

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 28: What if Zombies were kind to people and they didn't do anything to them?

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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 today we've got a question from Owen.

Owen: I'm Owen and my what if question is what if zombies were kind to people and they didn't do anything to them?

Parent: Thank you.

Owen: Thank you!

Parent: Bye.

Owen: Bye!

Mr. Eric: Aw, Owen, what a cool question. I have always hoped that in real life zombies would be kind. I mean... not that zombies are real, right? Uhhh, I hope they're not. Well, if they are, I hope that they're kind.

Well, Owen, I can't wait to get right to your sto—

Petey: Hold on there a second, Mr. Eric.

Mr. Eric: Oh, Petey the Pirate? Man, I haven't seen you in a while. Welcome back to the studio.

Petey: Aye, I come because I hear you're starting to do interview questions submitted by kids. But how are they supposed to know what kinds of questions to ask if you don't give them an example?

Mr. Eric: Oh, I don't know. I mean, our listeners are very creative, but you raise a good point, Petey. So, do you have some questions, for yourself?

Petey: Mr. Eric, that is not how an interview works.

Mr. Eric: Oh, right. Okay. So, I'll come up with a question. Um, when did you first know that you were a pirate?

Petey: What?

Mr. Eric: Well, I mean, were you born a pirate or did you, like, choose to become a pirate? I don't know how it works.

Petey: Well, of course I was born a pirate. When I came out into the world I was already battling a shark with a dagger from my teeth.

Mr. Eric: Wow, that must have been really hard for you.

Petey: Yo ho, indeed it was.

Mr. Eric: And why is it that pirates always wear bandanas over their heads even if they're wearing a hat over the bandana?

Petey: Oh, that one's easy. It collects all the sweat so it doesn't get into our eyes, and—

Mr. Eric: Petey, when you just adjusted your bandana, your whole hair moved.

Petey: Oh, that's nonsense.

Mr. Eric: Petey, are you wearing a wig?

Petey: Of course not! I've always had these long, beautiful dreadlocks since the moment I was born. A squid thought that I was its baby, in fact, and I had to battle it off.

Mr. Eric: While battling a shark at the same time?

Petey: Aye, a shark and a squid, and I was only three minutes old.

Mr. Eric: Petey, I don't quite believe you...

Petey: Mr. Eric, it's What If World. Anything's possible, you know that.

Mr. Eric: Okay, okay. But I still think you're wearing a wig.

Petey: Eeeh, I'm not. But I do have to go and uh, just, glue something really quickly. Not a wig or anything. It's a pasta noodle pirate ship I'm making for you.

Mr. Eric: Oh, Petey, that would be really great. And, you know, there's nothing wrong with being bald.

Petey: Bald! Hmmp! I'm gonna get out of here.

Mr. Eric: Okay, see you later, Petey. Folks at home, we're taking questions of all kinds just in case your kid has been waiting a little while on a story or is a little nervous about asking a story question. You could ask a question for Abacus P. Grumbler, the wizard, Petey the Pirate, Fair Elise, the fairy, Spiffy the Space Fairy, Mamma Jamma, Poppa Loo, Zach and Zizi, Harrigo the tree. You could ask a question for Count Cackula or Ferrevarius, the violin-playing ferret. You could even ask me a question.

Remember, the more we hear your voice, the better our stories and our podcast gets. And Owen, don't think I forgot about you for one second. Let's get to your story. What if zombies were kind to people.

[Rising harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: It was spring in What If World and that meant things were starting to heat up. Flowers were blooming, crops were growing, and kids were getting spring break. Zach and Zizi were no exception.

Zach: Mom, Dad, I really want to go Zombria for our spring break.

Poppa Loo: Zombria? What? After all that great Zombie protesting I did. One, two, three, four, we don't want zombies anymore.

Mamma Jamma: Five, six, seven, eight, zombie neighbors would be great! Let's do it.

Poppa Loo: Mamma Jamma, do you always have to undercut my chants?

Mamma Jamma: Oh, your chants are mean. If Zach wants to go to Zombria, you know, I guess we should check with Zizi.

Zizi: Oh, well it is Zach's turn to pick.

