

STAND BY ME

PRESS KIT



INTRO

Through this film,
I wanted to encourage my grandfathers, father, my friends, and children,
who endure the world along with me, to reach out a helping hand.

To say that I exist because you exist...

It would be difficult to change the world with one film.
But after watching <Stand by Me>, I dream of small miracles of people being moved to make phone
calls or send texts to those around them.

- Director BANG Soo-in

BILLING BLOCK

CJ E&M IN ASSOCIATION WITH GB BOSTON INVESTMENT PRESENT

A DOODOONG PICTURES PRODUCTION CO-PRODUCED BY GOM PICTURES

LEE SOON-JAE, JEONG JI-HOON

MUSIC BY SHIM Hyun-jung RECORDED BY LEE Seung-yup, KIM Young-rok

COSTUME DESIGNER LEE Jin-ah MAKE UP AND HAIR DESIGNER LEE Jin-young

PRODUCTION DESIGNER SHIN Yu-jin EDITED BY KIM Mi-young

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WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY BANG Soo-in

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SYNOPSIS

Deok-gu, a 7-year-old boy, lives with his little sister Deok-hee and his grandfather in a country village.

A few years ago, Deok-gu's father passed away in a traffic accident, and soon his mother ran away with his father's life insurance payout.

Working part-time just in order to survive, the grandfather struggles to raise the kids, and it's not easy to buy even a small toy for Deok-gu.

While Deok-gu prepares to enter elementary school, his grandfather discovers that he doesn't have much time left.

But Deok-gu is too young to look after his sister and even himself.

So, his grandfather prepares a present for his grandchildren that might be his last.

HOT ISSUE 01

"I could relate to the heart of the movie."

The most beloved, legendary actor in Korea stars in a film
with no pay and returns in 7 years!

LEE Soon-jae was the first actor to star in a daily drama series. He was the first and oldest actor to ever win an award in Entertainment Awards. In 2011, he was the eldest award winner of an overseas international film festival for his performance in <I Love You>. At age 84 and 62 years of experience, LEE Soon-jae still maintains an active acting career. Returning in a starring role after 7 years with <Stand by Me>, LEE is set to impress viewers across the country with a warm, touching family drama.

Claiming that she completed the character of Deok-gu's grandfather after meeting countless people, director BANG Soo-in commented, "I saw in actor LEE Soon-jae how our grandfathers, with their strong integrities aside, grew smaller through the years. And I thought the tears he sheds at the end will melt viewers' hearts more than anyone." However, delivering the script to a legendary actor like LEE Soon-jae, with a limited budget, demanded great courage. The director, who never imagined anyone else in the starring role, delivered the script to him, and LEE immediately decided to star in the movie with no pay. LEE said, "<Stand by Me> looks at the world and people warmly through the story. I thought it's a film that is needed in the world now. Above all, I was teary throughout reading the script and I had to take part," and showed his heart for the film.

In <Stand by Me>, LEE Soon-jae portrays 'Deok-gu's grandpa', a devoted man who sacrifices everything, even his name, for his grandchildren. He tries to do everything for his grandchildren so that they will not be lacking in growing up without a mother. Even for the legendary actor, <Stand by Me> proved to be challenging. LEE Soon-jae commented, "The most difficult thing for an actor is to portray an ordinary character. The elderly men I portray must all be distinctly different. And I must deliver appropriate expressions and messages within the ordinary role." However, LEE took on the challenge and succeeded in creating another unique character. Sticking to the philosophy that he should live like his character, LEE wore Deok-gu's grandpa's jacket and pants around town even on his days off, and showed his passion and dedication to his role. LEE commented, "I've had much glory as an actor, but that's not what's important in life. I just want to be remembered as someone who worked hard." His comment shows why he receives infinite respect from not only younger actors but also people throughout the country.

