

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 24: What if summer camp was in the clouds?

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[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. Today we've got a question from Mia. Let's listen up!

Mia: My name is Mia. I really like summer camp, and what if summer camp was in the clouds? Bye!

Mr. Eric: Wow, Mia. You are so well-spoken. You got that question right out there. What if summer camp were in the clouds? That's really cool. I never got to go to summer camp as a kid. I'm glad you enjoy it. You know, I have actually taught a bunch of summer camps, though. I wonder if a What If World summer camp in the clouds will be anything like the ones I used to teach. Let's find out!

[Rising harp scale.]

Our story starts off with a young fairy named Pixicato.

Pxicato: Mom! Mom! I don't want to go to summer camp.

Mr. Eric: Said Pixicato.

Fair Elise: Oh, my little girl,

Mr. Eric: Said Fair Elise.

Fair Elise: You feel that way now, but by the time summer camp is over, you won't want to leave.

Sprite Alright: Everything's going to be sprite all right!

Mr. Eric: Said Pixicato's other fairy mom, Spirte Alright

Pxicato: Mom. That joke hasn't been funny for years.

Sprite Alright: No, but I mean it. Everything's going to be sprite all right, honey. You've got nothing to worry about. Just get there and join that theater club and you'll become a great actress like me.

Fair Elise: Well, you could also play the violin like your mother, Pixicato, and be a great musician for the play.

Pixicato: Just, I'm nervous. I don't know anyone there.

Sprite Alright: You're going to have so much fun!

Mr. Eric: Sprite Alright was a very, very excitable sprite, as you can see.

Fair Elise: And best of all, you're going to be one of the only natural flyers there.

Mr. Eric: Said Fair Elise, trying to calm her daughter down.

Fair Elise: But if you get lonely, just wish upon the nearest star and well be there that very same night to pick you up.

Pixicato: Ma, that would be even more embarrassing to get picked up by your parents.

Sprite Alright: So you're not gonna have fun if you stay, and if we pick you up, you're going to have even less fun.

Pixicato: I know, it's a conundrum. Maybe I should just stay home altogether.

Mr. Eric: But Fair Elise and Sprite Alright weren't so easily deterred. When they dropped off Pixicato, there were a few tears, but Curt Cumulus, the counselor, did his best to cheer her up.

Curt: Don't cry, little pixie girl. I'm gonna introduce you to a brand new friend.

Mr. Eric: Curt Cumulus floated a few feet away to reveal a little rabbit.

Lola Rabbit: Hi, I'm Lola! Oh, I'm so excited to be here. Hey, what's your name, my name's Lola, did I tell you that already? Oh, I don't know, I'm just so so so so so so so so excited.

Pixicato: Um, yeah, I'm Pixicato. It's nice to meet you, too.

Curt: Well, there. The two of you are practically best friends. Now look, everyone's waiting in the cloudatorium, so let's get a float on, huh?

Mr. Eric: Lola and Pixicato followed after the counselor into the giant cloudatorium full of students of all shapes and sizes. There were

flowercorns and wind wands. Snokemon and space fairy. There was even a boy fairy, which were really rare. She'd never seen one in real life.

Pixicato wanted to sit by herself but Lola the rabbit was having none of it.

Lola Rabbit: My mom, her name's Rola, well she's not really my mom, she's my big sister, but my parents are really old so she kind of raises me like a mom. And anyway, she helped me save up so I could come here and, and-and-and-and, wait what's your name again? Did-oh, you're Pixicato, okay. I'm Rola, did I? I mean, no, that's my mom's name, I'm Lola.

Mr. Eric: She followed all the way to their seats chatting on and on until Curt Cumulus the counselor, spoke up.

Curt: H'okay! Welcome everybody to The Sky's the Limit: A Summer Camp in the Clouds. We want you all to know that if you try hard enough and you find the thing you really want to be, there's nothing that's gonna stop you. For example, I always wanted to be a floating cloud that ran a summer camp in the clouds! And, here I am. Huh huh huh huh huh...

Mr. Eric: Lola the Rabbit had raised one of her little paws in the sky and was shaking it back and forth furiously.

Curt: Oh, I see we have a question already. Uh, yes, Lola the Rabbit.

