

Where the Garden Blooms

비밀정원

Korean Classic Reader Level 1

Sungju Kim

Sophora Books



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The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett was released into the public
domain in the United States.

Where the Garden Blooms – Korean Classic Reader – Level 1 – Korean Edition
Original story – Loosely based on The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson
Burnett
Written by Sung-ju Kim



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Table of Contents

1부_ Where the Garden Blooms

Introduction • 08

Adaptation notes • 09

Who is Sophora Books? • 10

Characters • 11

Locations • 12



2부_ 비밀정원

제1장 이수진 거제도로 오다 • 16

제2장 새로운 아침 • 20

제3장 지민과 비밀 • 28

제4장 거제도 학교 • 36

제5장 비밀 탐험대의 시작 • 44

제6장 정원의 비밀 • 56

제7장 숨겨진 마음들 • 68

제8장 피어나는 봄의 정원 • 76

부록

Language Notes • 82

Key Words-Footnote • 88

Appendix A-Glossary • 87

Appendix B-Grammar • 90

Multiple Choice Vocabulary Quiz • 92

Further Materials and Other Books • 102

제1부



ABOUT THIS BOOK

General information about this series

Introduction

A Korean Graded Reader

Published by Sophora Books

Welcome back to the Korean Classic Reader series—where language learning meets heartfelt storytelling.

In this volume, we invite you into 비밀정원 (Where the Garden Blooms), a gentle reimagining of The Secret Garden, now set in early 1980s Korea.

The story follows Sujin, a quiet girl who moves to Geoje Island after the loss of her family. There, she discovers a hidden garden and two new friends. Through shared moments in this secret place, their lives slowly begin to change—just as the seasons shift and the garden comes to life.

As always, this reader is specially designed for Korean learners:

- Uses essential vocabulary based on TOPIK I level
- Repeats key expressions naturally within the story
- Features short, simple chapters for steady progress
- Includes a helpful appendix of key words to support your reading

We hope this story not only strengthens your Korean reading skills, but also offers a quiet space to feel, imagine, and grow.

Written and adapted by Sung-Ju Kim

Edited and curated by the Sophora Books Korean Language Team

Thank you for reading with us.

Enjoy the journey—one word, one page, one garden at a time.

Adaptation Notes

This story is a gentle Korean adaptation inspired by *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett. While not a direct translation, it reimagines the heart of the original—emotional healing, inner growth, and the quiet transformation that comes from friendship and nature.

Set in early 1980s Korea, the story follows Sujin, a reserved girl who moves to Geoje Island after losing her family. There, she meets Jimin, a quiet boy with his own unspoken sadness, and Minjae, whose warmth brings light to their lives. Together, they discover a forgotten garden—and through it, a way to reconnect with themselves and with each other.

In this retelling, we've adapted the original themes to reflect Korean culture, landscapes, and emotions, offering learners a story that feels both deeply local and universally human. The rhythms of island life, traditional family dynamics, and the significance of seasons in Korean life all add layers of meaning to the story.

This book is part of the Korean Classic Reader series, designed for low-intermediate learners of Korean (Level 1).

- The vocabulary is carefully selected from the TOPIK I level
- Key expressions are naturally repeated for ease of learning
- Each chapter is short and approachable
- A glossary of essential words is included at the end to support your reading

Whether you've read the original or are discovering this story for the first time, we hope this Korean retelling offers you both a language learning experience and a moment of quiet reflection—like stepping into a hidden garden.

Who is Sophora Books?

Sophora Books is named after the *Sophora japonica*, also known as the Scholar Tree—a symbol of wisdom and learning in Korea since the Joseon Dynasty.

Just like the Scholar Tree, we believe books are seeds of knowledge. Every book we publish is planted with care, with the hope that it will grow, inspire, and take root in the hearts of readers.

At Sophora Books, we value curiosity, growth, and the quiet elegance that comes from learning. Through thoughtful storytelling, we hope to spread the timeless shade of the Scholar Tree around the world.

Characters

Mary Lennox → 이수진 [Lee Su-jin]

A quiet and withdrawn girl who moves to Geoje Island after the sudden loss of her family. She slowly opens up as she discovers a hidden garden and forms new friendships.

Colin Craven → 김지민 [Kim Ji-min]

A reserved boy living with his grandfather. He has been physically and emotionally closed off from the world, but begins to change through his connection with Sujin and the garden.

Dickon → 신민재 [Shin Min-jae]

A warm-hearted and curious boy who helps Sujin and Jimin discover the joys of nature. He brings energy and kindness into their lives.

Locations

Geoje-do (거제도)

Where is Geoje-do?

Geoje-do (Geoje Island) is located off the southern coast of South Korea, in Gyeongsangnam-do Province, near the port city of Busan.

It's South Korea's second largest island, connected to the mainland by the Geoje Bridge.

