

ESCAPE FROM PYONGYANG

a story by UENK



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One man's desperate run from the world's harshest regime!

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About the Publication

Genre:

Pure satire fiction.

Core Theme:

An exploration of boundless ambition meeting the unyielding reality of a divided Korea, and the respect for the profound cultural chasm that defines it.

이별은 미(美)의 창조

한용운

이별은 미(美)의 창조입니다. 이별의 미는 아침의 바탕 없는 황금과 밤의 울 없는 검은 비단과 죽음 없는 영원의 생명과 시들지 않는 하늘의 푸른 꽃에도 없습니다.

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오오, 이별이여. 미는 이별의 창조입니다.

Translation from Korean:

Separation is the Creation of Beauty

By Han Yong-un

Separation is the creation of beauty.

The beauty of separation is not found in the groundless gold of morning,

Nor in the threadless black silk of night,

Nor in the eternal life that knows no death,

Nor in the unfading blue flowers of heaven.

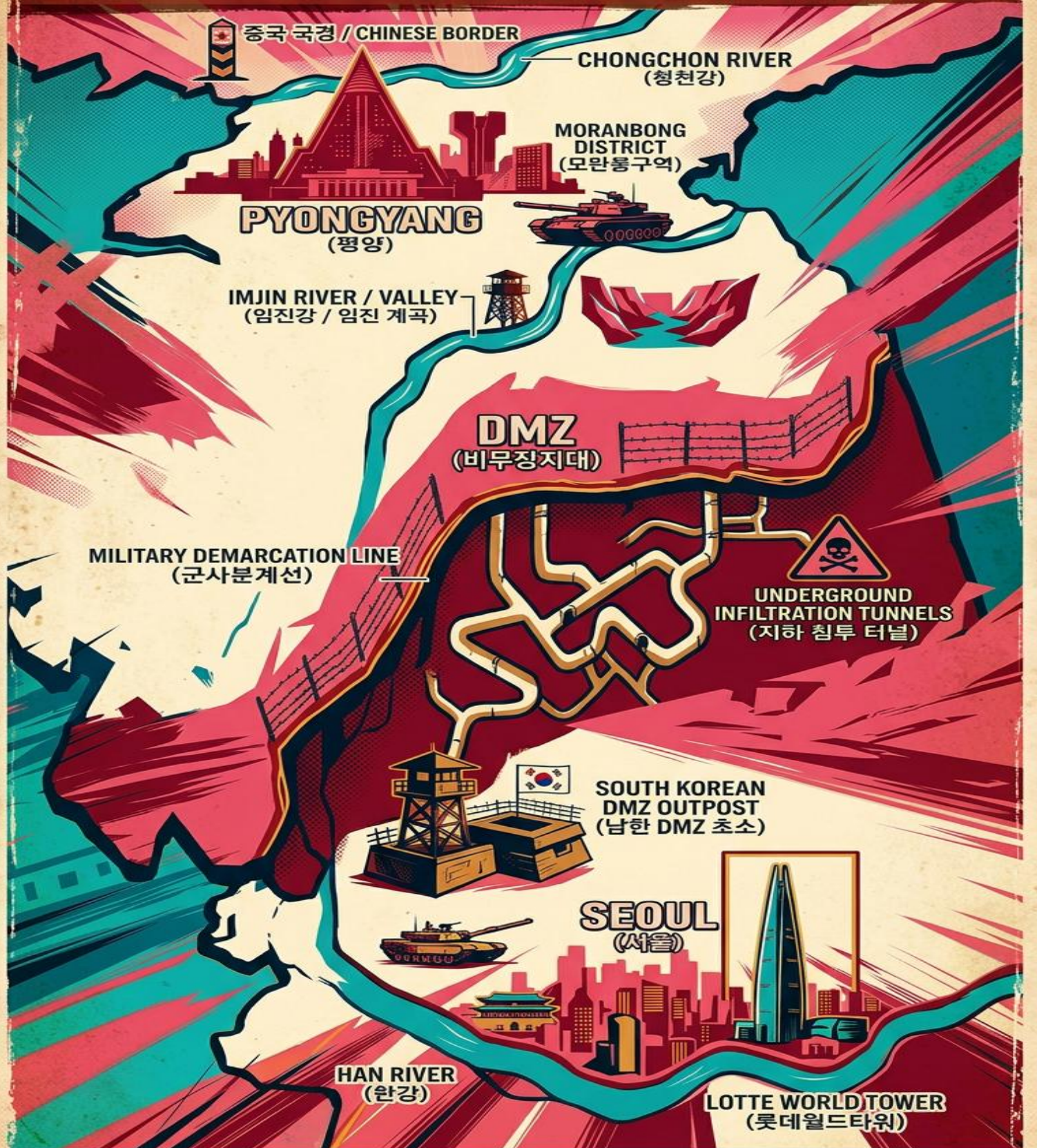
O my Beloved, if it were not for separation,

I could not die in tears and be reborn in laughter.

