



The Symbolic Significance of Deer in Ildiko Enyedi's *On Body and Soul*

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Abstract

This paper examines the symbolic significance of deer in Ildiko Enyedi's 2017 film *On Body and Soul*. Through a close analysis of the film's visual and narrative elements, the paper explores how the deer imagery serves as a powerful metaphor for the characters' emotional journeys and the duality inherent in the human condition. The paper also reflects on the broader implications of animal symbolism in the film, considering the complexities of anthropomorphism and the potential risks of reinforcing reductive human-nature dichotomies. The findings suggest that while the film's use of deer symbolism effectively conveys the emotional and psychological dimensions of human experience, a more nuanced approach that acknowledges the complexities of the human-nature relationship could lead to a richer and more thought-provoking engagement with these themes.

Keywords: On Body and Soul; deer symbolism; human-nature relationship; anthropomorphism; environmental aesthetics



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Introduction

The film *On Body and Soul* (2017), directed by Ildiko Enyedi, has received widespread critical acclaim for its unique, captivating narrative, which explores the profound themes of love, isolation, and the interconnectedness of human experience. One of the most striking and symbolically rich elements in the film is its use of deer as a central motif, which helps elucidate the protagonists' emotional journeys and the story's deeper philosophical underpinnings. The deer in Enyedi's film *On Body and Soul* is imbued with metaphorical depth, serving as a potent symbolic device that illuminates the complexities of the human condition. Through a meticulous analysis of the film's visual and thematic elements, this research paper explores the multifaceted symbolism of deer and uncovers how they mirror the emotional journeys, psychological states, and transformative experiences of the film's protagonists. By exploring the significance of deer within the narrative, this paper aims to shed light on Enyedi's masterful storytelling and how she uses this symbolic motif to craft a profound exploration of the universal human search for connection, meaning, and self-discovery.

Deer have long been imbued with symbolic significance across a wide range of cultural and mythological traditions. As majestic, yet sensitive creatures, they are often associated with themes of vulnerability, spirituality, and the delicate balance between the human and natural worlds. In *On Body and Soul*, Enyedi skillfully leverages these symbolic associations to craft a poignant exploration of the human condition, delving into the complexities of interpersonal relationships, the search for connection, and the subconscious's power to shape our lived experiences (Rushing & Frentz, 1980).

Endre is the main protagonist, a slaughterhouse manager who is emotionally withdrawn and disconnected from others. Maria is the film's other central character, a quality inspector at the slaughterhouse who struggles with social anxiety and profound isolation. Throughout the film, the deer serves as a powerful metaphor for the emotional states and inner turmoil of Endre and Maria (Lestari et al., 2020). The deer's presence in the protagonists' shared dream sequences reflects their struggles with vulnerability, intimacy, and the quest for a deep, meaningful connection. The deer in the film appear in the dreams of both Endre and Maria, serving as the conduit through which they discover their shared connection and emotional bond. It represents the protagonists' desire for emotional and spiritual fulfillment, as well as their

inherent fragility and the challenges they face in navigating the complexities of human relationships.

This paper examines how deer images in *On Body and Soul* function as potent symbols of emotions, intimacy, and dual aspects of human nature. It explores what these symbols reveal about changing perceptions of human traits and their depiction of nature, emphasizing moral and creative issues involved in representing animals with human feelings. Through these insights, the study contributes to discussions on anthropomorphism by questioning whether assigning human emotions to animals in film projects human subjectivity onto nature or instead offers new ways to envision interspecies connections. It advances eco-critical film analysis by exploring how the film's visual and narrative depictions of deer blur the boundaries between human and non-human life, encouraging viewers to reconsider ethical relationships with nature. Using Jungian psychology and animal studies, the analysis demonstrates how Enyedi's film both examines and challenges concepts of animal symbolism, trauma, and the limits between humans and animals.

