



CJ Entertainment Presents
A Moho Film Production
In association with
CJ Capital Investment, Centurion Investment,
TSJ Entertainment Korea Capital Investment,
Ilshin Capital Investment and Samsung Venture Capital

Presents

LADY VENGEANCE

(Chin-Jeol-Han Geum-Ja-Ssi)

Directed by
Park Chanwook

Starring
Lee Young-ae
Choi Min-sik

Produced by
Lee Tae-hun & Cho Young-wuk

Studio

MJ Peckos/Tartan Films
8322 Beverly Blvd. suite 300
Los Angeles CA, 90048
Phone: (323) 655-9300
Cell: (310) 729-1030

Publicity

Emma Griffiths
Sophie Gluck & Associates
In Toronto: cell (917) 593-8159
In New York: (212) 595-2432

For stills, please go to www.tartanfilmsusa.com – Login: press, Password: tartan

Directed by
Park Chanwook

Produced by
Lee Tae-hun & Cho Young-wuk

Screenplay by
Chung Seo-kyung & Park Chan-wook

Executive Producer
Miky Lee

Director of Photography
Chung Chung-hoon

Editor
Kim Sang-bum & Kim Jae-bum

Production Designer
Cho Hwa-sung

Music Director
Cho Young-wuk

Running Time
112 Minutes

Cast

(In order of appearance)

<i>Choir 1</i>	Kang Nam-mi
<i>Choir 2</i>	Choi Jeong-nam
<i>Choir 3</i>	Ko Hye-sook
<i>Choir 4</i>	Baek Bok-hwa
<i>Choir 5</i>	Hong Chul
<i>Choir 6</i>	Joo Sung-wan
<i>Choir 7</i>	Jang Min
<i>Preacher</i>	Kim Byeong-ok
<i>Lee Geum-ja</i>	Lee Young-ae
<i>Won-mo's Friend</i>	Choi Sung-yoon
<i>Chief Choi</i>	Nam Il-woo
<i>Reporter</i>	Cha Soon-bae
<i>Won-mo's Father</i>	Kim Ik-tae
<i>Won-mo's Mother</i>	Lee Young-mi
<i>Ko Sun-sook</i>	Kim Jin-ku
<i>Woo So-young</i>	Kim Bu-sun
<i>Kim Yang-hee</i>	Seo Young-joo
<i>Witch</i>	Koh Soo-hee
<i>Mr. Chang</i>	Oh Dal-su
<i>Oh Soo-Hee</i>	Ra Mi-ran
<i>Park Yi-jeong</i>	Lee Seung-shin
<i>Prisoner 1</i>	Kim Keum-sun
<i>Prisoner 2</i>	Song Yeon-soo
<i>Pimp</i>	Lee Jung-yong
<i>Mr. Baek</i>	Choi Min-sik
<i>Geun-shik</i>	Kim Si-hu
<i>So-young's Husband</i>	Koh Chang-seok
<i>Chief Choi's Wife</i>	Hong Hye-ryung

Won-mo's Cousin

Prisoner 3

Jenny

Jenny's Adoptive Father

Jenny's Adoptive Mother

Won-mo

Prisoner 4

Prisoner 5

Prisoner 6

Se-hyun's Sister

Dong-hwa's Father

Dong-hwa's Mother

Jae-kyung's Mother

Jae-kyung's Father

Eun-joo's Grandmother

Dong-hwa

Se-hyun

Eun-joo

Jae-kyung

Narrator

Special Appearance

Kim Jeong-nam

Choi Hee-jin

Kwon Yea-young

Tony Barry

Anne Cordiner

Nam Song-woo

Jeon Sung-ae

Lee Kyoung-mi

Lee Young-hee

Chang Jung-ae

Choi Jeong-woo

Park Myung-shin

Lee Yong-nyeo

Kim Choon-gi

Won Mi-won

Lee Byung-jun

Kim Hee-soo

Seo Ji-hee

Kim Yo-jung

Kim Se-won

Oh Kwang-rok

Song Kang-ho

Shin Ha-kyun

Yoo Ji-tae

Kang Hye-jung

Yoon Jin-seo

Lee Dae-yon

Lim Soo-kyung

Han Jae-deok

Ryu Seung-wan

A Park Chan-wook Film
CJ Entertainment Presents
A Moho Film Production
In association with CJ Venture Investment
Centurion Technology Investment Corporation
TSJ Entertainment Korea Ltd.
Isu Venture Capital Co.,Ltd
Ilshin Investment Co., Ltd.
Samsung Venture Investment Corporation

