



# Escaping North Korea: Defiance and Hope in the World's Most Repressive Country

By Mike Kim

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The first of its kind, this book provides a unique inside look into the hidden world of ordinary North Koreans. Mike Kim, who worked with refugees on the Chinese border for four years, recounts their experiences of enduring famine, sex-trafficking, and torture, as well as the inspirational stories of those who overcame tremendous adversity to escape the repressive regime of their homeland and make new lives.

One of the few Americans granted entry into the secretive "Hermit Kingdom," Kim came to know the isolated country and its people intimately. His North Korean friends entrusted their secrets to him as they revealed the government's brainwashing tactics and confessed their true thoughts about the repressive regime that so rigidly controls their lives. Civilians and soldiers alike spoke of what North Koreans think of Americans and war with America. Children remembered the suffering they endured through the famine. Women and girls recalled their horrific experiences at the hands of sex-traffickers. Former political prisoners shared their memories of beatings, torture, and executions in the gulags.

With the permission of these courageous individuals, Kim now shares their stories and recounts his dramatic experiences leading North Koreans to asylum through the six-thousand-mile modern-day underground railway through Asia. His unflinching narrative exposes the truth about North Korea, stripping away the last veils that still shroud this brutal dictatorship.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Kim chronicles his effort to lead North Korean refugees through the 6,000-mile underground railway through China in this exposé of the astonishing day-to-day realities of famine, religious oppression, torture and sexual abuse in the most secretive and impoverished member of the axis of evil. The author, a former missionary, spent four years at the China–North Korea border building shelters and orphanages, and his access to government officials, journalists, aid workers and hundreds of North Korean refugees provide him a unique vantage point from which to synthesize current research and policy on conditions in North Korea with affecting real-life testimonials. His intrepid effort to help four North Korean teenagers avoid arrest and repatriation on the journey from northern China to the British consulate in Shanghai is riveting, as is his insider knowledge of the perilous route refugees navigate across the borders of China, Laos and Thailand. The author's compassion and astonishing ability to penetrate the Hermit Kingdom and lift its shroud of secrecy do much to ameliorate the book's chief flaws, the clunky prose and occasionally amateurish conjecture and derivative political analysis. (Aug.)

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#### Review

[A] fascinating account of [Mike Kim's] efforts to smuggle North Korean defectors to freedom in the South. (*The New York Review Of Books*)

[Kim's] intrepid effort to help four North Korean teenagers avoid arrest and repatriation on the journey from northern China to the British consulate in Shanghai is riveting, as is his insider knowledge of the perilous route refugees navigate across the borders of China, Laos and Thailand. (*Publishers Weekly*)

The power of *Escaping North Korea* stems from the stories Mr. Kim tells. During his four years in China, he met hundreds of escapees from the North. He reconstructs their tales—of the privations of daily existence in North Korea, of life on the lam in China—in heartbreakingly detail. . . . There are many heroes in Mr. Kim's book, not least the author himself. (*The Wall Street Journal*)

A portrait of modern North Korea by an awareness advocate who was granted special access to the country's isolationist circles shares inspirational stories by survivors of such tragedies as famine, sex-trafficking, and gulag torture. (*Forecast Magazine*)

Mike Kim focuses on the question why such a large number of North Koreans are seeking refuge in China. He describes their flight and their situation in China as well as the living conditions in North Korea, including the situation of Christians under the North Korean regime. Among their sufferings are the following: poverty, famine, unemployment, violence, alcoholism, theft, corruption, bribery, oppression, gambling, abuse, rape, human trafficking, child soldier slavery, etc. According to Kim, famine and the search of food is the most common reason why North Koreans defect. (*International Journal for Religious Freedom*)

Mike's embrace of the spartan and hazardous vocation of protecting North Korean refugees in China is nothing short of exceptional. His book offers a personal and compelling account of this life-and-death rescue operation for our cousins in the North. (Tim Peters, *Helping Hands Korea*)

It is impossible to read the remarkable stories of personal suffering, endurance, and courage in these pages without believing that more can and must be done to help the North Korean people. It is not bad strategy or poor diplomatic practice to place human rights at the top of our agenda with Pyongyang and to challenge the rest of the international community to do the same. (Michael J. Green, Georgetown University)

This is an inspiring yet tragic study of the brave few in North Korea who have chosen to vote with their feet to leave the earth's most repressive regime. An important and accessible piece of work, it should be read by generalists and specialists alike. (Victor Cha, Georgetown University)

We hear about women refugees who suffer when sold as brides for rural Chinese farmers (a practice, incidentally, that involves many Chinese, not just Korean refugees, though this is not discussed), or who are sold into city brothels. We hear of children born to stateless North Korean mothers in China, who as a consequence are unable to attend school or obtain medical care. We hear that most refugees are sick when they cross the border. We gain insights into indoctrination and the mindset of North Koreans after six decades of socialist rule. We learn how refugees initially appear lifeless and rarely smile; that they are usually weak, thin, and malnourished; and so on. And it is here that the volume's strength resides. (Keith Howard *Reviews*)

Americans and other foreigners have also opened a window to the suffering of the North Korean people, including Mike Kim, a young Tae Kwon Do expert who opened a string of martial arts studios in China as cover to help North Koreans defect. His book, *Escaping North Korea*, is a stunning story of tragedy and heroism. (Michael Green, Georgetown University, on CNN Opinion)

#### Review

A portrait of modern North Korea by an awareness advocate who was granted special access to the country's isolationist circles shares inspirational stories by survivors of such tragedies as famine, sex-trafficking, and gulag torture. Illustrations.

### Users Review

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##### **Heather Goodson:**

This book untitled Escaping North Korea: Defiance and Hope in the World's Most Repressive Country to be one of several books in which best seller in this year, that's because when you read this guide you can get a lot of benefit on it. You will easily to buy this kind of book in the book retail store or you can order it through online. The publisher of this book sells the e-book too. It makes you more readily to read this book, as you can read this book in your Smartphone. So there is no reason to you to past this publication from your list.

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**Paul England:**

This Escaping North Korea: Defiance and Hope in the World's Most Repressive Country is new way for you who has intense curiosity to look for some information as it relief your hunger of information. Getting deeper you upon it getting knowledge more you know otherwise you who still having little bit of digest in reading this Escaping North Korea: Defiance and Hope in the World's Most Repressive Country can be the light food for you because the information inside this particular book is easy to get by simply anyone. These books develop itself in the form which is reachable by anyone, yes I mean in the e-book form. People who think that in book form make them feel drowsy even dizzy this e-book is the answer. So there is not any in reading a guide especially this one. You can find actually looking for. It should be here for a person. So , don't miss the item! Just read this e-book type for your better life and also knowledge.

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