

2020

## Review of *Rice from Heaven: The Secret Mission to Feed North Korea* by Keum Jin Song

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### Recommended Citation

Phillips, Taylor R., "Review of *Rice from Heaven: The Secret Mission to Feed North Korea* by Keum Jin Song" (2020). *Library Intern Book Reviews*. 244.

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Rice from Heaven: The Secret Mission to Feed North Korea  
Cho, Tina  
Illustrations by Keum Jin Song  
New York: Little Bee Books, 2018  
9781499806823

Summary: *Rice from Heaven* tells the true story of a group of South Koreans who try to help the people starving in North Korea by sending them balloons with bags of rice tied to the bottom. The book is written from the perspective of a little girl named Yoori whose father once lived in North Korea but was able to escape to the South. She believes with all her heart that what they are doing is right, but is scared when she has to face grumbling from people who don't believe they should be helping the "enemy". Yoori bravely shows compassion to another boy who treats her with anger and explains that there are children in the North who are starving because they don't have enough food to eat. Her kindness and sincerity help to encourage others to see the North Koreans not as enemies but as brothers and sisters deserving of love.

Comments: With the supplemental materials and author's notes at the end, this book is a great tool to introduce children to the ongoing situation in North Korea. The extra material describes the true story of the rice balloon project that took place on May 2, 2016. The author provides a brief explanation of the politics of the Korean Peninsula as well as fun facts and highlights of Korean culture. Due to the serious nature of the content I think this book is better suited to older elementary aged children who can understand some of the complexities of war and the effects that it has on ordinary citizens. This book would be perfect for book reports or other similar projects as the additional material helps to give a variety of facts about the Korean Peninsula.

*Recommended*

Taylor Phillips, Centennial Library Graduate School Intern