

EARBOY

Written by

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A YOUNG BOY's ear.

TITLE CARD: "Earboy"

His feet fidgets on the leg of a stool he sits on. FOOTSTEPS.  
A WOMAN enters frame.

Hair clumps that resemble black elephant tusks fall from the sky and land on an obscure surface like snowflakes.

It feels like winter. Everything feels slow, heavy and ginormous until..

SNIP SNIP.

METAL SCISSORS cut through hair. BOY PLAYS WITH TOYS.

TV plays in the background.

BOY

"Rawr! I got you now!"

HA-YUN

이안아, 가만히.. 어, 가만히 좀 있어보자.

(Ian, one moment, please.)

BOY

"You'll never take me alive  
Monster!"

HA-YUN, a Korean woman in her late 30s, desperately tries to get the boy to sit still. She wears a grey hoodie.

She attempts to hold up his hair.

BOY (CONT'D)

"You know why?"

HA-YUN

이안아, 조금만 참자, 응?

(Ian, one moment, please.)

But then he punches the air with his POWER RANGER toy.

BOY

(O.S.)

"Cuz it's Morphin Time!"

Ha-Yun pulls back the scissors in the nick of time.

Her eyes go big as she clenches her hand.

We see IAN, a 7-year old Korean-American boy as he glances back at Ha-Yun. He sports a SUPERHERO EYE MASK, SLEEVELESS UNDERSHIRT, and has a TOWEL draped over his shoulders to protect him from the falling hair.

Ha-Yun exhales and glances to the side.

A creased document that reads "APPLICATION FOR PUBLIC HOUSING UNIT - CONCORD, CA" sits near the sink.

2 INT. MOTEL BEDROOM ROOM 2

We see Ian and Ha-Yun in front of the bathroom sink.

IAN  
"Take that monster!"

HA-YUN  
이안아— (Ian-)

IAN  
And that!

3 INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT 3

Ian winds up his power ranger.

IAN  
And TAKE this-

Ha-Yun snatches away his power ranger.

He turns around to Ha-Yun. His face becomes stoic.

Ha-Yun kneels down and sets the scissors aside on the floor.

HA-YUN  
머리부터 먼저 자르고—그다음에 놀자.  
(Haircut first. Then you can play.)

Ian tries to grab his power ranger but she pulls it away.

IAN  
Give me my ranger.

HA-YUN  
내일, 이안이가, 멋지게 보였으면 좋겠는데...  
(Ian, it would help us if you look nice for tomorrow)

IAN

I don't care--I want to go home!

He removes his mask. His face revealed.

IAN (CONT'D)

I want us to go back home to appa.

HA-YUN

우리 이제 새로운 집으로 이사갈꺼야.

더 좋은 집으로.

(We are going to a new home. A better home.)

Ha-Yun gets distracted by a bruise mark on Ian's collar bone.

Ian tries to cover it up.

IAN

Appa promised he'd take me to see the snow-

Ha-Yun impulsively snaps. Flinging the toy to the floor.

HA-YUN

전에한 약속이나 지키지 약속은 무슨-  
(Your appa promised a lot of things)

But then catches herself - she immediately regrets it.

Ian looks shocked.

She picks up the toy for him. Grabs the scissors and become's playful.

HA-YUN (CONT'D)

이안아! 지금부터 정~말 빨리해줄께!

어! 근데 엄마가 이 파워레인저의 힘을 좀 얻을수있을까? 엄마도

그런 힘이 필요하거든--?

(I'm going to be quick now. I just needed to borrow some of your ranger's power... Mom's need that too you know)

IAN  
You can't because you're stupid  
like appa says.

He casually returns to playing with his toys.

She swallows and then exhales.

Ian signals to keep cutting with a scissor finger gesture.

She gently grabs him by the shoulder.

HA-YUN  
이안아, 이안이가 그동안 많이 힘들었던거  
엄마가 다 알아... 앞으로는 다 괜찮아질꺼야.  
엄마가 더 노력할게. 우리 행복하게  
살수있게—엄마가 최선을 다할게. 응?  
(Ian, I know its been hard. Mom  
knows. It's going to be better. I'm  
gonna try harder. We're going to  
live happily. I'll do my best.)

4 INT. MOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT 4

We see them stare at each other like statues until...

IAN  
Um. My *back* is itchy.

Ha-Yun releases her hand from his shoulder.

The TV in the foreground. SNIP SNIP.

5 INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT 5

We hear the TV sound change to the starting music of a show.

Hair falls onto the bathroom tile.

IAN  
Hurry! I have to see my show.

HA-YUN  
응, 거의 다 해가. 조금만 더 하면돼요~ 가만히  
있어봐. 움직이지 말고.  
(Almost done.)

IAN  
No! My show, my show, my show.

She positions the scissor above his left ear.

HA-YUN

알았어~ 어~ 다했다. 다했다. 잠깐만...  
(Almost done.)

TV makes exploding, exciting sounds.

The scissor blades close.

Ian suddenly turns.

IAN

Hurry!

