



# Kim's Convenience

*Ins Choi , Albert Schultz (Foreword)*

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Winner of Best New Play and the Patron's Pick Award at Toronto's Fringe Festival, *Kim's Convenience* is the critically acclaimed, wildly popular, smash-hit debut by celebrated actor, playwright, and poet Ins Choi.

Mr. Kim is a first-generation Korean immigrant and the proud owner of Kim's Convenience, a variety store located in the heart of downtown Toronto's Regent Park neighbourhood. There, he spends his time serving an eclectic array of customers, catching petty thieves, and helpfully keeping the police apprised of illegally parked Japanese cars. As the neighbourhood quickly gentrifies, Mr. Kim is offered a generous sum of money to sell - enough to allow him and his wife to finally retire. But Kim's Convenience is more than just his livelihood - it is his legacy. As Mr. Kim tries desperately, and hilariously, to convince his daughter Janet, a budding photographer, to take over the store, his wife sneaks out to meet their estranged son Jung, who has not seen or spoken to his father in sixteen years and who has now become a father himself.

Wholly original, hysterically funny, and deeply moving, *Kim's Convenience* tells the story of one Korean family struggling to face the future amidst the bitter memories of their past.

This edition includes an eight-page black-and-white photo insert of the original Fringe production and the Soulpepper production.

## Kim's Convenience Details

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# From Reader Review Kim's Convenience for online ebook

## Naailah says

Amazing play, I loved Appa and Janet's character, this was a wonderfully written play. Heard Soulepper is putting on a performance of it soon, might check it out.

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## Rhonda says

I won this book as part of a prize package with CBC in Toronto. It isn't something I would have chosen on my own but I'm glad I won it. What a wonderful, quick and easy read. It was absolutely hilarious in parts and touching in others. The story is very real, and, no wonder, as it comes from the author's real life experience.

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## Zachary Keeseey says

"What is my story? Hm? What is story of me, Mr. Kim? My Whole life is this store. Everybody know this store, they know me. This store is my story. And if I just sell store, then my story is over. Who is Mr. Kim? Nobody know that. You take over store, my story keep going." (p.53)

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## Sara says

In preparation for Season 2 I decided to finally read the play and boy was it so worth it. The humour and heart embedded in these pages are so wonderful and truly resonate with the reader/audience. Thank you Ind Choi for giving life to these characters and telling such an important story that can be related to across cultures. Truly wonderful Canadian Theatre!

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## Brad says

If you're from Canada, chances are you've seen *Kim's Convenience* on the CBC. These days it is a pretty solid sit-com that competes regularly with *Schitt's Creek* for all of Canada's entertainment awards. But it got its start at Toronto's 2011 Fringe Festival before making it onto the board's of the Canada's much respected (despite recent scandals) *Soulepper Theatre Company*. It's easy to see why Ins Choi's lean, trim, episodic play made the transition to fat, gluttonous, episodic sit-com so easily, and the sit-com includes much to admire (especially the amazing work of Paul Sun-Hyung Lee, who plays "Appa"), but after reading the original stage play, I long to see Choi's original work in a theatre rather than on TV.

The original *Kim's Convenience* is tight. It has a beginning, a middle, and an end. It has clear character arcs. It has focus. It has all the guts. TV's *Kim's Convenience* doesn't have those elements in anything approaching the same way. The sit-com is loose; it is all middle with no beginning or end (which, really, is the truth of any and all sitcoms); its character arcs are subsumed by the length of the ongoing tale; it sprawls; it has only

some of the guts; it isn't bad ... I really enjoy it ... but I think I would love it in its original form even more.

If you are a fan of the sit-com, you should read this play. If you're a fan of comic theatre you should read this play. If you wonder what it is like to be an immigrant in Canada you should read this play. If you want a good laugh on a weeknight, however, you should cuddle up with your family and turn on the CBC. It's almost as good as the play.

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### **Anna says**

It's hard to review a play without actually seeing it performed. I think I would have enjoyed it more seeing it performed than reading it. While Appa and Janet are well developed, Umma and Jung are not. In fact, based on just reading the play, it's kind of hard to see the dynamics of any relationships within the family aside from Appa and Janet. It's obvious body language and non-verbal cues are what will sell the play to an audience.