HOT ISSUE 02

JEONG Ji-hoon, a genius boy actor who beat the odds 1000:1
LEE Soon-jae, JANG Gwang, and SEONG Byung-sook! A great band of top actors!

<Stand by Me> is highly anticipated for its band of top, experienced actors such as JANG Gwang and SEONG Byung-sook, as well as the young, genius actor JEONG Ji-hoon, who takes on his first starring role alongside LEE Soon-jae.

Director BANG Soo-in auditioned over 1000 child actors for the role of 'Deok-gu'. JEONG Ji-hoon, who was only 9 years old at the time of his auditions, was perfect in portraying 'Deok-gu' just as director BANG had imagined. While most child actors simply followed the director's instructions, JEONG Ji-hoon did not just memorize the lines, but presented a brilliant show of analyzing and expressing the emotions perfectly. However, it was JEONG Ji-hoon's explanation of 'Deok-gu' that was crucial in director BANG's casting decision. He said, "I like sports, but I'm not good at it. So other kids don't really want to play with me. But I still like sports. I think Deok-gu is a boy like that, too." Just then, director BANG's image of 'Deok-gu' coincided with JEONG Ji-hoon. JEONG is an actor who made strong impressions in works such as tvN's [Another Miss Oh] and [Goblin: The Lonely and Great God]. He also appeared in 2017's biggest box-office hit <Along with the Gods: The Two Worlds>, and proves his future is bright.

A great cast of top, quality actors, who have proven strong acting skills in solid list of works, also maximizes the film's drama. Actor JANG Gwang emitted intense presence with great acting in films such as <Along with the Gods: The Two Worlds>(2017), <New World>(2013), <Masquerade>(2012), and <Silenced>(2011). In <Stand by Me>, JANG takes on the role of 'Grandpa Go-bok', the soft-hearted town mayor despite his grumbling, mean outward appearance. Actress SEONG Byung-sook, who has solidified her acting skills on theatrical stages, portrays the romance with JANG in <Stand by Me>. After rising to fame as a voice actor, SEONG worked on films such as <Goodbye Mom>(2009) and <Haeundae>(2009) and TV drama series such as [Band of Sisters](2017), [Misaeng](2014), [Discovery of Love](2014), and [My Love from the Star](2013). In <Stand by Me>, SEONG portrays Madam JEONG, the owner of the town's store who impresses with her show of loving kindness. Also, JANG Gwang and SEONG Byung-sook were also captivated by the touching script of <Stand by Me> and took part with no pay along with LEE Soon-jae. Completed with the great actors' dedication and passion, <Stand by Me> is the must-see touching family drama this spring.

HOT ISSUE 03

"The most heart wrenching story of 2018"

A grandfather's special gift to leave behind for his young grandson

<Stand by Me> was rumored to be 'the saddest story of the year' even in its screenplay development stages. It is a film that leaves a deep resonance with viewers' as a genuine story about 'family' that everyone can relate to. Living with his younger sister 'Deok-hee' under their grandfather's care, seven-year-old 'Deok-gu' is a country boy who misses his mother dearly. Although rumored in town as 'a foreigner who ran off with her dead husband's price on life', Deok-gu's last memory of his mother was being mercilessly chased out of the house by his grandfather. Deok-gu is ashamed and embarrassed by his grandfather who had taken his mother away from him, doesn't buy him any toys, and goes around town wearing socks with holes. His grandfather forces him to take speech arts lessons and insists he grows up to become the President. He also makes Deok-gu memorize all the names of his ancestors, saying it is Deok-gu's duty as the eldest son of the family. As his grudge against his grandfather grows by the day, kids start calling him 'Deok-hee's mother', and Deok-gu gets upset in having to watch his younger sister. As Deok-gu's grandpa's sadness in losing his son turned to anger by his beloved daughter-in-law's betrayal and he had chased her out, he is forced to do all kinds of odd jobs in town to make ends meet and raise his young grandchildren despite being over 70 years old. He tries his best to raise them properly despite the difficulties. Then one day, Deok-gu's grandpa hears from the local doctor that he does not have much longer to live. At last, Deok-gu's grandpa decides to spend his remaining time to prepare a special gift for his young grandchildren who would be left alone in the world.