Executive Producer

Miky Lee

Produced by

Lee Tae-hun
Cho Young-wuk

Associate producers

Lee Yong-woo
Hur Dae-young
Jeon Sang-min
Jhe Min-ho
Koh Jeong-suk
Kim Sang-ki

Executive Producers

Park Dong-ho
Kim Joo-sung
Shin Shang-han

Production & Financing

Choi Joon-hwan

Producer

Lee Chun-young

Written by

Chung Seo-kyung
Park Chan-wook

Cinematography

Chung Chung-hoon

Lighting

Park Hyun-won

Sound Recordist

Lee Seung-chul

Sound Design

Kim Suk-won

Kim Chang-sub

Editing

Kim Sang-bum

Kim Jae-bum

Music

Cho Young-wuk

Composed by

Choi Seung-hyun

Lee Ji-soo

Na Seok Joo

Orchestra

Moho Baroque
Ensemble

Visual Effect	Yi Zeon-hyoung
Special Make up	Hwang Hyo-kyun
	Kwak Tae-yong
Special Effects	Kim Kwang-soo
	Kim Tae-eui
	Yoo Yung-il
Martial Arts Director	Kwon Seung-ku
Production Design	Cho Hwa-sung
Set Design	Oh In-ho
Make up & Hair Artist	Song Jong-hee
Costumes	Cho Sang-kyung
Assistant Director	Seok Min-woo
Production Assistants	Lee In-sung
	Kim Dae-joon
	Song Soo-in
	Um Tae-hwa
	Hong Jun-kyu
Scriptwriter	Lee Kyoung-mi
Storyboard	Cha Zoo-han
	Song Sun-chan
Line Producer	Kim Jeong-min
Production Managers	Kang Hyun
	Kim Woo-sang
Production Unit	Shin Ye-rim
	Ryu Dong-pil
	Kim Young-ho
	Hwang Yeon-ha
Camera Crew	Ju Sung-lim
	Shin Kyung-won
	Ryu Uk
	Kang Chi-liang
2 nd Unit	Cho Seok-hyun
	Kim Jung-woo
Key Grip	Jeong Il-seo
Grip	Lee Dong-won
Assistant Gaffers	Chu Su-ho
	Lee Kang-heon
	Chu Su-il
	Kim Kyung-bae
	Jo Dae-youn
	Na Hyun-min

Lighting Crane Operator
Supertechnocrane Operator
Boom Operator
Assistant Boom Operator
Art Director

Key artwork Design
Head of Art Dept.
Art Dept. Assistants

Props
Props Assistants

Set Design Assistants

Assistants Make up & Hair Artists

Costumes Assistants

Location Editing

Special Effects Assistants

Special Make up Assistants

Beak Jin-ho
Seo Jung-tak
Hur Pil-bong
Kim Byung-ho
Yi Eun-ju
Jung Dae-jin
Choi Hyun-seok
Han Ji-hyung
Jung Jeom-seok
Lee Jin-young
Lee Kyu-bong
Yeo Hyo-jeong
Shin Hye-mi
Kim Jong-hoon
Lee Si-hoon
Hwasung Gongjakso
Jung Mi-ran
Namgung Hee-jin
Shim Young-bin
Cho Sung-sang
Lee Seung-yong
Kang Ki-bae
Kim Sang-kyu
Ki Won-hyun
Kim Hyo-jin
Park Ji-soon
Lim Hang-mi
Cho Sang-hyun
Son Nary
Lee Hye-young
Kwak Jung-ae
Chung Soo-jin
Kim Tae-soo
Shin Seo-lin
Choi Jung-wook
Chun Lae-hoon
Kim Sung-koo
Woo Chung-sik
Lee Jae-ho
Hwang Hyo-kyun

Martial Arts Team

Computer Graphics

FX Director

FX Technical Director

FX Art Director

FX 3D Director

FX Composite Artist

FX Digital Matte Painter

FX Designer

Sound

Sound Design

Dialogue Editor

Sound Effect Editor

Foley

Dolby Consultant

ADR REC/Sound Optical REC

Digital Lab

Lab Master

Digital In&Out

Digital Master

Technical Director

Digital Colorists

Telecine

Digital Restoration

Lab Manager

Lab Assistants

Kwak Tae-yong

Lee Hee-eun

Kang Eun-jin

Choi Chang-hee

Cho Joo-hyun

Choi Chun-bum

Park Sung-kyu

EON DIGITAL FILMS

Yi Zeon-hyoung

Jeong Seong-jin

Han Young-woo

Choi Jae-cheon

Lee Ju-won

Na Il-hwan

Lim Jae-hyun

Park Min-su

BLUECAP

Kim Suk-won

Kim Chang-sub

Choi Eun-ah

Kim Min-jung

Park Ju-kang

Park Jin-hong

Sim Gyu-jong

Kim Yong-gook

Kim Jae-kyung

Kim Kyung-tae

Hong Yoon-sung

H.F.R.

Ok Im-sik

Lim Ho-young

Song Youn-woo

Lee Jae-woo

Lee Yong-ki

Park Jin-ho

Han Jae-min

Kim Tae-sung

Kim Jin-sung

Yun Seol-ae

Kim Young-beom

Lim Se-na

Hong Ye-lee

Jang Woo-young

Digital Mastering

BEBHUR
Corporation(Quvis)

