

The **heroine** of this Korean bestseller is extremely ordinary. That's the point

Kim Jiyoung, the **exceptionally** average **protagonist** of Cho Nam-Joo's novel, is 33, living on the outskirts of Seoul with her husband and **infant** daughter. She is exhausted by the **monotony** of cooking, cleaning and child-rearing, and vaguely **resentful** that she gave up her job at a marketing agency.

exceptionally 异常地; 特殊地

protagonist 主角

infant 婴儿; 幼儿

monotony 单调

resentful 气愤的; 厌恶的

roach 蟑螂

There's nothing especially dramatic about her story, which is precisely Cho's point. Cho wrote "Kim Jiyoung" in 2015. At the time, **misogynistic trolls** were becoming a greater presence online. **Derogatory slang** targeting housewives, like the term "mum-**roach**," was becoming more prevalent.

misogynistic 厌女的

troll 挑衅帖子

derogatory 贬低的; 不敬的

slang 俚语; 行话

"I wanted to write about issues that women could not speak about before, because they were taken for granted," Cho said last month during a Skype interview. "I wanted to make this into a public debate."

Her strategy worked. When "Kim Jiyoung, Born 1982," was published in Korea in 2016, it was received as a cultural call to arms. Celebrated and criticized in almost equal measure, the novel ignited a nationwide conversation about gender inequality. K-pop stars like Sooyoung of Girls' Generation and RM of BTS praised it, delivering a major publicity boost. A politician with the left-wing Justice Party gave a copy to President Moon Jae-in with a note **imploring** him to look after women like Kim Jiyoung.

implore 恳求; 乞求

parody 戏仿; 仿效

Along with praise, the novel generated a backlash among men who opposed Cho's feminist message. A crowdfunding effort began to support a **parody** book titled "Kim Ji-hun Born in 1990," about a young Korean man who faces reverse discrimination for being male.

Cho never expected it to drive such extreme reactions. "My novel made people speak out, " she said. "The novel became more complete thanks to the readers themselves."