

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 42: What if I marshmallows could talk and the law was humans couldn't eat them

File Length: 17:41

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 Lucia.

Lucia: My name is Lucia and my favorite thing is playing with my dog, Mrs. Jones and my fishy is Luna. And my question is what if marshmallows could talk and the law was humans couldn't eat them?

Mr. Eric: Wow, Lucia. I love that question, especially all the specifics it had. You like playing with your dog, Mrs. Jones. You like playing with your fishy, Luna. And you want to know what if marshmallows could talk and the law was humans couldn't eat them? That is really cool.

One of our listeners had a really good idea. She called in just asking if we could add one specific thing to a story. Folks at home, we've got over a hundred questions and I'd love to tell a story for each and every one but it would be really easy to add an add-on each week. Let's listen to Esme's.

Esme's Mom: Hi, so my daughter Esme has a request for a character in one of your stories. Here she is.

Esme: My request is could there be a griffin in one of the stories?

Esme's Mom: And why do you want a griffin?

Esme: 'Cause they're one of my favorite mythical creatures.

Esme's Mom: Thank you! Bye.

Mr. Eric: Wow, Esme. Griffins are super cool mythical creatures and we've never had one in What If World so that is just the perfect question. All right, without further ado, let's answer Lucia's question with Esme's add-on. What if marshmallows could talk and the law was humans couldn't eat them, plus a griffin.

[Rising harp scale.]

Disembodied Voice: [Jazzy music] [Skatting] Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Merv the Griffin show starring your host, Merv the Griffin.

Merv: Hi! Hiya folks. You can thank me for having you.

Disembodied Voice: He's half lion, half eagle and half bunny.

Merv: Okay, that was a bit uncalled for.

Disembodied Voice: Featuring Mr. Mouser and the Little Big Band.

Mr. Mouser: We won't let you down, Mr. Griffin. As long as you don't eat us mice.

Disembodied Voice: And most importantly me, your announcer, Disembodied Voice.

Merv: Well, the announcer doesn't usually introduce themselves.

Disembodied Voice: Then you should give me a raise!

Mr. Eric: While the Little Big Band played their instruments and Disembodied Voice and Merv the Griffin argued back and forth, Marsha Mallow and her batchie, Marshall Mallow, hid nervously under the mane of this great griffin as it soared through the sky.

Merv: Well, I've already given you a raise. I've raised you up into the sky.

[crickets]

Little Big Band, that's where you do the ba-dum-tch thing.

Mr. Mouser: I'm sorry, we usually only do rimshots for jokes.

Merv: Disembodied Voice, will you just introduce our guests?

Disembodied Voice: Our special guests this week are Marshall Mallow and his sister or something, Marsha Mallow, from Candytopia.

Mr. Eric: Marshall and Marsha walked out from their hiding place in Merv's mane and down to a comfy little fold in his lion hide. It kind of looked like a couch. The whole show took place on the griffin's wide back. The Little Big Band played down towards its tail, just in case he tried to eat them. And a crowd of crickets made a ring around the stage, which is to say, the area the little marshmallows now sat on.

Marsha: Thank you so much for having us.

Mr. Eric: Said Marsha Mallow. Merv the griffin turned his long, flexible eagle neck and looked at them both with his sharp eyes and sharper beak.

Merv: Thank you both for coming on the show.

Mr. Eric: Said Merv.

Marshall: [Uncomprehensible]

Mr. Eric: Said Marshall Mallow.

[rimshot] [laughter]

Merv: Marshall, you jokester. Well, this is a camera on my head, but don't worry. I can fly safely while looking at you two. Disembodied Voice will tell me if I'm about to fly into anything.

Disembodied Voice: Yeah, after you've already hit it. Ah ha ha ha ha.

Merv: Well, Marshall. I've heard that you've made it illegal for mallows to be eaten by humans.

Marsha: Um, actually, I really did that.

Mr. Eric: Said Marsha.

Marsha: I wrote the law and helped push it through candy congress.

Merv: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Marsha: Are you even listening to me.

Merv: Thank you. Plenty of conditioner and lots of plucking.

Marsha: What?

Merv: I'm sorry, weren't you asking me how I got this handsome?

Marsha: No, I—

Merv: This guy knows what I'm talking about.

Mr. Eric: Merv pivoted the camera to Marshall Mallow who was using his stumpy little arms to play the drums on his belly.