CLIP. CRUNCH.

IAN (CONT'D)

Ow!

CLANK!

Scissors and toys hit the floor with droplets of BLOOD.

HA-YUN

어! 어! 어머! 어머! 어떻게! 어떻게! 미쳤나봐 이걸 어떻게!  
(Oh my! Oh my!)

IAN

What? What??

She scrambles off to the side.

HA-YUN

(O.S.)

어! 이안아! 아니야 아니야 괜찮아! 잠깐만  
잠깐만! 가만히 있어봐!  
(Just a second! Just a second!)

Ian reaches for his ear.

BLOOD slides down his finger tips. Ha-Yun's voice DROWNS OUT.

His eyes cold and wide as he looks toward the floor.

There lies an EAR FLAP in the foreground.

He turns and sees a gruesome reflection of his blood-stained ear... A DEAFENING SILENCE.

HARD CUT:

6 EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

6

Christmas lights dangle from the motel roof.

MUSIC CUE: "Deck the Halls" (Instrumental version) in the background until...

Ha-Yun bursts through their room's door, carrying Ian who has half a blue hoodie on, in her arms while holding onto his ear with a wet, slightly red towelette.

IAN  
AHHHHHHHHHHH!

Ian SHRIEKS while he clenches onto his power ranger.

She gently tries to shush him so not to wake up the neighbors around the motel.

7 EXT. MOTEL POOLSIDE - NIGHT

7

She frantically scans the area.

And then rushes over to a pool table with an ASH TRAY and empty BEER BOTTLES.

She lays Ian down on the pool chair.

Tears run down his face as he furrows his eyebrows.

IAN  
(Repeats)  
I don't want to die.

She gives off a nervous chuckle.

She looks through the ash tray and finds a cigarette butt.

She blows on it, which reignites a glowing ember.

Ian raises his eyebrow.

She hugs him as tight as she humanly can.

The cigarette lines up against Ian's partial ear.

IAN (CONT'D)  
Wait.

HA-YUN  
우리 이안이 식식하지! (I'm sorry, Ian.  
Please be brave)

She dabs the cigarette on his ear. SIZZLE!

Smoldering ear cartilage. Ian SCREAMS!

We zoom out to what looks like Ha-Yun branding her child.

IAN  
Stop! Stop!

He finally pushes her off and then grabs his ear.

Ha-Yun pulls his hand away from his ear.

HA-YUN  
어! 아직! 만지면 안돼.  
(Don't touch it yet.)

Ian pushes back and hits her repeatedly in the chest.

IAN  
Idiot.

Ha-Yun grabs his power ranger and tries to calm him with it.

He chucks it into the empty, dried up swimming pool.

IAN (CONT'D)  
I hate you, I hate you, I hate you.

Ian stands up and marches away. Holding onto his ear.

IAN (CONT'D)  
I'm going home.

We stay with Ha-Yun as she slowly clutches onto her chest.

8 INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT 8

Ian washes his ear in the sink. His mask sits nearby.

9 INT. MOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT 9

He packs his toys in a fury into his power ranger backpack.

But then he slowly pulls back out his monster.

He examines it and then his own ear in the mirror - touching his ear and realizing it doesn't hurt anymore. He then touches the bruise on his neck, which is still tender.

RED & BLUE lights wash over him. He looks toward the window.

10 EXT. MOTEL SWIMMING POOL - NIGHT 10

Ha-Yun travels through the empty swimming pool.  
She kneels down and picks up the power ranger - processing.  
FOOTSTEPS from above.

HA-YUN  
이안아, 엄마가 미안해—  
(Ian, I'm sorry-)

Two HARD LIGHTS suddenly spot over her.  
She glances up like a deer slightly trembling.

11 EXT. MOTEL POOLSIDE - NIGHT 11

Ian's feet walk and turn a corner, which reveals two POLICE OFFICERS investigating the empty pool with their flashlights. The officer heard talking to Ha-Yun is a middle-aged, Caucasian male officer (30s) who looks like he's tough as nails. Beside him is a African-American female officer (40s).

OFFICER CRAIG  
(Distant)  
There's a report of a disturbance..  
What's your name and date of birth?

Ha-Yun stutters.

HA-YUN  
(O.S.)

어! 저기—오케이... 어떻게 어떻게 어 엄..엄.. 소리 소리... (Date.. Birth... 1952, May 2nd)

Ian looks surprised in his mask and hoodie.  
LORRAINE glances at CRAIG and then steps up.

OFFICER LORRAINE  
And your name ma'am. What is your name?

HA-YUN  
(Broken English)  
예스... 마이넴 이즈: 하윤. 정하윤. 아니—노:  
하윤. 정. (Ha-Yun. Ha-Yun Jung.)

OFFICER CRAIG  
Which is it? Jung Ha-Yun or Ha-Yun  
Jung??

HA-YUN  
Ha-Yun Jung.

OFFICER LORRAINE  
(to herself)  
Ha-Yun Jung.

LIGHT FOOTSTEPS approach.