Animal Symbolism in Films: A Literature Review

Symbolism in films has been the subject of extensive academic study, with researchers exploring how the representation of non-human beings can shed light on the human condition and the broader societal and environmental issues. The study has shown that the symbolism of

animal characters is deeply rooted in cultural myths and folklore, enhancing audience engagement through familiar social representations. As in the film *Seafood* (2011), the character Pup, a bamboo shark, signifies determination, while Julius symbolizes loyalty and bravery, and Myrtle's character is linked to nurturing qualities, drawing on the protective nature attributed to turtles in mythology (Achin & Bianus, 2022). Similarly, another scholarly work demonstrates that the representation of animals in films involves decoding symbols within narrative contexts, emphasizing how these animals often embody particular traits or values that resonate with audiences. However, the interpretation of animal symbols can vary across different cultures, reflecting broader societal attitudes towards nature, conservation, and the human-animal relationship (Wang & Chen, 2020). The film *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter... and Spring* (2003) uses the progression of seasons to symbolize stages of life and spiritual development, with each animal representing specific traits relevant to those stages. The animals not only enhance individual character arcs but also serve as metaphors for broader Buddhist concepts, such as karma, attachment, and enlightenment. This interplay among the animals illustrates the cyclical nature of life, emphasizing the continuous journey toward spiritual awakening (Green & Mun, 2019).

While the existing literature on the symbolism of deer in cinema is limited, some scholars

have examined deer as a symbolic device in related works. In *The Killing of a Sacred Deer* (2017), the deer serves as a potent symbol representing several interconnected themes that resonate with ancient Greek mythology and contemporary moral dilemmas. It embodies sacrifice and atonement, referencing the tradition of deer as sacred in Greek mythology, where its suffering reflects the sacrifices necessary for redemption and the heavy price of atoning for past sins. Also, the deer symbolizes innocence and vulnerability, highlighting the unjust punishment of innocent victims, as its pain mirrors the guilt the characters inflict on others. The film also introduces elements of the supernatural and the uncanny through the deer's unpredictable presence, creating unease and suggesting irrational forces at play. The deer also represents the other's gaze, serving as an object of desire that reflects the characters' insecurities and societal pressures. At the same time, its suffering symbolizes their guilt, burdening them with the consequences of their actions (Raissi & Ghaffari, 2023).

On Body and Soul presents a rich tapestry of themes that resonate with Jungian psychology, particularly through its exploration of the unconscious, trauma, and the quest for wholeness. Central to the film is the concept of the 'collective unconscious' (Jung, 1968), illustrated by the shared dreams of the protagonists, Endre and Maria, which symbolize their deep-seated desires for connection and understanding. The film also delves into *anima* and *animus* dynamics, showcasing how Endre's vulnerability and Maria's struggles with intimacy

reflect their internal conflicts and the need to integrate their masculine and feminine aspects (Hila, 2022). Trauma plays a significant role, as both characters grapple with their past in a setting that represents both brutality and potential transformation, emphasizing Jung's belief that confronting one's shadow can lead to healing. Furthermore, the theme of body-soul integration is prominent, highlighting the need to reconcile physical experiences with emotional realities. The film presents love as a transformative force that can arise from shared experiences of suffering, highlighting the protagonists' pursuit of psychological integration and wholeness - a central concept in Jungian theory.

Critiquing Deer Symbolism

The opening scene of the film *On Body and Soul* features a striking depiction of a deer in a snow-covered forest, setting the tone for the film's exploration of connection and isolation. This scene serves as a metaphorical prelude to the narrative's themes, where the serene yet stark beauty of the snowy landscape mirrors the emotional landscapes of the characters. In this scene, the deer is shown in a tranquil state, embodying innocence and vulnerability against the harsh winter surroundings. The snow-covered forest creates a sense of stillness, emphasizing the isolation experienced by both the deer and, later, the human characters. The deer symbolizes purity and a natural connection to life, which contrasts with the protagonists' emotional struggles. As the film progresses, this imagery resonates with the characters' journeys toward

understanding and intimacy amidst their challenges. Throughout the film, deer serve as powerful symbols of innocence and vulnerability, reflecting the inner lives of the main characters, Endre and Maria (Grand, 2019). The film's portrayal of their shared dream, in which they exist as deer in a serene, snowy landscape, emphasizes their longing for purity and connection amid the harsh realities of their lives. This imagery aligns with the broader symbolism of deer in various cultures, where they represent gentleness, sensitivity, and a deep connection to nature (Phillips, 2024; D Maori, 2022). The deer embody the fragility of innocence, highlighting how easily it can be threatened by the brutality of the world around them. As the protagonists navigate their emotional struggles, the deer also symbolizes the potential for healing and transformation through vulnerability. Their journey reflects the idea that embracing one's sensitivity can lead to personal growth and deeper connections with others, reinforcing the film's exploration of love and intimacy born from shared trauma (Kearney, 2013). The deer in *On Body and Soul* encapsulates the delicate balance between strength and fragility, urging viewers to recognize the beauty in vulnerability as a pathway to authentic relationships and self-discovery. The deer's fragility and exposure to harm in the dreams parallel the protagonists' sense of vulnerability as they navigate the complexities of human relationships and confront their emotional scars.

