives. Thirty years later, they become middle-aged men who see the obituaries of their friends. This coming-of-age story will make readers reflect on their own youth and how it shaped their own lives.



Like the Roughneck Princess

Early Reader Book
88 pages | ISBN 9791160944570
Sakyejul Publishing, 2019.

In a small kingdom faraway, there is the legend of a Roughneck princess. She was so rowdy that everyone left her kingdom. Aengdu is the princess of another small country, and she tries to do everything right and not be like the Roughneck princess. One day Princess Aengdu visits Jadu's house to experience the life of commoners, and there Jadu tells Princess Aengdu that she has been stressed out because of Princess Aengdu, who is so perfect at everything. As she becomes good friends with Jadu, Princess Aengdu decides to write a new legend.

Looking for Cha Daegi

Illustrated by Kim Jung-eun | early reader book
136pages, ISBN 9791160947304,
Sakyejul Publishing, 2021.

This book is based on a story which the main character, Cha Daegi, who used to be shy and introverted due to his nickname, restoring his self-esteem while hanging out with his friends and family members. The writer has come up with this story after seeing an elementary school homework to interview with a person with the same name by accident through the Internet. She thought that if a child has a unique name, that child would feel difficult doing this kind of homework, and then, she came up with the name of 'Cha Daegi'. The writer has delicately expressed how characters have felt in this book and made them realistic characters in this book. Moreover, she also contained ordinary episodes or common concerns of children such as episodes related to nicknames, searching my name in the Internet, taking care of wandering cats, or children dreaming of becoming a YouTube creator.

Other Works



The Country of My Mother

Illustrated by Lee Seon-ju | children's Book
167pages, ISBN 9788957981030,
Prooni Publishing, 2000.

It is a story of a south Korean boy who accompanies his grandfather's visit to Mt. Geumgang. His grandmother was displaced from his hometown in North Korea during the Korean War. The writer paid a visit to Mt. Geumgang herself and wrote down her wish for Korea's reunification and the reunion of separated families. It depicts the beauty of Mt. Geumgang in North Korea and sketches a variety of people including the protagonist's grandfather. It also delivers concerns over the North and South Korean relationship and future prospects. This work can show both Korean children and international children the tragedy of war and the importance of community through this rare and sad history of the Korean division.

Foster Care

Illustrated by Oh Seung-min | children's Book
128pages, ISBN 9791197120596,
Bamtee Publishing, 2006/2021.

This book is a collection of five short stories that dives deep into the childhood in the contemporary world. Each short story explores a pair of conflicting ideas: friendship and animosity, communication and detachment, restraint and freedom, and convention and openness. The children in the stories feel lost between the two contradicting worlds. Delving into the issues that feel close to the heart of the children here and now, such as gender roles, economic polarization, technology and animal rights, this collection of short stories provides guidance and support for children and the parents alike.



Us, In the Land of the Giants

YA Novel
248pages, ISBN 9791191826050,
Bamtee Publishing, 2012/2022.

A teenage daughter takes a trip with her mother to Gobi Desert, Mongolia. Dain, a fifteen-year-old girl, is rather irritated when she hears of her mom's plan to visit Mongolian deserts, although it is her first-ever trip abroad. She will be stuck with her 47-year-old mother and her boring friends, in the middle nowhere. She feels completely isolated in the middle of the desert. On the other hand, the mother Sukhee is dealing with her own emotional turmoil. She is distracted with the jealousy she feels for her friend, the unresolvable love-and-hate relationship she has had with her own mother, and the anxiety she feels for her children's future. Nearing the end of the trip, a mirage appears across the horizon. When it vanishes, the mother and the daughter are left with a secret to confront.

The Whale in My Pocket

YA Novel
264pages, ISBN 9791197120558,
Bamtee Publishing, 2008/2021.

This book is a story about teens and their dreams to become the next K-pop star. Min-gi is a handsome young boy, but his parents only approve of his sister, an A+ student. After receiving offers from multiple celebrity agencies, Min-gi is determined to become the next K-pop star. Min-gi finds a chance at success when he becomes friends with two very talented teenagers, Yeon-ho and Jun-hee.

Yeon-ho's mother is a financially irresponsible cabaret singer. Yeon-ho is left to take care of his blind grandmother, while his mother gets herself in more troubles. Jun-hee faces obstacles as an adoptee, despite the love and care his adoptive parents provide for him. The two fear of being under the spotlight, and naturally refuse when Min-gi asks them to form a team with him for auditions. Will the struggling teens finally achieve their dreams? Which of them will become the next K-pop star?

