

**Podcast: What If World**  
**Episode: 014: What if trains were never made?**  
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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. I'm Mr. Eric, your host, and I'm so glad to be back. I had an excellent holiday break, and I hope you all did, too. But I want to get started right away with our question from a boy named Levi.

Levi: My name is Levi, and I'm four. I like dinosaurs and what if trains were not builded?

Levi's Parent: What if trains were never made, right?

Levi: What if trains were never made? Thank you.

Mr. Eric: Oh man, finally! Yes, thank you, Levi. I have been waiting for someone to mention dinosaurs for such a long time. And that's a really cool question, too. What if trains were never made, huh? Hmm. Well, you know, I think we ought to get straight to What If World and find out.

[Rising harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: Once upon a time there was a dinosaur named Q Rex. And like most dinosaurs, he worked on the Rex Express. What If World didn't have any trains so dinosaurs decided to do all the deliveries themselves.

Q Rex: Uh, this is a really heavy crate of socks.

Mr. Eric: Q Rex said.

Pops Dino: Son, you know, when your mouth is full of a crate of socks, it's pretty hard to hear you.

Q Rex: [Spits] I said, this is a really heavy crate of socks!

Pops Dino: Well, that's right. We're dinosaurs. It's our job to transport large goods all across the country.

Q Rex: We have to do that just because we're dinosaurs? That doesn't seem fair.

Pops Dino: Well, now, son. Just because something doesn't seem fair doesn't mean we need to question it.

Q Rex: What? That's crazy! If something's unfair, you absolutely have to question it.

Pops Dino: Oh, son. Put that crate back in your mouth and let's finish our delivery.

Q Rex: [Extremely muffled] Okay, lead the way.

Pops Dino: We've got to deliver these socks to the orphanage.

Mr. Eric: Q Rex and his father carried as many socks as they could, and together they ran all the way to the orphanage.

Orphans: Hooray, socks! I want a purple pair of socks! Do you have any of those socks that do go on your fingers like toes? I mean toes like fingers, you know the ones?

Mr. Eric: All the kids from the orphanage crowded around Q Rex and looked through his crate of socks.

Orphans: Oh, thank you so much. These are really great. My feet won't be cold anymore.

Pops Dino: See, son? Working for the Rex Express is a good thing. Why, you're a regular hero.

Q Rex: I know, Pops. We're doing a good thing, but, it's just why do we have to do it?

Pops Dino: Son, make sure you never say that word.

Q Rex: What word? Why?

Pops Dino: Shhh. Told you not to say it.

Q Rex: Well, how do I know what word I'm not supposed to say if you don't say the word I can't say. Is it why?

Pops Dino: Ergh. Yes, it's why! Ooh, now you got me saying it.

Q Rex: Dad, I don't understand. Why can't I say why?

Pops Dino: Ooh. Q Rex. Just. [Sighs] Have you ever heard of the Whynosaurs?

Q Rex: The Whynosaurs? Yeah, I mean, they're extinct. I guess they're what came before us, like what we evolved from?

Pops Dino: That's right, son. But do you know why the Whynosaurs went extinct?

Q Rex: Dad, you just said Why.

Pops Dino: Oh, well, I can say it when I'm explaining my point.

Q Rex: No, then why?

Pops Dino: You can't say it, only I can say it.

Q Rex: How?

Pops Dino: That's better. They went extinct because they asked too many questions.

Q Rex: What? That doesn't sound right at all. You have to ask questions. You have to be curious. You have to find things out for yourself!

Pops Dino: Shh. If you ask too many questions, you might go extinct just like they did.

Q Rex: That doesn't sound like a true story at all. How do you know it's true?

Pops Dino: How? It's true because... everybody says that's what happened so it's got to be true.

Q Rex: Well, Dad, whether or not that's the whole story, I want to figure out what I want to do for myself. And I just don't think it's working for the Rex Express.

Pops Dino: Oh, son. That kind of talk is going to land you in a world of—where are you going?

Mr. Eric: Q Rex had run off to play with the kids from the orphanage.

Q Rex: Haha, oh, that's so fun! Oh, thanks for playing with me.

Child 1: You're really big. We can slide down you, like your tail.

Child 2: Can I paint all your nails?

Child 3: Look at me, I'm a dinosaur, too. Rar.

Q Rex: Oh, that's so fun. Hey, look, you're sliding down my tail so I'm going to slide down your slide.

Child 1: All right!

Child 2: I can't see anything wrong with that.

Child 3: It'll be great!