As a fan of the CBC show, I was able to just use what I knew from there and incorporate it with the screenplay. However, I can see someone who has never seen the show or the play really struggling with this.

The show has clearly taken the best parts of the play and really fleshed it out. I feel like I'd rate it higher if I had seen the play and lower had I come in knowing nothing.

3.45/5 rounds to 3/5.

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### **feux d'artifice says**

this was rly funny and warm! I regret not seeing the play when I had the chance, but am totally gonna check out the TV show when I have a moment. the story rang very true for the whole first generation immigrant experience. wld recommend!

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### **Maggie Gordon says**

Kim's Convenience has just launched as a tv show in Canada, so I was curious about the original play. It started as a Fringe Fest show in Toronto and got picked up by one of the theatres in town. The play is short, but full of heart and humour. I have heard some newspaper columnists declare that the tv show has put aside "political correctness" (sighs deeply), and while the play certainly touches on a lot of stereotypes, these instances feel purposeful and arise out of the fact that the play is largely told from the perspective of an older, Korean immigrant and his experiences in Canada. Though I would vastly prefer to see the play on stage, the script made me laugh, and the response from the Korean community seems to be quite positive that one of their own made a play specifically focusing on their community. It's a story that has a lot of unexplored potential (given the length of the stage performance), so I hope the TV show is as carefully put together as this play was.

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## **Lili Kim says**

This book (and the show itself) will make you laugh, but it will also make you cry (especially the part about the LA riots and the ending). I love how Ins Choi brings up so much about a parent's sacrifice, an immigrant's hardships, and being able to forgive and love.

Appa said it best: "What is my story? What is story of Mr. Kim? My whole life I doing store. This store is my story? No. My story is not Kim's Convenience. My story is you. And Janet. And Umma. And Sonam. You understand?"

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## **Josh says**

Very good. It's based on the play, and not the TV show, so some characters are different, and the children are older.

Only gave 4 stars because I wish it was longer, it's only 90 pages, and reads like a play script so it's a quick read.

Would recommend

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## **Marilyn says**

I bought this, because it was discounted on the kobo site, and I had seen the commercials for the TV series, and it looked good.

Regularly 16.95 on kobo (or 13.09), I picked it up for 2.99, and love when I can get books for under the 3 dollar mark.

That said, I enjoyed this book, it was comical, and it gave a great look into 1st and 2nd generation Korean-Canadian families. However it's not what I expected, and it was A LOT shorter than I expected - especially due to it's regular price is over the \$10 mark.

Glad I picked it up, took about an hour to read, and on to the next book.

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## **Catherine says**

This book was great it really made me excited for the second season of Kims Convenience. It was really cool seeing the differences between the original play and the show. I would definitely recommend it for any Canadian and fan. #yycbookclub

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## **Denise says**

I was fortunate to get to see this play mounted in New York as part of the Soulpepper on 42nd Street at the

Signature Theater. I've been a longtime fan of Soulpepper, and it was such a gift to get to see the show in such a great space, with much of the original cast. This edition is great because it has extra material about the transition from stage to TV, and I'm very excited to check out the show. The play is a really beautiful, restrained piece. It's an enjoyable read, but it's the actors that truly bring this show to life (because when is that NOT the case?) It was great to be able to read it because I was curious about the exchanges between Appa and Umma in Korean, and there were some jokes that I think I missed. There are so many great little Canadian-isms that are delightful to both read and see on stage. I can't wait to see what Ins comes up with next, and to see this play's star continue to rise.

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### **Lawrence Lam says**

Loved the tv show. The best moments from the play have transferred to tv. I wish there was more development of Jung but I get that the playwright wanted to minimize his stage time. I'd love to workshop this.

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### **David Yoon says**

It's tough. Like reviewing Hey Jude with nothing more than the lyrics. The play's the thing! After reading it I'm more than a little disappointed to find it just finished its run in London Ontario. I can only hope someone mounts it again nearby.

The play, not unlike the Korean variety store it's set in, crams so much into such a tiny space. Parental expectation, xenophobic bias, forgiveness, immigrant Korean's roots in the Christian community and, with the convenience store, the community at large. And while I agree with reviewer that says "it could be accused of sacrificing truth to reconciliation" I understand the motive. It's hilarious, heartfelt and it can't help but make me think of my own folks.

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