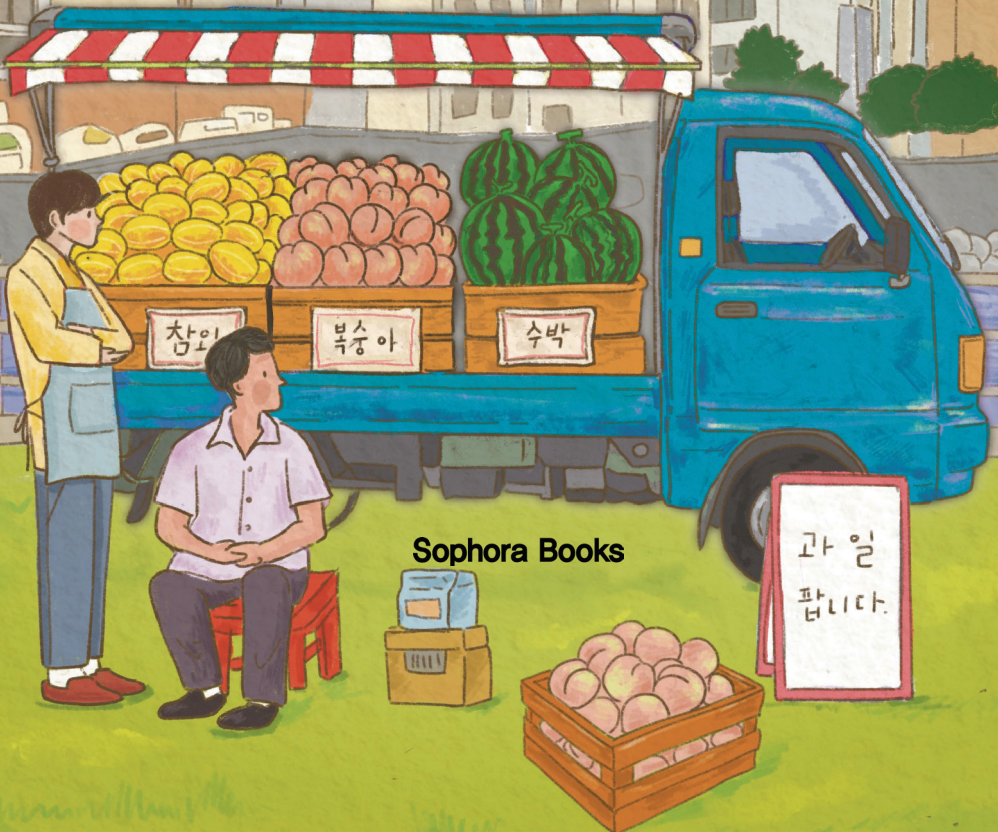


Korean Classic Reader

Summer Calls

과일이 왔어요

Sung-Ju Kim



Sophora Books

과일이 왔어요 Summer Calls

Korean Graded Reader — TOPIK I
Korean Edition

Original story — Loosely based on 메밀꽃 필 무렵 (When Buckwheat Flowers Bloom, 1936) by Yi Hyo-seok (이효석)

메밀꽃 필 무렵 (When Buckwheat Flowers Bloom, 1936) by Yi Hyo-seok is in the public domain in the Republic of Korea and internationally.

Written and adapted by Sung-ju Kim
Published by Sophora Books
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or contact us at admin@sophorabooks.com



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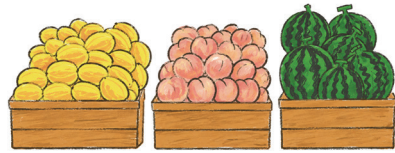
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Connecting you to your target language through stories

제1부



ABOUT THIS BOOK
General information about this series

Introduction

과일이 왔어요 *Summer Calls* — A Korean Graded Reader Published by Sophora Books

Welcome to the Sophora Books Graded Reader series — where language learning meets real Korean storytelling.

