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NEWS

Squid Game Creator Explains Why Season 2's Trans Woman Character Is Played By a Cis Man



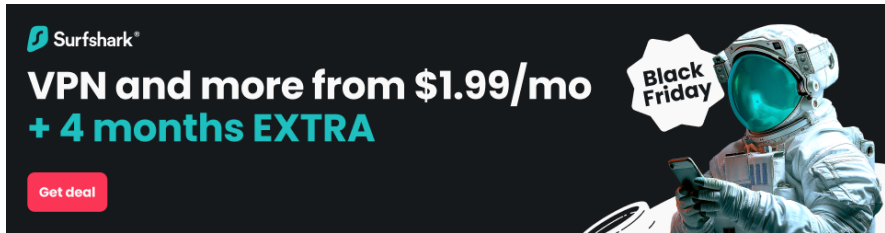
By Yumna Nasim — December 31, 2024 [No Comments](#) [3 Mins Read](#)

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Hwang Dong-hyuk, the creator, writer, and director of Squid Game, shared the emotional reason behind his choice not to cast an openly transgender woman for the role. He described it as a "heartbreaking" decision.

In **Squid Game season 2**, one of the standout characters is **Hyun-ju**, a transgender woman and former special forces soldier. She enters the deadly game to win money for her gender-affirming surgery. Known as **Player 120**, Hyun-ju showed bravery and kindness, saving lives and helping Gi-hun (played by Lee Jung-jae) during his rebellion against the guards. Fans were surprised to learn that the character was played by a **cisgender male actor, Park Sung-hoon**, instead of a transgender woman.

Creator **Hwang Dong-hyuk** explained to **TVGuide.com** that he anticipated this reaction but shared the **"heartbreaking"** reason behind his decision not to cast a transgender actress for the role.



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“ ***I expected people to talk about this from the moment I started creating Hyun-ju, At first, we considered casting a transgender actor to keep the role authentic. However, during our research in Korea, we found that there are very few actors who are openly transgender or gay. Sadly, the LGBTQ community in Korean society is still marginalized and overlooked, which is truly heartbreaking.*** ”

— Hwang shared with the outlet

Hwang explained that finding a transgender woman for the role was **"nearly impossible."** He said,

“ ***That's why we decided to cast Sung-hoon. I've followed his work since his debut, especially his roles in queer stories, and I completely trusted his talent to bring this character to life.*** ”

Hwang also pointed out that trans characters are very rare in Korean shows. He wanted to include this representation in Season 2 because **"it's not widely accepted yet"** in Korean society.



See More: [Squid Game's Hwang Dong-hyuk Picks Which Marvel Character Would Win the Deadly Competition](#)

Hwang shared with [Decider.com](#),

“ I see the people who join the Squid Game as those often ignored or pushed aside by society, not just because of money issues. In Season 1, Ali represented this idea as a foreign worker in Korea, a group often seen as a minority here. Sadly, in Korea today, gender minorities face similar struggles. That’s why I created the character Hyun-ju as a transgender woman transitioning from male to female.

— He explained,

In Season 2, Hyun-ju shares her struggles as a transgender woman, talking about the **discrimination** she faced in her job and personal life. Creator Hwang hopes her story in Squid Game will help people understand these challenges better.

Squid Game Season 2 is now available on [Netflix](#), with Season 3 expected to release in **2025**.

Yumna Nasim



A recent CS grad who loves keeping up with new designs and trends in UI/UX, enjoys writing and is passionate about exploring the latest marketing trends in the entertainment industry. With one year of experience in this field, she crafts engaging news blogs that capture the latest trends. In her spare time, she enjoys watching Hollywood movies and TV shows, reading novels, and sharing movie reviews on her Reddit account.

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