O, Separation!

Beauty is the creation of separation.

THE NORTH-SOUTH ESCAPE CORRIDOR FROM BORDER TO SEOUL



THE PATH OF DESPERATE FLIGHT UNCOVERING DMZ INFILTRATION ROUTE

PROLOGUE:

The Scar of the Han River

Seoul, 14 January 2018

As I sit at my desk gazing over the Han River, I see a city throbbing with neon lights and gleaming skyscrapers. Below me, a new generation rushes by—youths who know war only from the faded pages of history books. To them, the 38th parallel is an abstract line on a map, a mere political footnote.

To me, it is an open nerve.

My hands tremble as I grip my pen. It is not merely old age; it is the sheer weight of the words I must finally commit to paper. I remember the time before the rupture. The Korea of my childhood was poor, occupied by the Japanese, but it was one. We breathed the same mountain air and ate rice from the southern fields. There was no "us" and "them".

After the 1945 liberation, we believed the sun would finally rise over a free peninsula. But the great powers had other designs. With a careless pencil stroke on a world map, our land was cleaved between two foreign ideologies. The 38th parallel sliced through living rooms, through rice paddies, and ultimately, through hearts.

When that fateful Sunday in June 1950 broke, I was a young man brimming with ideals. The invasion from the North struck like lightning from a clear sky. Suddenly, the brother living beyond an imaginary line became the enemy. I tumbled into war not from hatred, but from necessity—to safeguard what dignity remained.

I have built a beautiful life here, surrounded by family. I watch my grandchildren growing up in a world where they are free to speak their minds and travel where they wish. But in the night's silence, when the north wind blows, I feel the shadow of the other side.

I think of the man I became there, the woman I left behind, and the son who does not know my name. I am free, yes—but I am the bearer of a secret as large as the DMZ itself. This account is no mere confession; it is a tribute to a torn land, awaiting the day the wound finally heals.

CHAPTER 1:

The Meat Grinder of Chongchon River

November 1950

I did not go to the front out of hatred. It was a naive sense of duty that drove me. In the years following liberation from Japanese occupation, I drifted through the streets of Seoul. As a medical student, I debated the Constitution and Reconstruction in coffeehouses. We dreamed of the hospitals and universities we would build. Meanwhile, the great powers in Washington and Moscow were busy sketching our future with the careless stroke of a pencil on a world map.

The war, however, was no heroic epic. It was an endless descent into a brutality that battered every shred of humanity out of us. By November 1950, my unit found itself at the Chongchon River near the Chinese border. Our lines were collapsing under the weight of the Chinese intervention. We were ordered to assault a position near those jagged, frozen banks that broke the heart of every soldier who had to climb them.

I remember the stench above all else. It was a suffocating mixture of gunpowder fumes, rotting flesh, and the metallic tang of blood soaked into the mud. Rain fell almost constantly. The slopes turned into a slick slurry of clay and human remains. We climbed over them to reach the next ridge, only to find the enemy had already withdrawn to the next, even higher ridgeline. It was a meat grinder that was never sated.

On a misty morning in November, we received orders for a final, desperate charge. Smoke from American Napalm strikes hung in the valleys like a stifling black blanket. As we neared the crest of a Chinese hill, a hellish mortar fire erupted. An explosion directly behind me lifted me off my feet. I felt a flash of white light, then the weightlessness of a fall as I plummeted into a deep ravine. Branches lashed my face until everything went black.

When I regained consciousness, the world was terrifyingly still. I lay at the bottom of a scree slope. My uniform was in tatters. My officer's insignia was caked in mud, my left arm numb, and my head throbbed. I found myself in a no-man's-land behind North Korean lines.

As I crawled through the brush, I stumbled upon a cluster of corpses. There, half-buried under the sand, lay a North Korean soldier. His face was unrecognisable, but his uniform remained intact. It bore a small red star and a name tag that read " Kim Jung-ho."

In that clammy darkness, survival overtook morality. I knew that being the South Korean officer, Park Seo-joon, was a death sentence in this territory. With trembling fingers, I stripped off my own jacket. I wiped the mud from Kim's name tag. As I pulled on his coat, I felt myself switching not just uniforms, but identities. Park, who believed in democracy and the good fight, had to die in that ravine. The man called Kim Jung-ho would rise from the ashes of the Chongchon River.

CHAPTER 2:

Echoes of Pyongyang

Early December 1950

The transition from South Korean officer to North Korean soldier unfolded in a haze of fever and adrenaline. I dragged myself through the undergrowth of the borderlands, my eyes fixed constantly on the south. I was moving toward Pyongyang, trailing the wake of the retreating UN forces. My plan was simple: reach the capital, find a South Korean unit, and secure passage back to Seoul. But with every mile, the Chinese advance tightened the noose around the city.