Poppa Loo: Oh, when's it gonna be my turn?

Mamma Jamma: Poppa Loo, you promised to pick last so we can all finally go to your boring old stamp factory.

Poppa Loo: I'm telling you, you kids are gonna love the stamp factory. I mean, you can get lost in there for days and days...

Zach: I really want to go to Zombria.

Poppa Loo: But you know zombies are terribly dangerous.

Zizi: Well, actually, an article in the New What Times recently said that zombies are reformed.

Zach: Are cool!

Mamma Jamma: The sooner we do this, the sooner you get to go to your stamp factory.

Poppa Loo: All right, all right, if it'll get you all to just pipe down, we can go to Zombria. And we're buying 10 bottles of Zomblock on the way.

Mr. Eric: Zombria was a pretty old town. It had been around for over a hundred years and a lot of the houses looked a little run down like they could use a paint job. But other than that, and the fact that there were zombies walking around, it didn't seem much different from any town you may have visited.

Poppa Loo: All right, kids. Keep the windows rolled up and put on your Zomblock. Now, I'm only promising you one night here, okay.

Zizi and Zach: Okay, Dad.

Poppa Loo: And what do you say if someone asks to eat your brains.

Zizi and Zach: No, thank you.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, honey. Quit trying to spook them. Zombies are nice.

Mr. Eric: They pulled into the old bed and breakfast. It was a big house with a sign up front that said "Hugs and Puppies."

Mamma Jamma: Oh, with a name like that, it's gotta be a friendly place.

Poppa Loo: We'll see.

Mr. Eric: They parked the car in the little lot and walked right up to the door.

Poppa Loo: And remember, kids. Don't invite them in or else they could—

Zizi: Dad, invitations are a vampire thing.

Zach: Besides, I think they need to invite us in. We're the strangers here.

Mr. Eric: The door opened with a creak. [Creak] And there was a tall, smiling zombie wearing a nice button-down shirt and holding a puppy.

Zombie: Brains? Brains. Brains-brains.

Poppa Loo: That's it, let's get out of here, kids.

Mr. Eric: Poppa Loo dropped their luggage, picked up the kids and ran for the car.

Mamma Jamma: Ahahaha hooo.

Poppa Loo: Oh, no, I've left Mamma Jamma behind.

Mr. Eric: He looked back to see her laughing and smiling as she held that puppy and it licked her face.

Zach: Dad, I don't think we're in any danger.

Poppa Loo: Shows what you know. That zombie puppy is gonna... is gonna...

Zizi: Lick Mom's face?

Mamma Jamma: Oh, Poppa Loo, come here. Zach, Zizi!

Mr. Eric: The three of them walked back up but Poppa Loo was spraying them with a cloud of Zomblock. The zombie opened its arms wide.

Zombie: Braaa-aaains.

Poppa Loo: Oh, he's coming for us for sure!

Zombie: Oh, excuse me. I didn't realize you didn't speak Zombie.

Mamma Jamma: See, honey? He was just speaking Zombie.

Zach: Oh, oh! How do you say my name in Zombie?

Zombie: Oh, what's your name?

Zach: Zach.

Zombie: Well, that's a fine zombie name. But in zombie, it's called, "Brains."

Mamma Jamma: Oh, do me! Do me! My name's Mamma Jamma.

Zombie: Brainsbrains.

Mamma Jamma: Hahaha!

Poppa Loo: All right, I guess, tell me how to say Poppa Loo in Zombie.

Zombie: Poppa Loo.

Poppa Loo: Yeah, but say it in Zombie.

Zombie: Poppa Loo.

Poppa Loo: What?

Zombie: I'm sorry, there's no good translation for your name.

Poppa Loo: Just say, like, Brainsbrains brains.

Zombie: I do not dance on cheese logs!

Zizi: Oh, Dad, your Zombie is awful.

Poppa Loo: Oh, come on. All he says is "Brains."

Zizi: Dad! You just said his mother looks like a squirrel.

Poppa Loo: Oh geez, well, will you tell him I'm sorry.

Zombie: I understand English. Most Zombies are bilingual.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, please pardon my Loo. The only thing bigger than his mouth is his foot when he sticks it in there.

