

Podcast: What If World

Episode: 012: What if there were a never ending bowl of ice cream?

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Transcription by Keffy

[Rising harp scales followed by the What If World theme song.]

Lyrics: What if kittens played the glockenspiel? And what if unicorns were real? What if you could fly or travel back in time, we welcome you to What If World. What If World. This is What If World.

Mr. Eric: Hey there, folks, and welcome back to What If World, the show where your questions and ideas inspire off the cuff stories. My name is Mr. Eric, your host and today we have a question from Chloe. Let's listen up.

Chloe: Hi, my name is Chloe and my what if question is, what if whenever you finished a bowl of ice cream, it magically reappeared again and you could eat it, so that it's never ending ice cream. Bye!

Mr. Eric: Wow, Chloe. What an interesting question. You see, I have a copy of the What Street Journal right in front of me. And this newspaper says that a magical ice cream bowl was just found in What If Worlds! We've gotta get straight there to figure out what's going on.

[Rising harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: Whendiana Joan was What If World's greatest explorer. She loved finding things that were lost. She found lost artifacts and endangered species. And even people that just got lost. She found them, too. She found so much lost stuff that she started donating a lot of it to museums.

One day, she found an ice cream bowl that seemed sort of special. So she brought it to the Observatorium. Does anyone remember who runs the Observatorium? That's right, it's Abacus P. Grumbler, the wizard!

Whendiana Jones went to the door of the Observatorium early one morning, and knocked as hard and fast as she could.

[Knocking sound]

Whendiana: Abacus, Abacus! Open up!

Abacus: Whendiana. Back again with one of your magical discoveries, I imagine.

Whendiana: That's right, Abacus. I found—you'll never believe it—an ice cream bowl.

Abacus: An ice cream bowl.

Whendiana: That's right. But check this out.

Mr. Eric: The bowl was full of vanilla ice cream. And Whendiana Joan pulled out a spoon and ate up that ice cream as fast as she could.

[Munching noises]

Whendiana: Ooh, ooh, it's really good.

Abacus: Yes, it looks like wonderful ice cream. You could have shared some with me.

Whendiana: Oh, don't worry about that Abacus. Just watch.

Mr. Eric: Right before their very eyes, the bowl filled up again. This time with strawberry ice cream.

Abacus: Oh my goodness. It had vanilla ice cream. Now it has strawberry ice cream. What sort of sorcery is this?

Whendiana: Abacus, I thought you liked sorcery?

Abacus: But of course I like sorcery, but only the kind that I understand. This bowl just makes as much ice cream as you need? Of any color or flavor? Oh, oh, I don't understand it!

Whendiana: Well, me neither.

Mr. Eric: Said Whendiana Jones.

Whendiana: But that's why I brought it to the Observatory. You know a lot about magic. And I know a lot about lost things. And I thought we could figure out how it works together.

Abacus: [Grumbling] All right, come on into the Observatory, and just be careful where you put that bowl. I don't want ice cream getting all over my tower.

Mr. Eric: Whendiana Jones very carefully place the bowl of ice cream atop the table in the middle of the foyer.

Whendiana: All right, Abacus. Well just leave it right on top of this table where there's nothing around.

Abacus: Alright, good. Let me gather my instruments and we'll come back and study this bowl of yours.

Mr. Eric: Abacus cast a spell to go deeper into the Observatorium.

Abacus: Abra-ca-deeper-int0-the-Observa—. Forget it. I'll just walk.

Mr. Eric: Whendiana heard him clattering around out there for about a half hour.

Whendiana: Gosh, how many instruments does he need to collect? It was such a long walk over here and I'm starting to get a little hungry.

Mr. Eric: She looked at that. bowl of strawberry ice cream.

Whendiana: Oh, now, I know I shouldn't have more than a single bowl of ice cream in any day but oh, I found it. I mean, I deserve it.

Mr. Eric: As she went over to pick up the bowl of ice cream there was a zap, crack and the air split beside her. And through this split of electricity and light stepped a shiny steel robot.

