

Al E. Gator

written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. SWAMP - DAY

A hot day under the blazing sun. Vegetation looks like it needs a good rain. The perfect time for many of the inhabitants to sunbathe.

A large mound of debris - sticks, mud, and vegetation, lies near the top of a levee. Small movement comes from within. Then we see it. A newly hatched BABY ALLIGATOR pokes out his head, eyeing the strange new world curiously. He crawls out of his nest, sliding down the side to the ground, where he SQUEAKS, an attempt to locate his mother.

A few more babies leave the nest, scattering around it, very awkward as they attempt to walk. They also SQUEAK for their mama.

But they attract something else... something unwanted. A curious RACCOON picks up on a delectable scent. He sniffs his way up to the mound, where he finds MALE BABY ALLIGATOR #1, terrified.

MARTHA is a female alligator, maybe 17 years old. She doesn't fit in very well with the other alligators and the grief this causes shows on her weathered face. With fury, she charges up to the raccoon. Beads of water roll from her body.

MARTHA

Get away from my babies!

The raccoon turns to look, fear taking over at the sight of the angry mother alligator about to strike. Martha swishes her powerful tail his way, sends the raccoon toppling several feet. Although he lacks serious injury, he's jarred. He shakes off the trauma just in time to see--

Martha charging him once again, her mouth in the process of opening wide.

The raccoon flees to the woods, barely outrunning the angry predator. Martha is determined to catch him, and would, except a tiny SQUEAKING coming from behind stops her.

Male Baby Alligator #1 has its head stuck inside the mound, quivering with fear as his tail swishes.

Martha makes an instant transformation into motherly mode.

MARTHA

It's okay, sweetheart. You're safe now.

Male Baby Alligator #1 pulls out his head, a pile of debris neatly stacked on top like a hat. He looks at Martha with awe.

MALE BABY ALLIGATOR #1

Mama?

Martha smiles, a somewhat creepy thing for an alligator to do.

MARTHA

Yes, baby. Mama's here.

More tiny SQUEAKS come from the mound. MALE BABY ALLIGATORS climb out, a few dozen in all. They look around at their strange new surroundings.

Martha beams with joy at the sight.

MARTHA

My little boys.

The baby alligators gather around her.

CALLIE (O.S.)

I guess congratulations are in order.

Martha turns to the water, where she finds--

CALLIE, a barely full grown female alligator with a snobbish attitude. A brood of FEMALE BABY ALLIGATORS, a couple dozen, stick close.

MARTHA

Thank you, Callie.

CALLIE

You should have made your nest by the water so you'd have baby girls instead. They're so much easier.

MARTHA

How would you know? That's your first brood.

Callie pauses, no good answer coming to mind. Then:

CALLIE

Well, it's what I've heard.

In an obvious attempt to duck out of the conversation, Callie swims away with her baby girls sticking close.

Martha watches her with dislike.

MARTHA

Snob.

She digs up what's left of the mound. A few eggs are left unhatched. The discovery causes a tear to drop from Martha's eye.

MARTHA

My poor babies.

She starts to cover the unhatched eggs with debris, using her front feet. One of the eggs twitches, demanding Martha's immediate attention. She recoils, unblinking eyes settled on the egg.

A crack races across the shell. A tiny hole forms, growing larger as something inside pushes its way out. A minute baby alligator tail makes its appearance, wiggling to enlarge the hole.

Finally, the entire tail pops out of the opening, swishing in the hot air. A tiny voice within the egg calls out:

YOUNG AL (O.S.)

Help! I think I'm stuck.

Movements inside grow more desperate. The egg topples from the mound, rolls down the slope and crashes against Martha's foot. She instantly worries.

MARTHA

My baby!

She clamps down on the egg with her long teeth, causing it to break.

INT. MARTHA'S MOUTH - DAY - CONTINUOUS

YOUNG AL, an adorable male baby alligator with an unusual innocence about him, lies forward, arms over his head. He takes a nervous peek outside his little safe-haven.

YOUNG AL'S POV: We see the mound he just broke out of, visible through many large alligator teeth.

BACK TO SCENE:

YOUNG AL

Where am I?

Martha's moving jaws tosses around Young Al as she speaks.

MARTHA

(mumbled)

You're safe inside my mouth, my
precious baby.

Young Al raises up with alarm.

YOUNG AL

Mouth?

EXT. SWAMP - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Young Al dashes out of his mother's mouth, barely fitting through a gap between her teeth. He tumbles to the ground in front of his brothers. Thinking this is the funniest thing they have ever seen, and it likely is in their short time alive, the brothers laugh.

BROTHER #1

You're dumb.

The brothers laugh harder, especially BROTHER #2.

BROTHER #2

And stupid, too.

BROTHER #1 turns to him with a condescending look.

BROTHER #1

That's what dumb means.

BROTHER #2

Oh. How was I supposed to know?
I've only been alive for a few
minutes.

BROTHER #3, wearing glasses and looking like an alligator version of Einstein, pushes the glasses to the bridge of his nose with a front toe.

BROTHER #3

Technically, we have been alive for
two months inside the eggs. We just
weren't aware of our surroundings
outside.

BROTHER #4 rolls his eyes.

BROTHER #4

Great. Smarty Pants is gonna bore us to death.

Martha intervenes.

MARTHA

Children, each one of you is different in his own way, and I love every one of you equally.

The babies gather around her, sticking close. Except for Young Al. He scans the wilderness with large eyes, awed by everything he sees, the simple sounds of nature taking place. This is an adventurer in the making.

A flying shadow passes over the group. Martha looks up, spotting--

-- an EAGLE circling her and the brood. It's on the hunt and baby alligators are on the menu.

Martha pulls her sons closer in full protective mode.

MARTHA

We have to make it to the water. Climb in.

She lays forward, mouth wide open. Her babies race inside where they will be safe. Martha scampers for the water a good distance away.

Only she has inadvertently left behind Young Al in the chaos. He gazes upward, where--

IN THE SKY

-- the eagle continues to circle. He spots something enticing on the ground below and lets out a SQUAWK as he glides downward at incredible speed.

ON THE GROUND

Young Al freezes at the sight, not sure what to think about the approaching creature but his instincts kick into full gear.

YOUNG AL

This isn't good.

He flees to the water, only his big, quick strides fail to do much due to his very tiny little legs.