Lola Rabbit: Uh, so I was wondering when we were going to get to play because I had to work really hard at school and get really good grades and save up all my money from my paper route in order to get here, and liiii just wanted to start playing now, so uhhhh...

Curt: Hold on there, of course we're gonna get to play, but we have to sort of pick the things we want to play with, you know? The-the-the classes that we want to take.

Mr. Eric: At this, Pixicato perked up. She raised her hand, too.

Pixicato: Um, Mr. Cumulus—

Curt: Please, call me Mr. C.

Pixicato: Mr. C, is there a class about how this camp in the clouds exists?

Curt: Well of course there is. There's classes for everything, but your parents signed you up for the play!

Lola Rabbit: Play!?

Mr. Eric: Shouted Lola the Rabbit.

Lola Rabbit: I wanna play! I love playing. I want to do the play, what's a play?

Curt: Okay, okay. Calm down. You're both in the play. That is, of course, if you can pass the audition, huh huh huuuh.

[Record scratch]

Mr. Eric: Pixicato suddenly felt like all the eyes in the cloudatorium had turned to her and Lola.

Lola Rabbit: Did you hear that, Pixicato? We get to do the play together, isn't that so much fun? Oh, we're going to be best friends, I just know it. Oh, why aren't you smiling? You should be smiling ear to ear like I am. All the time! Hahahah!

Mr. Eric: Pixicato stayed quiet through the rest of the meeting. As everyone was leaving the Cloudatorium, she and Lola got a handout of the lines for the audition.

Pixicato: Oh, I don't know if you can understand this, but I'm really nervous about this play.

Lola Rabbit: I don't even know what a play is, so of course I can't understand this. Why would you be nervous about anything? The only thing I was ever nervous about is whether I could save enough money to get here. But I did! I saved so hard and I helped and Rola helped save and she saved her money and—

Pixicato: No, you don't get it. A play isn't just playing. It's like you have to walk up on that stage in the CLOUDatorium and give lines and everyone's going to look at you and listen to you and if you make a mistake, they're going to laugh at you.

Lola Rabbit: Hahaha. I make mistakes all the time. I like laughing at my own mistakes, and sometimes people laugh along.

Mr. Eric: Pixicato flew away to find her room and it turned out she was sharing a bunk bed with Lola the Rabbit.

Pixicato: Lola, you're really nice but I think I just want to be left alone for a minute.

Lola Rabbit: Okay, I'll leave you alone for a whole minute. One whatifippi, two whatifippi, three whatifippi...

Mr. Eric: Pixicato buried her head in her fluffy cloud pillow. Parts of the pillow were warm and dry. Parts were soft and wet and misty. She found herself studying the pillow. She didn't even hear what Lola was saying for a long time until finally she couldn't help but hear.

Lola Rabbit: Lunch time! Lunch time! Lunch time! Lunch time! Lunch time!!! It's lunch time.

Mr. Eric: Lola took Pixicato's hand and was hopping along the clouds even faster than Pixicato could fly, dragging them all the way to the fluffiteria. There were no tables, no chairs, no serving trays or even utensils. It was just a bunch of kids and a few counselors sitting around piles of large fluffy cloud.

Lola Rabbit: Oh, I heard about this, my parents were actually cloud bunny.

Pixicato: Yeah, it's fascinating. What do we eat?

Lola Rabbit: Well, the clouds of course, silly!

Mr. Eric: And Lola the Rabbit mused up a bunch of clouds right in front of that even bigger mound of cloud. Then she sat in her mused up clouds, sort of like a beanbag chair.

Pixicato: Oh, I get it.

Mr. Eric: And Pixicato tried to mused herself up a little beanbag chair of her own. Then she plucked a piece from her fluffy cloud chair and popped it into her mouth.

Pixicato: Mmm... gleah.

Lola Rabbit: [Laughs] Those aren't the clouds that you eat. The mound of clouds is the fluffiteria.

Pixicato: I didn't know... I'm so embarrassed.

Mr. Eric: Pixicato felt like all the other campers were looking at her, but they really weren't.

Lola Rabbit: You're right, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to make fun. All you gotta do is take a piece from this big mound of clouds here and think about what you want it to turn into.