Learninator: I am the Learninator. Put down that bowl.

Whendiana: What? You're the who-inator? Anyway this Observatorium's closed. You'll have to come back to learn later.

Learninator: Not the learn later. The Learninator.

Whendiana: Of course. Excuse me, Learninator, but you're trespassing. That's against the law.

Learninator: This is more important than the law. I am trying to save the future.

Whendiana: What? The future? Oh my? Do I eat this bowl of ice cream in the future and then get a stomachache and have to invent a robot to come back in time to tell me not to eat the bowl of ice cream so I don't get a stomachache.

Learninator: Well yes, but also you destroy What If World.

Whendiana: Oh, wow. Well, I'll just make sure I don't eat the bowl of ice cream. Wh-what? I destroy What If World? I'm Whendiana Jones. I try to make What If World a better place by finding all the lost things.

Learninator: Well, this bowl should have stayed lost. Hasta la vista, Bowley.

Mr. Eric: And the Learninator held out a metal hand and out sparked in electrical bolt. When it hit the side of the bowl, it just bounced off in the other

direction clattering all over the Observatorium! Smashing and bursting and exploding everything in sight. Except for the bowl. All that happened to the ball was it rocked back and forth until it tipped.

Whendiana: Learninator, what are you doing? You've destroyed half of Abacus's Observatorium. I found half of this stuff and—uh oh.

Mr. Eric: Now, folks at home, you might have noticed that this bowl refilled whenever it emptied of ice cream. But, if it were tipped over, do you think it could ever get full again? Mm-mm.

And so more and more ice cream shot out of it. Strawberry, then chocolate, then cookie dough, then peanut butter, then toffee, then coffee, then—

Learninator: See, Whendiana Jones? You have destroyed the world.

Whendiana: Me? I was just going to have a bowl of ice cream. Then you came over and knocked it over and now we're spilling ice cream all over it.

Learninator: Exactly. Just as the future predicted.

Whendiana: What? That doesn't make any sense.

Mr. Eric: It looks like Abacus P. Grumbler had finally finished finding everything he needed. He started down the stairs with an armful of books and scrolls, wands and flasks and magical ingredients of all kind.

Abacus: All right, something here ought to help tell us what the deal is. What is the deal with all this ice cream?

Mr. Eric: The first floor of the Observatorium was already full so high up with ice cream that it had started floating out the door and down the street.

Learninator: Well, you'll see. I came back in time to try to save the world.

Whendiana: Yeah. And in the process. I think he destroyed the world.

Abacus: What? I don't care about any of that. I'm just—you're getting my Observatorium all sticky. Why don't you just pick the bowl up so it stops spilling infinite amounts of ice cream.

Whendiana: Well, that's just the problem, Abacus. We can't find the bowl underneath all this ice cream.

Learninator: Oh dear. Looks like we've done it again. I think our only hope is to go back in time.

Whendiana: What? Learninator, aren't you supposed to learn from your mistakes?

Learninator: Yes, I am programmed to learn from my mistakes. But clearly, this was your mistake.

Mr. Eric: The Learninator had a clock on the middle of his steel chest and he touched the minute hand and started turning it back.

Learninator: I think that five minutes or so should do it.

Whendiana: Hey, why don't we have a plan before we go back in time.

Mr. Eric: But it was too late. They were already traveling back in time, the three of them to five minutes before, when the ice cream bowl hadn't yet been tipped.

Whendiana: I'm sorry Learninator, you're trespassing here.

Mr. Eric: And the air split again. And out through the crackling lightning stepped Abacus, the Learninator, and another Whendiana Joan.

Whendiana: Quick Joan, it's me Joan. These two time traveling robots are gonna tip over the bowl and then they're gonna destroy the—

Learninator: Learninator 2! Don't blast that bowl!

Abacus: —combined with my Abacus power, we can disenchant the bowl, thus making no more ice cream pour out of it.

