

K CRUSH

AMERICA

Issue 1 • May 2014

LEE MICHELLE

A K CRUSH

EXCLUSIVE

STELLER'S MARIONETTE

SEXY OR OVERREACHING?

An indepth look at
Steller's imagery.
Has this marionette
production gone the way
of pornography?

Kpop hit LYRICS

SEOTAJI AND BOYS

SHINHWA

Lyrics and Translations
to your favorite songs
provided. This issue
features I pray 4 U and
To You.



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With translations

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FROM THE EDITOR

You personal greeting and picture will go here.

Learn it
Love it

WORDS AND TRANSLATIONS

1. Hello.
안녕하세요?

“안녕하세요” also means
“How are you?” or “How do you do?”
Can be used or without a question mark.

2. Good Bye!
안녕히 가세요. (Formal)
안녕! (Informal)

안녕 basically means well/ good.
“가” means “To go”.

3. How are you?
How have you been well?
잘 지내셨어요? (Formal)
잘 지냈어? (Informal)

잘 means “well” “skillfully” and etc.
지내다 is “To pass”, “To spend”.

4. Happy/pleased to meet you!
만나서 반갑습니다. (Formal)
만나서 반가워! (Informal)

반갑다 does not literally mean “happy”
but the expression has to do with the
Korean’s emotional attachment “정”.

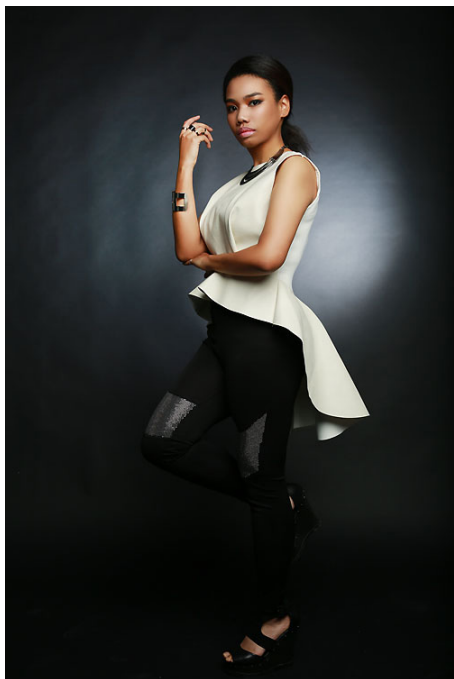
5. I am sorry.

죄송합니다. (Formal)
미안해. (Informal)

“죄” is sin. “죄송” is to indicate regret
for the wrong and asking for pardon.
“미안해” is an expression you can use
between friends, close acquaintances or
someone who is younger than you.



A NEW SHINING STAR EMERGES



Most of you would recognize and know Lee Michelle from the audition program K-pop Star back in December 2011. She certainly is the kind of person who sticks to one's memory a long time.

Michelle took the stage away with her singing (Although some of the judges had to put in a few harsh words to criticize) when she sang Aretha Franklin's 'Chain of Fools' for her first audition. She certainly had a different level of volume to her voice that made her stand out from a crowd, which is practically her trademark: Her ability as a singer. Michelle was born on 9th of September 1991 in Paju, South Korea to a Korean mother and an African American father and her parents divorced just before Michelle was born. Michelle has one brother and three sisters (two of them now live in America) and she's the youngest member of the family.

Michelle must have had a lot of hardships while growing up in Korea. Growing up is hard for anybody, but being an interracial child in Korea must have been more than challenging. On top of that she had to experience poverty and would frequently go to school on an empty stomach.

But amidst of all her troubles, Michelle knew she loved to sing from an early age. She recalls her childhood saying she can never forget listening and singing to Mariah Carey and Toni Braxton's cassette tapes her mother owned and trying to match the singing pitch with her sister.

K-pop Star gave her a chance to have a shot in a singing career she expressed that she found the kpop Star experience exciting and really enjoyed herself and was able to sing as much as she wanted to.

