

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 38: What if werewolves and unicorns were real and everyone had a unicorn as a pet?

File Length: 23:24

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. Today we have two questions, and I received these questions on the same day, but they had something in common. I'm going to play Eli's for you, first.

Eli: Hello. My name is Eli and I'm six years old. I like Harry Potter and my question is what if werewolves were real?

Mr. Eric: Really cool question, Eli. I love werewolves, and of course I adore Harry Potter. Eli, you're not going to believe the very next question I got that day?

Kendall: Hi, my name is Kendall and I'm eight years old and I like puppies.

Lenley: Hi, my name is [unclear] and I'm ten years old and I like Harry Potter.

Together: And our question is: what if unicorns were real and everyone had that as a pet?

Mr. Eric: Wow, Kendall and Lenley, what a cool question. Okay, let me make sure I have it all. Kendall likes puppies. Lenley likes Harry Potter and they both want to know what if unicorns were real and everyone had one as a pet.

Folks, I mean, I think today's story just tells itself, right?

[Rising harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: Our story starts in Zach and Zizi's house, just a few weeks before the school year is set to start.

Zach: Hey Zizi, I'm finally old enough to get into the Observatorium.

Mr. Eric: Said Zach.

Zizi: I know, Zach.

Mr. Eric: Said Zizi.

Zizi: But just because you're old enough doesn't mean you're going to get an invitation.

[Wolves howling]

Zach: Zizi, is that what I think it is?

Zizi: It sure is, Zach! We just received a howl!

Mr. Eric: They rushed to the door and flung it open to reveal a giant shaggy brown werewolf with a slobbery envelope in his mouth.

Werewolf: [Pants] Pluaaah! Who's Zach?

Zach: I'm Zach.

Werewolf: Okay, that's for you. Sorry I buried it a little bit. But it's okay because I dug it back up.

Zach: Uh, okay. Thanks.

Mr. Eric: And that giant werewolf sprinted right off. Zach picked up the slobbery, dirty envelope and slowly, carefully opened it to try not to rip the wet paper.

Zizi: Oh, Zach! What does it say? I can't wait to hear.

Zach: Oh, it says I'm accepted!

Zizi: Zach! That's the best news ever.

Mr. Eric: Zach and Zizi gave each other a big hug, the slobbery, dirty envelope sticking to both of them.

Zizi and Zach: Ew.

Zizi: Zach, we've got to tell Mamma Jamma and Poppa Loo right away.

Mr. Eric: They rushed to the kitchen of their rocketship house and found Poppa Loo sipping his coffee and reading his paper.

Zach: Poppa Loo! Poppa Loo! I got accepted into the Observatorium.

Poppa Loo: My boy, a wizard. Oh, I'm a proud papa today!

Mr. Eric: Poppa Loo snatched up the envelope.

Poppa Loo: Yadda yadda wizard, yadda yadda unicorn pets, yadda yadda tuition? Well, it looks like Mamma Jamma and me are gonna have to pick up a few extra hours at the plant plant to pay for this.

Zach: Aw, but please, Dad? It's all I ever wanted.

Mr. Eric: Said Zach.

Zizi: Um, did you say unicorn pet?

Mr. Eric: Asked Zizi.

Poppa Loo: Yeah, it says something about mandatory unicorns for all students.

Mr. Eric: Just then, they heard Mamma Jamma scream.

Mamma Jamma: Oh my goodness!
[Record scratch]

Poppa Loo: Mamma Jamma! What's wrong! I'll go send one of the children to check on you!

Mr. Eric: Said Poppa Loo, flipping to the next page of his newspaper.

Poppa Loo: Zizi, you go ahead. Poppa Loo's late for work.

Mr. Eric: And he kept on reading that paper.

Zizi: Come on, Zach.

Mr. Eric: Said Zizi. And they rushed upstairs to see what Mamma Jamma was so upset about.

Mamma Jamma: Zach, Zizi, I don't want you to be alarmed, but there's two skinny albino rhinoceroses out in our yard!

Zizi: Skinny albino rhinoceroses?

Mr. Eric: Asked Zizi, looking out the window. And there stood two beautiful shiny unicorns. Zach and Zizi ran back downstairs again. Oof, they were getting tired from all this running. And they went outside to meet their new unicorns.