In this volume, we invite you into 과일이 왔어요 (*Summer Calls*), a modern retelling of 메밀꽃 필 무렵 (*When Buckwheat Flowers Bloom*, 1936) by 이효석 (*Yi Hyo-seok*), one of Korea's most beloved classic short stories.

The story takes place in the early summer of 1997, in the small southern city of Jinju. Cheor-i, a quiet twenty-two-year-old who has just finished his military service, starts a new job selling fruit from an old blue truck. The driver, Mr. Kim, is a man of few words who has driven the same route for twenty-three years. As the two of them call out "과일이 왔어요!" through the back streets and along the Nabalcheon Stream at dusk, an old story slowly rises to the surface — one summer, one woman, and a song never forgotten.

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, approachable chapters for steady progress
- Includes helpful appendices of key words and cultural notes

We hope this story not only strengthens your Korean reading skills, but also gives you a glimpse into the heart of 1990s Korea — one fruit truck, one cassette tape, one deepening summer night at a time.

*Written and adapted by Sung-Ju Kim. Published by Sophora Books.
Available on KoreanMate — koreanmate.net*

Adaptation Notes

This story is a modern Korean adaptation inspired by 메밀꽃 필 무렵 (*When Buckwheat Flowers Bloom*, 1936) by 이효석 (*Yi Hyo-seok*), one of the most cherished writers of Korean rural literature

The original follows an aging traveling peddler, Heo, who walks the market roads of Gangwon-do with his donkey. He carries the memory of a single night, long ago, with a young woman by a watermill — the one tender moment of his lonely life. On the road he meets a young man named Dong-i, and a quiet truth slowly reveals itself between them.

In this retelling, we have reimagined the story for a more recent Korea:

Original (1936)	This Retelling (1997)
강원도 산길 A Gangwon-do mountain road	경남 진주 Jinju, South Gyeongsang
장돌뱅이 A traveling market peddler	과일 트럭 장사꾼 A fruit-truck seller
나귀 The donkey	파란 트럭 The blue truck
물레방앗간 The watermill	나불천 독길 The Nabolcheon stream bank
허생원 Heo the peddler	김만수 Kim Man-su
동이 Dong-i	철이 Cheor-i

In Yi Hyo-seok's original, the bond between the two men is hinted at through one quiet detail — both are left-handed. In this retelling, we keep that thread: a tape pulled, a knife held, a box opened — always with the left hand.

The heart of the story remains the same — a man who has carried one summer evening for twenty-three years, and a young man who slowly begins to understand why. The original never says the truth out loud, and neither do we.

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.

One day, while walking through a university campus, our founder noticed a particular tree among many others. Its wide, sprawling branches and small, vibrant green leaves exuded a natural elegance. Standing under its shade, she whispered aloud,

"It's so elegant, so beautiful."

The label on the tree read: *Sophora japonica* — the Scholar Tree.

The Scholar Tree holds deep cultural significance in Korea. During the Joseon Dynasty, it was traditionally planted in schools and academies, symbolizing knowledge and intellectual growth.

At Sophora Books, we believe books are seeds of knowledge — planted with care, nurtured with intention, and destined to grow in the hearts of readers. Just as the Scholar Tree spreads its roots and branches far and wide, we hope our books spread curiosity, wisdom, and a love of learning around the world.

Every book we publish is a seed. Every reader is a garden.

sophorabooks.com

Characters

박철이 Park Cheor-i Twenty-two. Quiet, hardworking, and freshly out of the army. He lives with his mother and has just started selling fruit. He is left-handed.

김만수 Kim Man-su Fifty-five. A fruit-truck seller who says little and notices much. He loves the singer Lee Moon-sae, keeps cassette tapes in his glove compartment, and has driven the same route to the Nabolcheon for twenty-three years. He is left-handed.