After K-pop Star, Michelle was signed to YG Entertainment as a girl group Supearls' member along with her Kpop Star peers Lee Jung Mi, Lee Seung Joo, and Lee Ha Yi, but later in 2013 it was reported that the Supearls had disbanded for some unknown reason. The real reason behind the disbandment is not told by either any of the former band members or YG Entertainment, so we have no way of knowing what happened exactly except there was some kind of dispute. Since leaving YG Michelle has kept herself pretty busy singing in live stages in Hongdae areas and performing gospel songs at her church. In March 2013, Michelle signed to her current label DIMA Entertainment, to finally undergo training to become a solo artist officially, as we wished she'd done years ago. And this isn't just my personal opinion, she has fans from all over the globe who have been waiting for her to emerge as a solo artist since day one.

Lee Michelle's first digital single, 'Without You' has been out since 21st March. The song's lyrics might not be what everyone could relate to, but nevertheless her voice is so beautiful and soothing to listen to. Like the lyrics to the song, she is beautiful and meaningful and she certainly knows it.

// Like the lyrics to the song ('Without you), she is beautiful and meaningful and she certainly knows it"

The music video also made a massive impact on the viewers. I took the time to watch some of the reaction videos from the fans and many of them got very tearful and some even cried out loud. How one person's work effects and tells stories of others is amazing.

The child actor who appears in her music video is of mixed race like Michelle and she plays a part. And, she draws, writes and colors banned racist words on the wall and later... well for those who haven't yet watched the music video please take the time to check it out.

And don't get me wrong. 'Without You' is not about misery and loneliness but Michelle releases her emotions she's had for so long, overpowering her weaknesses and standing up to everything that was hurting her in life. Michelle has said in one of her interviews how she doesn't like to express and show her emotions because she knows she'll be in pieces if she does. She says shed a lot of tears after she watched

her music video. I hope they were happy tears because she made her fans thankful and happy hearing her song. When I first saw the title I wondered who the "You" from 'Without You' really was, but after seeing the MV I came to the conclusion that it does not matter at all. The lyrics are about yourself and overcoming your fears, obstacles and everything that hinders you. Lee Michelle is an inspiration for the people who are from mixed or diverse background and she takes pride in giving her hope for others. No one should be alone and the world still has a lot of educating to do.

Everyone needs to know they are beautiful and loved, I really love the fact that Michelle is doing something great to make an impact and she's speaking out for herself and others which is something vital for the Korean society. And, of course, for the rest of the world.

I had the pleasure of interviewing Lee Michelle, although I wasn't lucky enough to meet her face-too-face since she was so busy. I contacted her management and, because I needed an interview within three days, they were decent enough to reply within the time limit with Michelle's answers via email. I could feel she was such a warm and humble person through merely reading her words and I was very touched. For some of you who are wondering, her Korean is perfect as any Korean you'll meet. And, her English is very proficient. She is definitely a full package to become a successful singer. She is so grown up for a 22 year old with such a modest and caring personality and she's bound to shine like a star.

Hope you guys all enjoy the short interview from Lee Michelle and wish Michelle a great career.

J. CHUNG



WANT HEALTHY, GLOWING SKIN? TRY THESE K-CELEBRITY METHODS!

JOELLE HALON

Korean women are known for their fresh, glowing, youthful skin. Looking at actresses in many K-Dramas like “You Who Came from the Stars,” women often look like they barely wear makeup due to their luminous skin. According to Linda Moerch, author of “The Price of Beauty in South Korea,” the better one’s complexion is, the more highly thought of that person is in society since clean, clear skin is a symbol of purity.

Seoul and other big cities in Asia like Shanghai and Beijing have issues with pollution, too. A strict moisturizing routine helps protect skin from the harsh elements, prolonging one’s youthfulness.

Watching actresses on screen is enough to give anyone skin envy, but how do they achieve such flawless skin?

The “Inside” Scoop

Koreans work hard to maintain 물광피부 (mul kwangpi bu) or “radiant, dewy skin.” The saying “beauty is skin deep” is true as the moisturizing process begins. Since skin reflects one’s health, drinking plenty of water helps with skin elasticity and dryness, providing a youthful appearance. A good diet prevents skin from aging quickly, creating a gorgeous glow. Many feel these steps even slow the aging process.

Taking the time to consider a healthy diet and the multi-step process of moisturizing is beneficial. That’s why so many Korean women look so young regardless of age.

