

Podcast: What If World

Episode: 015: What if somebody wove a tapestry around the sun and nobody could see?

File Length: 00:17:33

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 today we have a question from Riley.

Riley: Hello, my name is Riley, and I go to Weaving. And I was wondering if somebody, or an evil witch, wove a tapestry around the sun and nobody could see? Thank you.

Mr. Eric: Ooh, Riley. That is a cool question. I hope you enjoy weaving, and I'm sorry this witch is about to put her weaving powers to ill use.

[Rising harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: Our story starts a few years back when a young student by the name of Alabaster Zero was going to his very own weaving class.

Petrina: Hello there, class, my name's Petrina the Pirate, but you can call me Petrina the Powerful, for I'm about to show you the power of weaving.

Mr. Eric: Alabaster put his hand in the air.

Alabaster Zero: Um, Mrs. Pirate, it seems like weaving really isn't all that powerful?

Petrina: Oh, well, you just haven't learned enough about it yet.

Alabaster Zero: Uh, I don't think I really want to learn weaving. It's old lady stuff.

Petrina: Old lady stuff. Just because I'm old and a woman doesn't mean that weaving isn't for everyone.

Alabaster Zero: Okay, sure, but how long does it take to weave something?

Petrina: Oh, depends on how good you are and how big of a thing you're weaving. I could weave you a wee scarf in just an hour or so.

Alabaster Zero: An hour! I have to be here for a whole hour? Uh.

Petrina: Well, for you it'd probably take a few days, so you could learn the basics first and—

Alabaster Zero: Learn the basics? I gotta learn? And sit here? And keep working. Oh man. Petrina...

Petrina: It's Mrs. Pirate, please.

Alabaster Zero: Whatever, I think I'm done with this.

Mr. Eric: The young Alabaster stood to walk out of the classroom.

Petrina: Alabaster, stick around and I'll show you that persistence and learning put together can change the entire world.

Alabaster Zero: What? There is nothing you can make with that little loom that's gonna impress me, lady. I'm out of here.

Mr. Eric: And the young Alabaster walked out the door. [Door slams]

Several years went by and Alabaster Zero grew into a young police officer. He'd noticed during that time the sky slowly starting to get darker.

Alabaster Zero: Huh, that's a weird sort of mystery but, eh. Not much I can do about it. I'm sure the sky will be brighter again next year.

Mr. Eric: But when the next year came, the days weren't any longer or brighter. And the year after that, they were shorter and darker still.

Alabaster had learned enough in school to know he shouldn't ever look directly at the sun. So he put on his coolest sunglasses, covered his eyes with his hands, and just peeked through a tiniest crack in his fingers.

Alabaster Zero: Is it just me or does it look like there's thread or something covering half of the sun? That's weird. Oh well, I'm no astrologomer, nothing I can do about it.

Mr. Eric: A few years later, Alabaster Zero was a full grown police detective. He woke up one morning ready to attack the day.

Alabaster Zero: All right, day. You've got nothing on me. Alabaster Zero's coming for you! Hahaha!

Mr. Eric: He leapt out of bed and opened his door and [CLUNK]

Alabaster Zero: Aah, ow.

Mr. Eric: He immediately stubbed his toe on the walkway, and he couldn't see a thing.

Alabaster Zero: Wait a second, let me check my watch. 8:30am? Where's the sun? It's summer time!

Mr. Eric: He reached around blindly with his arms trying to find something to hold onto.

Alabaster Zero: How am I supposed to solve a crime if I can't see?

Mr. Eric: Just then he saw a flock of fairies flitting through the sky. Those fairies and the stars themselves were the only light in the whole world.

Alabaster Zero: Hey, fairies? A little help.

Mr. Eric: One fairy flew down from the flock. You might remember her, her name was Fair Elise.

Fair Elise: Hello Alabaster. So nice to see you, again. [There is an audio error so that Alabaster is Abacus in dialogue during this episode from here on, but this has been corrected in the transcript.]

Alabaster Zero: Fair Elise, I think somebody stole the sun!

Fair Elise: Oh, Alabaster, that's impossible. If the sun were gone, all of What If World would be gone.

Alabaster Zero: Alright, but, without any sunlight, we're not going to last long, either. So who would benefit from only starlight?

Fair Elise: Well, starlight is what gives fairy wands their power, so I suppose fairies would profit from it.

Alabaster Zero: Are you telling me that you are the criminal? You're under arrest!

Fair Elise: Alabaster, I'm trying to help you. I'm not a criminal.

Alabaster Zero: That's just what all the criminals say.

Fair Elise: Well, I suppose you're right. Well, let's try to find who really did this. I know all the fairies, and they love long sunny days as much as they do long starry nights. They would never do something that would hurt the whole world.