철이 어머니 Cheor-i's Mother Works long shifts at a garment factory in Jinju. She wakes before dawn to cook for her son and never once says she is tired. She is left-handed.

단골 할머니 The Regular Grandmother One of Mr. Kim's loyal customers. She haggles over every melon but always opens her purse in the end.

나불천의 두 아주머니 The Two Women by the Nabolcheon Garment-factory workers who pass the truck on their way home each evening — and stir something in Mr. Kim he cannot say.

Locations

진주 Jinju A historic city in South Gyeongsang Province, where the Namgang River flows past the old walls of Jinjuseong Fortress. In 1997, just before Korea's financial crisis, life here still carried the warm, analog feeling of an earlier time — pagers, cassette tapes, and red public phone booths.

남강 Namgang River The wide river running through the heart of Jinju. At dusk its bridge glows red with the evening sun — the modern echo of the moonlit buckwheat field of the original story.

농산물 도매시장 The Wholesale Market Where the truck sellers gather before dawn to buy melons, peaches, and tomatoes. Loud, bright, and busy at four in the morning — the place where Cheor-i and Mr. Kim first meet.

나불천 Nabalcheon Stream A small stream in Ihyeon-dong, Jinju. On summer evenings a cool breeze draws people to its banks. This quiet path is where Mr. Kim's story begins and ends — the still center of the whole book.

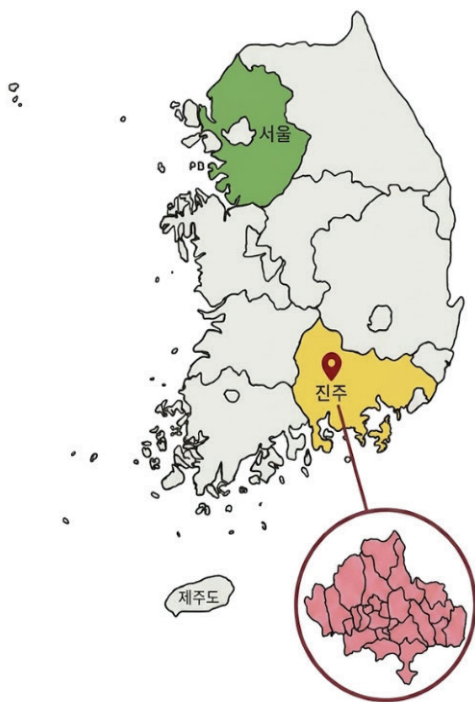
파란 트럭 The Blue Truck Mr. Kim's old blue truck, with a coin box on the dashboard and a glove compartment full of cassette tapes. More than a vehicle — it is a companion of twenty-three years.

For the cultural story behind each place, see Culture Notes on p.123.

Locations

진주 Jinju

Here's where it is on the map:



Connecting you to your target language through stories

제2부



과일이 왔어요

. 1 .

새벽 네 시

Track 1



아저씨 이름은 김만수였습니다.

| 1 |

저는 박철이입니다. 올해 스물두 살이고, 경상남도 진주에 삽니다.

진주는 남강이 흐르는 오래된 도시입니다. 강 근처에 진주성이 있는데,
오래되고 아름다운 성입니다. 저는 이 도시가 좋습니다.

지금은 1997년 6월, 초여름입니다.

1 흐르다 v. to flow

2 초여름 n. early summer

아침부터 햇별이 따갑고 하늘은 파랗습니다.

³

요즘 저는 새벽 세 시에 일어납니다. 과일 장사를 시작했기 때문입니다.

장사 준비를 위해서 새벽에 시장에 가야 합니다. 그래서 저는 새벽에 일어납니다.

어머니는 매일 새벽에 일어나서 밥을 차려줍니다.

⁴

"철이야, 밥 먹고 가."

"네, 어머니. 금방 갈게요."

저는 빨리 먹고 집을 나갑니다. 아직 하늘은 까맣고 별이 보입니다.

새벽은 언제나 조용합니다.

