Cats on Film Pod

Transcript

Cats on Film Pod Episode 30
Madagascar (2005)



SKIPPER
Meows

INTRO JINGLE

RAY
Hi everybody! Welcome to *Cats on Film Pod.* I'm Ray Ilyn, here with my co-host, Skipper.

SKIPPER
Meows

RAY
Thank you for joining us every Tuesday as we review cats in film. You can support Skipper & me at https://pod.fan/catsonfilmpod

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Spoilers ahead!
Our special series, "Lions in Winter", continues this week. On today's episode, we're discussing the first *Madagascar*, from 2005. It's the only non-Disney movie we're reviewing this month.

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RAY
But *Kimba* was a TV series, Skipper, not a film. "Cats on *Film* Pod*",* not "TV Pod".

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RAY
Anyways, let's recap *Madagascar*, which begins in New York City, with the song "Born Free", from the movie *Born Free,* which is about humans raising a lion. And is definitely on our list of films to review.

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Madagascar's main feline is Alex the lion, the King of Central Park Zoo—the star attraction! There's a statue of him, and merch, and a 24-hour webcam, and he loves the attention. Alex knows how to dance and pose for photos, but has no clue where his steak dinners come from. He is fully institutionalized, sucking his thumb as he sleeps in a concrete enclosure amid the sounds of New York City streets.

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Right? Not even a scrap of carpet, the poor kitty. And there are no other lions for him to snuggle or play with, so his best friend is a zebra – his natural prey. Their friendship is sweet, but Alex is forced to go against his nature by the zookeepers, who were engaged in sketchy acquisitions.

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Double-spoiler! In the sequel, we learn that little lion cub Alex was poached off a wildlife preserve somewhere in Africa, so he's a victim of illegal wildlife trafficking. Not to mention how they pack the animals in wooden crates with just air holes and some straw on a cargo ship from New York to Kenya—even worse than the concrete zoo habitats!

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RAY
Yeah, lots of animal abuse in this kids movie.

SKIPPER
Meows

RAY
Huh. Yeah, Alex *is* the one captive lion we've discussed on the show this month. And he has very few feline traits. He walks on his hind legs, but when he and Marty finally start running on all fours across the grassy plains of Madagascar – *ah,* so joyful!

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RAY
I know – it's a real bummer when you can't go roll in the grass for even a day if it's raining or something. All you do is mope!

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Meows

RAY
Well, for good reason.
Anyways, once Alex and his herbivore friends are dropped off by a team of penguins, one of whom is called "Skipper", by the way—

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RAY
Laughs You tell 'em, buddy! *Laughs*

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Meows

RAY
Laughs Back to Alex the lion, he and his fellow zoo victims venture into the jungle and find a lemur party – they've got music and colorful lights and dancing! And after Alex accidentally scares away the fossas who usually prey on the lemurs, those fluffy little cuties are quite grateful. However, the city animals don't understand why anyone would fear Alex because they are cut off from "the circle of life".
They start to figure it out when Alex gets so hungry that he chomps on his best friend's butt! But the lemurs still have to spell it out for them.

CLIP FROM *MADAGASCAR*
JULIEN
Come, come, Maurice – what is a simple bite on the buttocks among friends? Here, give me a nibble.
MAURICE

Your party is over, Julien. Your brilliant plan has failed.
MARTY
What are you talkin' about?
MAURICE
Your friend here is what we call a deluxe model hunting and eating machine, and he eats steak, which is you.
GLORIA
Get outta here!
JULIEN
Okey-dokey, Maurice, I admit it—the plan failed. All is lost! We're all doomed! The fossas will come back and gobble us with their mouths! Because– we are *all* steak.
MORT
I'm steak! Me me me me me me me!
MAURICE
Mr. Alex cannot stay here. He belongs with his own kind, on the fossa side of the island.

RAY
But the fossa on the other side of the island do not accept Alex as their "own kind" cuz they're only kind of feline-ish and definitely not lions.

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RAY
They're scientifically classified as being in the same general group as cats, but they're really in a class of their own, having evolved on an island for so long. So Alex continues to feel lonesome and alienated. And because humans conditioned his predator instincts out of him, Alex is tormented by his carnivorous urges.

CLIP FROM *MADAGASCAR*
ALEX
Stay back! Please—I'm a monster.
MARTY
Alex, you're no monster. You're my friend. We're a team. You and me, remember?
ALEX
Growls

RAY
Poor kitty.

SKIPPER
Meows

RAY

The zoo animals are completely bonded by their shared captivity trauma and refuse to give up on Alex. Luckily, the penguins return from their trip to Antartica and introduce Alex to fresh sushi.

CLIP FROM *MADAGASCAR*
ALEX
Mmm—mmm! This **is** better than steak! I love it! **I love it!**
SKIPPER
The kitty loves the fishy.
CROWD
Cheers

SKIPPER
Meows

RAY
And all the land animals are happy because none of them are friends with any fishies.

SKIPPER
Meows

RAY
True— Alex's eating habits are probly the only feline behaviors he ever displays.
Well, Skipper, what's your review of *Madagascar's* feline representation?

SKIPPER
Meow, meow

RAY
Only two out of four paws for Alex the lion. His instincts are so messed up by humans that he's barely feline at all. Plus, there's so much animal abuse.

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OUTRO MUSIC

RAY
Cats on Film Pod is voiced and produced by Ray Ilyn, with music by The DōsMan, and additional sounds from FreeSound.org. Follow us online @catsonfilmpod on Instagram, Twitter, and PodFan. *Cats on Film Pod !*

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