Cats on Film Pod

Transcript

Cats on Film Pod Episode 14
The Witches (1990)



INTRO JINGLE

INTRO SHOW

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

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Thanks for joining us every Tuesday as we review cats in film. There will be spoilers.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Today, we're reviewing *The Witches* from 1990, based on the book by Roald Dahl.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Yes, the stereotype of black cats running with witches. Although, there's also a snake with one of the English witches.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Let's recap!
First, we meet a fluffy black Norwegian cat living with a middle-aged white lady who has all the signs of a witch. Not only a black cat, but also purple eyes, square-toed shoes, claw-like hands, and an obvious wig. Plus, she likes attacking children.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
The boiling bone-on meat on her stove-top *could* be child remains, but that's not even directly hinted at. When she kidnaps the little blonde-haired white girl, Erica, all we know is that she's trapped in a painting in her parents' house for several decades.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Good point. The black cat crossing little Erica's path isn't bad luck. The witch accompanying the cat is unlucky for the child.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
These negative, color-ist stereotypes can lead to problems for lots of kitty cats who just happen to be born with beautiful black fur. Have you ever experienced that kind of bias, Skipper?

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Oh, Skipper, I'm so sorry they treated you that way – **mis**treated you that way. Poor kitty.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
I love you exactly as you are!

SKIPPER
purrs

RAY
Yeah, good kitty.

SKIPPER
purrs

RAY
Another good kitty is Eva's cat, Liebchen, who does an admirable job of protecting their room at the Hotel Excelsior when the little boy who's been turned into a mouse is sneaking about.

CLIP FROM *THE WITCHES*
LIEBCHEN
Growls
LUKE
Down, cat! No, cat!
LIEBCHEN
Growls
LUKE
Grandma, help! Oh!

RAY
Liebchen gets so close to catching that mouse boy, but a dangling yarn toy proves much more enticing than a troublesome little mouse. And that granny's pretty good at play!

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
It's sweet the way Eva's first thought on getting back to their hotel room is to find her beloved Liebchen.

CLIP FROM *THE WITCHES*
EVA
pspsps!
Liebchen!
pspsps!

RAY
But that kitty does not deserve to be called a "bad cat" just because Eva doesn't understand that Liebchen's attacking the little mouse boy.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
For sure! Tossing the cat performer at Angelica Houston to simulate leaping is a cruel method of staging the unexpected cat trope.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Yes, they plan to have quite a lot of mice. Perhaps the Grand High Witch's plan to turn children into mice is ultimately for the benefit of cats?

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Not only more to eat, but if England is overrun with mice, then cats will have an elevated position in society!

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Yeah, what *did* happen to Liebchen after the mouse boy and his granny attacked the witches?

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Maybe. That hotel certainly needs some help controlling their vermin infestation! That would be a nice happy ending for Liebchen.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Indeed. So what's your review of the cats in *The Witches,* Skipper?

SKIPPER
Meows

RAY
I agree – only one paw for *The Witches.* It perpetuates harmful stereotypes about black cats, and the filmmakers were not exactly kind to the live cat performers.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Yeah, they had the Henson studio make some mouse puppets to mix in with the live mice, but they've got no problem throwing a good kitty around!

SKIPPER
meows

END STING

RAY
Thank you for listening to *Cats on Film Pod.* Know someone who loves spooky children's books? Be sure to share this episode with them!

OUTRO JINGLE

END CREDITS

RAY
Cats on Film Pod is voiced and produced by Ray Ilyn, with music by The DōsMan, and additional sounds from FreeSound.org.
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SKIPPER
meows