Zizi: Hi unicorn. I'm Zizi. What's your name?

Hernosity: My name is Hernosity, thank you very much. Now let me see your stables, little girl.

Zizi: Oh, um, we don't have stables. But we do live in a rocketship house.

Hernosity: A rocketship house, how quaint.

Mr. Eric: Said Hernosity.

Hernosity: Very well. I need three hours of running every day. Weekly visits to a unicorn horn spa and fresh moon sapphires for breakfast every morning.

Zizi: Oh, don't you worry Hernosity. I'm going to take good care of you.

Hernosity: You had better. A unicorn is a great responsibility.

Mr. Eric: Meanwhile, Zach and his unicorn were already rolling around in the mud together.

Puppy: My name's Sir Jonathan Rhinehart Fancy Hoofs the Third.

Zach: Hahaha. That name's really long. Can I call you Puppy? I always wanted a puppy. But a unicorn's pretty cool.

Puppy: Okay, you can call me Puppy.

Mr. Eric: Said Sir Jonathan Rhinehart Fancy Hoofs the Third. The kids still had a couple weeks before the school year started. And they were really good at taking care of Puppy and Hernosity during those times. They couldn't afford moon sapphires and a fancy stable, but they gave those unicorns a lot of exercise, a nice hay-filled garage to sleep in, and the best uni-kibble their parents could afford. Until finally, it was time to head to the Observatorium.

Poppa Loo: All right, kids. Good luck at the Observatorium. Learn lots of magic.

Mamma Jamma: And take good care of those unicorns, you two!

Zizi: Huh?

Zach: Huh?

Mamma Jamma: I hope you didn't think your mother and father were gonna take care of those unicorns.

Poppa Loo: Wizarding school is expensive, kids. And besides, we already have to take care of you two.

Mamma Jamma: Which we love doing.

Poppa Loo: Of course, of course. But those pets are your responsibility.

Zach: But I'm going to have a lot of magic to learn.

Zizi: Yeah, Mom. I can't ride this unicorn for three hours a day?

Poppa Loo: Do you two both want to go to magic school?

Zach: Yes.

Zizi: Yeah.

Mamma Jamma: And do you two both want to keep your unicorns.

Zach: Of course!

Zizi: Forever and ever.

Poppa Loo: Then I'm sure you'll figure something out. Okay. Off to Platform 39 $\frac{3}{4}$ ths with you.

Mr. Eric: So Zach and Zizi packed up their unicorns and rode them down to platform 39 $\frac{3}{4}$ ths.

Zach: Man, I'm really tired from all this riding.

Mr. Eric: Said Zach.

Zizi: I know, Zach, but I bet the train has a stable for our unicorns.

Zach: So, Zizi, we're at the train station, but I don't see the platform.

Zizi: Sheesh, Zach. Didn't you read the invite? Just follow me.

Mr. Eric: Zizi rode Hernessity all the way toward the end of platform nine and suddenly she fell out of sight.

Zach: Uh oh. That looks scary.

Mr. Eric: But Puppy the unicorn said.

Puppy: That looks fun.

Mr. Eric: And he ran at full speed at a tiny hole in the ground, which opened and—

Zach: AAH!

Puppy: [Laughs]

Mr. Eric: It felt like they were falling forever, but then they floated down softly to the ground and saw Zizi stepping through a giant wardrobe. And when they followed her into the wardrobe, they saw the back of this exceedingly long wardrobe was a mirror and they looked into the mirror and were suddenly able to pass through the mirror and THEN they were at the Horsetrot Express.

Zizi: You're gonna love this part, Zach.

Mr. Eric: Said Zizi.

Zizi: It's like a train of a thousand carousel horses that takes you all the way to the Observatorium.

Hernosity: [Snorts]

Mr. Eric: Snorted Hernosity.

Hernosity: That's what it was until we came to life and became unicorns again. Now you have to ride us all the way to the Observatorium.

Mr. Eric: And yes, indeed, Zach and Zizi saw a line of a thousand kids riding unicorns.

Puppy: Wow.