Alabaster Zero: All right. So it's something that likes the darkness and is also evil.

Fair Elise: Right...

Alabaster Zero: I know, it's gotta be a werewolf.

Fair Elise: Alabaster, a full moon comes once a month regardless of whether it's night or day—

Alabaster Zero: Werewolf it is, let's go.

Fair Elise: Oh, dear.

Mr. Eric: Fair Elise led Alabaster deep into the wolf wood. Long, low branches scratched at him in the darkness.

Alabaster Zero: Uh, Fair Elise, are you sure there isn't some place a little less spooky we could solve this crime?

Fair Elise: My wand is extra powerful with all this starlight. You've got nothing to fear.

Alabaster Zero: Then why am I so scared?

[Howling]

Alabaster Zero: Fair Elise, did you hear that?

Fair Elise: Of course I heard it. It was a loud howl coming from about three feet away. Look!

Mr. Eric: Sitting just in front of Alabaster and Fair Elise was a large, shaggy werewolf.

Werewolf: Where are you guys going?

Alabaster Zero: We're going to find a werewolf.

Werewolf: Where would a werewolf be?

Alabaster Zero: I mean, I'm looking at one, right?

Werewolf: Where are you looking?

Alabaster Zero: I'm looking right at you.

Werewolf: Ooh. And where am I?

Alabaster Zero: You're right in front of me!

Werewolf: Ooh. Where's that?

Alabaster Zero: Oh. Fair Elise, can you talk some sense into this werewolf?

Fair Elise: Excuse me, werewolf. Did you by chance block out the sun or steal it or something? Or do you know someone who did?

Werewolf: Where's the sun?

Fair Elise: Well, it was right up there, but we can't see it anymore.

Werewolf: Ooh. Ooooooh. Where did it go?

Alabaster Zero: That's what we're asking you, bub? You took it, didn't you? You took it and you... you... you replaced it with the moon!

Werewolf: Oh, I like the moon. Where's the moon?

Alabaster Zero: [Sighs loudly] I don't think we're getting anywhere with this guy.

Fair Elise: Listen, werewolf, can you find someone for us?

Werewolf: Ooh, I can sniff out anything. Where do you want to go?

Alabaster Zero: We want to find where the sun went.

Werewolf: Well, where was the sun before?

Alabaster Zero: It was right there!

Mr. Eric: It was noon now, so Alabaster pointed straight up into the sky.

Alabaster Zero: That's where the sun would be.

Werewolf: Ooh, then that's where we should start sniffing.

Mr. Eric: The werewolf climbed to the top of the tallest, spookiest tree.

[Sniffing]

Werewolf: Ooh, I smell string. Yummy. Yum yum yum yum yum.

Alabaster Zero: No, don't eat the string, it might be our only clue.

Werewolf: [Hacking and coughing].

Mr. Eric: The wolf spat out the string and jumped out of the tree.

Werewolf: [Howls] Here's the string! I got the string. I got the string. Angnagnagnagn.

Fair Elise: Um, werewolf, please don't chew on the string. I think maybe you could help us sniff out where the string goes.

Werewolf: Ooh, where it goes. That's my speciality.

Mr. Eric: And the werewolf spat out the drooly string once again.

Alabaster Zero: Ugh, it's so slimy. And black. Something this dark black is surely the tool of evil.

Fair Elise: Alabaster, the werewolf's getting away.

Alabaster Zero: Oh! Let's go!

Mr. Eric: Fair Elise sprinkled some fairy dust on Alabaster, and they both flew after the wolf.

Werewolf: Where's the string? Ooh, where does it go? Ooh, it goes over here. Oh yeah, yeah. [Chewing noises] Ooh, it smells good.

Alabaster Zero: It can't smell good, wolf. It's the tool of evil.

Werewolf: Oh, I don't know about that. But it smells, oh, I like this smell. I'm gonna go. Let's find the string.

Mr. Eric: They ran out of the wolf wood and threw a long, grassy field. They passed by Hillda the Hill playing with her rabbits and moles.

Hillda: Hey there. Alabaster, please find the sun for us! My grass is having a hard time growing.

Alabaster Zero: I'm on the case, Hillda. Lay off.

Hillda: Ooh.

Mr. Eric: They passed goblin mountain where Dontknowhen's songs rang through the air.

Dontknowhen: [Singing] Oh where, oh where has our su-un gone? Oh where? Oh where could it be?

Alabaster Zero: Why don't you quit singing about it and start helping me?

Dontknowhen: Well, I'll wish you luck at the very least. [Singing] Good luck, Alabaster, please find our sun faster, and—

Alabaster Zero: Oh, I can't stand it, get me out of here!