Location in Australia

Producer

Kane (Kyu-min) Park

Line Producer

Adrian (Ho-il) Lee

Production Manager

Phillip (Hyun-soo) Kim

Production Assistant1

Eric (Sung-min) Kim

Production Assistant2

John (In-chul) Park

Production Runner

Young (Young-tae)Kim

Key Grip

David Litchfield

Grip Assistant 1

Wayne Rowe

Grip Assistant 2

Craig Jackson

Key Gaffer

John Morton

Electrician

Damien Raj

Generator Operator

Max Bourne

Unit Manager

Borris Sudjovic

Catering

Darran Hannah

Houser Owner

David & Penny Litchfield

Coach Driver

Suntour

Farm Owner

David Morgan

Marketing Producer

June Lee

Marketing Manager

Cho Young-seon

Head of Distribution

Shin Shang-han

Distribution Team

Kang Kyung-ho

Jung Tae-sun

Kang Mun-hwan

Carol Noh

Choi Yoon-ho

Baek So-yeon

Rhee Han-dae

Marketing Supervisor

KIM Jong-hoon

Marketing Managers

Lee Seung-cheol

Karen Park

Kim Bo-yeon

Marketing Team

Elan Kim

Kwon Yong-kyu

Hwang Ki-sup

Jessica Kim

Choi Aram

Kim Yang-yeon

Production & Financing Managers

Production & Financing Team

Production Supervisor
Head of Int'l Distribution
Int'l Distribution Team

Still Photographers

Making Film by

Title Sequence
Poster/Ad Slick Design

Poster Photographer
Trailer Director

Tag Lines by
Publicity

Choi Young-joon
Yeon Dong-eun
Song Sung-woo
Alex Hong
Kimberly Lee
Yoo Il-han
Lee Ji-young
Yi Jin-hee
Kim Ga-young
Jeong Yong-wook
Simon Lee
Kang Kyung-il
Joe Chung-hwan
Lee Joo-hyun
Kwon Kyung-won
Jennifer Muhn
Kini S. Kim
Josh Lee
Karen Moon
Sandy Kang
Jun Kim
Eric Kim
Stephanie Kim
Kwan Lee
David Park
Lucy Lee
Han Se-jun
Kim Ji-hye
Cho Young-youn
Lee Yun-do
Garson Yu (yU+Co.)
Kim Sang-man
(SPUTNIK)
Lee Kwan-yong
Sohn Yun-young
Yim Ji-young
Kim Hye-moon
Oh Hyoung-kuhn
Park Ji-hong
Bak Yong-joon
Jeong Seung-hye
Kim Jin-young
(All That Cinema)

Official Website
Online Marketing

Mobile Marketing
Media Purchasing
Printing
Jimmy Zip

Steady Camera Crew

Assistants Steady Camera Crew

Underwater Camera Crew
Assistants Underwater Camera Crew

Camera Rental

Film Provider
Developing
Color Correction
Negative Film Editor

Transportation

Location Support

Production Accountant
Lee Young-ae's Managers

Choi Min-shik's Manager
Kim Si-hu's Manages

Oh Dal-su's Manager

Yang Eun-jin
Kwon Min-kyung
d.o.E.S.
ZINESS
Seo Yu-jin
Choi Jae-hyun
BOBOSCOMPANY
ARTSERVICE
DAEKYUNG TOTAL
Lee Hak-song
Lee Sang-jo
Kim Sung-ho
Yeo Kyung-bo
Jeon Yong-hoon
Kim Dae-lim
Ham Seong-jin
Park Sang-hoon
Baek Im-tak
Han Seung-yong
Park So-yeon
Jeong Myung-hee
Yoo Jun-sang
Yun Tae-jn
Saebang Color Lab.
Shin Chung-sup
Kwak Sung-suk
Shin Ji-nan
Shin Soon-sik
Jung Jin-woo
Chung Sang-kuk
Busan Film Commission
Seoul Film Commision
Cheong-ju City Hall
Justice Department
Lee Chang-sook
Lee Joo-yeol
Choo Seung-wuk
Do Youn-young
Lee Seung-hwan
Jeong Dong-in
Kang Jung-gu
Shin Sung-ho

Lee Seung-shin's Manager
Koh Su-hee's Manages

Koh Chang-seok's Manager
Yoo Ji-tae's Manager
Song Kang-ho's Managers

Shin Ha-kyun's Manager
Kang Hye-jung's Manager
Yun Jin-seo's Managers

Casting Mangers

Kim Jong-hwa
Jeong Dae-wol
Kang Dae-yeol
Eun Hee-jun
Kim Jong-pan
Kim Young-hoon
Sim Pil-bo
Choi Min-seok
Lee Yong-hyun
Lee Seok-ju
Park Sung-hye
Tak Ji-hyun
Park Jae-min
Yoon Hyun-seok
Song Dae-jung

Sympathy For Lady Vengeance

Synopsis

Short Synopsis

She's hailed as an angel, the poster girl for religious rehabilitation by a preacher and a chorus of Santa Clauses as she walks out of prison following a 13-year-sentence for kidnapping and murdering a little boy. But when beautiful Lee Geum-ja is presented with the traditional tofu cake, meant to celebrate the birth of a new, reformed life, she tosses it to the ground and coldly walks away. The woman who earned a reputation for good deeds behind bars, sets herself on a path of retribution aimed at the man whose evil criminality left her behind bars.

To succeed in her quest she enlists a detachment of former fellow prisoners. There are: Kim Yang-hee, a former prostitute who had murdered her pimp, now a hairdresser who provides Geum-ja with an apartment; Woo Si-young, imprisoned 1990-1996 for bank hold-ups committed with her husband, who now helps to fashion a blunderbuss-like revolver for Geum-ja; Oh Su-hee, imprisoned from 1993-1994, now a silversmith who crafts intricately drafted earrings for Geum; and Park Yi-jeong, another inmate of Geum-ja's penitentiary (from 1998 to 1999) who had worked longest and hardest at enabling Geum-ja's plan, actually marrying her comrade's quarry.

One other inmate also aided Geum-ja, but never saw the outside: Go Seon-sook A North Korean spy imprisoned 1967-1991 who gives Geum-ja a book called the Diamond Sutra, which turns out to be a yellowed guide to achieving vengeance.