Mr. Eric: Lola did just that, plucking a handful of cloud and thinking hard until her hand was full of drippy butterscotch pudding!

Lola Rabbit: Ew, gross. I guess I'm not that good at this.

Mr. Eric: She threw the pudding down, reached in again, and!

Lola Rabbit: There it is. A nice juicy carrot. [Gnawgnawgnawgnawgnaw]

Pixicato: [Laughs]

Mr. Eric: Pixicato forgot herself for a minute. She was having fun in the fluffteria with her new friend, imagining foods and making them out of clouds. But she couldn't stop wondering how these clouds worked.

Curt: Okay, kids! Lunch time's over. Time to come audition for the play!

Mr. Eric: Groups of campers walked and floated and flew off with various counselors. Pixicato, Lola, and a few others went off with Mr. C.

Curt: Okay, who's gonna be the first brave soul to come up on the stage. I know the cloudatorium is empty now, but imagine it being full of hundreds and hundreds of people.

Mr. Eric: Pixicato found herself getting even more nervous. But Lola the Rabbit was already on the stage!

Lola Rabbit: Hi, I'm Lola the Rabbit, and I'm auditioning for the part of I don't really know because I didn't read the script, but here I go! Lala lala dee! I'm a rabbit, look at me, flipping, flopping, and woo, I'm really fast, too! I'm running all over, and check this out, check this out! See how fast I can eat a carrot! [Frantic gnawing noises] Carroto, carroto, wherefore art thou, carroto, you're in my belly, hahaha! The end.

Mr. Eric: And Lola jumped off the stage.

Curt: Wow, that was... um. Very. Energetic, Lola, but I'm afraid if you want to be in the play, you're going to have to actually read the lines and learn them.

Lola Rabbit: Oh no, that sounds boring, I worked and studied all year long and so I could get here so I could play!

Curt: Oh dear, well, uh, h'okay. Uhhh... who's next. Oh, you there, at the very back of the auditorium wearing the shiny fairy armor with the cool slicked back hair.

Prince Willielm: Hello, I'm Prince Willielm. I don't really think much of this script but I'll read it. [Clears throat] Let me just get into character.

By the power of the clouds, who is the greatest teacher ever to walk the land? Curt Cumulus. We need him to come save us from drought and from not listening to each other. Where are you? Oh, where?

Curt: Oh, oh oh oh, it's so beautiful. [Crying] You did such a good job. I think we know who our lead actor is. Who wants to go next? Oh, I see Lola Rabbit forcibly raising her friend's hand. Oh, Pixicato, why don't you come up here.

Pixicato: Oh, no, thank you, no. Oh, Lola, put my hand down. Oooh... okay.

Curt: Why don't you read for the best part in the whole show. Curt Cumulus, himself! He comes and saves the day at the end so he only just has the one monologue. You can do it.

Mr. Eric: Pixicato flapped her way up to the stage and looked down at her lines. The sheet of paper seemed to keep coming into and out of focus. Was she crying? She couldn't be crying, not in front of all these people. She read her lines:

Pixicato: I'm not the only good cloud in the sky. You think I'm a hero, but I can't do it all. The only way you campers will ever be happy is if you... make each other happy. Just ask yourself [breaking up] what would Curt... Cumulus... do... [Crying] I'm sorry!

Mr. Eric: And she flapped her wings so fast and so loud she was just trying to get out of that cloudatorium, but what was that? [Slow scattered clapping, gaining in volume] It wasn't just her wings flapping, it was clapping? She turned around. She was almost at the door but all the other campers and even the counselor himself were clapping.

Curt: Wow, such emotion. I've never been so impressed.

Prince Willielm: Yes, I thought really only we rare male fairies had the gift of perfect acting.

Lola Rabbit: Oh my gosh, Pixicato! Can you teach me to be like that, you're like the best, oh my—

Pixicato: I-I wasn't acting. I was really scared. I don't like this.

Curt: But you're here for three weeks, you gotta do the play. You signed up for it.

Prince Willief: It will get easier, I presume. I mean, everything's pretty easy for me.

Lola Rabbit: Please don't leave the play! I want to act with you. This is the first time I've done anything other than running around that's actually been fun.