Craig presses his walkie in the background.

OFFICER CRAIG  
(O.S.)  
Dispatch, give me descriptives over  
the air--for a Ha-Yun Jung, May  
2nd, 1952. That's hotel, alpha...

Meanwhile, Lorraine turns around and sees Ian.

She gestures to Craig she'll take care of him and sheaths her  
flashlight.

OFFICER LORRAINE  
(To Ian)  
Hey buddy. What's your name?

12 EXT. MOTEL SWIMMING POOL - NIGHT 12

Ha-Yun realizes they're talking to Ian.

HA-YUN  
어, 이안아! 괜찮아 괜찮아 들어가있어. 엄마  
금방 갈게! 들어가!  
(Go back inside Ian, everything is  
okay-)

OFFICER CRAIG  
Shush! Remain quiet. Do not move a  
muscle.

He points at her.

13 EXT. MOTEL POOLSIDE 13

Lorraine squats down in front of Ian, who's scared.

OFFICER LORRAINE  
 Hey hun it's okay. We're here to  
 protect you. Who's that?

She points at his monster toy but then notices his awkward  
 head turn.

OFFICER LORRAINE (CONT'D)  
 Can you take your mask off for me  
 hun?

He shakes his head.

OFFICER LORRAINE (CONT'D)  
 Hun, I need to see your face. Or  
 else mommy might get in trouble.

A beat.

He slowly removes his mask in front of her.

Her eyes go big.

14 EXT. MOTEL SWIMMING POOL - NIGHT

14

HA-YUN  
 이안아? 괜찮아? 어? 괜찮아?  
 (I an you ok??)

OFFICER CRAIG  
 Hey. I swear to God.

HA-YUN  
 (Broken English)  
 That's my son. Don't take him pls.

OFFICER CRAIG  
 Say one more word and I'll arrest  
 you for not complying. You'll never  
 see your son again. You understand?

These words are gibberish to Ha-Yun but his tone scares her.

15 EXT. MOTEL POOLSIDE - NIGHT

15

Craig's walkie goes off.

POLICE DISPATCH  
 (O.S.)  
 Ha-Yun Jung, no criminal record.  
 (MORE)

## POLICE DISPATCH (CONT'D)

Filed a DV report against her spouse. Currently in a custodial battle for Ian-

He turns his walkie off.

OFFICER CRAIG

Lorraine, what's the situation?

Lorraine wants to look at Craig since his walkie suddenly cut out but refocuses on Ian. A beat.

She gently grabs his monster toy and points to it.

OFFICER LORRAINE

So did mommy hurt you? Tell me the truth.

Ian gestures the scissors with his fingers.

IAN

No, really. And then I went "Ow!" But then she stopped it. It doesn't hurt anymore.

IAN (CONT'D)

(Referring to his ear)  
It's kinda cool.

Lorraine's poker face breaks into a short smile for the first time.

OFFICER LORRAINE

(Refers to bruise)  
And that?

IAN

(Refers to bruise)  
And this one... I was playing with my dad but I'm okay.

OFFICER CRAIG

(O.S.)  
Lorraine.

A beat.

OFFICER LORRAINE

(To Officer Craig)  
Yeah we don't have a crime here. It looks to be an accident.

OFFICER CRAIG  
Are you sure? The report's on you.

OFFICER LORRAINE  
Affirmative.

Craig is skeptical but presses his walkie again.

OFFICER CRAIG  
Code 4 at motel.

POLICE DISPATCH  
We copy the code 4. Be advised  
there is a multi-car collision on  
Alhambra. Occupants in critical  
condition.

OFFICER CRAIG  
Copy on our way.

Lorraine hands the monster back to Ian with a subtle smile.

Craig glances at Ha-Yun and then makes his way towards  
Lorraine.

16 EXT. MOTEL SWIMMING POOL - NIGHT 16

HEAVY FOOTSTEPS walk away.

The flashlight on Ha-Yun disappears. Leaving her in the dark  
empty pool basked in orange-yellow sodium vapor lights.

DEEP EXHALE. SNIFFLES.

Ha-Yun collects herself.

Ian steps down into the pool, walks over and picks up his  
power ranger before handing it to Ha-Yun.

She hesitantly grabs it and holds onto it gently.

Ian makes his way back but turns and waits for Ha-Yun.

She notices him waiting and then their eyes meet.

17 EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT 17

They walk back to the motel room beside each other. It's not  
perfect, but close enough that it feels like mom and son.

LIGHT SNOWFLAKES fall onto the ground and IAN stops.

A beat.

Snow falls onto Ian's cheek.

HA-YUN

(O.S.)

이안아, 왜? 뭐가보여?

(What is it?)

Ha-Yun also notices the snow gently falling around her.

IAN twirls and excitedly thrusts his monster into the air - flying through the snow and into their motel room.

18

INT. MOTEL DOOR - NIGHT

18

The door opens and the monster in Ian's hand flies into the room. Followed by Ha-Yun's hand holding the power ranger, which pauses at the door before flying in as well.

FADE OUT.