[Crashing noise]

Mr. Eric: It all fell apart.

Children: [Crying] Oh man, I should have seen this coming.

Q Rex: Oh, I'm sorry, guys. I thought maybe I was a slidersaur.

Mr. Eric: Q Rex's father finally caught up with him.

Pops Dino: Son, you're not a slidersaur. You're not a whynosaur. You're a dinosaur. Now pick up that empty crate. We've got to return it for our next delivery.

Q Rex: Ah, Pop.

Mr. Eric: Q Rex picked up the crate like he was told and followed his father all the way back to the factory.

Pops Dino: Now, son. When you get back to the factory, none of this who, what, where, when?

Q Rex: Aw!

Pops Dino: Don't even say it with a crate in your mouth.

Q Rex: Aw...

Pops Dino: None of this question talk, okay?

Q Rex: [Muffled] Okay.

Mr. Eric: Back at the factory Q Rex saw dinosaurs coming in from all over the world to pick up packages and drop off empty boxes. Pterodactyls flew in for little letters. Brachiosaurus stomped down for the biggest packages. And there was even an underwater pipe

that shot out big packages to megalodons who would swim them across the seas.

Pops Dino: See, son? Every dinosaur knows what kind of delivery they need to make. And we all work together so everyone has the things they need.

Q Rex: I know, Dad. But aren't there any dinosaurs that do other things?

Pops Dino: Well, some dinosaurs are too old to deliver packages, so they mostly do the paper work so we know where the packages are going.

Q Rex: Aw, Dad.

Mr. Eric: Q Rex's dad looked down at his son. He didn't understand his son, but he wanted to help him.

Pops Dino: Well, there is one job that's a little different.

Q Rex: Really?

Pops Dino: Oh yeah. If a dinosaur's a really good reader with an excellent speaking voice, they can make the announcements over the loudspeaker.

Mr. Eric: They heard an announcement just then.

Announcer: [crackle] Make sure packages are delivered on time. [crackle]

Pops Dino: See, son. When we hear that dinosaur's voice, we all know to work our hardest and try our best.

Q Rex: Really? I think I could do better than that.

Pops Dino: Well, if you think you could do a good job, then I believe in you. Why don't you go up there and give it a shot.

Q Rex: Oh, really Pop? Do you mean it? Hahaha.

Pops Dino: Get on up there. I know old Tara Dactyl. She owes me a favor.

Mr. Eric: Q Rex rushed up to the booth.

Q Rex: Tara Dactyl! My dad says that you would let me do the announcements.

Tara Dactyl: [Muffled, mumbly] Well, if you think you can do a better job than me, then go on and try.

Q Rex: I just think I'd try something a little different.

Tara Dactyl: You can do anything you want as long as all the dinosaurs know that they need to deliver the packages on time.

Q Rex: Packages on time. I can do that.

Tara Dactyl: All right. I'm going to go take a break, good luck. Bye.

Mr. Eric: And Tara Dactyl flew out of the booth.

Q Rex: Well, I can't be a whynosaur. I'm too big to be a slideosaur. Maybe I'm a rhymeosaur.

Mr. Eric: Q Rex pulled out his Why-pod shuffle and plugged it into the speaker system.

Q Rex: [Rapping] Uh, ladies and gentlemen, give it up for Q Rex! It's Q Rex, I'm a rhymeosaur not a dinosaur or a slideosaur, I'm telling y'all, I'm a rhymeosaur. It's what I always wanted to be I just didn't know I could be free and everybody why don't you help me just raise your hands and clap and sing along, whee! Nobody's clapping. Oh, nobody's really doing anything. Everyone looks kind of mad, except my Dad. He's nodding his head along. He kind of likes the song. Dad, come up here! Join me, yeah! Let's do it, let's be rad!

Pops Dino: [Rapping] I don't know what you're doin' but I kind of like it foolin'. It's kinda fun for me, I'm moving my tail and my booty, ooh.

Q Rex: Dad, I think we just made a song together.

Pops Dino: Is that what that was? Well, we'd better get back to our delivery now, don't you think.

Q Rex: Okay, Dad.

Mr. Eric: As they walked out of the studio, all the dinosaurs were shaking their heads. Tara Dactyl flew back into the studio as fast as she could and got on the speaker.

Tara Dactyl: Don't worry about whatever that was, just make sure your delivery's on time.

Mr. Eric: And with that, all the dinosaurs snapped back into motion.

Q Rex: Ah, Dad. All the dinosaurs are mad at us.

