

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 37: What if cats are rocket ships and you could turn into a polka dot?

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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 Maya and another question from Ian.

Maya: My name is Maya and I really like Shopkins. What if you can turn into a polka dot?

Parent: Thank you.

Maya: Thank you.

Mr. Eric: Maya, you like Shopkins, too? Gosh I'm hearing so much about these things lately. And I think your question is very inventive. Let's hear what Ian has to say.

Ian: Hello, my name's Ian and I'm four years old and I like cats and baseball and my question is what if cats are rocket ships.

Parent: That's Ian and he's four years old. He likes cats and baseball, and his question is: What if cats are rocket ships? Thank you.

Mr. Eric: Well, Ian, you know I love baseball. And I am always up for a good cat question. So let's get right into your story.

[Rising harp scale.]

[Crackle] 10... 9... 8... [Countdown continues in background]

Mr. Eric: JF Kat, Dame Dot, Berry Fields, Sniff the Cat, and dozens of other people and creatures from all over What If World were packed on a tiny rocketship.

[Rocket blasting off]

Sniff: Mondays...

Mr. Eric: Said Sniff the cat.

Sniff: Why does What If World always get destroyed on Mondays.

Mr. Eric: The rocket ship started lifting off but it only got a foot before—
[Struggling and sputtering engine and alarm noises]
The engine sputtered out and it fell back to the ground with a big burst of rock and fire.

Sniff: Of course, all the fur burns off my tail.

Mr. Eric: Sniff the cat grabbed the nearest fire extinguisher and put out all the fire on the tipped over rocket ship. Fortunately everyone was wearing their safety belts so no one was hurt other than a few bumps and bruises.

Berry: I don't understand.

Mr. Eric: Said Berry Fields.

Berry: It should have worked.

JF Kat: Er, I'm confused as well. I mean, how difficult can it be to build a rocket ship?

Mr. Eric: Said JF Kat.

Sniff: I don't even really remember how we got here.

Mr. Eric: Said Sniff the cat.

Dame Dot: It is a very interesting story.

Mr. Eric: Dame Dot, a little purple polka dot clad in golden armor was helping everyone out of their seats and off the ship.

Dame Dot: It all started yesterday afternoon.

Sniff: Aw, flashbacks... I can't stand flashbacks.

Berry: Oh, I'm sure this flashback will be all kinds of exciting.
[Chimes]

Mr. Eric: It was the annual What If World reunion baseball game and it was a really hot day.

Sniff: A baseball game? There's nothing more boring than baseball.

Berry: Shh! Just enjoy the flashback.

Mr. Eric: [Clears throat] As I was saying, it was a very hot day.

Tara Dactyl: A 2-1 pitch. Swung on and missed.

Mr. Eric: Said Tara Dactyl.

Tara Dactyl: Here comes the 2-2 pitch. High and outside. Ball three.

Mr. Eric: Said Tara Dactyl, again.

Sniff: That's it. Flashback over.

Berry: I don't know how you did that.

Sniff: Everyone knows baseball's fun to play but not so fun to listen to.

Dame Dot: But without the flashback how will anyone know how we got here?

JF Kat: You mean how we all decided it was too hot to play baseball so we'd take a rocketship to outer space where it's cooler?

Dame Dot: Uh... oui.

Mr. Eric: Said Dame Dot.

Dame Dot: That is the general jist of it, yes.

Sniff: And it didn't work.

Berry: But we spent all day building that rocket ship.

Mr. Eric: Said Berry Fields, the little strawberry Shoppler.

Sniff: And all I got was a half-burned off tail.

JF Kat: Wait a minute. One of my citizens is injured!

Mr. Eric: JF Kat patted his two little paws together. It barely made any sound at all, but just the same, a dozen cats all in blue scrubs rushed over to Sniff the cat and got him right on an ambulance.

Berry: Oh my goodness!

Mr. Eric: Said Berry Fields, jumping onto Sniff the cat's shoulder at the last second.

Dame Dot: Oh dear.

Mr. Eric: Said Dame Dot, and jumped onto Berry Fields' little shoulder.

JF Kat: Well, everyone's doing it.

Mr. Eric: Said JF Kat, and jumped onto one of the doctor's shoulders.

Cat Doctor: Reoow!

JF Kat: Presidential business.

Cat Doctor: Okay...

Mr. Eric: Said the Kitty Doctor. And before you knew it, they'd rushed Sniff the cat to the What House's finest hospital.

Sniff: I just lost the fur on my tail. It might even grow back.

Mr. Eric: Said Sniff.

JF Kat: Gentlecats, we can rebuild him. We have the twineology. We have the capability to build the world's first rocketship cat. Sniff the cat will be that cat. Better than he was before. Better. Rocketeer. Twinier.

Sniff: Uh, I'd be happy with just a tail wag.