A stifled groan from a shallow ditch stopped me. Beneath a charred pine tree lay a man more battered than I. Gold stars glinted on his shoulders in the weak moonlight. He was no ordinary infantryman, but Officer Choi Min-jun. His leg was bent at an unnatural angle; his side was soaked in crimson. My medical training instinctively took over. I knelt beside him and used my belt as a makeshift tourniquet. I tore a strip from my stolen jacket to staunch the flow of blood.

He gripped my wrist with startling strength. His eyes were wide with agony as he rasped a question: "Was I from the 3rd Division?"

I lied. I whispered that my name was Kim Jung-ho and that I would get him to an aid station. In that moment, Park Seo-joon was buried. To survive behind these shifting lines, I had to fully inhabit the skin of the North Korean soldier I had found in the ravine.

In the days that followed, Min-jun recovered miraculously under my care. While we sheltered in deserted bunkers, he spoke not of hatred, but of hope. He was determined: as soon as he could walk, he would rejoin the Chinese to "liberate" Pyongyang from the imperialists.

"I haven't seen my wife, Soo-jin, for an eternity," he told me one evening, as distant artillery lit the horizon. "I don't expect to see her for some time yet. The war demands everything." He stared into the small fire. "We dreamed of a family. A child growing up in a land without trenches. That longing keeps me going, Kim."

My heart constricted. I thought of Seoul, of the markets and the freedom I yearned to reclaim. But I merely nodded. When the time came to enter Pyongyang, I knew I could not fight. Not against my own people.

"My sight, Officer," I lied, rubbing my eyes, which were red from smoke and exhaustion. "Since that shell blast by the river, I see only shadows in the distance. I would be a liability at the front."

Min-jun looked at me with pity. "A soldier who cannot aim is a dead soldier. Go to Pyongyang. Rest." He wrote feverishly. "Give this to the concierge of the complex in the Moranbong district. It will give you a roof over your head."

When I reached the outskirts of Pyongyang, my world collapsed. I had hoped for the sight of South Korean flags, but the city was a skeleton of concrete and soot. The UN troops had been driven out in a hurried, scorched-earth retreat. The roads to the south were severed by a wall of Chinese steel. The North Koreans had retaken the city.

I was a prisoner in a hostile fortress. My only chance of survival was to keep my head down and blend into the masses. I had to play the role of 'Soldier Kim Jung-ho' to perfection until the storm passed.

At the entrance of the grey apartment block sat Mr Han, the concierge. He was a small, stooped man with a face like crumpled parchment. He studied Min-jun's letter. "The Officer still lives, then?" he remarked, before leading me into a chill hallway that smelled of coal tar and stale sweat.

On the third floor, he stopped at a heavy wooden door. "This was the room of a lieutenant killed at Inchon. Everything remains as it was." It was a bleak cell: an iron bedframe, a thin mattress, and a portrait of the Great Leader that followed me with stern eyes.

"You have neighbours," Han whispered, pointing to the door opposite. "That is Lee Soo-jin. She is very quiet. She has had a hard time lately. She recently received word that her husband was killed at the front."

As he spoke, her door creaked open. A young woman stepped out with a metal bucket. Her face was a pale, elegant oval. She possessed a natural grace that took my breath away, even as she regarded me with a gaze like fractured glass.

"Good evening, Comrade," I said, forcing my voice to remain steady.

She gave a curt, almost imperceptible nod and passed me without a word. I watched her go with a strange pang of sympathy. I was a man pretending to be a North Korean soldier, living opposite a woman who believed she had just lost hers. I did not know then that the "widow" was the wife of the officer I had just saved—the man who was even now fighting at the front, hoping for a child he would never see.

I closed my door and leaned against the wood. I was safe from the bullets of the front, but I was now a prisoner in a house of secrets. The road to Seoul was closed. I was no longer a man with a plan; I was a man in a stolen uniform, waiting for a chance that might never come.

Want to see how the story unfolds?

You've had a glimpse of the journey, but the real adventure is only just beginning. With twists, turns, and discoveries still to come, there is so much more to uncover within these pages.

If you enjoyed this introduction and want to find out what happens next, the complete story is available now.

Grab your copy today on Amazon and
dive into the full experience !!!

**Thank you for reading and for supporting
independent storytelling !!!**

Discover more from UENK.

If you enjoyed this journey, explore more works from UENK by visiting **UENK PulpWorks**:
www.uenk-pulpworks.com



UENK PulpWorks was born from a lifelong passion for cinema and literature. Drawing inspiration from the shifting tides of global politics and the striking visual language of vintage propaganda posters, I wanted to create something unique for the modern reader. By blending these influences with today's appetite for fast-paced, punchy content, I began crafting stories under the name **UENK** (pronounced like 'dunk' without the 'D').

On our website, you will find a collection of short stories and novellas, all available through Amazon. I truly hope you enjoy reading them as much as I enjoyed bringing them to life.

This is biting satire and high-octane pulp designed to hook you from the very first page. Join the **Pulp Revolution**—we cut through the noise of fake news with real, raw storytelling.

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