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YEONMI PARK

IN SEARCH OF FREEDOM

<https://youtu.be/JFd8bnupsQY>

I have to do this because this is not just, I am speaking... This is for the people who want to tell the world what they want to say.

North Korea is an unnatural country. There is only one channel on TV and there is no internet. We aren't free to sing, say, wear or think what we want.

North Korea is the only country in the world that executes people for making unauthorized international phone calls.

North Koreans are being terrorized today.

When I was growing up in North Korea, I never saw anything about love stories between man and woman, no books, no songs, no press, no movies about love stories. There is no Romeo and Juliet, every stories were propagandized to brainwash about the Kim dictators.

I was born in 1993 and I was abducted at birth even before I knew the words 'freedom' or 'human rights'. North Koreans are desperately seeking and dying for freedom at this moment...

When I was 9 years old, I saw my friend's mother publicly executed. Her crime? Watching a Hollywood movie!

Expressing doubt about the regime can get 3 generations of whole family imprisoned or executed.

When I was 4 years old, I was warned by my mother, not to even whisper, the birds and mice could hear me. I admitted it. I thought the North Korean dictator could read my mind. My father died in China after we escaped North Korea. And I have to bury him at 3 am in secret. I was 14 years old. I couldn't even cry, I was afraid to be sent back to North Korea.

The day I escaped North Korea; I saw my mother raped. The rapist was a Chinese broker. He had targeted me. I was 13 years old. There is a saying in North Korea, "Women are weak, but mothers are strong". My mother allowed herself to be raped in order to protect me.

North Korean refugees, about 300,000 are roaming over in China. 70 percent of North Korean women and teenage girls are being victimized and sometimes sold for as a little as 200 dollars. We walked across

the Gobi Desert following a compass and when it stopped working, we followed the stars to freedom. I felt only the stars are with us. Mongolia was our freedom moment.

Death or dignity; I was with the knife; we were prepared to kill ourselves if we are going to be send back to North Korea. We wanted to live as humans...

People often ask me, "How can we help North Koreans?". There are many ways, but I would like to mention 3 for now.

One, as you care yourself, you can raise awareness about human crisis in North Korea.

Two, help and support North Korean refugees who are trying to escape for freedom.

Three, petition China to stop repatriation.

We have to shed the light in the darkest place in the world. It is not just North Korean human rights; it is our rights!

The North Korean dictators have violated for 7 decades. We need governments all around the world to put more pressure on China to stop repatriation. In particular, Chinese delegates of 'One Young World' can play a part by speaking up. North Korea is indescribable... No human deserves to be oppressed just because of their birthplace. We need to focus less on the regime and more on the people who are being forgotten.

'One Young World', we are the ones who will make them visible. Fellow delegates, please join me as we make this a global movement to free North Koreans. When I was crossing the Gobi Desert, scared of dying, I thought nobody in this world cared. It seemed that only the stars were with me...

But you have listened to my story. You have cared... Thank you very much.

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