



THE JOSEON RETROSPECTIVE

A TOKYO ART MUSEUM MYSTERY · A KEIKO ITO
MYSTERY, BOOK ONE



AT A GLANCE

SERIES
The Keiko Ito Mysteries, Book One (of a planned five)
AUTHOR
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SUBJECTS
Cozy mystery · Literary fiction · Museum & art-world fiction · Korea/Japan historical themes · Dark academia

SYNOPSIS

At the National Art Center Tokyo — a real museum that owns nothing, where every object is borrowed and must be returned — Senior Registrar Ito Keiko inspects a celadon moon jar on loan for a landmark exhibition of Joseon dynasty ceramics. Days later, the Korean researcher who accompanied the jar is found dead in a basement service corridor, having left a careful annotation, handwritten in Korean, on page four of Keiko's own condition report.

Keiko is not a detective. She is a registrar — a professional whose career rests on the premise that the documented record, kept with enough care, cannot be argued with. She reconciles discrepancies, and the discrepancies lead her to a letter from 1938, a confiscation dressed in administrative language, and a wrong the record has been waiting all this time to make right.

WHY IT WORKS ON THE SHELF

- **A distinctive amateur sleuth.** Justice through documentation, not deduction — a fresh mechanism for readers tired of the standard detective.
- **Cross-shelf appeal.** Sits comfortably with cozy mystery, literary fiction, and the dark-academia and museum-fiction readerships.
- **Substantive and timely.** Built on the real work of provenance research and the restitution of cultural objects displaced during the Japanese colonial period in Korea — a subject in the news and in museum practice worldwide.
- **Book-club ready.** A reading group guide and historical appendices are included in the book; a Book Club Kit is available to libraries on request.
- **A local author with professional standing.** Book One of five, by a San Diego resident and former acquisitions editor and art educator — available for library programming throughout San Diego County.

LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

The author is available for a free 45-minute talk on the real world behind the fiction — suitable for adult programming, book clubs, and local-author showcases.

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