Mr. Eric: Said Puppy.

Puppy: That looks really fun.

Zach: Oh no, I'm already so sore from riding.

Hernosity: Well, where do you think the Horsetrot Express came from, boys and girls?

Zizi: I guess we never really though of it.

Mr. Eric: So they joined the long line of unicorns on the Horsetrot Express and by the time they got to the Observatorium, every last one of those kids was exhausted.

Zach: Uhhh, I'm so sore.

Zizi: Yeah, even riding a unicorn gets a little old after a while.

Hernosity: Excuse me?

Mr. Eric: Said Hernosity.

Puppy: It's okay, Hernosity. They're just sleepy.

Mr. Eric: Said Puppy.

Puppy: And I'm sleepy, too, to be honest. Can't wait to go to sleep in a nice hay-filled garage.

Mr. Eric: [Whistling in the background] The giant tower of the Observatorium reached up before them. And a bunch of smaller towers of stone and wood and candy and diamonds, and just about anything else you can imagine, had sprung up all over the field surrounding the school making a kind of colorful castle.

Zach: Zizi, where is that whistling coming from?

Mr. Eric: Asked Zach.

Sully: Oh, sorry. That's my unicorn's power.

Mr. Eric: Said Sully the Squid. He was holding onto a slimy, rather grumpy looking unicorn.

Zizi: Wait, our unicorns have powers.

Sully: Well, yeah. Every unicorn's horn has one power. My unicorn has a whistling horn.

Zach: That's so cool.

Mr. Eric: Said Zach.

Zach: Well, my unicorn's name is Puppy and his horn can—Puppy, what does your horn do?

Puppy: Oh, my power's so cool. I just can't remember what it is.

Zizi: What about you, Hernosity?

Mr. Eric: Asked Zizi.

Zizi: What's your power?

Hernosity: My power is most special indeed.

Zach: Cool!

Hernosity: Yes, it's quite cool. For you see, I have the power to turn anyone into a—

All: Yes?

Hernosity: A werewolf.

All: Oh.

Zizi: Well, that doesn't seem like a very useful power.

Hernosity: We cannot help the abilities we are born with. We can only make the best of them.

Zach: I think it's cool. I want to be a werewolf. That's like, I'll be my own puppy.

Zizi: Zach, no. Mom and Dad aren't gonna want you to be a werewolf. We'll just be very careful around Hernosity's horn.

Sully: Yeah, that way, nothing will go wrong, almost definitely.

Abacus: All students to the cafessium?

Zach: Zizi, was that?

Zizi: Yep. That was Abacus P. Grumbler.

Zach: Wow.

Sully: Eh.

Hernosity: I'm guessing you haven't met him yet.

Sully's Unicorn: [Whistling in background]

Mr. Eric: And all the students and their unicorns packed into the Cafessium. Long wooden tables with benches stretched all the way through the Cafessium, and at the edges stretched long troughs of food and water for the unicorns.

Abacus: Greetings, students! It is I, Professor Wizard Headmaster Abacus P. Grumbler Extraordinaire.

Zach: Wow.

Mr. Eric: Said Zach.

All others: We know already. Yep. Oh boy.

Mr. Eric: Said everyone else.

Abacus: And now, all first years must make a line in front of the Sorticorn.

Mr. Eric: Abacus gestured to his own unicorn, a knobby old ladycorn.

Abacus: Her trusty horn will sort you into you proper tower where you will train beside your—

Mr. Eric: But as his hand swept out toward the Sorticorn, he accidentally knocked her old, brittle horn right off her head.

Sorticorn: Aaaaah.

Mr. Eric: The Sorticorn cried.

Abacus: Oh dear. Um... never fear, everyone. Sorticorn just needs to borrow a different horn while I fix this one. Any volunteers?

Mr. Eric: The Sorticorn was a very old and respected unicorn and so every last unicorn raised its head up from its trough, offering its horn.

Abacus: Such magnanimity. Such generosity. Oh, I could but weep. Except it would just make all you kids giggle, I'm sure. Very well, If I just take a small piece of all of your horns, it will make her a new one. Alakazam and shalamazot, giving a little means a lot!