<Stand by Me> talks about family and roots that can never be severed or chosen. Anyone can become helpless before a raging storm, but the deep 'family love', that makes one infinitely strong in trying to protect those who are dear, is drawn out in an emotional story. <Stand by Me> is set to awaken the strong will to make it through the rugged ups and downs of life that may strike, and sprout warm hope, courage, and inspiration in the hearts of viewers across theaters this spring.

HOT ISSUE 04

“Dedicated to our grandfathers”

A must-see movie with fun laughter and touching emotions for all generations!

<Stand by Me> is about the ‘longing’ that we all have for those we miss, and is set to make waves of nostalgia stir in viewers’ hearts. When the meaning of family is fading and personal values are given priority today, director BANG Soo-in captured the hope of receiving comfort from someone we miss as we see ourselves in the mirror. The film gives the courage to reach out to grandfathers, grandmothers, friends, and children to have courage as they hold fast in the challenging world through the story of ‘Deok-gu’s grandpa’ in <Stand by Me>. Also, director BANG made the film in hopes that it will move young people to recall their parents, their parents’ parents, and their siblings and feel loved when faced with trials in life.

Expressing the multicultural family in ordinary, natural ways through <Stand by Me>, director BANG said, “The movie is not a story about human rights, but I didn’t want ‘the multicultural family’ to be interpreted as something unfamiliar anymore. I didn’t strive to stress the preciousness of the family, the future of multiculturalism, nor the greatness of family ties and love in just one film. It is just a story about the people who are living around us today.” She said she tried to embrace the various forms of families in our society and achieve a broad sense of empathy.

Deok-gu and his grandfather’s squabbles in <Stand by Me> will present laughter and warm, touching emotions. But when the family prepares to part, it will bring about overwhelming sad emotions. Also, <Stand by Me> will play a role as a film that transcends generations and cultures.



PRODUCTION NOTE 01

A script that took 8 years made complete with touching emotions!
A realistic story from watching, listening, and writing upon the lives of many

Director BANG Soo-in, who directed and wrote the screenplay for <Stand by Me>, said, "He was like a high mountain, but was also the easiest person in the world. Though we had the biggest age gap, he understood everything about me. Unlike myself who is starting out in life like the rising sun, he was finishing his like the sunset. After many years have passed, a glimpse of him brushed across my face in the mirror as I missed him. It all began from my longing of him." Director BANG pointed out that the film started out from missing her grandfather. She traveled around the mountains, seas, and fields throughout the country, except Jeju Island, for 8 years and watched and listened to many people's lives and wrote the screenplay from such experiences. The film is based on a genuine story that is not about a dramatic event or a unique character, but rather a heart wrenching family drama. Director BANG captured the feelings of her experiences with the people she met on the street, their stories, and what she heard and saw in honest, sincere ways in the screenplay. After several revisions over many years, director BANG was able to create 'Deok-gu' and 'Deok-gu's grandpa' in <Stand by Me>. The stories that the characters present in the film will leave deep impressions in viewers' hearts with a sense of longing. After the watching the film, viewers can imagine 'Deok-gu', 'Deok-gu's grandpa' and 'Deok-hee' sitting at the dinner table eating, taking walks together, and squabbling as they grow to resemble each other more and more, and feel the love.

PRODUCTION NOTE 02

3 generations living together in one house
The struggles behind finding and filming at the perfect house!