Mr. Eric: Pixicato really didn't want to do the play at that moment, but she wanted to be friends with Lola. And she wanted to impress your parents.

Pixicato: Well, you said it's just the one monologue at the end, right?

Curt: That's it. I mean, it's an easy part. Just an important one.

Pixicato: Well, it won't take me three weeks to learn it, what if some of the time when I'm not doing the play, I go to the class where I learn about the clouds?

Prince Willief: Learning? Awfully strange you'd want to learn over the summer.

Lola Rabbit: Yeah, my parents already told me how the clouds work. It's really complicated so I forgot, but it was boring so I don't think you want to do that. You should just come play with me.

Mr. Eric: But Pixicato had had just about enough.

Pixicato: Lola, you worked really hard to get here and I worked really hard to get out of coming here.

Lola Rabbit: I know, you're more fortunate than me. Rola said I might meet people like you who only want to do whatever they want to do because they don't think that other people want to do other things.

Pixicato: No, I-I didn't finish. I mean, you deserve to have fun and I want to be your friend. So I'm still gonna do the play even though I'm scared.

Curt: Then it's settled! You're in the play as Curt Cumulus! Congratulations.

Pixicato: But I think if I work really hard to get my lines, I should also be able to study the clouds.

Curt: The cloud class is on the other side of the camp and you can't go alone, so that's the end of the story.

Lola Rabbit: Oh, if that's the end of the story, then that's pretty silly. I mean, we're big kids so I think I'm old enough to go with her, right?

Curt: What? You, too, now?



Lola Rabbit: Well, sure. I learned all about the clouds from my family, so I could help her learn even faster and then she could help me learn the lines even faster because I still haven't learned any of the lines but I really want to do the play because this is really fun.

Curt: Oh, I never thought of that. Oh, sure. That's no problem. I mean, you're both going to be having less fun half of the time, but if that's what you two want.

Mr. Eric: Curt Cumulus checked his fluffy little wrist watch.

Curt: And you're just about late! Get going.

Mr. Eric: Pixicato and Lola hustled off across the camp to cloud class.

Pixicato: I can't believe you're willing to sit through this class for me. You don't seem to like to sit through anything.

Lola Rabbit: Well, you're doing the same for me and who knows? Maybe we'll both learn something.

Nina: Hello class. I'm Nina Nimbus. You may think you know all about the clouds, but you don't. You see—

Mr. Eric: Nina Nimbus paused briefly as the two new campers made their way into her class.

Nina: Two new students. If you're doing this and the play, you know you'll have to work twice as hard.

Mr. Eric: Pixicato nodded and took out her wand to conjure up a pen and paper for both she and Lola the Rabbit

Nina: Where was I? Oh yes. Curt Cumulus is a cloud, but I, Nina Nimbus, am actually a series of incredibly complex nano computers. Plus some cloud.

Students: Ooh. Wow!

Nina: And so it is with all the camp. You'll notice some of the clouds are warmer! It's because they're nano computers being cooled. They let off heat to help keep us warm at this altitude and they remain solid to keep us from falling to our dooms!

Students: Ooh! Oh!

Mr. Eric: Pixicato was barely keeping up with her note taking. She looked over to see Lola the Rabbit was already writing page after page of incredibly detailed notes including diagrams.

Pixicato: Lola, if I help you with the play, will you help me with this class?

Lola Rabbit: We're friends Pixicato. I'd help you either way.

Nina: So you see,

Mr. Eric: Continued Ms. Nimbus.

Nina: Everything before you really has a quite simple explanation.

Mr. Eric: Pixicato raised her hand.

Pixicato: Ms. Nimbus, there is one tiny thing that's still bothering me.

Nina: Yee-eess?

Pixicato: You say there's an explanation for everything, but what about the fluffiteria? Are you saying we're eating nano computers?

Nina: Oh heavens no. Those clouds are magic.

Students: Oooh! Oh!

Mr. Eric: The end.

[Falling harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: Oh, Mia. I hope you liked your story. It was cool to see a What If World summer camp. I gotta say, they're a little bit different than the ones I ran.

I'd like to thank Karen Marshall, my editor and producer, Craig Martinson, who wrote our theme song, and all you kids out there who work hard at every subject in school, even the ones you're not particularly fond of.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]