JF Kat: Nonsense. Hasn't every cat always dreamt of being a rocketship?

Sniff: I mean, sure. I'd love to be a rocketship.

Berry: But the last rocketship we built kind of exploded.

Dame Dot: And now you want to make him into a rocketship? Using twine?

JF Kat: Well, of course. We're cats.

Mr. Eric: All the kitty doctors suddenly leapt into action. It looked like they were just tangling and untangling length after length, yard after yard, mile after mile of twine into an intricate little kitty tail. JF Kat, Dame Dot, and Berry Fields were asked to go outside to the waiting room while they attached the tail.

It was so hot all over What If World, that they were sweating even as they sat still.

Dame Dot: How much longer do you think this will take?

Cat Doctor: Reow reow.

Mr. Eric: Said one of the doctors as she wheeled out Sniff the cat.

Berry: All done? Fantastic! I can't wait to play baseball in outer space.

Sniff: Well, I don't know if my tail's big enough to fit a whole baseball team.

JF Kat: Doctor, how long will it take to turn all cats into rocketships.

Cat Doctor: Reow.. reowreowrowrow.

JF Kat: Unacceptable! We were supposed to play in outer space tonight.

Dame Dot: Well, we could fit any number of players on his tail if they were polka dots.

Berry: You could even fit nine players?

Dame Dot: Oui! Polka dots are two dimensional. I only take up more space because of this armor.

JF Kat: But you'd need at least 18 players plus a couple of umps and some fans. Can you fit, like, 50 people?

Dame Dot: If you are polka dots, we can fit infinity people on one tail.

Sniff: That can't be right.

Cat Doctor: Reoooooorroow.

Mr. Eric: Said the kitty doctor and gave a nod to Dame Dot.

Dame Dot: Let me demonstrate.

Mr. Eric: And just like that, she blasted out a dozen polka dots of different colors, turning each of the dozen cat doctors into polka dots. Then all 12 polka dots rolled together and it looked like there was just one.

Dame Dot: And watch this.

Mr. Eric: Dame Dot took off her golden armor, rolled in front of the polka dots, and now it looked like there was just one purple polka dot.

JF Kat: This feels like some kind of weird magic.

Sniff: Rocketship cat tails made out of twine, I can understand. But 13 polka dots taking up no more space than one polka dot? That's weird.

Mr. Eric: When they wheeled Sniff the cat to the curb of the hospital, they found thousands of citizens of What If World clamoring outside. Cam, the Cannoli, a Shoppler friend of Berry Fields, walked up to the president.

Cam: Yo, Prez. It's too hot here. My cannoli cream is melting and it's made out of plastic. You better get us all off of this world ASAP.

Berry: Hey Cam, we were just about to go to outer space and play baseball.

Cam: What are you, nuts? The world's practically melting over here and you guys are playing baseball?

Crowd: Seems kind of selfish. [clamoring]

Mr. Eric: The whole crowd was complaining.

Dame Dot: Listen to me. We can all turn into polka dots and jump on the rocketship and travel in outer space in cool comfort.

Cam: Ah, you mean because we'd only be taking up spaces in two dimensions, and thus theoretically an infinite number of us can fit on his tail?

Dame Dot: Uh... oui.

Mr. Eric: And Dame Dot set about turning them all into polka dots and they all rolled into a tight little stack taking up no more space than Dame Dot herself.

Sniff: Well, we probably should have taken this for a test flight first, but...

Mr. Eric: Sniff the cat lashed his tail out perfectly straight and the countdown began. Berry Fields, the only who wasn't a polka dot, pulled a seatbelt across the thousands of other people who'd all been turned into dots. And the twine-tail rocketship blasted them off all the way into outer space.

Sniff: Well, that worked. I just hope I'm able to breathe in the vacuum of outer...

Mr. Eric: Bits of the twine tail unraveled and retwined together to form an airtight seal over Sniff the cat.

Sniff: Kids at home, don't try to build rocketships out of twine.

Mr. Eric: And just like that, they were all floating in outer space.

JF Kat: Wow. It's so much cooler up here in outer space.

Berry: And since you're all polka dots, you don't need to breathe or anything, so you can just spread out and play baseball.

Dame Dot: Just be careful not to drift away forever.

Mr. Eric: Said Dame Dot. All the thousands of polka dots were already leaving his tail and floating around checking out outer space, getting warmed up for the baseball game.

JF Kat: Wait a minute, we can get lost forever in outer space?

Dame Dot: Don't worry. You're polka dots. You could not get hurt.

JF Kat: Sure, but uh... I don't want to be a polka dot forever. Just basically for the baseball game.

Cam: Hey, Berry Fields. I think maybe I'm doing that whole floating away forever thing.

Mr. Eric: It was Cam Cannoli. He looked like a flakey brown polka dot with a little bit of white at the top.

Berry: Well, just come back here, Cam.