8

List of Translated Editions

The Picture Bride

- The Picture Bride, Forge Books, English(USA), 2022.
- The Picture Bride, Scribe Publications, English, 2022.
- Кыми Ли: Невеста по фотографии, Mann, Ivanov and Ferber, Russian, 2022.
- Drei Frauen und der Traum vom Paradies, Märchenwald Verlag München, German, 2023.
- アロハ、私のママたち, Futabasha Publishers, Japanese, 2023.
- เจ้าสาวรูปถ่ายกับฮาวายในฝัน, Jamsai Publishing, Thai, 2024.
- (forthcoming), Arabic, 2024.
- (forthcoming), Italian, 2025.



Can't I Go Instead

- そこに私が行ってもいいですか?, 里山社, Japanese, 2022.
- Can't I Go Instead, Forge Books, English(USA), 2023.
- Can't I Go Instead, Scribe Publications, English, 2023.
- ألا يمكنني الرحيل, Arabic, 2024.



Yujin and Yujin

- Yujin et Yujin, Picquier, French, 2011.
- 幼真和幼真, Liaoning Education Press, Simplified Chinese, 2011.
- 有真与有真, Beijing Yuchen Culture, Simplified Chinese, 2023.
- 有真和有真, Linking Publishing, Traditional Chinese, 2023.
- (forthcoming), Indonesian, 2025.



Like a Roughneck Princess

- A Princesa indomável, Atalante Editores, Portuguese(Brazil), 2022.



You Too Are a Twilight Lily

- 你也是山百合呀, 江苏凤凰, Simplified Chinese, 2023.
- (forthcoming), Japanese, 2025.
- (forthcoming), French, 2025.



So-hee's Room / Searching For the Hidden Path

- (forthcoming), Simplified Chinese, 2025.



List of Awards and Distinctions

- 2024 **Shortlist for the 2024 Hans Christian Andersen Award**
- 2026, 2024, 2020 Korean nominee for the Hans Christian Andersen Award
- 2024 Korea Culture and Arts Award (by Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism) in literature category
- 2024 Korean Literature Day by Korean Cultural Centre UK
- 2024 Korean Book Club by Korean Culture Centre AU: *Can't I Go Instead*
- 2024 One City One Book: *Deleted Scenes for You*
- 2023 Winner of the Nautilus Award for Historical Fiction(USA): *The Picture Bride*
- 2020~2022 One City One Book: *The Picture Bride*
- 2020 YES24 Book of the Year: *The Picture Bride*
- 2019 Open Children's Book Literature Award: *They Called My Name*
- 2019 Nadaum Book by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family: *Like the Roughneck Princess*
- 2018 IBBY Honour List: *Can't I Go Instead*
- 2018 One City One Book: *A Night with Dad*
- 2017 Bang Jeonghwan Literary Award: *A Night with Dad*
- 2014 One City One Book: *So-hee's Room*
- 2013 One City One Book: *Pet Food for You*
- 2012 Yun Seokjung Literary Award: *Pet Food for You*
- 2011 One Library One Book: *Just Different from Me*
- 2007 Socheon Children's Book Award: *Foster Care*
- 2006 10 children's book writers loved by Korean by Interpark Bookstore
- 2005~2009 One City One Book: *You Too Are a Twilight Lily*
- 1999 10 Korean children's books that represent the 20th century by Korean Children's Book Association: *Keundori in Bamtee Village*
- 1996 20 Best Children's books by Korean Children's Book Association: *My Teeth on the Roof*
- 1987 Kyemongsa Children's Literature Award: *Be the Bridge*
- 1985 JoongAng Children's Literature Award: *Uncle Bongsam*
- 1984 Saebeot Literary Award: *Younggu and Heukgu*

Exhibitions, Lectures, Fairs, etc.

2024

▼ Book Talk in Busan International Children's Book Fair 2024



◀ Korea Culture and Arts Award in literature category

▶ Online Interview/Book talk with Arabic readers



◀ Special Book Talk: Celebrating the HCAA shortlisted author

▼ Musical <Yujin and Yujin> in Taiwan: Guest talk



▶ Korean Literature Day in UK



◀ Korea-China Children's Literature Book Talk: with Cao Wenxuan

▶ Bologna Children's Book Fair: Authors from Korea



▶ Korean Book Club by Korean Culture Centre AU: *Can't I Go Instead*



2023

▶ Meeting with teachers in Incheon



◀ Book Talk in Changwon International Children's Literature Festival

2022

▼ THE KOREA SOCIETY(New York): Author Talks



◀ Musical<Aloha, My Moms> (Based upon *The Picture Bride*)



● Webtoon<Can't I Go Instead>(Based upon the same title)

▼ Musical<Yujin and Yujin>(Based upon the same title)



2020

▼ Moscow International Book Fair

2020 The Guest of Honor: Republic of Korea
Interviews with 5 Korean authors of picture books
and books for children and youth

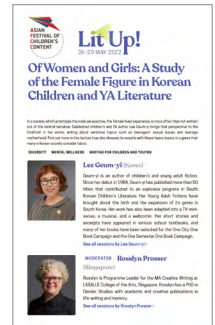


► Invited Speaker of 2022 Asian Festival of Children's Content in Singapore.