However, it is important to note that the symbolism of deer in cinema can also be subject

to potential pitfalls and oversimplifications. One potential risk is the tendency to reduce the deer to a single, one-dimensional symbol of innocence or passive victimhood, thereby failing to capture the nuances and complexities inherent in its symbolism (Moore et al., 2020). Additionally, the overreliance on deer imagery can sometimes lead to a reductive or clichéd portrayal, in which the deer becomes a mere trope rather than a meaningful narrative device.

While the opening scene of *On Body and Soul*, featuring a serene deer in a snow-covered forest, may set a contemplative tone for the film's exploration of connection and isolation, one could argue that the deer's symbolism is more complex and potentially problematic. Deer's representation of innocence and vulnerability could be seen as an oversimplification or romanticization of the human condition (Omarov et al., 2014). The deer's depiction as pure and peaceful, in contrast to the harsh realities of the slaughterhouse environment, may present a simplistic dichotomy between the natural and human worlds. These binary risks overlook the nuances and complexities inherent in human experience, which encompasses both beauty and brutality, vulnerability, and resilience (Djavadova, 2024). By positioning the deer as an embodiment of innocence, the film may inadvertently reinforce the notion that the natural world is inherently superior to human existence, despite its perceived cruelty (Kim et al., 2023).

Further, the deer's symbolic role as a conduit for the characters' shared dreams and

subconscious connection could be interpreted as a reductive representation of psychological and emotional processes (Blythe, 2023). While the Jungian concept is compelling, the deer's portrayal as a universal archetype may oversimplify the multifaceted nature of the human psyche and the diverse ways individuals navigate their inner landscapes (Jung, 1968).

While deer symbolism in *On Body and Soul* may be visually striking and thematically resonant, a closer examination reveals the potential pitfalls of overreliance on such symbolic representations. A more nuanced approach that acknowledges the complexities of human experience and avoids simplistic binaries could lead to a richer and more thought-provoking exploration of the film's themes.

Deer Symbolism and the Collective Unconscious

The shared dreams between the main characters, Endre and Maria, in which they appear as deer in a serene, snow-covered forest, serve as a powerful metaphor for their subconscious connection. The deer symbolizes the characters' true, unfiltered selves, unhindered by the social facades and emotional barriers that prevent them from fully connecting in their waking lives. The shared dreams suggest a deep, primal understanding between the characters, transcending the limitations of their conscious interactions (Vedfelt, 2009). The deer, as representations of the characters' psyches, embody the universal human yearning for wholeness and belonging. This symbolism aligns with Jungian psychology, emphasizing the importance of the collective

unconscious and the archetypes within it. Jung's concept of the collective unconscious is a universal psychic reservoir containing archetypal images that manifest through symbols and dreams across diverse cultures (Jung, 1968). The shared dreams of Endre and Maria tap into this collective unconscious, as they both experience the same dream world and encounter the same symbolic elements, such as the deer in the snow-covered forest. This suggests a deeper, universal connection that transcends individual experiences and speaks to the shared human condition.

Archetypes are universal symbols or patterns of behavior that exist in the collective unconscious, and the deer in the film can be seen as an archetypal symbol of innocence, vulnerability, and a connection to the natural world (D Maori, 2022). The deer in the protagonists' dreams represent their inner, primal selves, untainted by the complexities and burdens of conscious existence. This further reinforces the idea that the deer serves as a conduit for the character's subconscious desires and the need for authentic connection. The deer serves as a guide, leading the characters on a journey of self-discovery and emotional growth (Florea & David, 2014).

In the film, Endre and Maria's shared dreams and their growing relationship facilitate this process of individuation. Individuation is the process of integrating the conscious and

unconscious aspects of the self, leading to personal growth and wholeness (Tricarico, 2016; Brookes, 1991). As they confront their fears and vulnerabilities together, they begin to integrate their conscious and unconscious desires, moving towards a more authentic and fulfilling existence. The film suggests that by embracing the collective unconscious and archetypes, individuals can achieve a deeper understanding of themselves and their place in the world.