Marshall: [Incomprehensible]

Merv: Wow, talented and insightful. You're a lucky woman, Mrs. Mallow.

Marsha: Oh, we're not married. We're just batchies.

Mr. Mouser: Did you say batchies?

Mr. Eric: Asked Mr. Mouser.

Marsha: Yeah. It just means we came from the same marshmallow batch.

Merv: So, you're like, brother and sister.

Marsha: Um, marshmallows don't get married or have brothers or sisters. We're just a different culture.

Merv: So batchies are just kind of your zodiac sign? Like how I'm an Aries.

Marsha: That's really an oversimplification—

Merv: I think we're talking to a Capricorn, folks.

Marshall: [Incomprehensible]

Merv: Two Capricorns. No wonder you two are always butting heads. Or entire bodies. I'm not sure which is which on a talking marshmallow.

Marsha: Merv, I want to stay on track here. While making it illegal for humans to eat marshmallows, we still have a long way to go before there's marshmallow equality.

Merv: Right, right. And that's why you're leaving Candytopia to go to New What City and fight for freedom.

Marsha: Actually, yeah. How did you know?

Merv: Because I'm flying you there, right now.

[rimshot] [laughter]

Marsha: Was that really a joke?

Mr. Eric: Asked Marsha.

Mr. Mouser: It's probably the best he'll do today.

Mr. Eric: Said Mr. Mouser. And Merv the Griffin turned his camera-clad head around and swooped down out of the clouds to reveal New What City. And as they soared closer to the skyscrapers of the city, Merv the Griffin

suddenly took a sharp turn to the south, folding his wings into a dive as they all rocketed straight towards the Statue of Whatify.

- Marshall: [Incomprehensible and anxious]
- Mr. Eric: Said Marshall.
- Merv: Don't you worry.
- Mr. Eric: Said Merv.
- Merv: I've done this a hundred times.
- Mr. Mouser: He's never done this.
- Marsha: It's okay Merv, you can just drop us off anywhere.
- Merv: Nonsense, every immigrant has to be processed at Why Is Island.
- Mr. Eric: That great copper statue got bigger and bigger as they soared closer and closer. It was a green woman holding a flaming question mark.
- Marsha: Our maker was a Whatifican so we have dual citizenship and we've already done all our paper work!
- Mr. Eric: And Merv spread out his wings just before they were about to crash into the Statue of Whatify's sandaled feet.
- Merv: Well why didn't you say something before we were here?
- Marshall: [Incomprehensible]
- Mr. Eric: Merv the Griffin landed softly and the Little Big Band helped the marshmallows climb off Merv's lion tail. They got in a line of thousands of people and creatures looking to get into New What City.
- Marsha: Merv, if you could just fly us to the Island of What Happened—
- Merv: Sorry, I'm late to pick up my next guest. She's an elephant, so the flying's going to be tough. And mice, you better make yourself scarce.
- Mr. Mouser: Not all elephants are afraid of mice.
- Marsha: Yes, you shouldn't believe every stereotype you hear.
- Merv: Thank you, plenty of water and an all fish diet.

Marsha: Excuse me?

Merv: I'm sorry, weren't you asking how I got so big and strong? Well, anyway. Good luck getting in. Take care.

Mr. Eric: And Merv the Griffin took off into the air. It was a long wait in the line of Why Is Island. The two people in front of them were a big fluffy dog wearing a knitted afghan on top of which balanced a sturdy glass fish bowl with a single goldfish inside. The dog's name was Mrs. Jones and the fish on top? His name was Luna.

Marshall: [Incomprehensible]

Mr. Eric: Asked Marshall. The four of them had been talking for a few hours as the line slowly moved.

Luna: Of course I know Luna is a girl's name, sad Luna the fishy. But Mrs. Jones couldn't tell which one I was when she got me.

Mrs. Jones: In all fairness,

Mr. Eric: Said the shaggy dog, Mrs. Jones.

Mrs. Jones: Can you look at most fish and tell if they're male or female.

Marsha: Oh, don't get me started,

Mr. Eric: Said Marsha.

Marsha: Marshmallows don't even have genders. We just pick name.

Marshall: [Incomprehensible]

Mrs. Jones: And people treat you differently based on the names you pick?