3 따갑다 a. to sting, be hot (sun)

4 차리다 v. to set, prepare (a meal)

121

진주 농산물 도매시장⁵은 아주 큼니다.

도매시장은 트럭 장사꾼들이 과일과 채소를 사는 곳입니다. 여기서 산
과일을 트럭에 싣고⁶ 동네로 가서 팝니다.

새벽 네 시인데도 시장 안은 이미 환하고 시끄럽습니다.

"참외 들어왔어요! 싱싱한 참외!" 

"복숭아요! 오늘 아침에 온 거예요!"

아저씨들이 소리를 지르고, 지게차⁸가 왔다 갔다 하고, 트럭들이 줄을
서 있습니다. 모두 바쁩니다.

도매시장은 처음이었습니다. 어디로 가야 할지 몰라서 사람들 사이에
서서 두리번거렸습니다.

5 도매시장 n. wholesale market
6 싣다 v. to load

7 싱싱하다 a. to be fresh
8 지게차 n. forklift

그때 트럭이 눈에 들어왔습니다. 파란색 트럭이었는데, 오래되고 낡아 보였습니다. 트럭 앞에는 머리가 희끗한 아저씨가 종이에 무언가를 적고 있었습니다.



9 희끗하다 a. to be grayish (hair)

| 3 |

저는 아저씨한테 다가갔습니다.

"저, 아저씨."

아저씨가 고개를 들었습니다. 눈이 작고, 얼굴에 주름이 많았습니다.

10

손도 아주 거칠었습니다.

11

"뭐야?"

"저, 일을 찾고 있어요. 혹시 일손 필요하시면 열심히 하겠습니다."

12

아저씨는 위아래로 봤습니다. **한참** 아무 말도 없었습니다. 그런데 **갑자기** 아저씨가 물었습니다.

"나이가 몇이야?"

"스물둘이요."

10 주름 n. wrinkle

11 거칠다 a. to be rough

12 일손 n. help, a working hand

"군대는?"

13

"다녀왔어요."

아저씨는 다시 종이를 봤습니다. 그리고 말했습니다.

"하루 해봐. 마음에 안 들면 그냥 가."

"감사합니다!"

저는 허리를 숙여 인사했습니다. 아저씨는 아무 말 없이 트럭 쪽으로

14

걸어갔습니다.

13 군대 n. military, army

14 인사하다 v. to greet, bow

| 4 |

아저씨 이름은 김만수였습니다. 쉰다섯 살이었습니다.

김 씨 아저씨는 말이 별로 없었습니다. 시장에서 과일을 살 때도 조용했습니다. 상인들과 눈빛만 봐도 아는 사이 같았습니다.

"참외 두 박스, 복숭아 세 박스, 토마토 두 박스."

"김 씨, 오늘 복숭아 싱싱해요."

"알아."

그게 전부였습니다. 길게 말하지 않았습니다.

저는 박스를 옮겼습니다. 참외 박스는 무거웠고, 복숭아 박스는 더 무거웠습니다. 이마에 땀이 났습니다.

"빨리빨리."

"네!"

저는 **바르게** 박스를 트럭에 옮겼습니다. 아저씨는 왼손으로 박스를 빠
르고 **정확하게** 쌓았습니다.
15

| 5 |

과일을 싣고 나니 트럭에 박스가 가득했습니다.

"타."

김 씨 아저씨가 트럭에 타면서 말했습니다. 저도 트럭에 탔습니다.

트럭 안을 봤습니다. 트럭 안에는 동전이 가득 든 작은 통이 있었습니다.
16
또 트럭 서랍이 조금 열려 있었는데, 안에 카세트테이프가 가득했습니다.
17 18
색깔도 여러 가지였습니다.

15 쌓다 v. to stack, pile up
16 동전 n. coin

17 서랍 n. drawer
18 카세트테이프 n. cassette tape

'와, 테이프가 저렇게 많아?'