However, the deer's role as a conduit for the characters' shared dreams and subconscious connection could be interpreted as a simplistic representation of psychological and emotional processes. While the Jungian concept offers a compelling framework for understanding the shared symbolic experiences depicted in the film, the deer's portrayal as a universal archetype risks oversimplifying the human psyche's nuanced, multifaceted nature. Individuals navigate their inner landscapes in diverse and complex ways, drawing upon a rich tapestry of personal experiences, cultural influences, and unique psychological processes. The deer symbol, though resonant as a representation of the universal human yearning for connection and self-discovery, may fall short in capturing the full depth and complexity of the characters' inner lives and emotional journeys. A more nuanced approach that acknowledges the heterogeneity of human psychological experiences could lead to a richer and more thought-provoking exploration of the film's themes.

Deer Symbolism and the Human-Animal Dichotomy

The deer in *On Body and Soul* also serves as a symbol of the natural world, in contrast to the harsh realities of the slaughterhouse environment where the characters work. The deer in the protagonists' shared dreams represent a realm of purity, tranquility, and harmony - a stark juxtaposition to the violence and emotional detachment that characterize their waking lives. This tension between the natural world and the perceived cruelty of human existence is a recurring theme in the film, and the deer serves as a conduit for exploring these complex dynamics.

The deer may represent the innate, instinctive aspects of the human mind, in contrast to the more analytical and regulated dimensions of human cognition. In contrast, the characters' work in the slaughterhouse, with its emphasis on efficiency and the systematic processing of living beings, reflects the more mechanistic and dehumanizing aspects of modern society (Jack et al., 2013). The deer, in their ethereal, dreamlike appearance, serve as a reminder of the primal, intuitive connections that humans have lost or suppressed in the pursuit of progress and industrialization (Omarov et al., 2014).

This dichotomy between the natural and the unnatural, the human and the animal, is further explored through the characters' struggles with identity and emotional vulnerability.

Endre and Maria, despite their roles in the slaughterhouse, are drawn to the deer in their dreams, suggesting a longing for a more authentic, instinctual existence. Their shared experiences and growing connections allow them to embrace the ‘animal’ aspects of their psyches (Nelson, 2021), leading to a more holistic and integrated understanding of themselves.

The film’s exploration of the human-animal divide is not limited to the deer's symbolism. However, it is also reflected in the broader treatment of non-human animals in the narrative (Grant, 2019). The film’s setting in a slaughterhouse, where the systematic killing of animals is a daily occurrence, underscores the ethical and emotional complexities of human-animal relationships. The characters’ interactions with the animals, both in their waking lives and in their dreams, prompt them to confront their capacity for empathy, compassion, and moral responsibility towards the natural world. By using the deer as a symbolic bridge between the human and the animal, the film invites the audience to reflect on how our perceptions of the natural world and our animalistic nature shape our lived experiences and personal growth.

Anthropomorphism and Point of View

One of the major criticisms of wildlife documentaries from an ecological perspective is the anthropomorphism of animal behavior and the relationships that exist within this ecosystem (Grasso et al., 2020). Anthropomorphism, the attribution of human traits and emotions to non-human beings, is a common technique used in films to create empathy and connection between

the audience and the animal subjects (Servais, 2018). While some believe that this approach can help audiences better understand animal behavior, others argue that it leads to a misunderstanding of the true nature of ecosystems and animal relationships (Porter, 2006).

The use of anthropomorphism in *On Body and Soul* presents a similar tension. The shared dreams of Endre and Maria, in which they appear as deer, could be seen as a form of anthropomorphism, as the filmmakers project human emotions and experiences onto the animal characters. This technique may foster a sense of intimacy and empathy between the audience and the protagonists. However, it also risks obscuring the deer's distinct nature and their role within the ecosystem. The film's point of view, which often aligns with Endre and Maria's perspectives, further reinforces this anthropomorphic approach. By presenting the narrative primarily through the lens of the human characters, the film may inadvertently privilege the human experience over the deer's, potentially diminishing the deer's autonomous agency and the complexity of the ecosystem in which they exist.