Mr. Eric: And a thousand tiny cracking sounds rolled through the Cafessium as little bits and pieces of every unicorn's horn flew towards the Sorticorn's head.

Abacus: Right. Now it'll just be a few more hours of sorting and then you'll all have dinner.

All: Aw... Oh, come on.

Mr. Eric: All the students groaned. They'd been riding all day, from all over What If World. They were exhausted and hungry.

Abacus: All right, we'll conjure the food right now and the Sorticorn will go around touching you all with the tip of her horn and sorting you all into your proper towers. As you stuff your little faces.

All students: Yay! Oh thank you! Good idea.

Abacus: Well, at least I know I can't mess up a food spell. Magic kazaam and shamala zop! Give this load of kids some slop!

Mr. Eric: But he aimed his wand a little too high, and about a metric ton of sloppy joes and salads fell from the sky, covering every last student.

Zach: I think I'm going to like it here.

Mr. Eric: Said Zach, scooping up sloppy joe with lettuce and shoving it in his mouth. Meanwhile, the Sorticorn went around and gently tapped every student with the tip of its horn. No one could hear who was sorted where in the noisy Cafessium. I mean, the kids couldn't even see each other under all the slop. But when the meal was finally over, they shuffled outside, shaking the last of the slop off of them.

Zach: So, Zizi. Where did you get sooOOOorted? That was strange.

Zizi: Oh, Zach, maybe you got sorted into WherewoOOOOOlf tower, just like me.

Sully: That's funny. I don't remember therRRRRRe being a werewolf towerRRRR.

Mr. Eric: It had begun raining outside and as the last of the sloppy joe and salad was washed away, the children saw that they'd all been turned into—yep, you guessed it.

Werewolves: AhOOOOOO! Awoooooo! [Various howls]

Mr. Eric: Hernosity looked from one werewolf to the next in a panic. Oh dear, it appears Abacus took the tip of my horn but got all of my magic.

Abacus: What's all this howling about?

Mr. Eric: Said Abacus, sweeping out of the Cafessium.

Abacus: Oh dear. I've turned the whole school into werewolves. That's the third time this year.

Zizi: Abacus, you have to fix us.

Puppy: Oh, that's not going to be possible.

Mr. Eric: Said Puppy.

Puppy: Only another unicorn can undo a unicorn's magic.

Zach: Then you've got to save us, Puppy. I don't want to be my own puppy anymore. I can already feel myself getting fleas.

Hernosity: I'm afraid that's not his power.

Mr. Eric: Said Hernosity.

Puppy: Yeah, see?

Mr. Eric: Puppy the unicorn touched his horn to each of them and nothing happened.

Abacus: Listen, does anyone here have a dispelling unicorn?

Mr. Eric: But none of the werewolf students raised their hands.

Abacus: And who keeps whistling?

Sully: Oh, sorry. It's just my unicorn.

Zach: There have got to be more unicorns somewhere, Abacus.

Abacus: You're right, my dear boy. But where?

Sorticorn: [Snort]

Mr. Eric: The Sorticorn slowly walked up to them.

Sorticorn: Have you tried the shelter?

Mr. Eric: She asked.

Zizi: A shelter for unicorns? No one would ever give up a unicorn as a pet.

Sorticorn: You might be surprised.

Mr. Eric: And she gestured with a horn made of a thousand other horns, to the south.

Abacus: Very well. To the sheltarden!

Zizi: It's just the shelter.

Sully: Yeah, not everything has a weird name, Abacus.

Abacus: All right, fine. But the whistling horse stays.

Unicorn: [Whistles ominously]

Sully: Okay.

Mr. Eric: It was late at night and the moon was full, which made all the werewolf children very happy to run and frolic all the way to the shelter. The unicorns ran among them, neighing as the werewolves howled. And even a few fairies joined the merriment, lighting the way for Zach, Zizi, and Abacus.

The shelter was a wide-open ranch with low fences made of simple wooden posts that any unicorn could hop over. In fact, most of them did, and the werewolves, too.

Abacus: It is I, Abacus P. Grumbler, come to Sheltraria, in order to free, um... these werewolves from being werewolves. I suppose.