Topic 1) Depicting the 'Unspeakable'

Topic 2) Of Women and Girls:

A Study of the Female
Figure in Korean Children
and YA Literature



▼ Korea-Georgia Arts Festival 2022



2021

► Theater Play<Yujin and Yujin>(Based upon the same title)



► Book Concert in Gwangyang Yonggang Library



► 2021 One City One Book in Ansan



► Published a travelogue in Nepal *Bistari Bistari* with fellow writers, all royalties were donated to remote villages in Nepal.



2019

- ▶ International Book Fair for Children and Youth (FILIJ) in Mexico



- ▼ Special lecture in Cheonbo Middle School



- ▼ One City One Book in Uijeongbu



- ◀ Special lecture in Gusandong Library Village

- ▼ Visiting the historical site of forced labor during the Japanese colonial period in Sakhalin, Russia



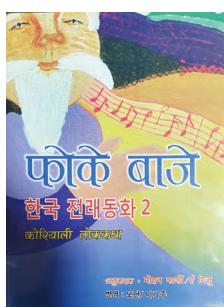
2018

- ▼ IBBY Congress 2018 in Athens (IBBY Honour List)



2017

- ▼ 3rd visit to Nepal with fellow writers, donation of children's books to schools in remote villages



- ▼ Book Talk in Yongsan Element School





◀ Special lecture on children's writing with Yes24 Bookstore

2016

- ▶ Visited a Korean school in Ushtobe, Kazakhstan, donated Korean children's books



2015

- ▼ 2nd visit to Nepal with fellow writers, donation of children's books to schools in remote villages



- ▶ Book talk with teenager in Seoul Metropolitan Library



◀ Interview with Interpark Bookstore

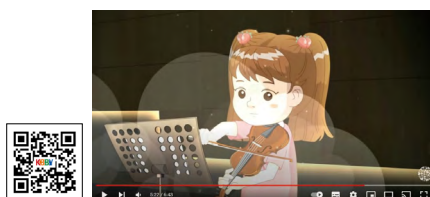
2014

- ▼ Special lecture in Gwangju City Library



2013

- ▼ Short Animation for Improving Awareness of Disabled (Based upon *Just Different from Me*)



- ▼ Special lecture in Changwon International Kid Literature Festival 2013



2012

- ▼ Special lecture in Jinju Middle School



2011

- ▼ Special lecture in Boryeong Library



2010

- ▼ Interview with Aladin Bookstore



2008

- ▼ Special lecture in Jaesong Children's Library in Busan



2006

- Published *Lee Geum-yi's Children's Book Creative Class*



2004

- Opened a lecture on how to create a children's book. (~2006)

2002

- ▼ EBS Children Literature in TV Drama: *Just Different from Me*



2001

- KBS TV Drama: *Keundori in Bamtee Village*

1999

- 20 recommended books for summer vacation by Korean Children's Book Association

1996

- Selected 50 best children's books by Korean Children's Book Association

1994

- ▼ Book Festival for reading 10 Korean Children's Literature by Korean Children's Book Association



1992

- ◀ Selected 20 best children's books by children's writers

창작동화 '책잔치' 벌인다				
어린이도서연구회 오늘~18일 전국 8곳서				
강연·가독신문전·인형극공연등도 함께				
우리 아이가 쓴 창작동화를 한 권의 작품 12권(가나다순) 소개	서울	7~12일	어린이도서관	가독신문 전시
이제부터 '책 잔치' 열려	부산	13~18일	부산시립도서관	가독신문 전시
강연·가독신문전·인형극공연등도 함께	대구	13~18일	대구시립도서관	가독신문 전시
우리 아이가 쓴 창작동화를 한 권의 작품 12권(가나다순) 소개	대전	13~18일	대전시립도서관	가독신문 전시
이제부터 '책 잔치' 열려	충청	13~18일	충청남도도서관	가독신문 전시
강연·가독신문전·인형극공연등도 함께	전남	13~18일	전남도도서관	가독신문 전시
우리 아이가 쓴 창작동화를 한 권의 작품 12권(가나다순) 소개	전북	13~18일	전북도도서관	가독신문 전시
이제부터 '책 잔치' 열려	경북	13~18일	경북도도서관	가독신문 전시
강연·가독신문전·인형극공연등도 함께	경남	13~18일	경남도도서관	가독신문 전시
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1984

- Made her debut as a children's book writers by winning the Saebeot Literary Award

2026 Hans Christian Andersen Award Nominee from Korea

Writer Lee Geum-yi

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