

CONTACT: Ann Aubitz - Publisher
Kirk House Publishers
612-781-2815
ann@kirkhousepublishers.com
kirkhousepublishers.com

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A story of perseverance is born in the midst of a national tragedy.

Alone on the Battlefield is a story of perseverance is born in the midst of a national tragedy. Her family torn apart by the Korean War, a young girl fights to survive in the face of unimaginable peril and despair. Her life's journey takes her across the ocean and back as she struggles to reconcile her devastating past with the woman she seeks to become and searches for a community and a family in which she truly belongs.

What people are saying: An inspiring personal story of crossing two countries, of a young girl's life journey, transforming the pain and barriers of national prejudice, abuse, and racial discrimination to a pathway to wholeness, healing, and community empowerment. As a woman of color, I honor Hyon as resilience, perseverance, and hope role model. – Emma Corrie

Her life is itself a microcosm of the tragic history of Korea. But Ms. Hyon Kim has taken unspeakable tragedy and turned it into something triumphant. Her story is gripping and powerful. It is a true story of her overcoming adversity and finding love and goodness in her life. While I hope that someday these sad stories will no longer be a part of our history, I am grateful that she has found a voice to tell her story. – Lee Sang-hoon

Alone on the Battlefield
A Child Surviving the Korean War

by Hyon Kim

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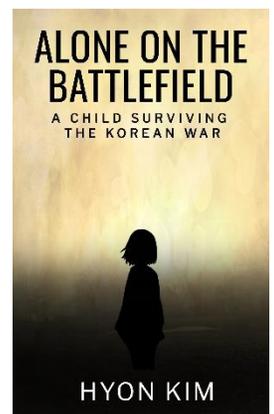
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To contact the author: hyontokkim@comcast.net

Ms. Kim is the founder and CEO of MN Best, Inc., founder of Midwest Alliance for North Korean Refugees, and co-founder of OurTech Coop. She has a BS from the University of Minnesota. Ms. Kim was the first Asian to serve on the University of Minnesota Board of Regents.

She was Chair of the State Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans and a member of the board of directors for notable organizations such as YWCA USA, Roseville Rotary Club, and the Minnesota Council of Churches. She was Honorary Chair for the Global Minnesota "Year of Korea" in 2016 and named one of Minneapolis St. Paul Business Journal "Top 25 Women to Watch".



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HYON KIM

hyontokkim@comcast.net

www.authorhyonkim.com

BARNES
& NOBLE



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

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EXCERPT FROM

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It was a long journey indeed. One day in June of 1950, I grabbed my grandmother's hand, hopped down the stone stairs of my house in Seoul, and traveled to my aunt's home in a southern province.

A few days later, on June 25, 1950, the Korean War began, and the world was turned into a sea of blood. My mother and two brothers had no choice but to leave Seoul and follow my father to North Korea. At four years old, I was left behind, alone on the battlefield.

Not only was I left behind, but I was also given a label, a shameful epithet that would follow me: *bbal-gang-i*. It meant I was a “red,” a “commie,” *a piece of shit*. It also meant that I was marked for death. My father was a communist—so people also thought of me as one.

More than seventy years have passed since that day. From that time on, my hatred, my utter despidal of my father is a pain that I have carried. This hatred I had for him was even more vile than the label of *bbal-gang-i* that I had to endure. My father never came back for me. I have hated my father my entire life from the moment he went to North Korea with my family—and left me behind.

Father, you have been dead since 1956. Your body is tangled anonymously among many corpses underneath the concrete of a street with no name in North Korea. I was heartbroken whenever I thought of you. I hated you and I missed you.

Yet even in the dim memories of my childhood, the warmth you showed me when we were together shines through. I remembered how you would call me your princess. I remember your loving eyes as you hugged me many times a day. Often, I still feel like that four-year-old girl trying to hold her father tight. It is only now, in my old age, that I have begun to remove the stigma of being a *bbal-gang-i*—a red, a communist. It is only now that I am trying to erase the feeling of hatred that I have built up in my heart. Now I want to tell the story of what I needed to do to survive and how I longed to live in my father's arms.

Now I think I can find my own way home.





HYON KIM

Author

763-233-1751

hyontokkim@comcast.net

www.authorhyonkim.com