Cleanliness Before Moisture

Cleansing and exfoliating is a valuable part of a healthy skin regime. Not cleansing enough clogs pores, impeding the moisturizer’s ability to soak into skin. Exfoliation unclogs pores, but doing this too much may damage skin, causing red scaly patches. Exfoliating every two days may be ideal.

When cleansing, celebrities like singer/actress Suzy Bae swears by 4-2-4. Four-two-four involves using cleansing oil for four minutes. The oil breaks down makeup while replenishing skin. Next comes a foam cleanser for two minutes to clear pores. Finally, rinsing with cool water for four minutes removes impurities while closing pores. Cool water also increases blood circulation, creating rosy cheeks and reduces puffiness. Besides cool water, some celebrities even rinse with cold lemon water to tone and tighten skin while the lemon dissolves toxins.

While following this method seems cumbersome, on “Get It Beauty,” Bae and her makeup artist, Hong Sung Hee, swears it helps makeup glide on better for a more natural appearance.



Moisturizing: A Multi-Step Process

Across Asia, moisturizing is a timely but serious process. Celebrities may use between ten-to-20 moisturizers on their face to lock in moisture! Why so many? Paired with a balanced diet, the two work together to create a flawless, bright complexion.

Layering moisturizers is the best way to achieve flawless skin. Since celebrities use so many, there is an application method.

When applying moisturizer, start with the lightest ones like water-based serums and moisture sprays first. Medium-weight creams like day or night creams and eye serums would be next, followed by the heavier creams like wrinkle reducers last since they are the heaviest. Layering lightest to heaviest helps skin absorb moisturizer better.

Celebrities also have their own methods for application. Actress Go Hyung-Jung, author of the book “Texture,” suggests warming moisturizer to help it soak into skin. Other actresses and skin specialists suggest applying moisturizer in an upward fashion to lift and tighten skin.

Anyone Can Do It

While moisturizing methods seem difficult, there is a reason why Korea is revered as one of the world’s skin care leaders. Anyone can follow this method regardless of how many products they have in their makeup cabinets. Just remember good cleansing skills, exfoliation, and layering moisturizers, and anyone can have the healthy skin of the stars!

Child actress and “Music Core” host Kim Sohyun uses Teenage Nature (tn) moisture cocktail cream. She demonstrated how she uses it in a 2013 episode of “Get It Beauty.” The moisture cocktail cream is available through ibuybeauti.com for under \$25.



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TOO SEXY
OR TOO MUCH
OVERREACHING?

STELLAR'S "MARIONETTE"

JOELLE HALON

Look at me, a sad doll
Tied under string
Look, I'm still being
dragged around by you
These tough feelings are
hard to cut off
I'm still in your hands,
I'm that doll

In February, female quartet Stellar released "Marionette," a song about being treated like a puppet in a relationship. Emotionally charged lyrics and a dance track make the song memorable. "Marionette" is Stellar's first hit, ranking 35 on the Gaon charts and 34 on Korea's Billboard Hot 100 K-Pop chart. Unfortunately, the music video received negative attention for its sexy concept and 19+ rating, causing Gayoung, Minhee, JunYool and Hyoeun to receive the ire of fans. "Marionette's" controversy stems mainly from the dance and milk scene, though these scenes aren't really as bad as fans make them. The dance involved a lot of hip movement and rear-rubbing, representing sexiness and erasing the memories of being used. The dance, as awkward as it was, fit the tone and lyrical content:
Look at me, a sad doll

Tied under string

Look, I'm still being dragged around by you
These tough feelings are hard to cut off
I'm still in your hands, I'm that doll
The dance's issue it that it seems exaggerated. That's part of its charm despite how polarizing it is in the K-Pop community. The moves are supposed to be exaggerated since the girls are marionettes. Stringed-puppets do not move fluidly; the dance was far from elegant. During the dance, the girls' tights have stitching resembling doll seams. Equally important are the dark colored clothes. Darkness symbolizes loss of free-will. The man in the relationship yanks their strings, engaging them in the movements. They don't want to, but they're forced.

