

THE TWO KOREAS

NAME: _____

PART A

LETTER 1: FROM A BROTHER IN SOUTH KOREA TO HIS SISTER IN NORTH KOREA

May 15, 1955

Dear Eun-jin,

I hope this letter finds its way to you, though I fear it may never reach you at all. It has been five long years since we were separated by the war and the border that now divides our homeland. Each day without you feels like an eternity. I remember our last moments together so vividly—the chaos, the tears, and the desperate hope that we would find each other again soon.

Life here in the South has been challenging but manageable. I have found work as a teacher in a small village school. The children are a joy and a comfort, reminding me of the simpler, happier days of our childhood. I often think of you and wonder how you are faring. Are you safe? Are you healthy? Do you have enough to eat? These questions haunt me day and night.

Our parents worry about you constantly. Mother has fallen ill, her heart heavy with the sorrow of our separation. She speaks of you often, holding onto the hope that one day we will be reunited. Father has taken to tending a small garden, finding solace in the earth as he waits for news of you.

I heard rumours of families being allowed to send letters to the North. I am writing this with the faint hope that it might reach you somehow. Please, if you receive this, write back and let us know you are alive and well. Your absence leaves a void in our hearts that nothing else can fill.

Stay strong, my dear sister. We hold you close in our thoughts and prayers every single day. Until we meet again, know that you are loved and missed more than words can express.

With all my love,

Your brother, Joon-ho



LETTER 2: FROM A SISTER IN NORTH KOREA TO HER BROTHER IN SOUTH KOREA

August 10, 1955

My dearest Joon-ho,

I cannot believe my eyes as I write this letter. By some miracle, your words reached me, bringing a surge of hope and love that I had nearly forgotten was possible. It has been too long since we last saw each other, and I have missed you and our parents more than I can bear.

Life here in the North is hard. Food is scarce, and every day is a struggle. But knowing that you are safe and thinking of me gives me strength. I have found work in a textile factory, and though the hours are long and the conditions tough, it is a blessing to have a job.

Your letter brought tears to my eyes, both of joy and sorrow. I am heartbroken to hear of Mother's illness. Please tell her to hold on and to keep faith. I carry her in my heart every day and pray for her health. Father's garden must be beautiful; I can picture him working in it, his hands nurturing life even in these difficult times.

I wish I could be there with you, to help and to share in your lives once more. The separation is unbearable, but we must remain hopeful. Perhaps one day the leaders will see the pain this division has caused and allow us to reunite, but I cannot say anymore.

Until then, let us keep writing, even if our letters do not always get through. These words are our lifeline, our way of holding on to each other across the miles and the barriers that divide us.

Take care of yourself, dear brother. Give my love to Mother and Father. I dream of the day when we will be together again, sharing stories and laughter as we once did.

With all my love and longing,

Your sister, Eun-jin





PART B

Using the timeline below, plot some of the life events that families separated by the division of the two Koreas may have missed.

1950: _____

1955: _____

1960: _____

1965: _____

1970: _____

1975: _____

1980: _____

1985: _____

1990: _____

1995: _____

2000: _____

2005: _____

2010: _____

2015: _____

2020: _____

2025: _____



PART C

Imagine that you are Joon-ho and are applying to be reunited with your sister, Eun-jin. Fill in the blanks on the application form below.

Application for the Korean Family Reunion Lottery

Applicant Information:

Name: Kim Joon-ho

Date of Birth: March 3, 1925

Gender: Male

Current Address: 45 Haneul-ro, Seoul, South Korea

Contact Number: +82-2-123-4577

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Separated Family Member Information:

Name: Kim Eun-jin

Date of Birth: June 15, 1928

Gender: Female

Last Known Address: 12 Pyonghwa Street, Pyongyang, North Korea

Relationship to Applicant: Younger Sister

Separation Details:

Date of Separation: June 25, 1950

Location of Separation: Near the 38th Parallel, during the onset of the Korean War

Circumstances of Separation: Our family was fleeing the conflict as the war broke out. In the chaos and confusion, Eun-jin and I were separated from our parents and each other. We have had no contact since that fateful day.

Personal Statement:

Dear Reunion Committee,

My name is Kim Joon-ho, and I am writing to apply for the family reunion lottery in hopes of being reunited with my beloved sister, Kim Eun-jin, from whom I have been separated for many decades.



Describe the effect of the war on your family:

What would reuniting with your family member mean to you?

I implore you to consider my application favourably, not just for my sake but for the memory of our parents and the resilience of the human spirit that yearns for reunion and reconciliation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kim Joon-ho

