

The Dark Crystal: The Reduced Script

FADE IN:

INT. UGLYPALACE - SKEKSIS HEADQUARTERS

UGLY LIZARD-LIKE BIRDS crawl around, making themselves incredibly DARK and DISGUSTING. Their ruling reeks corruption and tyranny. They are brutal and cruel. They enslave other races.

AUDIENCE

Oh, I think they are evil.

They live in dirty yet excessively decorated PALACES. They absorb additional life span from a PURPLE CRYSTAL through eye contact with CREEPY MUSIC in the background. They become stone and break into pieces when they DIE.

AUDIENCE (CONT'D)

This is dark magic. Those creatures are certainly evil.

They strip their fellow creature's clothe off with sick and twisted enthusiasm. Their laughter gives the AUDIENCE the creeps. Most of all, they burp and chew food with their mouths opened. They are EVIL.

AUDIENCE (CONT'D)

Uh, isn't this a children's movie?

EXT. THE MYSTIC LAIR

FRIENDLY BIRD-LIKE LIZARDS walk around. One of them talks to a PUPPET GIRL.

FRIENDLY BIRD-LIKE LIZARD

Listen, Puppet Girl...

MALE PUPPET LEAD

(in a sissy manner)

I'm not a girl; I'm Jen, a male Gelfling!

FRIENDLY BIRD-LIKE LIZARD

Whatever. Listen, according to this random prophecy, you must heal The Dark Crystal and save our world. In order to do so, you must 1. Find a female version of Yoda and get this Significant Item from her; 2. Not ask any of my wise colleagues for directions; 3. Experience the

(MORE)

FRIENDLY BIRD-LIKE LIZARD (CONT'D)
 artificial beauty of the world of
 The Dark Crystal; 4. Encounter
 extraordinarily cutesy beings
 specifically created and designed
 for this movie. On your way, you
 will enjoy the beautiful scenery
 and the mysterious magical
 atmosphere. That is pretty much the
 essence of your otherwise trivial
 mission. Consult A TOURIST'S GUIDE
 TO THE WORLD OF THE DARK CRYSTAL
 for your traveling pleasure. Now,
 leave, Male Puppet Lead; the
 success of this movie rests not so
 much on the completion of your
 unremarkable and boring journey but
 rather on the stunning special
 effects.

MALE PUPPET LEAD
 But hasn't my stuffed-animal
 appearance already ruined it?

EXT. SOME OTHER PLACE

MALE PUPPET LEAD walks and walks and walks, allowing nothing
 interesting to happen other than DIRECTOR JIM HENSON
 manifesting his VISUAL EFFECTS BUILDING SKILLS that involves
 only PLASTIC and GLUE.

MALE PUPPET LEAD
 Hey, Jim Henson heaven doesn't get
 much better than THIS nightmare!

Suddenly, an ATTEMPT TO SHOW THE EMOTIONAL SIDE OF THE STORY
 is thrown in!

FEMALE PUPPET LEAD
 Hello. My action figure comes with
 my annoying comical animal
 sidekick.

MALE PUPPET LEAD
 I thought I was the only
 Monkey-Like creature alive.

FEMALE PUPPET LEAD
 Technically, you don't have any
 good reason to believe that claim
 to begin with, do you?

MALE PUPPET LEAD

Oh, right.

There is some chemistry. But since both leads are PUPPETS, they are incapable of facial expressions, thus making their romance MECHANICAL and DULL.

FEMALE PUPPET LEAD

Let's go and see my foster family who appear to be constantly celebrating for nothing.

MALE PUPPET LEAD

But I'm wanted by the Ugly Lizard-Like Birds! Won't my presence put your family in jeopardy?

FEMALE PUPPET LEAD

I fail to see how logic should top the fine children's movie tradition of containing native festivals.

EXT. POD PEOPLE LAIR

The PUPPET CHARACTERS are in a native festival. COUNTRY MUSIC plays and COUNTRY FOODS are offered. ALL PUPPET CHARACTERS are HAPPY and DANCING.

SMALLER PUPPET CHARACTER

What a heart-warming scene with originality.

PARENTS IN THE AUDIENCE

But I've seen scenes like this for at least a hundred of times in other standard children's movies.

SMALLER PUPPET CHARACTER

Then check this out.

Suddenly, the festival is interrupted by GIANT COCKROACHES, minions of UGLY LIZARD-LIKE BIRDS! They capture a bunch of SMALLER PUPPET CHARACTERS, while the FEMALE LEAD does nothing to save them during the invasion!

FEMALE PUPPET LEAD

I feel no need to do so since I'm selfish and one-dimensional.

MALE PUPPET LEAD

But we must. To make the story dramatic and heroic. Plus I have to heal The Dark Crystal with this Significant Item I have so I will have to get to that UglyPalace anyway.

FEMALE PUPPET LEAD

Fine. But we must do this in such a way that Director Jim Henson can introduce more Dark Crystal animals.

They hop on SCARY RABBIT-HORSES. This is intended as HEARTWARMING and FUNNY.

PARENTS IN THE AUDIENCE

(thinking about the horror of mixing entirely generically different species, such as men and dogs)

Shouldn't this be a children's movie?

INT. DARK, UGLYPALACE - EVIL LAB

Meanwhile, UGLY LIZARD-LIKE BIRDS are draining the life out of the SMALLER PUPPET CHARACTERS by exposing them to THE DARK CRYSTAL. The shots are done in great details, eagerly offering painful close-ups of the VICTIMS' eyes to demonstrate how the victims lose their MINDS and YOUTHFULNESS. Their faces become wrinkled within the space of seconds, the reflections in their eyes are lost, and their mouths keep hanging as if they are experiencing a permanent shock. Their LIFE ESSENCE, whatever that is, has become LIQUID. Then the UGLY LIZARD-LIKE BIRD EMPEROR drinks it and gains temporal JUVENILITY.