A major gripe, though, is how unfocused the camera was during the dance sequence. There were times when it was difficult to tell what steps the girls were doing, but perhaps it's for the best given the controversy. Juxtaposed with the dance are white scenes. Each member interacts with the white room to some capacity. White represents purity, freedom and vulnerability as the lyrics reflect.
I don't like you, I hate you
You haven't changed at all,
I haven't changed either
When you touch me, I accept it
Tell me, am I a joke to you?
Each girl has time to ponder the relationship and what it's doing to her. Actions aren't exaggerated, and there is a feeling of

//

I don't like you, I hate you
You haven't changed at all,
I haven't changed either
When you touch me, I accept it

Tell me, am I a joke to you

despair. Stellar performs well because viewers can feel their sadness. Hyoeun's part where she crosses out her face in the mirror stood out most because it suggested she hated herself for being controlled. Now, the milk scene feels odd given the tone of the video. JunYool allows the milk to drip down her breasts, a clear reference to sex with the milk representing male fluids. This scene is nearly pornographic but fits the lyrics.

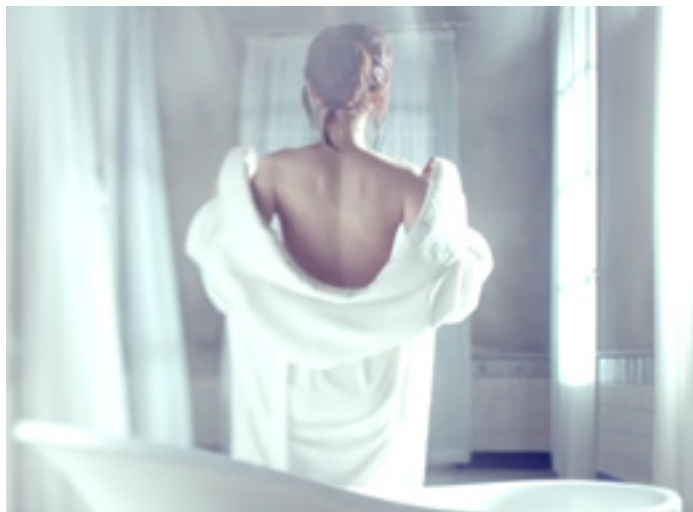
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“
You’re so bad, I’m hurting
again
You haven’t changed at all,
I haven’t changed either
I’m reacting to your fickle
nature
Tell me, is this fun for you?”