However, this approach may also have its drawbacks. By projecting human emotions and experiences onto the deer, the film could oversimplify the animals' distinct nature and the complexities of the ecosystem they inhabit. The shared dreams could be interpreted as an attempt to bridge the human-animal divide. However, this technique may inadvertently

privilege the human perspective, potentially diminishing the deer's autonomous agency and the nuances of their role within the environment (Stinchcomb et al., 2022). The film's point of view, which often aligns with that of the human characters, further reinforces this anthropomorphic approach, potentially obscuring the deer's true nature and their relationship to the broader ecosystem.

Critics have argued that while anthropomorphism can foster empathy and understanding, it may also lead to misrepresentations of animal behavior and the dynamics at play in the natural world (Karlsson, 2011). From the perspective of critical animal studies, however, seeing animals this way is often questioned because it puts human ideas above animals' own experiences. Experts in this area say that animals in movies should not just be used to show human feelings but should be seen as having their own ways of acting and being. From this angle, the deer in *On Body and Soul* might be seen less as symbols of human weakness and more as characters whose presence in the film shows the limits of seeing things only from a human point of view. Briefly mentioning this idea makes the film's symbolism more complex without detracting from its emotional or artistic power. The film's emphasis on the emotional connection between the protagonists and the deer, though compelling, could be seen as simplistic and fails to capture the complexities of the human-animal relationship fully.

Deer and the Slaughterhouse

The contrasting depiction of the tranquil deer scenes and the harsh slaughterhouse environment serves as a powerful commentary on the themes of innocence, vulnerability, and the complexities of life and death. This contrast is deeply woven into the narrative, highlighting both the beauty of connection and the harsh realities of existence. The deer scenes, particularly those depicted in the shared dreams of Endre and Maria, evoke a sense of serenity and purity. The imagery of the deer in a snow-covered forest symbolizes innocence and a natural state of being, free from harm. These dream sequences allow the characters to experience a profound emotional connection in an idyllic environment. The deer represents an idealized world where vulnerability is embraced, and relationships can flourish without the burden of societal pressures or past traumas. The deer embodies untainted beauty, serving as a reminder of what is pure and untouched by life's harsh realities. The serene dream world fosters intimacy between Endre and Maria, enabling them to explore their emotions freely. This contrasts sharply with their real lives, where they struggle to connect due to their insecurities.

In stark contrast, the slaughterhouse scenes depict a harsh, unforgiving environment filled with violence and death. This setting represents the brutal realities of life that often overshadow moments of beauty and connection. The slaughterhouse is not just a physical space but an

analogy between animals and marginalized humans (Pergadia, 2023); it symbolizes the emotional and psychological struggles that Endre and Maria face in their daily lives. The graphic nature of slaughtering animals serves as a visceral reminder of mortality and suffering. It highlights how cruel life can be and how often innocence is sacrificed (Cudworth, 2015). The slaughterhouse environment reflects the characters' feelings of isolation and disconnection from one another. While they share dreams that foster intimacy, their waking lives are filled with loneliness and emotional barriers.

By juxtaposing tranquil moments with brutal realities, the film deepens its emotional resonance, compelling viewers to confront life's fragility and the intricacies of human relationships (Pelican, 2018). The film invites contemplation on the duality of human nature, our capacity for love and connection coexist alongside our potential for violence and destruction. This duality is reflected in Endre's role, as he embodies both a caring individual seeking connection and an employee at a slaughterhouse who regularly witnesses death. The contrast raises existential questions about life, death, and the true meaning of connection in a world that often seems indifferent to 'a metaphor for human suffering' (Close, 2020). It challenges viewers to consider how moments of beauty can coexist with brutality. The serene deer scenes catalyze Endre and Maria's transformation, providing respite amidst the chaos of

their reality and encouraging them to confront their fears and embrace vulnerability despite their surrounding circumstances.

The interplay between these contrasting settings profoundly affects Maria and Endre's emotional states. Maria's serene visions of the deer become increasingly significant as they represent her yearning for love and connection. As she forms a bond with Endre, these dreams evolve into a shared experience that offers hope amidst their bleak surroundings. This juxtaposition similarly shapes Endre's character. His stoic demeanor masks a deep-seated vulnerability that gradually emerges in his interactions with Maria. The slaughterhouse symbolizes not only his professional life but also his emotional barriers. The moments he shares with Maria allow him to confront his isolation, leading to a gradual transformation.

