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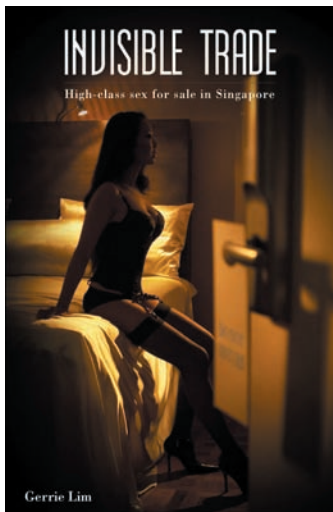
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#1 bestselling nonfiction title in Singapore in 2004.

INVISIBLE TRADE

High-class sex for sale in Singapore



SINGAPORE, 15 JUNE 2004—When a certain foreign businessman comes to Singapore, the first person he calls is not his stockbroker or an important client—instead he places an excited call to book Jasmine, the Mongolian strangler. For the pleasure of being strangled while sexually gratifying himself the businessman will fork over the princely sum of S\$800—comprised of a S\$200 escort agency booking fee and the rest going to Jasmine. Ten minutes later, it's all over and the tall lithe 28 year-old from Ulan Bator departs the five-star hotel having not even removed one stitch of her clothing in the process.

In true testimony to the axiom that fact is indeed often stranger than fiction, Monsoon Books' new book entitled *Invisible Trade: High-class sex for sale in Singapore* provides a rare, in-depth look at the eccentricities of a business many acknowledge takes place, but few know anything about.

Welcome to the very real, largely hidden and often surreal world of 'high-class'—read expensive—sex for sale in the Lion City, where the sexual desires of this tiny island run the gamut from simple missionary zeal to the cracking of the whip. Never before have outsiders been offered such a fascinating look into the weird and wonderful, delightful and sometimes depraved world of five-star, high class prostitutes that operate in Singapore's flourishing sex trade. Through the deft hand of author Gerrie Lim—who spent more than six months interviewing the young women and men who are the human capital of this industry—readers are given access to this secret world of high-priced sex workers.

The book entices the reader with the fascinating and often hilarious exploits—all of them true—of both the local and foreign sex workers operating out of the myriad escort agencies and high-end KTV lounges across the island. Make no mistake, this is no voyeuristic kiss-and-tell book, this is a lucid and often penetrating look at what motivates the escorts to buck social norms and self-imposed notions of self-worth and shame to pursue this shadowy line of work.

In many cases the motivators are familiar (materialism, socio-economic escape) while others are surprisingly refreshing—like the escort who is financing her Master's degree. And not everything involves sex either, for the world of human needs and desires can mean that simple companionship is often the order of the hour. Take for example the escort hired to simply accompany a local man to a void-deck wedding, the old man who just likes to talk dirty, or the girl hired to provoke jealousy with a client's girlfriend while attending a court trial!

Against the illuminating backdrop of cultural observation, this powerful mix subtly invites one to think differently about what is in reality a significant underground economy, or as the title suggests, an 'invisible trade'.

About the Publisher

Monsoon Books is a Singapore-based independent publisher dedicated to publishing classic and contemporary crime, literary and pulp fiction, humour, and narrative nonfiction, with distribution throughout Asia, the United States, Canada, the UK, Australia and New Zealand. We publish quality books from outstanding writers such as Gerrie Lim, Stephen Leather, Stu Lloyd, Warren Olson, Erich R. Sysak, D. Devika Bai, Ee Lin See, Alison Lester, Andrew Hicks, Peter Neville, Janet Lim and Moammar Emka.

Through sublicenses with our colleagues overseas, Monsoon's titles are translated into and published in various languages around the world. Under the direction of publisher Philip Tatham, Monsoon represents an exciting, innovative and distinctive alternative to commercial publishing; our mission is to be unique—to find new talent and put publishing in Asia at the heart of the literary world.

INVISIBLE TRADE

By Gerrie Lim

ISBN: 981-05-1033-0

Publication Date: 15 June 2004

Price: S\$18.95

Format: Paperback

Pages: 208pp

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