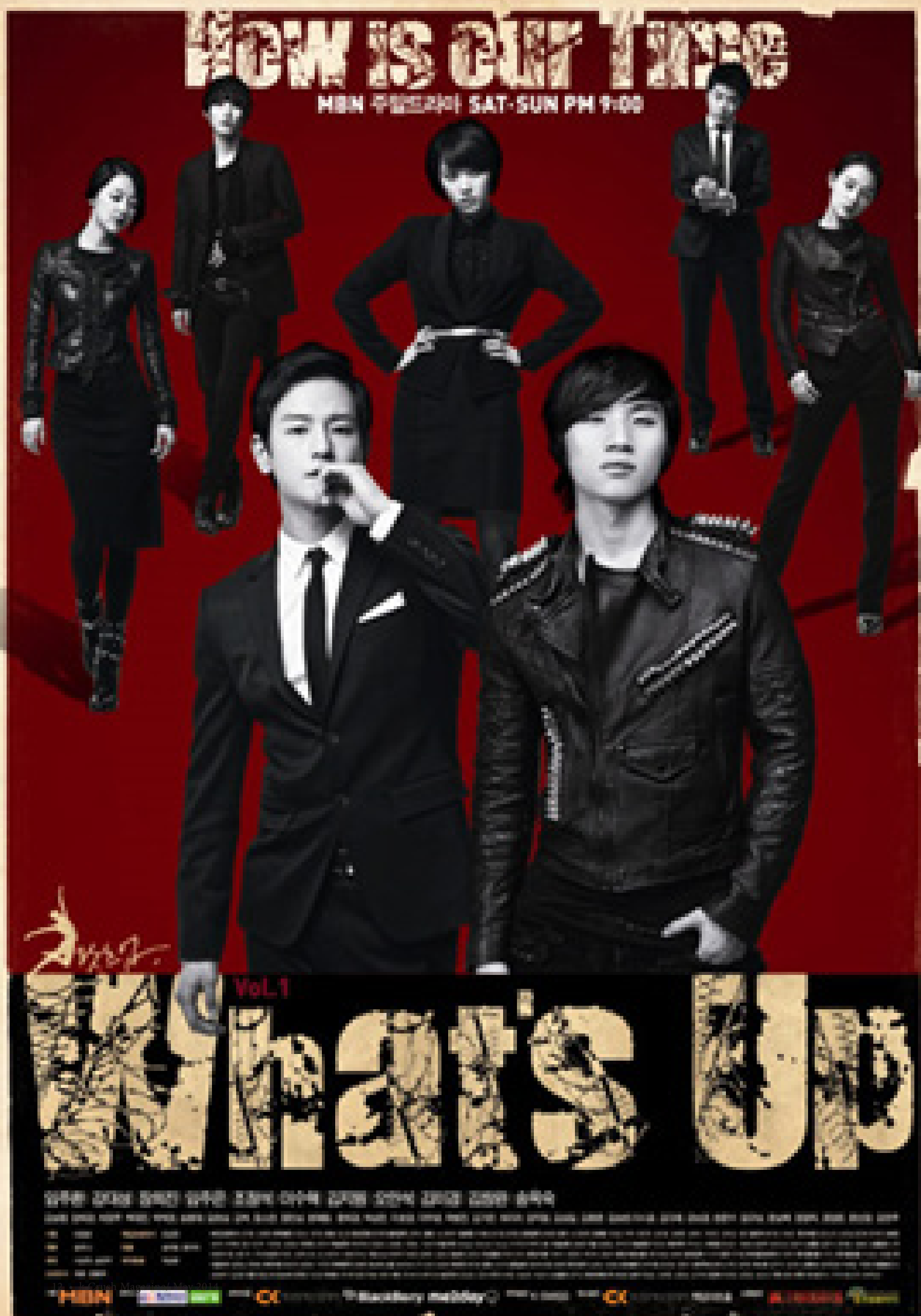


The only explanation is JunYool gives in to sex to appease her man. What message does this send to young listeners watching the video? It’s never okay to do something to please another, but this line says otherwise. It fits the puppet theme, but it is cringe-worthy. From a Western perspective, “Marionette” is no different from other sexy concepts. It’s mild compared to videos like N.O.M’s “A-Guys,” which features members dressed like S&M strippers while shoving their hands in their pants. This video earned comments saying it was “entertaining,” showing a double .

YOU’RE SO BAD IS IT FUN FOR YOU?

Look at me, a sad doll
Tied under string
Look, I’m still being
dragged around by you
These tough feelings are
hard to cut off
I’m still in your hands,
I’m that doll





“WHAT’S UP”

FUN, ADDICTING, UNFINISHED

JOELLE HALON

While many great new K-Dramas exist, sometimes a nostalgia trip is in order to visit dramas forgotten over time. 2011-2012’s musical drama “What’s Up” was the ticket. With melodrama, music and relatable characters, the initial story captivated. Toward the end, abrupt shifts caused one to scream “what’s up!?”

The drama follows several first-year musical students trying to find success. “What’s Up” feels like a Korean version of “Fame” with the individual subplots. Each student has to overcome hardship: Do-Sung (Big Bang’s Daesung) and Doo-Ri (Lim Ju-Eun) search for identities outside family secrets and expectations; Jae-Hun (Lim Ju-Hwan) wants to escape his criminal past; Tae-Yi (Kim Ji-Won) remains haunted by her father’s death; Byung-Gun (Cho Jung-Seok) battles stage fright; and Chae-Young’s (Jang Hee-Jin) star faded long ago.

“TWO STORYLINES SHINED: JAE-HUN AND TAE-YI’S SADNESS-MARRED ROMANCE AND DOO-RI AND TEACHER SUNWOO’S (OH MAN-SEOK) ILL-FATED, ONE-SIDED LOVE.”

Each character’s growth made the plot realistic. It was like watching close friends find their identities. Two storylines shined: Jae-Hun and Tae-Yi’s sadness-marred romance and Doo-Ri and teacher Sunwoo’s (Oh Man-Seok) ill-fated, one-sided love. The series’ writers excelled since both stories brought a good share of laughter and tears given Tae-Yi’s sweet awkwardness and Doo-Ri obsessive tendencies.