Zombie: He eats feet? How barbaric.

Poppa Loo: No, sticking your foot in your mouth is a figure of speech. You, on the other hand, eat brains!

Zombie: No, no no. Figure of speech. Let me show you to rooms and give you hugs.

Zach: I hear zombies give the best hugs.

Poppa Loo: Oh, I don't think so.

Mr. Eric: Said Poppa Loo, spraying Zomblock all over everyone in the family.

Zombie: Oh, that give me bad allergies.

Poppa Loo: It's my right as a What Ifican to spray what I want, when I want, who I want.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, give me that spray!

Mr. Eric: Said Mamma Jamma, and she snatched the Zomblock away from Poppa Loo.

Poppa Loo: Aw, shucks.

Zombie: Okay. Here are your rooms. Who want hugs?

Zach: Me.

Zizi: Me.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, I want so many hugs!

Poppa Loo: I'll pass.

Mr. Eric: And the tall, smiling zombie bent over and gave Zach, Zizi, and Mamma Jamma a big, group hug. It was really nice. And that puppy was jumping all over them and licking them. And everybody was laughing. Except for you know who.

Poppa Loo: Zombie, you know it's my job to hug my family.

Zombie: Hey. I have name. It's Brains brainbrains Brains brains brains braaaaaaiins. Brainsbrains brains brainszzzzz brainsbrains brains brains BRAINS! Brains brains braaiins brains brhmrm brains brains! Brains. But you can call me Zed.

Poppa Loo: Okay, Zed. Here's your money for the rooms and you can scam.

Mr. Eric: Zach and Zizi went into their room to unpack. It was right next door to Mamma Jamma and Poppa Loo's.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, Poppa Loo, look at this brochure about Zombria. There's so much fun stuff to do here.

Poppa Loo: Fun for you, maybe. I just seem to keep embarrassing myself in front of the kids.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, you just gotta loosen up. Let's all do something fun together.

Poppa Loo: All right, all right. What's that brochure of yours say?

Mamma Jamma: Well, there's museums and dances and sports.

Poppa Loo: Pick whatever you think's the most fun and we'll do it in the morning.

Mr. Eric: The next morning, the whole family went downstairs to have breakfast with Zed and his family.

Zed: Oh, sorry. Here are my kid, Goo and Icky.

Goo: I prefer Gooward.

Icky: Icky's fine by me.

Goo: Would you two like hugs?

Zizi: Sure, I'd like a hug.

Zach: That sounds good.

Mr. Eric: Poppa Loo didn't like seeing his kids hug these young zombies but he got a stern look from Mamma Jamma and he could just hear her saying in his head:

Mamma Jamma: [Echoing inside Poppa Loo's head] Keep that big yap closed, Poppa Loo.

Mr. Eric: So they all sat down for breakfast. Zed's well-trained puppies sauntered in with covered trays strapped to their backs.

Poppa Loo: Oh boy, I'm so hungry.

Mr. Eric: Poppa Loo and his whole family opened their trays to reveal delicious bread and bacon and eggs and a glass of orange juice. But when Zed's family uncovered their trays, ugh, it was all kinds of garbage and old cans, and I think there was a sock in there.

Poppa Loo: Hulgh!

Mr. Eric: Poppa Loo felt a little squeamish.

Zizi: Dad, zombies eat old food that humans can't, okay. Don't embarrass us.

Poppa Loo: Oh, boy, hmm. I'll try not to, ugh. Now, I'm kind of wishing they did eat bra—ow!

Mr. Eric: Poppa Loo stopped at kick from Mamma Jamma under the table.
After breakfast they rushed off to the museum.

Zizi: Oh, I can't wait to study the brainoglyphics.

Mamma Jamma: I want to learn about all their advances in neuroscience.

Zach: I wanna jump in the brain pit.

Poppa Loo: Please don't tell me this museum is...

Mr. Eric: Yep. It was a museum of brains. And it was in the shape of a giant plaster brain. The kids ran around playing and exploring for hours. Poppa Loo just found a newspaper to read, but it was written all in brainoglyphics.

Poppa Loo: Aw, geez.

