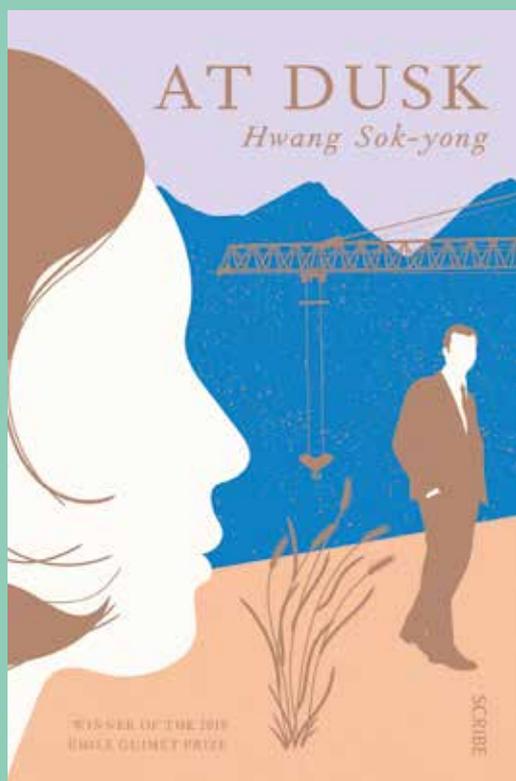




Reader's Guide



Other books by Hwang Sok-yong
The Guest (2007)
The Ancient Garden (2014)
Shadow of Arms (2014)
Princess Bari (2015)
Familiar Things (2017)

At Dusk Hwang Sok-yong

Translated by Sora Kim-Russell

Scribe UK

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About the author	Hwang Sok-yong was born in Changchun, China in January 1943. In 1993, he was sentenced to seven years in prison for an unauthorised trip to North Korea to promote artistic exchange between the two Koreas. He was released five years later on a special pardon by the new president. He has been shortlisted for the Prix Femina Étranger and was awarded the Émile Guimet Prize for Asian Literature for <i>At Dusk</i> . His novels and short stories are published in North and South Korea, Japan, China, France, Germany, and the United States. He lives in Seoul, South Korea.
About the translator	Sora Kim-Russell was born in Florida, USA, in March 1976. She is a poet and translator, and teaches at Ewha Women's University. She lives in Seoul.
About the book	Park Minwoo is, by every measure, a success story. Born into poverty in a miserable neighbourhood in Seoul, he has ridden the wave of development in a rapidly modernising society. The successful director of a large architectural firm, when his company is investigated for corruption he is forced to reconsider his role in the transformation of his country. At the same time, he receives an unexpected message from an old friend, Cha Soona, a woman whom he had once loved, and then betrayed. As memories return unbidden, Minwoo recalls a world he thought had been left behind – a world he now understands that he has helped to destroy.
What the judges thought	'A delicately drawn, vividly peopled and deftly plotted exploration of profound shifts in Korean society.'
Discussion points	<p>Park Minwoo has escaped poverty to become a successful businessman, but feels an emptiness inside. What do you think he learns about wealth and happiness in the novel?</p> <p>Food is described in great detail when Minwoo looks back at his difficult upbringing – what do you think the author was trying to say?</p> <p>What role does childhood sweetheart Cha Soona play in making Minwoo reflect back on his life?</p> <p>The novel is split into two different narratives – Minwoo and Woohee. Which story did you find more engaging and why?</p> <p>What is the significance of the title in relation to Minwoo's state of mind?</p>
Themed reading	<p><i>Ghachar Ghochar</i> by Vivek Shanbhag A close-knit family is delivered from near-destitution to sudden wealth after a miraculous change in fortune. As they move from a cramped shack to a large house, the family dynamics begin to shift. Conflict brews ominously in the background, as the dream of middle-class, aspirational living comes true...</p> <p><i>I Have the Right to Destroy Myself</i> by Young-Ha Kim In the fast-paced, urban landscape of Seoul, C and K are brothers who have fallen in love with the same woman – Se-yeon. Each trying desperately to find real connection in a disconnected world. Dreamlike and beautiful, the novel presents South Korea as cinematic in its urgency and its reflection of contemporary life.</p> <p><i>Everything Belongs to Us</i> by Yoojin Grace Wuertz Seoul, 1978. At South Korea's top university, the nation's best and brightest compete to join the professional elite. But childhood friends Jisun and Namin, from different ends of the economic scale, find themselves taking an unexpected path when they meet the charismatic Sunam, whose influence will impact them both, forever.</p> <p><i>First Person Sorrowful</i> by Ko Un Ko Un is Korea's foremost living writer. After immense suffering during the Korean War, he became a Buddhist monk. He has been arrested and imprisoned multiple times. Starting in 1958, he has published more than 150 volumes of poetry. This collection contains around 100 poems, on a range of themes.</p> <p><i>I'll Be Right There</i> by Kyung-sook Shin Set in 1980s South Korea, the novel follows Jung Yoon, a bright young woman, as she recounts her tragic personal history as well as those of her three closest friends. When Yoon is contacted by her ex-boyfriend after eight years apart, memories of her youth begin to resurface, forcing her to re-live them.</p>
Useful links	<p>Review of <i>At Dusk</i> in <i>The Irish Times</i></p> <p>Review of <i>At Dusk</i> in <i>RTE (Raidió Teilifís Éireann)</i></p> <p>Review of <i>At Dusk</i> in <i>Books and Bao</i></p> <p>Taking the Pulse of Korean Society: Novelist Hwang Sok-yong in <i>Korean Literature Now</i></p> <p>A new Cold War: Hwang Sok-yong on a divided Korea in <i>The Skinny</i></p>