Abacus: Oh, that's a very good idea, if I do say so myself.

Abacus: I do say so myself.

Abacus: I also do say so myself.

Abacuses: We do say so ourselves.

Mr. Eric: And the Abacuses pointed their wands at the bowl and said:

Abacuses: Abacus cadabacus!

Mr. Eric: Light blasted out from their wands and hit the bowl. And then, just as the Joans were shouting,

Whendianas: No, wait!

Mr. Eric: But it was too late. Ping ping ping ping ping ping ping ping ping! The waves of light blasting out from their wands bounced around the entire Observatory, knocking everything over, including the ice cream bowl.

Learninators: Oh dear. Here we go again.

Whendiana: Okay, guys, well, there's there's twice as many of us now. So if we all think hard, we can find this bowl and and turn it up right before we—

Abacus: That's right. There's six of us. So if we all go back in time, we're sure to be able to stop the three of us from knocking over the bowl again.

Learninator: That's a fantastic idea.

Mr. Eric: And the Learninator started turning the minute hand back again.

Whendiana: Abacus, Learniantor, just listen to me. We don't have to keep turning back time. Let's solve the problem that's right in front of us.

Mr. Eric: But it was too late. Back in time they went again. And suddenly,

Learninator: Hasta la vista, bowley:

Everyone: Wait! Wait! Wait!

Mr. Eric: All six of them shouted out at the Learninator.

Learninator: What am I waiting for?

Whendiana: Well, we came back from the future to tell you that blasting the bowl isn't gonna work.

Mr. Eric: Suddenly, Abacus started coming down the stairs with all his things again.

Abacus: What do you mean? What's not going to work? Oh, dear, there's three of me. How lovely. Well, how do you do?

Abacus: Oh! How do you do?

Abacus: Oh, I do do well. How do you do do?

Abacus: How do I do do? Is this some kind of a joke?

Whendiana: All of you, listen. Just quiet down for a minute. If we tip this ice cream bowl over, we are going to be swimming in a sea of ice cream.

Learninator: You're right, but if three robots and three wizards all blast the bowl at the same time—

Whendiana: Guys, I really don't think that's going to work, okay?

Abacus: On the count of three times three!

Learninators & Abacuses: Three, six, nine!

Mr. Eric: And do you think all their power together destroyed the bowl? Well, I'm sorry to say it didn't.

Learninators: Uh oh.

Abacuses: Uh oh.

Whendianas: Oh...

Whendiana: I think you all just made it stronger.

Mr. Eric: Yeah, they had. This time, a river of ice cream was blasting out of the bowl so fast. They were all getting swept away by it.

Learninator: I think maybe next time. We should go back in time. Just a few extra minutes.

Whendiana: No, no more going back in time. You can't just run away from your problems.

Abacus: Well, we're not exactly running away so much as being swept away by a roaring river of ice cream.

Whendiana: And whose fault is that?

Learninator: I'm not sure.

Whendiana: Learninator, why are you even called that if you never learn?

Learninator: Alright, if you're so smart. Why don't you teach us?

Whendiana: Okay, here's what we do. Abacus. Abacuses... abaci?

Abacus: You can just call us the Grumblers.

Whendiana: Okay Grumblers. You will use your magic to find where the bowl is under this river of ice cream.

Abacus: Check.

Grumblers: Abacus cadabracus!

Whendiana: Okay, Learninator. You learn everything you can about ice cream.

Learninator: I already know everything about ice cream.

Whendiana: Okay, then tell us what's the quickest way to get to the bottom of a river of ice cream.

Learninator: That's easy. You've just got to eat your way down.

Whendiana: That doesn't really sound like the best...

Mr. Eric: But the Learninators were already eating their way back up the stream of ice cream.

Learninators: Yum, yum, yum, yum oooh. Yum, yum, yum. This powers up our cells. Did we forget to tell you that we were ice cream powered robots.

Whendiana: Uh, yeah, that could have been helpful to know

Learninator: Yum yum yum yum yumyummyyummyyummyyummyyummy.