The house where 'Deok-gu', 'Deok-hee', their parents, and 'Deok-gu's grandpa', the three generations would have lived together, is a place that adds to the touching drama of <Stand by Me>. Director BANG Soo-in set the concept of the house as a rugged rural man and a migrant woman making a family. She wanted it to feel like a place for a woman from the warm sea living with a man in a cold mountain. While researching, director BANG found that most migrant women said that one of their happiest moments was when 'they saw snow for the first time'. The director, who said she cannot forget how happy the women looked as they recalled their memories, captured that moment in <Stand by Me>. She worked hard on capturing the first time 'Vanessa', Deok-gu's mom, sees snow outside the house. The directors and staff made great efforts in finding a nature-friendly house with a low stone fence around it. While going around the country in writing the screenplay, director BANG came across the perfect house in a village in Goryeong, Gyeongsangbuk-do Province. Also, thanks to the tremendous support from the town of Goryeong, the staff was able to shoot the film at the best locations with minimal mobilization.

Scenes of the town hall where adults and children learn to read and write, the town bus that stops whenever passengers want to get off, the streets around the town where people search for the lost boy, the neighborhood store at the entrance into town, and the warm, helping neighbors of the village around Deok-gu's family are all sure to impress.

PRODUCTION NOTE 03

It was destiny!
Newly discovered actors in <Stand by Me>!

<Stand by Me> boasts having found actors with new potentials who are perfect fits to their characters. First, genius, young actor JEONG Ji-hoon, who stars as 'Deok-gu', analyzed and interpreted his character completely during the 3-stage auditions and surprised the director and production staff. Topping each audition by far, JEONG Ji-hoon perfectly expressed 'Deok-gu', a character who is an innocent boy with different sensitivity and emotions from his peers, and beat out the fierce competition of 1,000 to 1. He met with the director once or twice a week to talk about the screenplay, expand his understanding of the characters, and take lessons in speaking with a dialect to make a complete transformation into 'Deok-gu'. Appearing in his first starring role in <Stand by Me>, JEONG Ji-hoon presents a mature, emotional performance that is surprising for his young age. With a high understanding of his character and great passion for his role, he presents a perfect acting chemistry with legendary actor LEE Soon-jae.

In casting for 'Deok-hee' after 'Deok-gu', the production had physical resemblances between the two characters in mind. Since 'Deok-hee' didn't have much dialogue, facial expressions were important. Thus, they needed a child actor who could perform naturally. During the 3 stages of auditions, PARK Ji-yoon, a naturally innocent girl who seems to have come over to play and not to audition, got into her scene alongside JEONG Ji-hoon. She burst into tears when needed and captivated the director and staff. JEONG Ji-hoon also said that PARK Ji-hoon was remarkably similar to 'Deok-hee' that he had imagined. However, PARK Ji-yoon's innocence of having no acting experience prior to the film was an unforeseeable variable which caught the staff off guard and filled the set with laughter. She didn't get scared in front of LEE Soon-jae and showed her casual, delightful acting to brighten up the mood from beginning to end. Meanwhile, the production had the most difficulty in casting an actress for the role of 'Vanessa', the mother of 'Deok-gu' and 'Deok-hee'. The production was introduced by chance to LEE Jasmin, a former member of Parliament and actress who appeared in <Punch>, who recommended a Filipino actress named Cherish. When they auditioned her, they found that she was exactly like what they had pictured for 'Vanessa' and asked her to join on the spot. Cherish, who had transformed into 'Vanessa', a simple wife and friendly mom, is ready to express deep motherly love to captivate and impress the audience.

CHARACTER & CAST

A 70-year-old angry, stubborn man
Deok-gu's grandpa – LEE Soon-jae

He is a 70-year-old grandfather with a fiery personality. Angry at his daughter-in-law for taking his son's insurance payout after his death, he chased her out of the house. Left to raise his grandchildren 'Deok-gu' and 'Deok-hee' alone, he does all kinds of odd jobs around town like picking up empty bottles and washing dishes. Though he is a strict grandfather who sets rules and responsibilities for 'Deok-gu' as the eldest son of the family, he is an infinitely loving grandfather who gives candy to 'Deok-hee' and offers his bad back to carry her. Though he does not have much, he is a strong head of the household who tries his best to raise his grandchildren under the circumstances. However, when he learns he doesn't have much time left to live, he prepares a special gift for his grandchildren who would be left alone in the world.