Mr. Eric: Someone stepped out of a small cottage in the middle of this expanse of ranch and seemed to walk towards them, or was it roll? It sort of looked like a snowman, or a snowman made of clay pots. The clay pot on top was perfectly round, and brown, and had a face painted on it.

'Arry: Hello? Name's 'Arry.

Zach: Harry?

'Arry: No, not Harry. 'Arry.

Zizi: I'm sorry, do you know that you're made out of pots.

'Arry: That's one of the hazards of rescuing unicorns, I'm afraid.

Abacus: It is you, the legendary 'Arry Potter.

'Arry: Just because I'm named out of pots doesn't make me last name Potter.

Abacus: I'm sorry. What is your last name?

'Arry: Unicornrescuer.

Zach: Well, 'Arry Unicornrescuer, is there a unicorn here that can turn werewolves into people?

'Arry: Can't right say. New ones dropped off every day since everyone in What If World got a unicorn for a pet.

Zizi: That's horrible.

Mr. Eric: Said Zizi.

Hernosity: It is not easy caring for a unicorn, as you well know, Zizi.

Mr. Eric: Said Hernosity.

'Arry: Yeah, imagine living in New What City, cramped in a tiny apartment. No life for a unicorn. Plus, they live for like a thousand years. That's a big commitment.

Zach: Well, I can't wait to get into quadruple digits with Puppy, here.

'Arry: Uh, yeaah.

Mr. Eric: Said 'Arry Unicornrescuer as the rest of his rescued unicorns approached the group.

'Arry: Listen, any of you unicorns have a power to cure werewolves?

Mr. Eric: A big, muscular unicorn stomped forward.

Large Unicorn: Me horns can turn werewolves back into—

Abacus: Well, what are you waiting for? These werewolves have eaten the slippers right off my feet and now they're working on my robes.

Large Unicorn: Veet.

Mr. Eric: Said the big unicorn, whipping his horn around and around and shooting a rainbow into the air that sprinkled down like glitter on all the werewolves, turning them right back into... peanuts.

Zach: Um, I don't feel quite like a person yet.

Mr. Eric: Said Zach the peanut.

'Arry: Well, we really all should have let him finish that sentence.

Mr. Eric: Said 'Arry Unicornrescuer.

Puppy: Mm, I love peanuts.

Mr. Eric: Said Puppy. And he leaned down towards the pile of peanut children.

Hernosity: Puppy, what in If World are you doing?

Puppy: I just remembered my power.

Mr. Eric: Said Puppy, licking a line of salty peanuts.

Abacus: Oh, the legumanity!

Mr. Eric: Screamed Abacus. But Puppy didn't eat those peanuts, he just slobbered all over them. And as he did, his unicorn horn started to shake and so did those peanuts and—[Popping noises]

—They turned right back into children!

Abacus: So your power is turning peanuts into people.

Puppy: Yeah, I have to be really careful at ball games.

Mr. Eric: Said Puppy. And slowly, he turned every last student back.

Hernosity: Well, Abacus, your students have been up all night and they're still not sorted.

Mr. Eric: Said Hernosity.

Abacus: Right, well, I managed to not get them all eaten by a unicorn, so I'll call it a success.

Mr. Eric: Said Abacus. And many of the unicorns had found old friends that night. So the students of the Observatorium made a point of taking turns visiting that shelter every single day and having an adoption drive every weekend. 'Arry Unicornrescuer was happy for the help. While they couldn't get every last pet adopted, they made sure every last one was happy.

Abacus: All right, students of Candy Tower. It's time for your very first lesson—but where are you? Did we never get around to sorting those students? I need, like a Sorticorn or something to do that for me. Where could I find such a magical creature.

Sorticorn: [Snorts]

Mr. Eric: The end.

[Falling harp scale.]

Mr. Eric:

Well, Kendall, Lenley and Eli, and all my listeners, I hope you enjoyed your story today. I'd like to thank Karen Marshall, my editor and producer, Craig Martinson, my theme song writer, Jason O'Keeffe, our artist, and all you kids out there who look out for rescued animals and help your parents take care of any pets you have. Be they fish, mice, dogs, cats, birds, lizards, snakes, gerbils, or anything else you can think of.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]

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