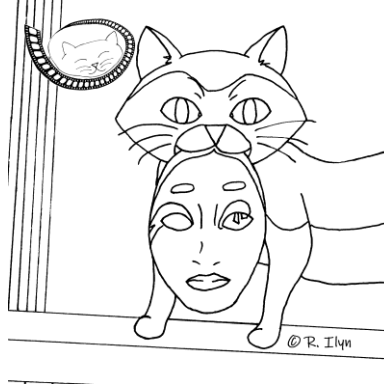


Cats on Film Pod

Transcript

Cats on Film Pod Episode 20 A Whisker Away (2020)



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's film is *A Whisker Away*. The English language dub for this animated Japanese film came out on Netflix in 2020.

SKIPPER

meows

RAY

Let's recap!

This skinny Japanese girl in her early teens, named Miyo—

SKIPPER

meows

RAY

Laughs — Yes, kinda like “meow”. Well, Miyo meets a trickster who sells her a mask that transforms her into a small white-furred, blue-eyed cat. As a cat, she’s able to spend time with the boy she has a crush on, Hinode, who doesn’t like her in her human form.

SKIPPER

meows

RAY

I mean, Miyo *does* have a big personality, and Hinode just wants to keep his head down and feel quietly sad about his dead dog.

SKIPPER

meows

RAY

It’s a creative way of re-hashing the identity mix-up plot that so many romances rely on.

SKIPPER

meows

RAY

Well, Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*, to start. And in the first film we reviewed for the pod, *Keanu* – Jordan Peele and Tiffany Haddish’s characters start off lying to one another about who they really are. And there’s any Cinderella or super hero story, and about half of all Hollywood rom-coms–

SKIPPER

meows

RAY

Oh. Yes. Back to *A Whisker Away*. Instead of pretending to be a long-lost sibling or mild-mannered reporter, Miyo pretends to be a cat. And the Mask Seller encourages her to make the most of it.

CLIP FROM *A WHISKER AWAY*

MASK SELLER

You really should have gone to Hinode’s place. You would have gotten to spend more time with him if you had.

MIYO

No! I haven’t even wiped my butt.

MASK SELLER

Cats don't use toilet paper. We just go *slurp!* It's eco-friendly.

MIYO

That is totally disgusting!

MASK SELLER

You'll have to learn to be more open-minded. You should be enjoying living like a cat. This will all be such a waste if you don't.

RAY

Hinode naming her after his dead dog is rude, even if he thinks she's the dog's reincarnation.

SKIPPER

meows

RAY

True. She has few feline behaviors. Even a human comments on it.

CLIP FROM A *WHISKER AWAY*

MR. SAKAGUCHI

She never grooms herself, or sharpens her claws, for that matter. What a strange cat.

RAY

Miyo is going back and forth between cat and human, but the Mask Seller wants her human face permanently, to swap for another cat's face.

Would you ever want to live as a human, Skipper?

SKIPPER

meows

RAY

Not even for an hour?

SKIPPER

meows

RAY

I think it'd be nice to be a cat for a little while.

SKIPPER

meows

RAY

Laughs Don't worry – I wouldn't eat any of your food. And I would definitely turn back into a human, even though being a cat is probably pretty awesome.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
The one cat we see in the film who puts on a human mask is Kinako, the pet of Miyo's step-mom. Kinako pretends to be Miyo so she can become her cat-mom's human daughter.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Yeah, it's sweet that she's willing to give up her cat life in order to spend more time with her cat-mom, even if she has to do it in a human body. One of those sympathetic antagonists.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Yes! She ends up doing the right thing, particularly after seeing how upset her cat-mom is that Kinako's gone missing. And then there's Cat Island. I was not expecting old-timey humanoid cats in kimonos and such.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Oh, I hadn't thought of that! But there's that human-cat bar where the humans who turned into cats hang out, separate from the others. And for some reason, all these cats walk on their hind legs and wear clothes while hanging out in the sacred tree city.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Good point. There aren't many cats just wandering around the city outside of Cat Island. Maybe that's part of why people are always so excited to see Miyo in her cat form, because all the town's cats are either on Cat Island or have turned into humans.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY

I wouldn't wanna live in a town like that, either! But Kinako finds Miyo on Cat Island and they swap faces and go back to their usual lives. It was fun to see Kinako and the human-cats team up to attack the Mask Seller! They're a total super team together!

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Majorly heroic. Back in the human city, Kinako is reunited with her cat-mom, and Miyo and Hinode are more emotionally open and truly understand one another. At, like, thirteen. Plus fireworks, because romance.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
We know there are humans who regret running from their problems to become cats, but we don't get to see the cat-to-human side much.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Yes, Kinako definitely regrets it when she sees how much her cat-mom misses her. I got a little teary-eyed when they were reunited.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Absolutely. Anything else?

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Okay. What's your review of the feline representation in *A Whisker Away*?

SKIPPER
Meow, meow, meow

RAY
Three paws out of four. No live cats were harmed, and they depict feline-ness well, but the residents of Cat Island are too human-like.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Thank you for listening to *Cats on Film Pod*. Know someone who loves love? Share this episode with that romantic!

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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Cats on Film Pod !

SKIPPER
meows