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Bare Bones

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Bare Bones

Abstract

This is a review of the short film, *Bare Bones* (2021), directed by Meryem Lahlou.

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Author Notes

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Bare Bones (2021), dir. Meryem Lahlou

This animated short film takes up a big topic: what does it mean to be a human being? We first see a creature crawling across a stark landscape. Then more come along. The creatures seem to have white plastic faces. Eventually the creatures stand and walk to a futuristic building. Here they march like ants. One seems to hang himself or herself. Another seems to fall to his or her death. The masks crack and the creatures become all bone.

In contrast to the creatures, we see on various occasions a cockroach crawling about the space filled by the creatures. Since cockroaches are believed to be able to survive any conditions, they raise the question of whether or not human beings will survive. Or will they disappear from the face of the earth.

We sometimes talk about our humanity or the human spirit. Sometimes we care about others or overcome great obstacles or show great courage. When we do, we express our humanity. But, we also show great callousness, even cruelty, toward others. We often take only

ourselves into consideration: we act with great selfishness. This too is part of our humanity. Maybe our humanity is like the Force. It has a dark side and a good side and life is the struggle to overcome the dark side. If we give in to the dark side we might survive, but at what cost? If we overcome the dark side, we may not survive, but maybe it is better if we don't survive but live for a while with the good side of our humanity. Or, maybe our survival depends on our following the light.