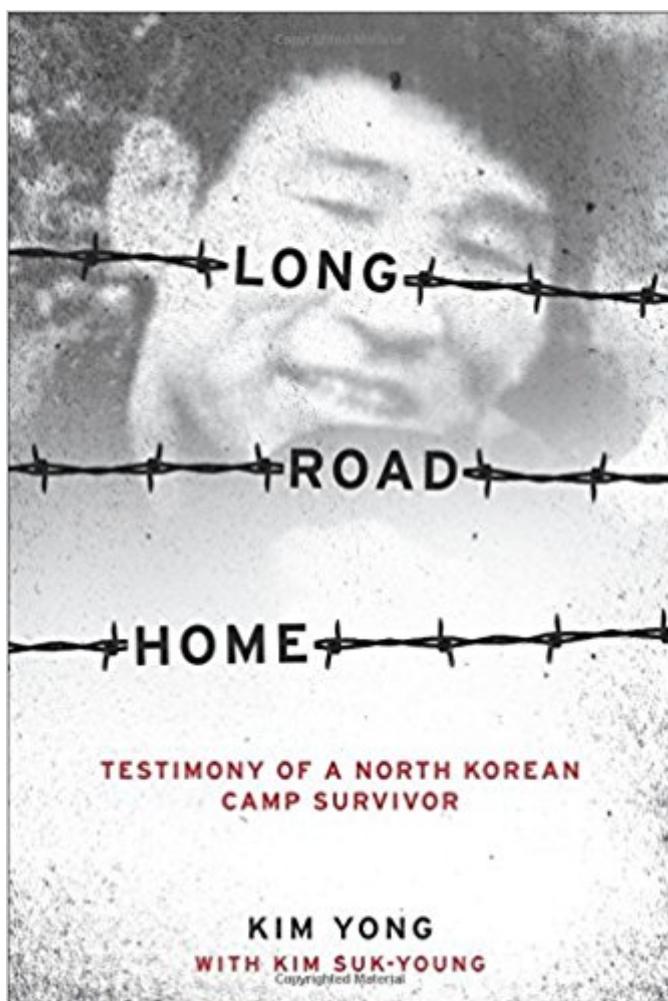


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Long Road Home: Testimony Of A North Korean Camp Survivor



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Synopsis

Kim Yong shares his harrowing account of life in a labor camp—a singularly despairing form of torture carried out by the secret state. Although it is known that gulags exist in North Korea, little information is available about their organization and conduct, for prisoners rarely escape both incarceration and the country alive. Long Road Home shares the remarkable story of one such survivor, a former military official who spent six years in a gulag and experienced firsthand the brutality of an unconscionable regime. As a lieutenant colonel in the North Korean army, Kim Yong enjoyed unprecedented privilege in a society that closely monitored its citizens. He owned an imported car and drove it freely throughout the country. He also encountered corruption at all levels, whether among party officials or Japanese trade partners, and took note of the illicit benefits that were awarded to some and cruelly denied to others. When accusations of treason stripped Kim Yong of his position, the loose distinction between those who prosper and those who suffer under Kim Jong-il became painfully clear. Kim Yong was thrown into a world of violence and terror, condemned to camp No. 14 in Hamkyeong province, North Korea's most notorious labor camp. As he worked a constant shift 2,400 feet underground, daylight became Kim's new luxury; as the months wore on, he became intimately acquainted with political prisoners, subhuman camp guards, and an apocalyptic famine that killed millions. After years of meticulous planning, and with the help of old friends, Kim escaped and came to the United States via China, Mongolia, and South Korea. Presented here for the first time in its entirety, his story not only testifies to the atrocities being committed behind North Korea's wall of silence but also illuminates the daily struggle to maintain dignity and integrity in the face of unbelievable hardship. Like the work of Solzhenitsyn, this rare portrait tells a story of resilience as it reveals the dark forms of oppression, torture, and ideological terror at work in our world today.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Kim gives us a marvelously unsympathetic portrait of a brain-washed apparatchik. (Christian Oliver Financial Times)[Kim's] dispassionate account of how one man endured the unendurable offers a clue as to how such extreme inhumanity can occur. (Donald Richie Japan Times)A reminder of the brutality of the North Korean regime. (John Feffer Korean Quarterly)

Long Road Home shares the remarkable story of the survivor of a North Korean labor camp, a former military official who spent six years in a gulag and experienced firsthand the brutality of an unconscionable regime. Presented here for the first time in its entirety, his story not only testifies to the atrocities being committed behind North Korea's wall of silence, but it also illuminates the daily struggle to maintain dignity and integrity in the face of unbelievable odds.

Without offending any other North Korean author who has written a much worthy book about his/her own life following their escape from their secluded homeland, I would like to let readers know that this book is a bit different, because this person is a North Korean upper class military defector. (I just want to point out that all North Korean autobiographies are necessary for us to learn from, and to respect these fine people for sharing with us all they have gone through and gone without.)The story of Kim Yong's life differs to that of the other average young North Korean. And it differs once he is adopted from an orphanage by an affluent, well established military couple who had much to offer (other than love) their promising adopted son and daughter. This was a State request to those military couples in this particular position. As an adult in the military, life went on and Kim Yong was doing well and promoted as a military officer. But after time, a sudden exposure to whom his unknown biological father was sent Kim's life wheeling him so far backwards, he was then placed to a lifetime sentence inside the bowels of the country's most notorious labor camps. After a well planned camp escape attempt works, he is now beyond those razor sharp walls of confinement, and his story continues on as he desperately tries to find ways out of his country. His trekking about will keep you gripping on to his story. The reason I recommend this book is because we have not heard much from a North Korean military officer who has defected. We learn, as he learns, more about his devious country and about this family dynasty, who holds an entire country in fear, sadness, in

poverty, without possessions, always in the cold, tortured, constantly hunger, in blackness, whether in their homes or in the most brutal labor camps. I wish Kim Yong nothing but the best in his travels and with his teachings. He has much to offer the rest of us.

as advertised

This is the sixth book about North Korea that I've read in the past few months, and is a MUST READ, as far as I'm concerned. What an abysmal country. I'm hopeful that with all these exposes this demonic kingdom will soon come to an end, and the tortured starving prisoners will be set free.

An amazing story of freedom. We have no idea that today people in this world can live such a horrendous life because of a extremely communist ungodly government who doesn't care about people or their welfare and just destroys everything about them. A story about never giving up!

The more I read about North Korea, the more horrified I become. There are a number of books available now that were written by defectors, but this is one of the very few that details life in a prisoner camp. It is truly horrifying that so many people in North Korea are forced to live in conditions that are even worse than those of Nazi concentration camps. Not a fun read by any means, but a real page-turner.

We were assigned the first half of the book as a class reading. I was just wondering what happened next of Kim Yong's escape journey inside China so I purchased the book. I think people need to know more about North Korea besides their nuclear project and this book offers a good story.

A tough read to be sure. I found the author to be courageous in publishing this first hand account of unspeakable and systemic atrocities.

Could not imagine a regime to be so cruel as this one. I could not leave the book down. I pity those who have been sent to the gulag. Suk-Young had suffered so much under this horrible regime. Well written.

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