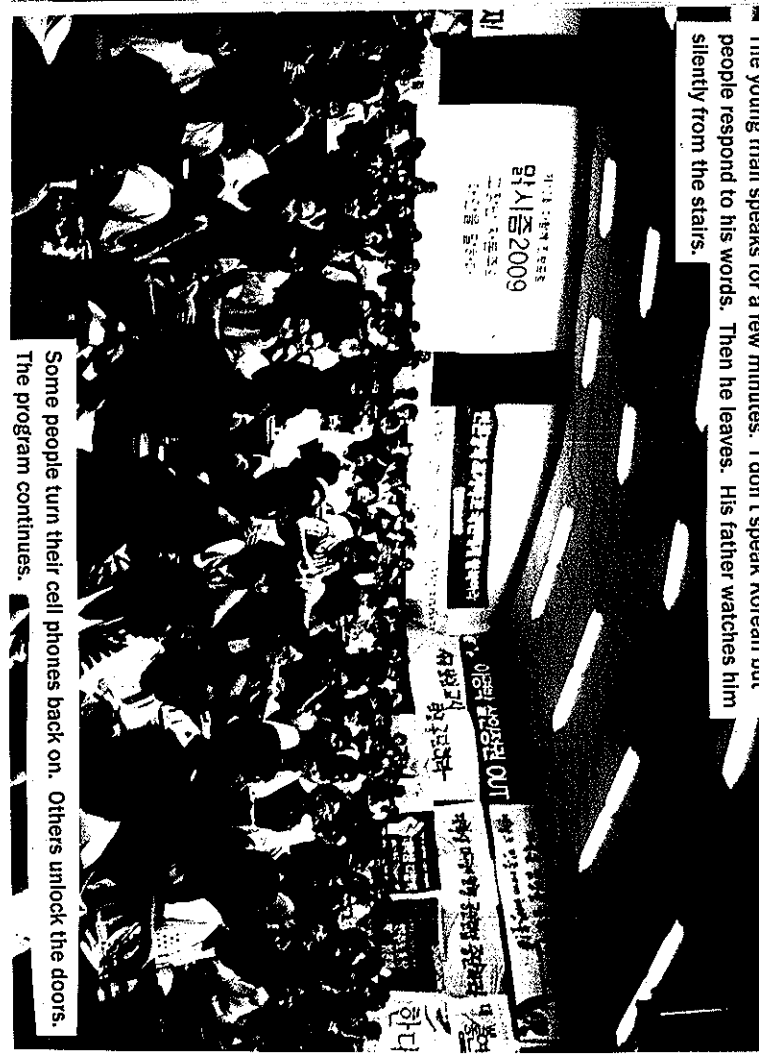


His parents are in the audience and didn't know he was going to be there. His mother rushes onstage and embraces him.



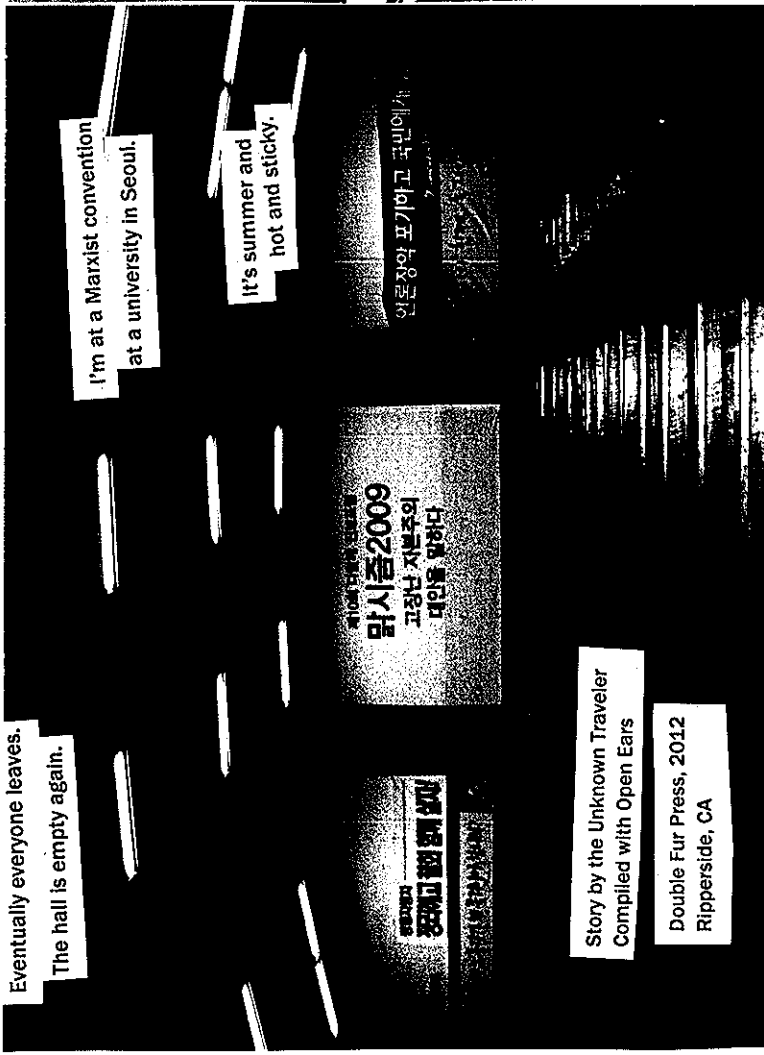
Some people turn their cell phones back on. Others unlock the doors. The program continues.



The young man speaks for a few minutes. I don't speak Korean but people respond to his words. Then he leaves. His father watches him silently from the stairs.

A skinny young man wearing glasses and loose-fitting black clothes comes out on stage. He is a student organizer who has been underground for a year or so.

Eventually everyone leaves. The hall is empty again.



I get to the main hall early and it's empty.



I come back later and the hall is filled with people. At one point someone says everyone turn off your cell phones, and people lock the doors.

I'm at a Marxist convention at a university in Seoul.

It's summer and hot and sticky.

Story by the Unknown Traveler
Compiled with Open Ears

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