Mr. Eric: Before they knew it, it was the afternoon.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, come on kids. We gotta go to the dance now.

Zizi and Zach: Yay!

Poppa Loo: All right, you kids are gonna see your Poppa bust a move now.

Zizi and Zach: Hehehe.

Mamma Jamma: That's the spirit, Loo.

Mr. Eric: They hustled all the way to Horde Square where hundreds of zombies were wandering around aimlessly, arms raised out, talking in zombie language.

Zombies: Brains! Brainsbrains. BRAAAAINS. Brainsbrains brains brains braaaaaains.

Mr. Eric: It all went together, I don't know, sort of melodically, but it didn't sound like any music Poppa Loo had ever heard.

Zombies: Braaaiaiaiaianssss Brains brains brains brains brainsbrains [Zombies mimicking electronic dance music, but all the instruments are just zombies saying "Brains"]

Mr. Eric: Zach and Zizi were walking around in lock step with those zombies. Even Mamma Jamma picked it up before long. But Poppa Loo just couldn't figure out that zombie walk dance.

Poppa Loo: I mean, it's just a shuffle, what kind of silly, crazy, weird dance is this, anyway?

[Record scratch]

Zombies: [Offended] Brains? Brains brains brains.

Mr. Eric: One young lady zombie walked up to him.

Lady Zombie: Brains brains? Braaaains!

Mr. Eric: And she pointed away from the square.

Poppa Loo: I'm sorry. I mean, uh... uh... brains? Brains brains?

Zach: Oh, Dad, you really shouldn't have said that.

Poppa Loo: Oh, fine. Let's just get out of here. Your mom said there was a sporting event of some kind.

Mamma Jamma: Oh yeah, let's go to the Zomball stadium.

Poppa Loo: Zomball? Oh, brother.

Mr. Eric: Yep. In Zomball, zombies use their heads as balls and they took turns throwing it to each other. And another zombie would use one of its legs as a bat and try to hit the head out of the park!

It wasn't a very fast game as there was a lot of zombies taking off legs and putting them back on and jumping down the base line and reattaching heads and sometimes they got their heads mixed up, too.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, this game doesn't make any sense to me.

Poppa Loo: Are you kidding, honey? The count's two brains to three heads and the Zombria Puppy Huggers are leading by two tombstones.

Mr. Eric: Crack! A zombie head was suddenly hit all the way into the stadium where they were seated.

Poppa Loo: I got this, kids.

Mr. Eric: Poppa Loo turned to a Zomball fan sitting next to him.

Poppa Loo: Buddy, is it okay if I borrow your arms for a minute?

Zomball Fan: Brains?

Mr. Eric: It nodded. Fast as lightning, Poppa Loo popped off its two arms, jumped up into the stadium, reached up as high as he could into the air and caught that zombie head! The head of the Zomball player looked down and gave him a wink.

Zomball Head: Braiiiiiiinss.

Poppa Loo: Ha ha ha ha ha.

Mr. Eric: Poppa Loo realized everyone in the Zomball stadium was watching him. He thought about a chant he'd been hearing in the stadiums and...

Poppa Loo: Uhh... Brrraaaaaiinsss?????

Mr. Eric: The whole stadium went quiet. And then:

Zomball Fans: BRAAAAIINNS!! BRAINS!

Poppa Loo: [Laughs] I'm finally getting the hang of this place. Here, Zach. This head's for you.

Zach: Aw, thanks Dad. I'll keep it forever.

Mr. Eric: And he stuffed the head into his backpack.

Zomball Head: [Muffled] Brains? Brainbrainbrainbrain.

Mamma Jamma: Boys, give the brains back.

Poppa Loo: All right.

Zach: Aw, shucks.

Mr. Eric: The end.

[Falling harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: Owen, I was so excited to finally tell a zombie story. Wow. I hope you all enjoyed the story. I'd like to thank Karen Marshall, my editor and producer. Craig Martinson, who made our great them song. And all you kids at home who've ever met someone new or a little different and gave them the benefit of the doubt. Sometimes it can take a while to find things you have in common with new people, but if you stay patient and nice, you probably will.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]