Geoje-do: Nature and Atmosphere

Geoje Island is known for its mild oceanic climate, scenic coastline, and lush green mountains.

It's home to hidden gardens, quiet villages, and traditional Korean homes, making it the perfect backdrop for a story about healing and emotional transformation.

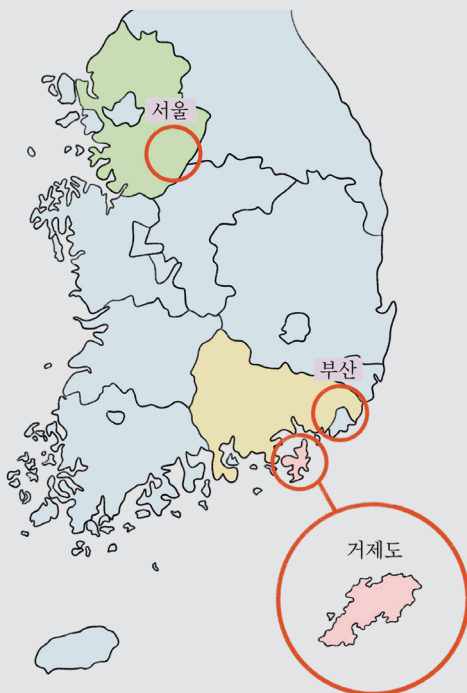
In Where the Garden Blooms

The story unfolds in this tranquil island setting, where Sujin finds not only a secret garden but also a space for quiet growth and healing.

Locations

Geoje-do (거제도)

Here's where it is on the map:



제2부



비밀정원

.1.

이수진, 거제도¹로 오다

Track 1



마음이 텅 빈 것 같았다.

수진은 서울에 살았다. 엄마와 아빠와 함께 살았다. 평범한 생활이었다.

어느 날, 사고가 났다. 엄마와 아빠가 돌아가셨다.

1

수진은 매일 울었다. 밤에도 울었다. 수진은 슬펐다.

마음이 텅 빈 것 같았다.

2

1 돌아가시다 v. pass away

2 텅 빈 adj. empty, hollow

‘**이제** 어디로 가야 하지?’

수진은 생각했다. 그때, 지민이의 할아버지에게 전화가 왔다.

“우리 집으로 오너라.”

할아버지는 따뜻하게 말했다. 수진은 마음속으로 생각했다.

3

‘**이제** **괜찮을** 거야.’

작은 희망이 생겼다.

4

거제도는 서울과 달랐다. 바다가 가까웠다. 조용했다. 사람들은 **천천히** 걸었다. 시간도 느리게 흐르는 것 같았다. 비가 오는 날이었다. 수진은 큰 가방 하나를 들고 버스를 탔다.

3 따뜻하게 adv. warmly, kindly

4 희망 n. hope

창밖에 산이 보였다. 바다가 보였다. 풍경은 예뻐다.

5

하지만 수진의 마음은 무거웠다. 버스가 멈췄다. 정류장에

6

7

도착했다. 지민과 할아버지가 기다리고 있었다.

할아버지는 모자를 쓰고 있었다. 세 사람은 말이 없었다.

“어서 오너라.”

할아버지가 말했다.

“안녕하세요.”

수진이 인사했다.

“안녕.”

지민이 작게 말했다.

“안녕.”

5 풍경 n. scenery, landscape

6 무겁다 adj. heavy (emotionally)

7 정류장 n. bus stop

수진도 대답했다.

할아버지 집은 오래되었다.

지붕이 낮았다. 마당이 넓었다. 나무가 있었다.

바람이 불었다. 나무 소리가 들렸다. 수진의 방은 작았다.

하지만 따뜻했다. 책상과 창문이 있었다. 작은 침대도 있었다.

8

수진은 가방을 내려놓았다.

‘이제 이 집에서 사는구나.’

수진은 생각했다.

‘엄마, 아빠, 잘 지내세요…….’

창밖에서 비가 떨어졌다. 수진은 **천천히** 눈을 감았다.

새로운 시작이었다.

8 따뜻하다 adj. warm

Further Materials and Other Books



Audiobook

We have made sure to include an audiobook with this graded reader to help you practise your speaking and listening skills. Hearing the language will help you become more familiar with intonation, sentence rhythm, and natural pronunciation—essential for understanding Korean in context. This will also support your comprehension when watching or listening to Korean content.

The audiobook is available as a digital download on the Sophora Books website.

<https://sophorabooks.com>

You can also explore our other books by visiting the website.



You've just finished reading a Korean Classic Reader by Sophora Books.

That's no small feat — and we hope you're proud of yourself.

At Sophora Books, we believe that language learning should be joyful, meaningful, and rooted in stories that stay with you.

We hope this story has not only helped you grow your Korean reading skills, but also given you something to feel, reflect on, and carry with you.

There are many more stories waiting for you.

Let's keep reading, together.

<https://sophorabooks.com>

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