To support herself, Geum-ja has gotten a job in a bakery run by Mr. Jang. Mr. Jang had taught baking in Geum-ja's prison, where he had been astonished by her ability to whip up wonderful concoctions with the sparsest of materials. Even more admiring of Geum-ja is Geun-sik, Jang's young apprentice who is just as astonished by Geum-ja's beauty.

After some flashbacks of Geum-ja making an obviously concocted confession to police officer Choi, we see the 32-year-old woman running into the first, serious complication to her bloody task. She reunites with her now-adopted daughter Jenny, an occasion which releases all sorts of emotions Geum-ja had thought she'd repressed. But an outing with Jenny and a fellow bakery worker, young smitten Geun-sik, brings Geum-ja to the presence of an abandoned-looking school. Both unnerved and newly resolute, she commits an act of unadulterated cruelty.

All this is prologue to the final confrontation with Mr. Paek, the former grammar school teacher who took in a teenaged Geum-ja when she was a pregnant teenager and ensnared her in his web of evil. When that web turns out to be larger than even Geum-ja expected, the grounds are laid for a vengeance surpassing even her imagination. How will redemption ever be achieved?

Long Synopsis

A big day: Beautiful Lee Geum-ja is being released from prison, after having been sent up for the kidnapping and death of a little boy, Won-mo, a crime she confessed to. Waiting for her in the cold and snow is the preacher who has become enamored of her new-found religiosity and a small choir of Santa Clauses he's brought with him. In flashback, we see the preacher watching Geum-ja's arrest on TV and then Geum-ja in prison, performing good deeds and testifying to her conversion to the preacher's approval; it's easy to imagine she's undergone a transformation. But when the preacher presents Geum-ja with the traditional white tofu cake, meant to symbolize a new start, she callously tosses it to the ground. Her transformation is a shock.

Geum-ja, who was imprisoned from 1991-2004, seeks out some of the fellow prisoners she helped while incarcerated. There's Kim Yang-hee, now a hairdresser, but a former prostitute who had murdered her pimp. Geum-ja had introduced her to the healing power of prayer and now Yang-hee, who finds Geum-ja oddly cold and unresponsive, gives her a tiny apartment in which to live. Geum-ja tapes a MISSING poster of Won-mo to the wall, alongside a wanted poster for herself. In front of it, she lights two of dozens of candles she's brought with her.

There's also Woo Si-young, imprisoned 1990-1996 for bank hold-ups committed with her husband. Geum-ja had donated a kidney to her when she fell sick inside. Now Geum-ja visits the couple's metal shop and has them fashion a strange, decorated, double-barreled hand-gun. But though Si-young fulfills Geum-ja's order gladly, she too is disturbed by the noticeable change in the now-frosty young woman's demeanor. Her husband contents himself with merely warning Geum-ja that the pistol will work but has a very short range; you'll have to hear the breath of your target to insure a kill shot.

Si-young knows Geum-ja has some sort of master plan, but can't figure out what it is or where she got it – or the plans for the strange gun for that matter. We find out in flashback, where the angelic, imprisoned version of Geum-ja is caring for a now-senile North Korean spy, Go Seon-sook (imprisoned 1967-1991). It's from her that Geum-ja got the Diamond Sutra, a yellowed old book that becomes Geum-ja's new bible.

All these good deeds had earned Geum-ja the reputation of an angel, but the angel had taken a turn.

Oh Su-hee, was imprisoned only from 1993-1994, but she was perhaps the most abused of Geum-ja's accumulated human projects. A loutish inmate, called the Witch (imprisoned for killing and eating her husband and his lover), forces Su-hee to perform oral sex on her, a repugnant duty to Su-hee. Geum-ja not only carries out a comically violent prank on the Witch, but goes even further. She begins subtly insinuating bleach into the Witch's meals, finally administering the fatal dose under the guise of caring for the bully. Afterwards, Geum-ja herself becomes known as the Witch.

When Geum-ja meets Su-hee on the outside, she's selling figurines of women holding severed men's heads. She makes them to order, she explains, with women customers bringing in

pictures of husbands and boyfriends to serve as models for the heads. Su-hee notes the change in Geum-ja's manner – particularly the blood-red eye shadow she's wearing now – but takes her former protector's order for intricately wavy earrings.

After her release, Geum-ja also visits Won-mo's parents, hysterically demanding forgiveness, cutting off a finger to demonstrate her sincerity and desperation. But all she does is cause Won-mo's mother to have a heart attack, and finally an ambulance takes both women to a hospital (where Geum-ja has her finger reattached).

To support herself, Geum-ja gets a job in a bakery run by Mr. Jang. Mr. Jang had taught baking in Geum-ja's prison, where he had been astonished by her ability to whip up wonderful concoctions with the sparsest of materials. Even more admiring of Geum-ja is Geun-sik, Jang's young apprentice who is just as astonished by Geum-ja's beauty.

One day, police chief Choi walks into the bakery, and flashes back to Geum-ja's interrogation, when she insisted – to the point of shouting – to a skeptical Choi that she had killed Won-mo. Choi apparently went along with what he knew was a false confession, as we see him surreptitiously guide Geum-ja through a recreation of the crime staged for a voyeuristic press.