Pops Dino: Son, I don't think they're mad. I think they're just confused. Like I was. I never knew you had that in you. I mean, I never knew I had that in me. We made a pretty good team, huh?

Q Rex: Not according to every other dinosaur. Don't worry, Dad. I won't act out like that again.

Mr. Eric: Q Rex picked up a big package with his mouth.

Q Rex: [Muffled] All right, let's go.

Pops Dino: Yeah, son. Let's go.

Mr. Eric: Their next delivery wasn't very far away. It wasn't even uphill. But it was a long quiet walk for Q Rex and his father. They dropped off a thousand cans of fly soup to the supermarket, and by the time they made it back to the factory, it was dark. And it was also kind of crowded.

Pops Dino: Hmm. What's going on here?

Q Rex: I don't know, Dad. Probably a bunch of dinosaurs here to yell at us.

Mr. Eric: Hundreds of dinosaurs watched them quietly. None of them were picking up packages. None of them were dropping off packages.

Q Rex: I got a bad feeling about this.

Mr. Eric: All the dinosaurs drew back and a path appeared. A straight line to Tara Dactyl and the booth.

Pops Dino: Son, just let me do the talking. We'll—we'll get through this.

Mr. Eric: They walked with their heads low.

Tara Dactyl: You two made a lot of trouble for me, today.

Mr. Eric: Said Tara Dactyl.

Tara Dactyl: It seems dinosaurs from all over What If World heard about your little stunt.

Q Rex: I'm really sorry, I just, I don't know what got into me. I just... I was told not to be a whynosaur, I'm too big to be a slideosaur. I just wanted to do something different.

Tara Dactyl: Well, now.

Mr. Eric: And Tara Dactyl raised an eyebrow.

Tara Dactyl: Why don't you do it again?

Pops & Q: Huh?

Tara Dactyl: The dinosaurs have never made such fast deliveries, and they've never looked so happy. They came from all over to hear you two.

Pops Dino: Oh, well, I don't know if we... keep trying new things like this, we might go extinct. But you know, I studied biology and there's really no reason why asking why would cause a person to get sick.

Tara Dactyl: I don't know about all that. All I know is you've got a crowd waiting for you.

Mr. Eric: And Tara handed them the microphone.

[Backing music plays]

Q Rex: Q Rex.

Pops Dino: And Dino Pop, bring it at you. Bringing the rhymes.

Q Rex: And these rhymes never gonna stop. All you dinosaurs drop off packages, never truth, never questions or even passengers. Can't believe I just rhymed with packages, I'm kinda getting really good at this. Well that rhyme wasn't just as good as it should be but I gotta practice this. You know, everybody, you should try new things and then try them again and again 'cause—

Pops Dino: That's the only way you get better, gonna write that down in a letter. Also, I think I'm gonna wear a sweater, it's kinda cold in this factory don't you know?

Tara Dactyl: Can I try a rhyme.

Q Rex: Tara Dactyl, of course you can rhyme!

Tara Dactyl: Well, I don't know, I mean, well, I never tried this, but well, here I goes. Oh, is the song over. I had a really good rhyme, I was gonna rhyme show with go. Because of the show can go on. Every day we want you to come back.

Pops Dino: Really? You want us back?

Tara Dactyl: Well, of course. I wouldn't have said so otherwise.

Q Rex: Yeah, but I thought that we were doing, like, that we were being bad and different.



Tara Dactyl: Different? Yes. Bad, heck no.

Pops Dino: Yeah, I mean, that was really fun. Let's do that every day. And you know, while we're at it, I think I'm going to start studying how the dinosaurs [whynosaurs?] went extinct in the first place.

Q Rex: Dad, that sounds really cool. I didn't even know you learned biology. Can you teach me?

Pops Dino: Sure, I can teach whoever wants to learn.

Mr. Eric: Hundreds of tails, wings, horns, and paws shot up into the air.

Q Rex: Well, if you all like rhymes and biology, I have another idea. We could lay down a bunch of tracks across the nation, and then make big machines that travel along those tracks delivering packages so we don't have to! We can call it... a railroad.

[Record scratch]

Several dinos: Huh? Huh? Huh? Uhh...

Pops Dino: Son, maybe just one or two new ideas at a time, huh?

Q Rex: Okay, Dad.

Mr. Eric: The end.

[Falling harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: Oh, Levi. I hope you enjoyed your story as much as I enjoyed telling it. I'd like to thank Levi again for today's amazing question. Karen Marshall, my tireless editor and producer. And Craig Martinson who made my favorite theme of all time.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]

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