Mr. Eric: They were eating at lightning speed now and she grabbed onto the back of them and followed along. Far behind her. She heard the Grumbler say:

Grumblers: Keep going straight ahead. Okay, now to your right! Go right! Now go straight down, all the way to the ground, and there you should find it!

Mr. Eric: They got to the bottom of what was now an ocean of ice cream.

Whendiana: All right Whendiana, now it's your turn.

Mr. Eric: What If World's greatest explorer did what she did best. She searched through clouds of vanilla and chocolate ice cream, cinnamon and pumpkin ice cream. She pushed through waves of fudge and caramel and whipped cream.

The Learninators kept eating it all around her.

Learninator: Yummyyummyyummy...

Mr. Eric: But a lot was getting through. She was cold and wet. She could barely breathe. Just when she thought all hope was lost, her finger touched the side of the bowl. Ice cream was shooting out of it so fast. She could barely hold on.

Whendiana: All right, just a little push. [Grunt]

Mr. Eric: And she righted the ice cream bowl. Just like that the sea of ice cream became a lake and then a river and then a stream. And then a puddle.

Learninators: Yum yum yum yum yumyummyyummyyummy.

Mr. Eric: Soon the Learninators had eaten every last bit of ice cream. Except the little scoop left in that bowl.

Whendiana: Oh my gosh, we did it finally.

Learninator: We sure did. Now we should just go back in time to make sure that we don't make the same mistake.

Whendiana: What? Haven't you learned anything? We solved the problem, that's enough. Now let's just clean up after ourselves.

Mr. Eric: Abacus caught up with them just then, his robes dripping with melted ice cream.

Abacus: Uh, cleaning up after ourselves sounds like quite the good idea.

Learninator: But we still made the ice cream ocean. We failed in our mission.

Whendiana: Learninator, you can't change the past. Sometimes you just have to accept your mistakes, learn from them, and move forward.

Abacus: You know she's actually right. I've got to cast about 100 bad spells before I figure out how to cast one good one, you know.

Learninators: We Learninators will take this lesson back to the future. But first let us destroy this bowl to make sure it never happens again.

Abacus: Um, Learninator, you can't just go—oh dear.

Whendiana: Learninator, what do you think you're doing?

Mr. Eric: The Learninators' hands all shone blue, like they were going to blast the bowl again and suddenly... it looked like a thought occurred to them.

Learninator: Wait a second, if we are powered by ice cream...

Abacus: And that bowl there supplies unlimited ice cream...

Whendiana: See, you're getting there. You're learning from your mistakes, keep going.

Learninator: Then we should destroy the bowl once and for all.

Whendiana: [Sighs loudly]

Learninator: I mean, take the bowl to the future. So we always have power.

Whendiana: There you go.

Mr. Eric: One of the Learninators took the ice cream bowl and went forward in time with an Abacus and a Whendiana. Another Learninator decided to go back in time with another Abacus and another Whendiana. And the final Learninator decided to stay.

Learninator: That is, of course, if there will be enough ice cream for me.

Abacus: Well, you know I am researching an ice cream spell.

Whendiana: And I think I've uncovered how to reach the lost city of Cowlantis.

Learninator: Good enough for me.

Abacus: All right, now it's time to clean up this mess. Let me get all of the mops going, and all the brooms, and the vacuums!

Whendiana: Ah, Abacus. This is a lot of work. Can't we take a quick break first?

Abacus: Well, I suppose we saved the world. We've earned a quick break.

Whendiana: Oh awesome. Because I really wanted to go out for some ice cream. My treat.

Abacus: Ice cream? [cries]

Mr. Eric: The end

[Falling harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: Oh man! That was a wacky one. Geez, I guess never ending bowls of ice cream can be kind of dangerous, but I still think I want one, to be honest.

I'd like to thank Keira [Chloe] for our inspired question. Karen Marshall for her inspirational editing and producing. And Craig Martinson for his inspiring theme.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]

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