The flashbacks continue when Geum-ja breaks into the adoption agency that handled the adoption of her own child. We see a 19-year-old Geum-ja, impregnated by a feckless teenaged boyfriend, calling an old grammar school teacher, Mr. Paek. After somewhat alarmingly reminding him that he used to call her “sexy” – this in grammar school – Geum-ja tells him of her predicament and asks if she can come live with him. Paek agrees.

Now armed with the relevant information, Geum-ja tracks down her daughter, who's been adopted by an Australian couple and named Jenny. Mother and daughter bond quickly, though Jenny is still angry over having been abandoned. But Geum-ja, who has painstakingly contrived an English-language letter explaining who she is, displays a vulnerable, even joyful and giddy, side she's kept hidden for the last 13 years.

Geum-ja, however, has not abandoned her larger plan. Just before meeting Jenny, she had fially allowed the puppy-doggish Geun-sik to sleep with her. In a moment of intimacy, she had recounted how, after her daughter was born, Paek had seduced her into helping him kidnap Won-mo. Paek rationalized the crime by saying that there were “good” kidnappings and bad ones, and that the seizure of Won Mo would be one of the former. But Paek had shown a different side when, annoyed by the boy's crying, he had killed him. Afterwards, Paek blackmailed Geum-ja into taking the fall by threatening to kill her baby.

No wonder her thirst for revenge is so intense.

The tension between her dueling emotions – the desire for vengeance and love for Jenny – comes into the open when Geum-ja, Jenny, and Geun-sik go on an outing. Beforehand, Geum-ja buys a puppy, who romps in the snow when they all pile out of the car near a meadow. They climb a hill and discover a deserted school. Jenny and Geun-sik run inside, where the baker gives Jenny an impromptu Korean lesson. But Jenny suffers a strong memory of kids in a classroom singing, a classroom presided over by Paek. She takes the puppy by the scruff of the neck and shoots it.

Fainlly we see the monster in his den: Paek in his apartment, expressionlessly eating dinner and watching TV. With no apparent change in emotion, he gets up and goes to the other

end of the table where his wife sits; he picks her up, bends her over the table, and has his way with her. For her part during the “lovemaking,” his wife reminds Paek that she’ll be out for dinner.

As it turns out, Paek’s wife is Park Yi-jeong, another inmate of Geum-ja’s penitentiary (from 1998 to 1999) and yet another beneficiary of the original Witch’s demise. Yi-jeong has assisted Geum-ja in her plans for revenge longer than anyone else, even taking an insurance plan in order to facilitate a meeting with Paek. And she’s not the only one; at least two other women have been working at discovering and corralling Paek.

But, Yi-jeong tells Geum-ja – who is the dinner friend Yi-jeong told Paek about – she can’t take living with Paek anyone. The plan for revenge has to begin tonight.

The plan seems doomed when we find Geum-ja’s spurned religious guide – the preacher – huddling with Paek. The preacher, it seems, has been following Geum-ja around since his former charge’s last cruel flip-off. He has snapped photos of Geum-ja and Yi-jeong meeting together and is now displaying them to an absorbed Paek, who rewards the preacher for his diligence with a check – for religious good works it is averred.

All seems lost when Paek ties Yi-jeong to a chair and beats her after she returns from her rendezvous with Geum-ja. That’s before, however, Paek pitches forward unconscious into his dinner plate.

Paek’s all set for Geum-ja’s vengeance until she finds some tell-tale talisman’s in Paek’s pocket. Then and Yi-jeong start going through the murdering extortionist’s home video collection. When the two women find evidence that Paek was an even bigger monster than first supposed. Geum-ja can no longer keep her vengeance to herself. There are other survivors who must be contacted and allowed the chance to splurge their bile and bitterness onto the purveyor of such pain and sorrow.

Sympathy For Lady Vengeance

About the film

At first glance, filmmaker Park Chanwook and actress Lee Young-ae look like the unlikeliest of collaborators. Park, who won the Grand Prix at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival for *Oldboy*, had achieved fame and box office success as the director of violent, emotionally wrenching revenge sagas, including both *Oldboy* and its preceding work, *Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance*. The planned third film in what had become a “Vengeance Trilogy,” *Sympathy for Lady Vengeance*, promised to further Park’s roiling vision.

Lee, on the other hand, was known throughout Asia as the star of the TV series, “The Jewel in the Palace.” In it, the actress starred as a cook of humble origins who goes to work in the imperial palace of the Chosun dynasty circa 1600. Undone by the machinations of a rival, she’s banished from the palace, only to return as the first woman physician to receive the highest of imperial appointments. Furthering the homey, soap opera quality of the highly popular period drama was the time it spent detailing the actual preparations of meals prepared for the royal household. The show didn’t just make Lee a star, but one of Korean television’s most popular cooks.

Hardly a natural pairing, then... except that Park and Lee had already worked together once before. Park’s third film, the box-office hit, *Joint Security Area* (aka *JSA*), had been about a military scandal that erupted when North and South Korean border guards fraternized with one another. Lee had played a central role in that film, as a Swedish army major of Korean descent who led the investigation into the affair’s aftermath.

Park had wanted to make his third film in the trilogy about a woman. He saw the gentle, demure image that Lee had developed in the meantime as perfect for his *Lady Vengeance* character, the heavenly angel/bloody-minded avenger Geum-ja. The contrast between the actress’s serene appearance and popular image, on the one hand, and the character’s startling, even shocking actions, would create the human enigma central to the movie’s drama.

