

Reading Guide



Love in the Big City

Sang Young Park

Translated by Anton Hur

Tilted Axis Press

What the judges said

'*Love in the Big City* is disarmingly confessional but never sentimental, even while sifting through the desolation of human existence. Sang Young Park's lost souls make their way through an uncaring world, seeking and briefly finding, moments of redemption. Anton Hur's brilliantly idiomatic translation conveys a vibrant sense of place.'

About the book

Love in the Big City is an energetic, joyful, and moving novel that depicts both the glittering nighttime world of Seoul and the bleary-eyed morning-after.

Young is a cynical yet fun-loving Korean student who pinballs from home to class to the beds of recent Tinder matches. He and Jaehee, his female best friend and roommate, frequent nearby bars where they suppress their anxieties about their love lives, families, and money with rounds of soju and freezer-chilled Marlboro Reds. Yet in time even Jaehee settles down, leaving Young alone to care for his ailing mother and find companionship in his relationships with a series of men, including one whose handsomeness is matched by his coldness, and another who might end up being the great love of his life.

About the author

Sang Young Park was born in 1988 and studied French at Sungkyunkwan University. He worked as a magazine editor, copywriter, and consultant before debuting as a novelist. The title story of his bestselling short story collection, *The Tears of an Unknown Artist, or Zaytun Pasta*, was one of Words Without Borders' most-read pieces ever. He lives in Seoul.

About the translator

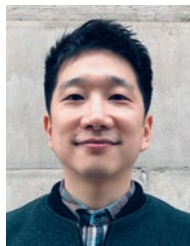
Anton Hur was born in Stockholm, Sweden in 1981. He has translated Man Asia Literary Prize-winner Kyung-Sook Shin's *The Court Dancer* and *Violets*, Booker International Prize-longlisted Hwang Sok-yong's *The Prisoner*, and others. He won a PEN/Heim grant for his translation of Bora Chung's *Cursed Bunny*. He lives in Seoul.



The author says...

'Back when I was a child, as now, Korean parents have this thing where they buy their home a set of 'world classics' for their children (and for interior decorating purposes). As a little boy, I began reading Agatha Christie mysteries,

Sherlock Holmes, and Lupin by the set. Eventually I realised that reading about jealousy, slander, and murder were not exactly conducive to the moral development of young children. But it also gave me a taste for other worlds.'



The translator says...

'In drawing inspiration from beyond the book, I asked Sang Young who his influences were, and he named some (thankfully!) English writers that were especially useful in triangulating the Sang Young Park voice in English. I ended up

going with David Sedaris, Chuck Palahniuk, and my own gay self as "the voice of Sang Young Park" and I think it turned out fine.'

Further reading

Hwang Sok-yong *The Prisoner*

Bora Chung *Cursed Bunny*

Han Kang *Human Acts*

Park Wanseo *Mother's Stake 1*

Kyung-Sook Shin *The Girl Who Wrote Loneliness*

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