However, Do-Sung and Chae-Young’s plots felt incomplete. Writers needed to focus more on why Do-Sung had to hide his identity and deny he’s his mother’s son. With Chae-Young, viewers can assume the entertainment industry treated her poorly, but this doesn’t explain her manipulative tendencies. One questionable inclusion was Cho Jung-Seok’s Byung-Gun. Byung-Gun served as comic. His scenes felt irritating since his humor came across as forced, but that might be the character’s personality. His inclusion may be good for viewers who can relate to his fears, but the writers could have done more with him than a few great



JAE-HUN (LIM JU-HWAN) AND TAE-YI (KIM JI-WON) IN “WHAT’S UP”/ DRAMA FEVER

“WHAT’S UP” HAD MANY MUSICAL TRIUMPHS. EACH SONG HAD MEANING AND MOVED THE PLOT FORWARD, ADDING A FUN ELEMENT”

telling her parents’ story to Jae-Hun. Doo-Ri’s cover of Four Non-Blonde’s “What’s Going On” may seem out of place, but it makes sense in setting up a poignant scene with Sunwoo viewers may not soon forget.

The showstopper, however, was Tae-Yi and Byung-Gun’s cover of Laura Pausini’s “It’s Not Goodbye.” The actors portrayed the emotion in the song, making it undeniably haunting. The song set the bar high for the others in the drama. Sadly, while the other songs were great, they did not reach the epic level of “It’s Not Goodbye.”

“What’s Up” was intended to be a multi-season drama but was dropped after not having a network or a timeslot. This issue caused the series to suffer since there are many loose ends, especially given Chae-Young’s and Do-Sung’s deal and the sparks Tae-Yi and Jae-Hun had despite two massive obstacles in their way. The last two episodes felt like there was a huge “to be continued” sign looming overhead. But, it seems the audience will never know what could have been.

Overall, strong acting, great songs and good writing make “What’s Up” an unforgettable drama. However, it would be nice to have some closure for the stories that began the final two episodes. “What’s Up” is a rough diamond, but well worth the time to get involved.

Despite weak points, writers did well with character development and casting.

Lim Ju-Hwan’s Jae-Hun was perfect. His skills made the ex-criminal sympathetic. Equal parts bad boy and sweetheart, Jae-Hun wore his heart on his sleeve when conning and caring about people. Lim Ju-Hwan transitioned to each complex side of Jae-Hun with ease. When paired with Kim Ji-Won’s Tae-Yi, magic happens.

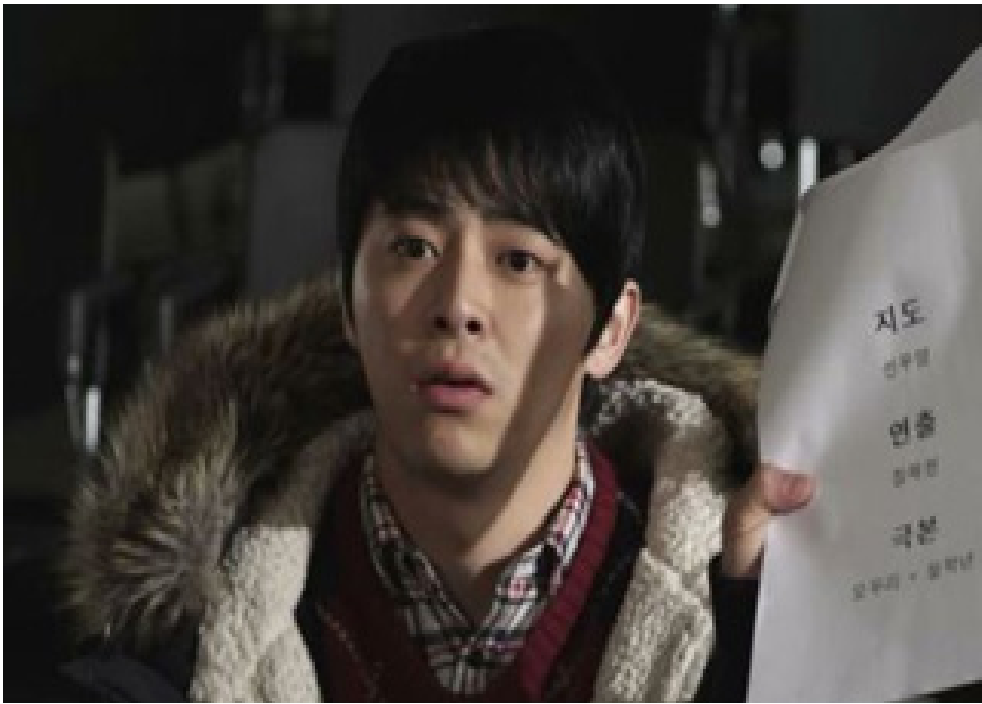
Kim and Lim Ju-Hwan have amazing chemistry. They have the ability to be cute together, yet, the agonizing heartbreak they experience can tear a person apart. It’s easy to root for these two considering how much Jae-Hun and Tae-Yi grew up when they realize one tragic night tied their fates together.