Sympathy for Lady Vengeance was also the cause for another reunion for Park. Chin Moi-sik’s brilliant turn as the star of *Oldboy* had cemented his status as one of Korea’s most important leading men. Wanting an adversary strong enough to match up with Lee’s appeal, Park cast Chin as the movie’s villain, a school teacher with an evil secret.

The rare film that features a woman acceding to the role of lone avenger, *Sympathy for Lady Vengeance* further advances Park’s dramatic explorations of revenge and its debilitating aftereffects.

Park Chanwook’s film premiered in his home country of South Korea on July 18, 2005 and exploded at the box office. To date the film has earned in excess of \$20,500,000 and seen more than 4,000,000 admissions, making it the biggest opening to date this year in Korea.

Sympathy For Lady Vengeance

Production Notes

Angel or Witch? Neither or both? Probably not even Lee Geum-ja herself could answer that question. The combined heroine and anti-heroine of Park Chanwook's *Sympathy for Lady Vengeance* is the latest of the South Korean filmmaker's troubled vengeance-minded protagonists to discover she risks losing her very self in the pursuit of what should be the satisfactions of bloody revenge.

When Geum-ja had been a pregnant teenager, she had fallen under the sway of a former teacher, Mr. Paek, who persuaded her to take part in a kidnapping. Although Paek shocked her by killing their young victim for crying too much, Geum-ja was coerced into taking the fall – a 13-year prison sentence. Now free – and an honest-to-god murderer – she's dedicated herself to hunting down the monster Paek. But a reunion with her daughter alerts Geum-ja to the consuming risks of revenge, a warning that torments her more than it deters her.

With *Sympathy for Lady Vengeance*, Park brings to an end a trilogy that began with *Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance*, reached an operatic crescendo with *Oldboy*, and here concludes with a relatively – that's relatively – less bloody, equally harrowing, but strangely optimistic work. Park's trilogy makes for a modern match to such notable action trilogies from the past: Sergio Leone's three Man With No Name westerns, starring Clint Eastwood, and George Romero's recently lengthened *Living Dead* output.

As was the case with these predecessors, Park began by ratcheting up the intensity of a particular genre; in his case, the urban revenge flick. The resulting emotional power of the movies became so explosive, that the confining conventions were shattered and the raw and bleeding human factor laid bare.

Park follows the example of Leone and Romero to use each succeeding film to illuminate different themes. For example, Leone's gunmen in turn displayed a taste for upending corrupt social orders (*Fistful of Dollars*), using apparent greed to avenge of death (*For a Few Dollars More*), before finally serving as exhibits in the comparison of smalltime criminality with the wartime version (*The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*). Romero's first three films dealt with psychological horror (*Night of the Living Dead*), social satire (*Day of the Dead*), and metaphysical angst (*Day of the Dead*),

Park's film each start with different critiques of Korean society. In *Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance*, Park concentrated on class differences, beginning with an unemployed worker seeking revenge on the businessman who laid him off, before turning to the businessman's reciprocal vengeance on the worker; Park even managed to throw in a third cycle of revenge – involving the black market for human organs – that expanded on the scheme of rich vs. poor.

In *Oldboy*, the background involves Korea's totalitarian legacy. A modest businessman spends a period of repressive dictatorship locked up in a private prison. Yet, when he's finally released, he finds himself taunted and manipulated by a young businessman who became rich under the dictatorship. Despite the recent establishment of democracy, the businessman finds

himself nearly powerless before the permanently rooted power of the earlier regime's collaborators. In the end of Park's bleakest film, all the desperate hero can hope for is an internal escape from repression.

Sympathy for Lady Vengeance is rooted in the condition of Korean women and in the way Geum-ja's response to her predicament flummoxes those who want to pigeonhole her. At first, her prayerful response to her imprisonment, and her helpful nature, earn her the sobriquet Angel. But as her helpfulness to her fellow inmates logically grows violent as their tortures grow harsher, she gets a new nickname: The Witch. Yet, she's the same person pursuing the same ends.

But Geum-ja herself begins to suffer from this personality divide when she's released from prison and begins her deadly quest for revenge on Paek. Now cold and almost indifferent to her former friends, she finds herself emotionally vulnerable when she finds the daughter she was forced to give up for adoption 13 years before. Geum-ja is forced to confront, in extreme terms, the tension between the socially-imposed roles of a coolly ambitious single woman and that of a loving mother. Geum-ja tries to resolve this tension in the midst of a revenge drama that would spark the envy of the Jacobins.

Over this thematic tension, Park layers a typically virtuosic and careering action film. Although by volume the blood count is down, that is more a credit to the ingenuity of Geum-ja's violence. The climax provides perhaps the most wrenching sequence yet in the Park canon, proof that the director is an unequalled contemporary cinematic cook of wrenching action, keen psychology, and acute social observation.

Crew Biographies

About the Director

Park Chanwook

Although he is now one of the leading figures of the new Korean cinema, director Park Chanwook didn't consider a filmmaking career until he attended university. While studying philosophy at Sogang University, the future director discovered Alfred Hitchcock and fell in love with movies. While his debut film, *The Moon Is... the Sun's Dream*, in 1992, and his second film, *A Trio*, in 1997, were not the sort of commercial successes Park would enjoy in the future, they did attract favorable critical notices.

