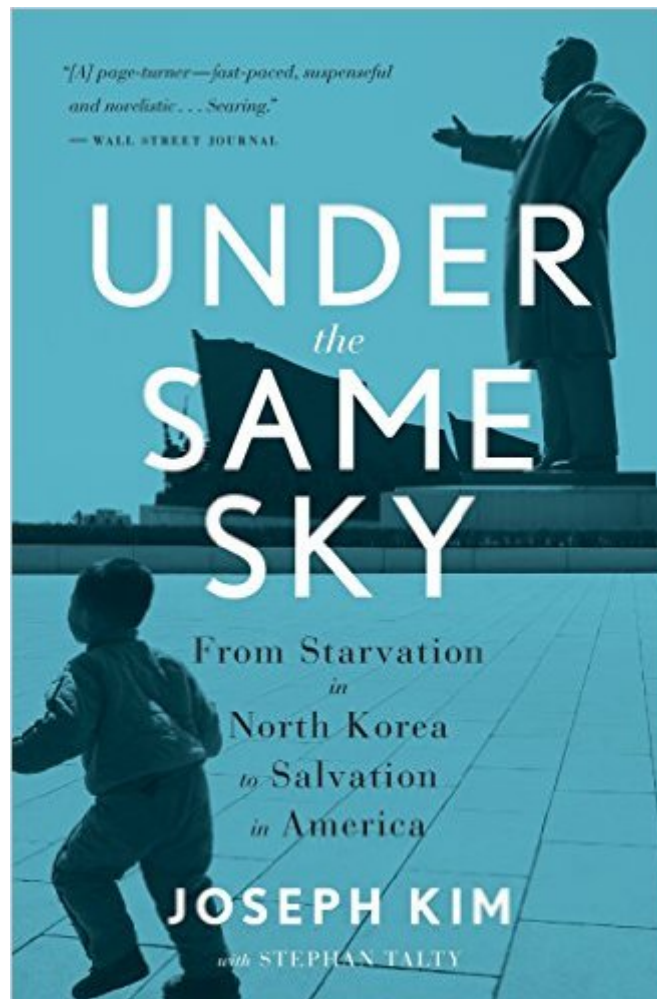


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Under The Same Sky: From Starvation In North Korea To Salvation In America



Synopsis

“Vital to our understanding of life in North Korea.” Washington Post “Powerful . . . Doesn’t hold anything back.” Publishers Weekly, starred review “Inside the hidden and mysterious world of North Korea, Joseph Kim lived a young boy’s normal life until he was five. Then disaster struck: the first wave of the Great Famine, a long, terrible ordeal that killed millions, including his father, and sent others, like his mother and only sister, on desperate escape routes into China. Alone on the streets, Joseph learned to beg and steal until finally, in desperation, he too crossed a frozen river to escape to China. A kindly Christian woman took him in and kept him hidden from the authorities. And through an underground network of activists, he was spirited to the American consulate, becoming one of just a handful of North Koreans to be brought to the United States as refugees. Joseph knew no English and had never been a good student. Yet the kindness of his foster family changed his life. He became a dedicated student, mastered English, and made it to college, where he is now thriving thanks to his faith and inner strength. Under the Same Sky is an unforgettable story of suffering and redemption. A remarkable tale . . . Vividly describes what Joseph Kim and millions of other North Koreans endured.” Christian Science Monitor “A courageous and inspiring memoir.” Kirkus Reviews “JOSEPH KIM was born in North Korea in 1990. In 2007 he came to the United States, where he completed high school. He is currently a college student in New York City. STEPHAN TALTY is the coauthor of several works of narrative nonfiction, including Captain Phillips. Author photograph © Martin Bentsen

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Stories coming out of North Korea are very popular now. This is the second book in two weeks that I have read that was written by a former North Korean defector. Joseph Kim's story is very similar to the story I read last week by Eunsun Kim, "A Thousand Miles to Freedom." Both authors escaped by crossing into China to the north. But here is where the similarities end. Joseph Kim is brutally honest in his memoir from the start. He's his father's only son and was always treated with more reverence when compared to his older sister. Even his older sister shared her food with him and he always expected to be given special treatment because of his gender. Life in North Korea as a young child started out well. There was love and parental security at first, although there are hints of his parents struggling with the marriage. But when the family endures the famine in North Korea in the late 1990s, things start to change for Joseph. He becomes just one more mouth to feed among his relatives and becomes a burden. His poor school grades and his gambling habits further disappoint his father, who had until the famine been rewarded well with a decent job and income. His writing is easy to follow, and the short chapters end with a somewhat suspenseful statement hinting that things would get worse and worse until he finally does escape the nightmare that is North Korea. Most of the narrative bogs down not about Christianity, or about how he found his faith, it's about the inhumane suffering of the North Koreans that he experienced while still in the country. This story is not just a Christian story, this is a story about survival and coming to realize that the North Korean government and its leaders don't care about its people.

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