요즘 누가 카세트테이프를 저렇게 모을까 싶었습니다.

19

트럭이 **덜컹거리며** 출발했습니다. 시장을 나오자 하늘이 **밝아오고** 있었습니²⁰다.

라디오에서 음악이 흘러나왔습니다.

| 6 |

시내로 들어가자 아저씨가 트럭을 세웠습니다. 그리고 **확성기** 버튼을 눌렀습니²¹다.



"과일이 왔어요~ 참외, 복숭아, 토마토가 왔어요~"

확성기 소리가 골목에 크게 울렸습니²²다. **깜짝** 놀랐습니다.

19 모으다 v. to collect

20 밝아오다 v. to grow light (dawn)

21 확성기 n. loudspeaker

22 골목 n. alley

어릴 때 들었던 소리였습니다. 그때 어머니는 동전을 쥐어주며 "빨리 나가봐" 했습니다.

잠시 후, 집 안에서 아주머니들이 나왔습니다.

"아저씨, 참외 얼마예요?"

"복숭아 상상해요?"

"토마토 주세요."

김 씨 아저씨는 조용히 과일을 주었습니다. 왼손으로 참외를 얇게 잘라 한 조각씩 건넸습니다. 자르는 솜씨가 좋았습니다.

23

저는 박스를 열고 과일을 꺼냈습니다. 첫 번째 장사가 시작됐습니다.

Further Materials and Other Books



Audiobook



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This graded reader comes with an audiobook to help you practice 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.

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guides, arrange sentences to test what you
know, and record yourself speaking — one story
at a time.



<https://koreanmate.net>



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

Well done — that was no small thing, 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.

Find us at

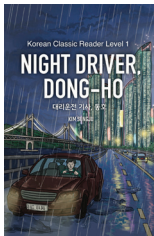
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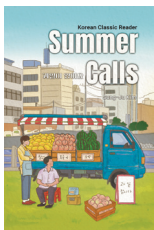
대리운전 기사, 동호 *Night Driver, Dong-ho*

One rainy night in Busan, a substitute driver picks up a passenger who changes everything. Based on 운수 좋은 날, one of the most beloved short stories in Korean literature. (Level 1)



순자의 봄 *Sun-ja's Spring*

After a spring of quarrels with the landlord's daughter, a quiet farm boy in a Jirisan village finally understands what she has been trying to tell him all along. Based on 동백꽃 (Camellias) by Kim Yu-jeong. (Level 1)



과일이 왔어요 *Summer Calls*

Loosely based on When Buckwheat Flowers Bloom by Yi Hyo-seok, this is the story of Cheor-i and a quiet fruit-truck driver. One summer in 1997 Jinju, a memory kept for twenty-three years slowly rises to the surface. (Level 1)

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Stories you already know, replanted in Korean soil — *Gatsby* in Seoul, *Jane Eyre* in Busan. Knowing where the story goes leaves you free to notice the Korean.



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Inspired by *The Great Gatsby*. A successful man looks back on a lost love in a story of longing and illusion. (Level 1)

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Inspired by *The Secret Garden*. On a quiet Korean island, Sujin finds healing through friendship and a hidden garden. (Level 1)



봄은 다시, 여름으로 첫 번째 이야기 *Spring Again, and Summer Part One*

Inspired by *Jane Austen*. Seo-ha navigates friendship, first love, and the moments that change everything. (Level 1)



봄은 다시, 여름으로 두 번째 이야기 *Spring Again, and Summer Part Two*

The story continues with a time-travel twist as Seo-ha learns to take control of her own destiny. (Level 1)



어둠이 깊어질수록 별은 더욱 빛난다 *The Deeper the Darkness, the Brighter the Stars Shine*

Inspired by *Jane Eyre*. Set in modern Busan, young and determined Ji-su carves out her own path. (Level 1)

Connecting you to your target language through stories

과일이 왔어요

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