After contributing to several screenplays, Park achieved "overnight" success with his 2000 film *JSA : Joint Security Area*. A tension-filled tale of potentially peace-busting fraternization between Northern and Southern border guards at the Korean divide *JSA*'s mix of drama, action, and suspense resulted in the sale of an astonishing 5.8 million tickets. It was Korea's highest-grossing film till that time. Park was universally recognized as a top talent, received numerous prizes at all of Korea's film awards, and an invitation to enter the official competition at the Berlin International Film Festival in 2001.

After *JSA*, Park shocked and impressed critics around the world with the hard-boiled revenge saga, *Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance*. Once again, a Park film was selected for the competition section at the Berlin International Film Festival, cementing his international reputation. His next vengeance-themed film, *Oldboy* (2003), brought Park more critical plaudits, plus the commercial success that had eluded *Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance*. The story of a man, who, after being imprisoned for 15 years without knowing why or by whom, is then set loose to seek his revenge, swept the Korean awards programs and ultimately took the Grand Prix at the Cannes International Film Festival in 2004.

Acknowledged worldwide for his unique themes and style, Park concludes his "Vengeance Trilogy" with his latest film, *SYMPATHY FOR LADY VENGEANCE*.

FILMOGRAPHY

Three... Extremes (Segment: "Cut," 2004)

Oldboy (2003)

If You Were Me (Segment: Never ending Peace & Love, 2003)

Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance (2002)

JSA: Joint Security Area (2000)

A Trio (1997)

The Moon Is... the Sun's Dream (1992)

Production Design

Cho Hwa-seong

Cho is a renowned Art Director, famous for bringing out the true feelings of movies to the fullest and being sensuous at the same time. He has worked with director Park before on *Three... Extremes*, and when Park assigned him the task of production design on <SYMPATHY FOR LADY VENGEANCE>, Park provided him with one directive... to go with a natural look.

Instead of stylized sets, as in previous projects, he has opted to go with more ordinary surroundings in *SYMPATHY FOR LADY VENGEANCE*. However, the changing status of Geum-ja's mentality was expressed through the use of color and depth of space. If *Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance* highlighted the realism and *Oldboy* the fantasy, the psychological place-in-time of Geum-ja was successfully expressed through the skilful hands of the art director in *SYMPATHY FOR LADY VENGEANCE*.

FILMOGRAPHY

Nambuk Love (2003)
The Last Supper (2003)
Natural City (2002)
Confession (2001)
Record (2000)
The Spy (1999)
The Soul Guardians (1998)
Hallelujah (1997)
Green Fish (1997)

Music Director

Cho Young-wuk

From classical music to popular songs, from psychedelic to punk, Cho Young-wuk is famous for his enveloping soundtracks. He has previously worked with director Park Chan-wook on *JSA* and *Oldboy*, but his music for *SYMPATHY FOR LADY VENGEANCE* is different than anything he has done before. Unlike *Oldboy*, whose music focused on the chase and revenge with mid-low tones and a macho atmosphere, *SYMPATHY FOR LADY VENGEANCE* is filled with higher tones and a more feminine mood.

FILMOGRAPHY

Blood Rain (2005)
Some (2004)
Flying Boys (2004)
The Classic (2003)
Oldboy (2003)
Silmdo (2003)
Public Enemy (2002)
Ardor (2002)
JSA (2000)

A Day (2000)
Tell Me Something (1999)
Happy End (1999)
The Quiet Family (1998)
The Contact (1997)

Director of Photography

Chung Chung-hoon

Chung Chung-hoon won praise for his dynamic and sensual visuals and action on *Oldboy*. In *SYMPATHY FOR LADY VENGEANCE*, he emphasizes the natural change of colors, connecting the colors to the flow of the story, as well as the use of close-ups and tight camerawork. This technique of shooting requires technical skills based on the Digital Intermediate Color Correction, which should be carefully calculated beforehand. With this style and technique of photography, audiences can closely trace the scenes as if they were witnessing the characters in reality.

FILMOGRAPHY

Antarctic Journal (2005)
Three... Extremes (2004)
Oldboy (2003)
Save the Green Planet (2000)
Gohae (2000)

Lighting

Park Hyun-won

Park Hyun-won has worked on over 20 films, including many of the biggest in recent Korean movie history. He has already made two films with director Park Chan-wook, and he is acknowledged for being able to catch the filmmaker's exact intentions. He used dark and wet lighting for *Oldboy*, but for *SYMPATHY FOR LADY VENGEANCE* he has gone in the direction of softer and warmer colors.

FILMOGRAPHY

Antarctic Journal (2005)
Three... Extremes (2004)
Windstruck (2004)
The Classic (2003)
Oldboy (2003)
Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance (2002)
My Sassy Girl (2001)
Last Present (2001)
Happy End (1999)
The Quiet Family (1998)

Costumes

Cho Sang-kyung

<SYMPATHY FOR LADY VENGEANCE> is the third film that Cho Sang-kyung has worked on with director Park Chan-wook. “Geum-ja likes pretty things and anything she touches becomes pretty,” says Cho in explaining his costumes for the film. Various kinds of colors appear throughout the film, but black is especially important. With different tones of black appearing when Geum-ja approaches her moments of revenge, color is vital to signaling the mood of the film.