LEE Soon-jae, a veteran actor with 62 years of acting experience, has given dedicated performances in theatrical plays, TV drama series, and films. He returns to the big screen in 7 years after <I Love You> and stars in <Stand by Me>. LEE, who has proved his passion for acting in various genres such as sitcoms, romance, drama, historical, plays, and reality shows, has been acting steadily for over 62 years, and is highly respected by his junior actors. He presents deep family love in the movie, <Stand by Me>, a film in which he decided to star in with no pay after reading the script. With strong affection and dedication to the film, LEE worked hard despite the threat of injuries. He delivers an impressive drama that resonates from his experiences and great acting. He said, "The world needs a story that looks at the world warmly like <Stand by Me>. A story that warms the heart and stirs good, gentle love," and showed his strong pride and affection for the film.

FILMOGRAPHY

MOVIES <I Love You>(2011) | <Romantic Heaven>(2011) | <Good Morning President>(2009)) and others

CHARACTER & CAST

A 7-year-old troublemaker who cannot let go
Deok-gu – JEONG Ji-hoon

'Deok-gu' has a grudge against his grandfather for driving his mother out of the house when he was younger. He complains about his grandfather not being able to buy him pork cutlets and toy robots. Deok-gu is embarrassed by his grandfather who forces him to practice speech arts, makes him dream of becoming the President, and goes around town with holes in his socks. He is unhappy about having to watch his younger sister 'Deok-hee' when he should be receiving care and affection from his mother, too. One day, Deok-gu runs away when his grandfather spanks him to teach him a lesson. Later, when his grandfather disappears and he is left with strangers, Deok-gu realizes he misses him dearly.

JEONG Ji-hoon had given strong performances in the hit drama series [Goblin: The Lonely and Great God] and films such as <Along with the Gods: The Two Worlds>(2017), <The Mimic>, and <Wonderful Nightmare>. He appears in his first starring role in <Stand by Me> and presents surprisingly delicate, emotional performances for his young age. JEONG perfected 'Deok-gu' with superb sensitivity and emotions unexpected of a child. From perfecting a dialect and thoroughly studying the character, JEONG makes a perfect transformation into 'Deok-gu'. Through this film, he demonstrates his natural, genius talents in acting and takes a giant leap forward as an up-and-coming actor.

FILMOGRAPHY

MOVIES <Along with the Gods: The Two Worlds>(2017) | <The Mimic>(2017) | <The Age of Blood>(2017) | <My Annoying Brother>(2016) | <If You Were Me>(2016) | <Wonderful Nightmare>(2015)

CHARACTER & CAST

A 5-year-old who is too young to know the meaning of goodbye
Deok-hee – PARK Ji-yoon

'Deok-hee' is just five years old and is in dire need of a mother's care. Since she lives with just her brother 'Deok-gu' and her grandfather, she is delayed in speaking compared to kids her age. However, she is a cute, cuddly child who is like an angel to her grandfather and puts a smile on his face. Although she seems bright and cheerful, she is sad to be the last one picked up from daycare everyday. As she watches her friends get picked up by their mothers and go home, she begins to miss her mom more and more. Her grandfather feels bad and worries about her.

PARK Ji-yoon, a child actor who puts a smile on people's faces with her big eyes and tiny dimples, is a new actor with no prior experience. Transforming perfectly into 'Deok-hee' with her untouched, natural acting, PARK Ji-yoon is set to enhance the viewers' immersion into the film. Armed with loveable charms, PARK Ji-yoon is set to bring about much laughter and melt viewers' hearts with her heartfelt, emotional performance.

CHARACTER & CAST

A stern man with a warm heart
Mayor – JANG Gwang

'Grandpa Go-bok' may seem mean on the outside, but he is warm at heart. Though he grumbles, he takes the initiative to set an example and help others.