The same can be said about Lim Ju-Eun’s Doo-Ri and Oh Man-Seok’s Sunwoo. Lim Ju-Eun perfects Doo-Ri’s wild-eyed look and emotional neediness in a borderline creepy way. Her need to be loved is evident, but her desperate attempts like camping out at Sunwoo’s place may make viewers cringe.

Oh portrays Sunwoo’s drunken stupor and obstinate but wise nature effortlessly. Combined, Doo-Ri and Sunwoo are oil and water, but this makes their interactions more believable.

One questionable inclusion was Cho Jung-Seok’s Byung-Gun. Byung-Gun served as comic. His scenes felt irritating since his humor came across as forced, but that might be the character’s personality. His inclusion may be good for viewers who can relate to his fears, but the writers could have done more with him than a few great songs and weak story.

“What’s Up” had many musical triumphs. Each song had meaning and moved the plot forward, adding a fun element. Tae-Yi’s “Stupid Cupid,”



CHO JUNG-SEOK AS BYUNG-GUN/DRAMA FEVER

for example, did a nice job telling her parents’ story to Jae-Hun. Doo-Ri’s cover of Four Non-Blonde’s “What’s Going On” may seem out of place, but it makes sense in setting up a poignant scene with Sunwoo viewers may not soon forget.

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ARE YOU A TRUE HALLYU FAN?

Many people have asked, “How do you know if you’re a true Kpop/Kdrama fan?”. Well, I’ll tell you that there are many ways to know if you are one! When you first got into Kpop and Kdrama, your reaction was probably something like “Um...?”, “what the heck is this?”, or maybe you were mind blown at the concept of how amazing it was. There’s just something special about it that once you start, you won’t be able to quit, kind of like a drug. To know if you are a true fan, this following list may sound familiar to you.

You know you’re a fan of Kpop/Kdrama when....

- 1 You knew the song Gangnam Style before it became popular
- 2 Know at least 1 Kpop dance
- 3 You can list the entire member’s names of your favorite group under 10 seconds.
- 4 You’re convinced that you’ll meet your idol one day.
- 5 Know at least 1 Kpop dance
- 6 Watch the same music videos over and over
- 7 Know the lyrics to your favorite songs
- 8 You stay up past midnight waiting for your favorite idol’s comeback
- 9 Enter a contest to win a trip to Korea and meet with your idol
- 10 Subtitles are your best friend
- 11 You complain about how guys are not as romantic like the ones in dramas
- 12 Listening to the OSTs imagining yourself being one of the characters in the drama
- 13 You ask yourself this question everyday “why does Korea have to be so far away?”
- 14 Got sick and tired of reading subtitles so you made an attempt to learn Korean
- 15 Your heart feels crushed when you hear that your favorite actor has to go through 2 years of military service
- 16 Wanted to go to Korea so bad that you looked up how much the plane tickets cost
- 17 Never get enough sleep because you’ve been watching dramas all night
- 18 You randomly quote phrases to friends and family and they look at you like you’re from another planet
- 19 Constantly trying to watch dramas everywhere you go such as school, work, vacation, etc.
- 20 You keep on telling yourself to only watch 1 episode but then you end up watching 8 episodes