



Your Republic Is Calling You

By Young-ha Kim

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Your Republic Is Calling You By Young-ha Kim

A foreign film importer, Gi-yeong is a family man with a wife and daughter. An aficionado of Heineken, soccer, and sushi, he is also a North Korean spy who has been living among his enemies for twenty-one years.

Suddenly he receives a mysterious email, a directive seemingly from the home office. He has one day to return to headquarters. He hasn't heard from anyone in over ten years. Why is he being called back now? Is this message really from Pyongyang? Is he returning to receive new orders or to be executed for a lack of diligence? Has someone in the South discovered his secret identity? Is this a trap?

Spanning the course of one day, *Your Republic Is Calling You* is an emotionally taut, psychologically astute, haunting novel that reveals the depth of one particularly gripping family secret and the way in which we sometimes never really know the people we love. Confronting moral questions on small and large scales, it mines the political and cultural transformations that have transformed South Korea since the 1980s. A lament for the fate of a certain kind of man and a certain kind of manhood, it is ultimately a searing study of the long and insidious effects of dividing a nation in two.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Spanning a single day, this tense spy novel from Kim (*I Have the Right to Destroy Myself*), marred only by some stilted prose, is also a deeply compelling study of the self and varying themes of trust. Kim Ki-yong, a North Korean spy who's lived undercover for 21 years, has fully adapted to life in Seoul, South Korea, where he runs a successful foreign-film importing business, owns a home, and has a wife and teenage daughter, neither of whom is aware of his past or actual identity. As Ki-yong ponders returning to the austere and sterile militaristic regime of the North after receiving a coded message from his handler ("Liquidate everything and return immediately"), his wife, Ma-ri, struggles with infidelity and his daughter, Hyon-mi, maneuvers the tumultuous and tricky landscape of adolescence. Kim offers a riveting tale of espionage along with keen observations of human behavior.

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From [Booklist](#)

An e-mail changes Kim Ki-yong's life. Seemingly a piece of spam in the Seoul resident's in-box, it's actually a coded communiqué from Pyongyang, ordering him to return to North Korea—immediately. Ki-yong isn't a sleeper spy, exactly; it's just that he hasn't received any orders in 10 years. Now, at age 42, he has spent exactly half his life in South Korea. He lives comfortably, working as an importer of foreign films, with lockstep life in the north only a distant memory. Will he meet the minisub and go back? Or will he defy the command and stay? This isn't really a spy story but a fascinating, personal portrait of life in a divided country and its toll on the citizens' psyches. It's not just Ki-yong's story, either: his alienated wife, Ma-ri, is on her own intense journey of self-discovery, and, in complete ignorance of her parents' worries, daughter Hyon-mi struggles with boys, school, and growing up. Kim's thoughtful, effortless prose is a pleasure. His characters are completely relatable and their story is revelatory. A writer to watch—and, of course, read. -- Keir Graff

Review

"The romantic belief is that art can either familiarize the strange or estrange the familiar. Now here's a guy who can do both at the same time. Young-ha Kim, very much like his protagonist, is a spy. He is spying on humanity; the secret information he provides is invaluable." —Etgar Keret, author of *The Nimrod Flipout*

"What a ride! Young-ha Kim is clearly a writer to watch out for. *Your Republic Is Calling You* promises to be *the* breakout book from Korea. Through his compelling narration of events happening in a single day, he leads us into the heart and soul of modern Korea and tells us and what it means to be human in a world bristling with borders. I cannot praise it enough." —Vikas Swarup, author of *Slumdog Millionaire*

"*Your Republic Is Calling You* is that rare thing, a novel that is simultaneously suspenseful and meditative, an intriguingly provocative novel about freedom, duty, and inevitability. This highly-charged novel kept me up half the night, turning pages; I spent the other half wide awake, staring at the ceiling, thinking and thinking about it." —Dean Bakopoulos, author of *Please Don't Come Back from the Moon*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Carol Anthony:

As people who live in the particular modest era should be revise about what going on or info even knowledge to make these people keep up with the era which is always change and progress. Some of you maybe will certainly update themselves by studying books. It is a good choice in your case but the problems coming to you is you don't know which you should start with. This Your Republic Is Calling You is our recommendation to make you keep up with the world. Why, as this book serves what you want and want in this era.

Patricia Miller:

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Kathleen Huckaby:

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