However, the film's positioning of the deer as pure and peaceful in contrast to the brutality of the slaughterhouse environment could be seen as a reductive portrayal that fails to acknowledge the complexities inherent in human experience, as discussed in the previous section. While this symbolic juxtaposition effectively conveys themes of mortality, connection, and the fragility of life, it may also risk perpetuating a simplistic divide between the natural world and human society.

Conclusion

In Ildiko Enyedi's 2017 film *On Body and Soul*, the symbolism of deer serves as a powerful narrative device, inviting viewers to contemplate the complex relationship between humans and the natural world. The deer's representation as a symbol of innocence, purity, and the natural state of being stands in stark contrast to the slaughterhouse's harsh, unforgiving environment, which symbolizes the brutal realities of human existence. The film's juxtaposition of serene deer scenes and visceral slaughterhouse imagery highlights the duality of human nature, with the deer embodying the characters' yearning for connection, love, and emotional vulnerability, often suppressed in their waking lives. However, the film's positioning of the deer as a symbol of pure, untouched nature could be seen as a simplistic portrayal that fails to acknowledge the complexities inherent in human experience. The film's exploration of the human-animal relationship invites deeper contemplation on the fragility of life, the meaning of connection, and the coexistence of beauty and brutality in the human condition.

The use of animal symbolism in film is a complex and multifaceted topic that warrants further analysis. Anthropomorphism, the attribution of human characteristics and emotions to non-human animals, has long been a common practice in visual media, serving to foster audience empathy and to relate the experiences of non-human beings to the human condition (Shamshirian et al., 2020). However, this approach has also been criticized for potentially oversimplifying or misrepresenting the realities of animal behavior and ecosystems.

Within the realm of environmental and ecological criticism, the portrayal of non-human animals in films has been a subject of intense scrutiny. Filmmakers' use of animals to metaphorize human suffering and critique societal issues has been examined, with some scholars arguing that the literal representation of animal suffering can broaden the discourses of liberation and compassion. At the same time, the risk of anthropomorphism and the potential for reinforcing human-centric perspectives have been acknowledged (Lestari et al., 2020). The symbolic significance of the deer in *On Body and Soul* exemplifies the complex interplay between human and nonhuman representation in cinema. This film's use of deer imagery invites viewers to consider the emotional and psychological dimensions of human experience while also raising questions about its approach to gender and the relationship between humans and nature.

As the fields of animal studies and eco-criticism continue to evolve, a more nuanced understanding of the role of animal symbolism in the film could lead to a richer, more thoughtful engagement with the complexities of the human condition and our relationship with the natural world. Conducting a comparative analysis of animal symbolism in other films, particularly those with a strong environmental or ecological focus, could provide valuable insights into broader trends and implications of this cinematic practice. Examining how other filmmakers

have employed animal imagery to explore themes of identity, trauma, and the human condition would be a fruitful avenue. Engaging with animal studies scholarship and incorporating the insights of relevant experts and advocates could provide new conceptual frameworks for analyzing the ethical and political implications of how animals are portrayed in film.

Beyond serving as a symbol in *On Body and Soul*, the deer also prompts us to consider broader questions about how animals are portrayed in movies today. Enyedi's film shows that animals can help connect human feelings, storytelling, and environmental awareness. However, it also shows the problems that come from attributing human traits to animals. Beyond its unique style, *On Body and Soul* fits into the modern European art film tradition, in which directors often use images of animals and simple visuals to explore questions of right and wrong and feelings of isolation. At the same time, its focus on close connections between people and animals places the film in worldwide conversations about movies that challenge the idea that humans are the most important and highlight how all living things can be vulnerable. The deer's pure image, while powerful, shows how movies often use animals to express human feelings rather than presenting them as real creatures with their own lives and place in nature.

In the growing field of animal studies and environmental films, *On Body and Soul* offers a way of presenting animals that is both thought-provoking and unclear. The mix of dreamy

animal scenes and the harsh reality of the slaughterhouse highlights the strange tension between caring about beauty and accepting animal suffering as normal. This conflict prompts viewers to reflect on closeness, vulnerability, and how movies shape our sense of right and wrong and our ability to care about other species. As more films worldwide address environmental problems and new ways of thinking about humans as animals, Enyedi's film shows why it is important to present animals as more than just symbols of human experience. It is also important to make movies that are more thoughtful and responsible towards animals.

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