JANG Gwang has given short but intense impressions with unique characters in all his works. He has a broad spectrum in acting and portrays a variety of characters with a mysterious aura. Having proved his solid acting ability through his many years on the theatrical stage and as a voice actor, he gleamed a brilliant presence in many productions with his quick wit. JANG breathes more life into the story of <Stand by Me>, and keeps the balance between the emotional and fun.

FILMOGRAPHY

MOVIES <Along with the Gods: The Two Worlds>(2017) | <Trolls>(2017) | <The Treacherous>(2015) | <Chronicles of a Blood Merchant>(2015) | <New World>(2013) | <26 Years>(2012) | <Masquerade>(2012) | <Silenced>(2011) and others

A trusted supporter of Deok-gu's family
Neighborhood store owner – SEONG Byung-sook

Madam JEONG is the owner of the neighborhood store. Clearly a kind, beautiful woman even in her old age, she sympathizes 'Deok-gu's grandpa' and tries to help him out. She is also a girl at heart who responds shyly to 'Grandpa Go-bok's' love for her.

Actress SEONG Byung-sook, who had solidified her filmography as an actress on the theatrical stage and as a voice actor, lit up the production set with her warm, delicate care of others. She shows great acting chemistry with LEE Soon-jae and JANG Gwang in yet another talented performance and is ready to impress viewers with heart warming emotions.

FILMOGRAPHY

MOVIES <The Discloser>(2018) | <The Running Actress>(2017) | <The Himalayas>(2015) | <Goodbye Mom>(2009) | <Haeundae>(2009) and others

CHARACTER & CAST

A man who constantly helps Deok-gu's grandpa
Doctor – CHA Soon-bae

He is the doctor in town. He is a friendly and caring doctor who worries about Deok-gu's grandpa's health. He makes sacrifices to do favors for him.

Actor CHA Soon-bae is an actor full of emotions and sensitivity who had to fight back tears throughout the filming. He takes on the role of a friendly, honest doctor in <Stand by Me>. He helps Deok-gu's grandpa and adds to the warm, touching emotions of the film.

FILMOGRAPHY

MOVIES <A Taxi Driver>(2017) | <The Hunters>(2016) | <The Throne>(2015) and others



DIRECTOR

"It all began from my longing of a man who was like a mountain to me, who was easy, and who had the biggest age gap with me, but still understood everything about me.

I missed him dearly. That longing for him became the starting point of <Stand by Me>."

Director – BANG Soo-in

Director BANG Soo-in gained experiences in directing while working under director LEE Joon-ik on films such as <Hi, Dharma 2: Showdown in Seoul>(2004), <King and the Clown>(2005), and <Beautiful Sunday>(2007). After experiencing and learning from director LEE's strong charismatic lead on the production set, director BANG Soo-in sets out to prove her skills in her debut feature film <Stand by Me>.

Director LEE Joon-ik said, "A director is someone who makes a myriad of choices. The director must constantly make choices after choices. And later on, the choices will come back to you with tremendous pressures, pains, and fears," and gave his sincere advice to director BANG Soo-in as she dreamed of becoming a director. After traveling all over the country for 8 years and working on perfecting the script of <Stand by Me>, director BANG Soo-in handed it over to director LEE Joon-ik for help. After reading the first draft of the screenplay, director LEE closed the last page and said, "I can tell you didn't write this at a desk. I held back the tears as I read it," and genuinely complimented the script, adding to the expectations to watch the completed film. Deeply touched by the advice from director LEE Joon-ik, whom she regards as a mentor in life and work, director BANG Soo-in said, "Thanks to him, I could become a diligent person who prepares till late at night for the next day's shoot in order to avoid making choices I'll regret." <Stand by Me>, a film born with director BANG Soo-in's great passion and dedication is raising expectations for its release.