FILMOGRAPHY

A Bittersweet Life (2005)

Three... Extremes (2004)

The Big Swindle (2004)

The Sweet Sex and Love (2003)

Oldboy (2003)

THE CAST

Lee Young-ae starring as Lee Geum-ja

One of Korea's sweetest actresses, Lee Young-ae, casts aside her popular image to play the enigmatic Lee Geum-ja, *Sympathy for Lady Vengeance*'s angel of vengeance

Lee Young-ae's first substantial role came in 2000, when she co-starred in Park Chan-wook's *JSA: Joint Security Area*. The serene young actress brought just the right amount of self-confidence to her role as a Swedish army major (of Korean descent) investigating an armistice-threatening scandal on the border between North and South Korea.

But Lee achieved fame throughout all of Asia later, first when she starred in Hur Jin-ho's *One Fine Spring Day* as an attractive but selfish divorcee, in a showcase for her special charms and quietly nuanced acting. In 2003, she starred as the cheerful and strong character Jang-geum in the hit TV drama 'The Jewel in the Palace', which drew the highest audience ratings for that year for Korean television and went on to become an international success. Lee starred as a simple, if self-possessed young countrywoman who becomes a cook to the imperial household during the Chosun dynasty. Cast out of the palace thanks to the machinations of a ruthless rival, she later returns as the first woman to become the royal family's physician.

Sympathy for Lady Vengeance is thus both a challenge to Lee's talents and to her fans' preconceptions of her. Based on the film's overwhelming critical and audience responses, the challenge was well met.

FILMOGRAPHY

One Fine Spring Day (2001)

Last Present (2001)

JSA: Joint Security Area (2000)

Inch'alla (1997)

Choi Min-sik as Teacher Baek

Choi Min-sik, one of Korea's most acclaimed actors, brings a frightening force to the part of Teacher Baek, the sinister elementary school teacher responsible for Geum-ja's suffering and the object of her vengeance.

In a cinema career that has yet to hit the ten-year mark, Choi has become one of Korea's most well-known actors through his long string of diverse and memorable roles. In the process, he has worked with South Korea's most distinguished filmmakers, perhaps most notably with the dean of his country's cinema, Im Kwon-taek. In Im's *Chihwaseon*, Choi delivered an unforgettable performance as Korea's greatest painter of the Chosun dynasty, a womanizing and carousing artist who both mastered and flaunted his art's rules.

Early in his career, Choi had also associated himself with some members of Korea's exciting new crop of filmmakers. For Kim Jee-won, he played a supporting role in the black comedy *The Quiet Family* (1998). The next year, he appeared in Kang Je-gyu's extraordinary espionage action-thriller, *Shiri*. But the part that brought Choi his greatest recognition was as the businessman mysteriously imprisoned for 15 years without explanation in *Oldboy*. Fascinated by the character of Mr. Baek, Choi decided to take on the pivotal supporting role. For the first time Choi has played a full-fledged villain.

FILMOGRAPHY

Crying Fist (2005)
Springtime (2004)
Oldboy (2003)
Chihwaseon (2002)
Failan (2001)
Happy End (1999)
Shiri (1999)
The Quiet Family (1998)
Number 3 (1997)

Oh Dal-su as Mr. Chang

Mr. Chang is the teacher who teaches Geum-ja the skills of a baker in prison. Impressed with her wonderful skills at turning poor prison supplied ingredients into a cake fit for a king, he employs her at his bakery when she is released.

Now a veteran of the stage, Oh first stepped into acting when he was a university student, after visiting a small theater on a delivery job. He made his debut in <Bet on my Disco> and also appeared in *Oldboy*, long to be remembered as the man who has his dental work rearranged.

FILMOGRAPHY

Crying Fist (2005)
A Bittersweet Life (2005)
Mapado: All About Hemp & Widows (2005)
When Spring Comes (2004)
The Wolf Returns (2004)
The President's Barber (2004)
Oldboy (2003)
Bet on my Disco (2002)

Kim Si-hu as Geun-shik

Geun-shik, a naïve 20-year-old boy working at Mr. Chang's bakery, falls in love with Geum-ja at first sight. He is always by Geum-ja's side and tries to provide a haven for the woman in her sorrow and pain.

Making his debut in a feature film, 19-year-old Kim has received a lot of public interest merely for playing opposite Lee Young-ae. In *SYMPATHY FOR LADY VENGEANCE*, he flawlessly assumes the role of the 20-year-old youth who is captivated by the beautiful yet mysterious Geum-ja.

Lee Seung-shin as Park Yi-jeong

Park Yi-jeong is the inmate who becomes closest to Lee Geum-ja, and on her release assists Geum-ja with her revenge in a way no one could ever imagine.

Lee Seung-shin made her debut on TV, instantly becoming established for her androgynous and intellectual look, characteristic traits which have brought her many drama roles. She appeared in director Park's previous film, *Oldboy*, as a hypnotist, and left a strong impression on the screen.

FILMOGRAPHY

Oldboy (2003)

Charisma (1996)

Kim Bu-sun as Woo So-young

Woo So-young owes her second chance at life to Geum-ja, having benefited from a much-needed kidney transplant from Geum-ja in prison. For this, Woo, with help from her husband, builds a custom-made piece on Geum-ja's special request which will provide her with the means of her revenge.

Kim is an actress who enjoyed success in the 80's with *Madam Aema*. In 2004, she appeared in *Once Upon a Time In High School* as a middle-aged woman, seducing Kwon Sang-woo (playing a high-school kid).

FILMOGRAPHY

Once Upon a Time In High School (2004)

My Mother, The Mermaid (2004)

A Moment to Remember (2004)

Madam Aema 3 (1985)