Cam: Oh just because I can understand being two dimensional doesn't mean I'm any good at it.

Mr. Eric: Then they saw the little pastry polka dot floating farther and farther away.

Sniff: I'll just blast my rocket for a second and go catch him.

Dame Dot: Wait, no!

Sniff: Meooowww...

Mr. Eric: The force from his twine tail blasted him towards Cam Cannoli, and at the same time, it blasted a thousand other polka dot people in a thousand different directions.

Berry: Oh man, I really should have done a headcount before this field trip.

Mr. Eric: Said Berry Fields. She was a three dimensional toy, but she was just a little Shoppler. She hopped from one polka dot person to the next, pushing them back towards Sniff the rocketship.

Berry: I think I saved just about everybody.

Mr. Eric: She said, a few hours later. She'd jumped over a thousand times and that had taken her several hours, and when she looked behind her, all she could see was Petrina the Pirate's polka dot, floating far off in the distance.

Petrina: Thank you for saving a little old polka dot lady.

Mr. Eric: She floated there in outer space for, she couldn't even really tell how long. She couldn't even tell how fast she was going. But sometimes, old stars faded out of sight and new ones came into view.

Berry: It's so pretty out here. But it's getting really cold, and I'm really starting to miss my friends.

Mr. Eric: One star in particular seemed to be getting bigger and bigger and as it got bigger, Berry Fields started to feel warmer and warmer.

Berry: Hmm. We Shoppers were taught that the sun was a lemon frosted cupcake in the sky. But maybe it could be a colossal burning ball of gas, after all.

Mr. Eric: She tried to move away from the sun, but there was nothing else to bounce off of. Now it was even hotter than it had ever gotten on What If World. She could feel her green leafy plastic hair starting to melt.

Berry: No one deserves to live in heat like this, but I'm just glad I saved my friends.

Mr. Eric: Just then, she saw a glint far off. Could it have been a spotted cat moving across the sky? It was hard to say.

Berry: Guys! It's me!

Mr. Eric: Cried Berry Fields.

Berry: Your shortstop.

Mr. Eric: That gave her an idea. She reached up with her scrawny little strawberry arm to her half-melted hair and snapped a piece of that green leaf right off. She rolled the soft green plastic up like a baseball and tossed it with all her might towards the sun.

Berry: Did that move me at all? Did it even slow me down?

Mr. Eric: She wasn't sure. But she felt like maybe it made a difference, so she tried it again. Snap! She broke off a little piece of hair, rolled it up into a little green ball and tossed it right towards the sun. Is that little spotted blur getting closer? Maybe it was. She wasn't sure, but all she had was hope, so, every little bit of her leafy hair got smooshed up into a green baseball and tossed toward the sun. Just as she was running out of hope and leafy hair.

Sniff: Took you long enough to find us, Berry.

Mr. Eric: Said Sniff, the rocketship cat. And then she heard a thousand cheers echo from inside his little tail.

Polka Dot People: Hooray! Hooray! Yay! I knew we'd find you! I wasn't so sure, but I'm glad we did! Yay! Hooray! Hooray!

Cam: Lady, you better never give me a scare like that again.

Mr. Eric: Said Cam Cannoli as soon as she got on board. Finally, they got back to What If World where it was still pretty hot, if not as bad as it had been.

JF Kat: Who would have thought thousands of two dimensional creatures taking a cat-powered rocketship into outer space to play baseball would have been complicated?

Mr. Eric: Said JF Kat.

Fish: I could have told you that. You can't just run away from your problems.

Mr. Eric: It was that fish. Do you remember him from episode 31, what if dolphins could fly?

Fish: Of course, they don't remember me. It's more convenient to forget, but I mean, we're talking about serious global warming. You can't just take a rocketship to outer space in order to—

Berry: We saved everybody again!

Fish: Oh, sure, Berry, for one day. But you gotta look at the bigger picture here.

JF Kat: Who put this fish bowl out side of the What House anyway? Am I supposed to eat you or something.

Fish: No, you're supposed to listen to me. We've got to reduce our carbon footprint and invest in renewable energy.

JF Kat: Like kitty rocketships, you mean?

Fish: That's not what I—well, sure, actually, yeah. I mean, kitty rocketships don't pollute, so, why not.

Dame Dot: And maybe my polka dot power can create electricity.

Berry: And then global warming will stop forever, yay!

Sniff: Mr. Eric, can you say the thing.

Fish: But, but. Mr. Eric, people need to know that you can't just make one cat rocketship and then save the world.

Mr. Eric: The end.

Fish: Aw, not again.

[Falling harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: Well, thank you Maya and Ian for another great pair of questions. I hope you liked your story. I'd like to thank Karen Marshall, my editor and producer. Craig Martinson, our theme song writer. Jason O'Keeffe, our resident artist, and all you curious kids out there who want to find out about things that keep this world cool.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]