PARENTS IN THE AUDIENCE

This is a children's movie, right?
RIGHT?

EXT. OUTSIDE THE UGLYPALACE

The PUPPET LEADS go to a STORMY LOCATION. Suddenly, they are attacked by the GIANT COCKROACHES!

MALE PUPPET LEAD

On no!

The GIANT COCKROACHES bite the SCARY RABBIT-HORSES' heads off and eat their legs -

PARENTS IN THE AUDIENCE

What kind of children's movie -

- right before the FEMALE PUPPET LEAD rescues the MALE PUPPET LEAD in a comical and humorous fashion.

AUDIENCE

I didn't see that coming...

(pause)

Oh, right, a children's movie.

Then, after a ridiculous plot twist that is totally unexpected and incomprehensible to children, the FEMALE PUPPET LEAD is captured by UGLY LIZARD-LIKE BIRDS!

UGLY LIZARD-LIKE BIRDS

Ha, we've got you, Female Puppet Lead!

They take her to the EVIL LAB and try to drain the life out of her as well, but apparently doing so is very time-consuming. A FEMALE CREATURE OF UNKNOWN RACE, who behaves hell a lot like a red YODA, is also imprisoned in the EVIL LAB.

RED YODA

Female Puppet Lead, use your Middle-Size-Puppet voice to awaken the lab creatures that are also here for no good reason!

She DOES, and the nearby UGLY LIZARD-LIKE BIRD scientist can't do a thing to stop her, creating the impression that THE DARK CRYSTAL'S power is useless against our FEMALE PUPPET LEAD.

FEMALE PUPPET LEAD

(dehydrating)

I can think and actually do things even when my mind is being drained out of my body! This really makes whole a lot of sense!

She succeeds and eliminates the BIRD SCIENTIST! And though she has been exposed to the LIFE-DRAINING DARK CRYSTAL longer than any SMALLER PUPPET has been, she has aged only slightly, so as to maintain her PUPPET BEAUTY.

INT.UGLYPALACE - SKEKSIS HEADQUARTERS

UGLY LIZARD-LIKE BIRDS are holding their magical ritual conveniently at this very moment. Suddenly, they notice the MALE PUPPET LEAD, who has randomly ended up in a balcony and is overlooking them unthreateningly. They SCREAM.

UGLY LIZARD-LIKE BIRDS
How terrifying!

Terrified himself, MALE PUPPET LEAD then hilariously commits the most random criminal act in this movie: he drops THE SIGNIFICANT ITEM to the floor on which the BIRDS are.

MALE PUPPET LEAD
What a pathetic way to enter the
climax of a fantasy movie.

On the other side of the room, the escaped FEMALE PUPPET LEAD, also on a balcony, is secretly witnessing this happening.

FEMALE PUPPET LEAD
I must do something for the Male
Puppet Lead. Lower yourself to
somehow collect that Item for him,
Comical Animal Sidekick!

COMICAL ANIMAL SIDEKICK
But isn't he still on that balcony?
How am I supposed to give him that
Item if I go down here, given that
he's up there, not to mention that
I even have trouble holding
objects?

FEMALE PUPPET LEAD
Just go.

Her COMICAL ANIMAL SIDEKICK falls for at least fifty feet and lands on the floor lightly. Then he falls into a crack near THE DARK CRYSTAL, not surprisingly.

FEMALE PUPPET LEAD (CONT'D)
Comical Animal Sidekick!

She also lands on the floor.

MALE PUPPET LEAD
(after jumps off the balcony
and lands on the
sharply-angular surface of The
Dark Crystal safely, without
the benefits of wings)

Why are you doing this? Surely it is pretty obvious that you can't accomplish anything by doing this!

FEMALE PUPPET LEAD

But this is an epic story, meaning someone must sacrifice herself. I will be caught by the Villains and you must choose between me and the world. Sound familiar? Yeah.

The formulated hero's dilemma tension scene follows. That is, until the UGLY LIZARD-LIKE BIRDS stab the FEMALE PUPPET LEAD in the back.

FEMALE PUPPET LEAD (CONT'D)

Gark!
(dies)

The MALE PUPPET LEAD is SAD, and everything happens in slow motion to fit his melancholy mood. Eventually, he decides to fix the hole in THE DARK CRYSTAL, finally, after sitting on it for five minutes.

UGLY LIZARD-LIKE BIRDS

This is all you have to achieve? You could have done it through other much more interesting approaches, without the sacrifice of the Female Puppet Lead!

MALE PUPPET LEAD

Well, since this is a children's movie, I must insult the viewers' intelligence.

He DOES, thus magically physically mixing two species, UGLY LIZARD-LIKE BIRDS and FRIENDLY BIRD-LIKE LIZARDS, together. This is positively GROSS, yet presented as EMOTIONAL, DRAMATIC and UNDERSTANDABLE IN A RELIGIOUS SENSE. Then one of the HYBRIDS speaks to the AUDIENCE.

HYBRID

So here comes the abrupt ending of this movie. Despite the director's claim that we are intelligent, we made this obnoxiously stupid and simple mistake in ancient times, hence justifying a dark, high-budget, unforgivably plot-less, empty motion picture and the 93-minute draining of YOUR life essence.

ADULTS IN THE AUDIENCE
(vomits)

CHILDREN IN THE AUDIENCE
(becomes old, mindless and
wooden, since they are also
enslaved by The Dark Crystal,
forever)

END