Mr. Eric: And that black string led them all the way to the shore and a lonely pirate ship.

Werewolf: Ooh, where'd the string go? Oh, string went underwater. Oh, hmm. I don't think I want to go in the water, I don't like getting wet.

Fair Elise: Well, that's all right. You've been such a big help, werewolf. I hope we see you again some time.

Werewolf: Or somewhere! Buh-bye!

Alabaster Zero: So, pirates stole the sun. Just as evil as I thought.

Fair Elise: Alabaster, you don't know the whole story.

Alabaster Zero: It's getting dark and cold, and that's all I need to know.

Mr. Eric: His fairy dust had worn off, so he dove into the bitter cold ocean and swam across to the ship. Fair Elise lit the way through the black sky and held out her magic wand to pull Alabaster onto the ship.

Alabaster Zero: All right, evil pirate, string, thief, sun-stealer! Get out here.

Petrina: Come on back, Alabaster. Come see.

Alabaster Zero: Huh? Why does that voice sound familiar?

Mr. Eric: Alabaster followed the familiar voice into a tiny cabin, where a little, ancient pirate sat at a simple loom, weaving inky black fibers through and through and then pushing them down gently with a fork.

Alabaster Zero: Petrina the Pirate. I knew it all along.

Fair Elise: No you didn't, Alabaster. You had absolutely no idea. You thought it was me first, then a werew—

Alabaster Zero: Quiet! Let me have this. Why'd you do it, Petrina? You know you're gonna go to jail now.

Petrina: Well, to prove a point dear Alabaster. You see? One little old woman weaving one length of string can change the world.

Alabaster Zero: But you committed a crime! You stole the sun!

Petrina: I didn't steal it. It's right here.

Mr. Eric: She gave a hard tug at the string coming out of her loom and all at once a blinding blast of sunlight shone through all of What If World.

Petrina: How would I have gotten you to investigate without making a bit of mystery.

Fair Elise: Petrina, you spent so many years working on this, and just pulled it away with the tug of one thread?

Petrina: Aye, a magical loom can weave around anything I will it to. If Alabaster had stayed longer in my classroom, he would have learned that, too.

Alabaster Zero: So really it's just your loom that's powerful. You're still just a little old lady. Hehehe.

Petrina: Oh, just because I use a tool means I have no power of my own, aye? What is a fairy without its wand. What is a detective without their magnifying glasses and gloves and powders? And what is a weaver without her loom?

Alabaster Zero: But Petrina the Pirate—

Petrina: Oh, I'd rather be called Petrina the Powerful.

Alabaster Zero: Powerful. You just gave up the only power you only had, over the sun.

Petrina: Oh, I was just using the sun as a bigger loom.

Fair Elise: Who would need a loom the size of the sun?

Petrina: Someone making a home for the space fairies.

Mr. Eric: Just then, Spiffy the space fairy dove out of the sky.

Spiffy: Hello, Petrina the Powerful. Thank you for our new home. All the space fairies in the Whoniverse finally have a place to live!

Petrina: Well, you're welcome. Sorry it took me so long. I had to be very persistent. I was hoping to get some help from a few students.

Alabaster Zero: Oh, uh, sorry, I think that's my bad. Petrina, I'm sorry it took me so long to learn my lesson. Do you think, maybe you could show me a few tricks right now?

Petrina: I think I need a rest right now, Alabaster. But let's resume your lessons tomorrow.

Alabaster Zero: Oh, I'll be there first thing, you better believe it. I want to weave little handcuffs onto criminals all over the world.

Fair Elise: Those would be awfully comfortable handcuffs. But remember what we learned about assuming people are evil?

Alabaster Zero: Oh, right. I guess we'll just start with the basics, then. Maybe I'll finally weave you that scarf, Petrina.

Petrina: I'd like that, Alabaster.

Mr. Eric: And as Alabaster made his way home, the sun dried off his wet clothes and the world had never seemed so bright. He got home as the sun was setting and when he looked up, it was as if the stars themselves were making waves across the sky and winking out for a moment. It was the space fairies finding their way to their new home. It shone like the biggest, brightest moon in all the whoniverse. The werewolves howled and Alabaster joined with them. [Howling, including Alabaster howling and laughing]

Alabaster Zero: Man, that Petrina really is powerful.

Mr. Eric: The end.

[Falling harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: So the space fairies were just getting a new home all along? Geez. Petrina may be the nicest old lady I've ever met. I'd like to thank Riley for today's fantastic question. I'd also like to thank Karen, my editor, producer. And Craig Martinson, my theme song writer. And all of you folks at home for being the greatest listeners.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]

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