Mr. Eric: But before they could talk any longer, they found themselves at the front of the line, finally.

Snake: Welcome to New What SssssCity.

Mr. Eric: Said the snake security guard at the front of the line.

Snake: Why isssss you here?

Marsha: Oh, that's why you call it Why Is Island.

Snake: Hey, why isssssn't in my mouth, little marshmallow?

Mr. Eric: Mrs. Jones gave a protective growl.

Mrs. Jones: Grrrrr. How dare you threaten this marshmallow.

Luna: You know it's illegal to eat marshmallows now, since they're all alive and can talk.

Snake: It'sssss illegal for humanssss. Not for ssssnakess.

Marsha: Well, that's just one of the things I'm here to change. Marshmallows are still being eaten more than any other creature in What If World.

Luna: People see a group of marshmallows walking around and they cross the street. Towards the marshmallows, to try to eat them.

Snake: Sssso what? I'm sssssupposed to report anything delicious coming through this line to my ssssuperior.

Mr. Eric: And the snake curled the end of his tail around a telephone.

Marshall: [Incomprehensible]

Mr. Eric: Said Marshall Mallow, pulling out his paperwork.

Snake: Hey, didn't I just ssssee you on the Merv the Griffin show.

Marshall: [Incomprehensible]

Marsha: I was on that show, too.

Snake: Why didn't you ssssay you're with a ssscelebrity? You four are free to go.

Mrs. Jones: Well I never.

Luna: At least he didn't eat us.

Mr. Eric: Marsha, Marshall, Mrs. Jones, and Luna, were escorted straight to the Why Is Island ferry. When they got off the ferry there was a crowd of reporters snapping cameras at them and shouting out questions.

Reporter: Marshall Mallow, we heard you were unlawfully detained at Why Is Island!

Reporter 2: Will you filing charges against Snakurity the security guard?

Reporter 3: Marshall, can you play your tummy like a drum for us, please?

Mr. Eric: And behind the reporters was a crowd of people, a lot of whom were kinds of candy. And even a few of them were marshmallows.

Marshall: [Incomprehensible]

Mr. Eric: Said Marshall, and started playing his belly like a drum again.
[Thumping]

Reporters: [Laugh]

Person 1: He's so charming.

Person 2: He should be the mayor.

Many: Ooh. Mayor? Mayor? Mayor? Who said mayor?

Chuck: It was me, Chuck Clues of Clues News. At the risk of editorializing, Marshall Mallow is my mallow and I think he's amazing and should be mayor.

Mr. Eric: And the whole crowd started chanting.

Crowd: Mayor Mallow! Mayor Mallow! Mayor Mallow!

Chuck: This just in, many mobs moved by maybe mayor Marshall Mallow!

Marshall: [Incomprehensible]

Mr. Eric: Marshall was waving his stubby little arms and his pale squishy face was turning a little pink. Mrs. Jones lifted her fluffy paw to get everyone's attention.

Mrs. Jones: I don't really think he wants to be your mayor.

Luna: I mean, a lot of people like him, but he clearly has no idea how to run your city.

Marsha: I think I would make a great mayor.

Mr. Eric: Said Marsha Mallow. But no one seemed to be listening.

Bear: Okay then, pop quiz, Mr. Mayor.

Mr. Eric: Said a scruffy bear in the crowd.

Bear: What are you gonna do about our vending machine crisis?

Marshall: [Incomprehensible]

Bear: That's right! No more fig bars in vending machines. Nobody likes fig bars anyway.

Caterpillar: I happen to love fig bars.

Mr. Eric: Said a little caterpillar lady.

Caterpillar: I'm pretty sure he said there should be more fig bars.

Marshall: [Incomprehensible]

Mr. Eric: Spluttered Marshall, hanging his head a little.

Bear: Well, which is it?

Caterpillar: I'd certainly like to know.

Chuck: This just in, flip-flopping fairweather fig bar fibber forgets another word that starts with an F...

Marsha: Excuse me?

Mr. Eric: Marsha spoke up a little but there was so much shouting.

Caterpillar: Figs for everyone!

Bear: No more fig bars!

Person: Figgetaboutit!

Person 2: Figgetaboutit, that's funny.

Marsha: Excuse me!

[Record scratch]

Mr. Eric: And suddenly, finally, a few eyes turned to Marsha Mallow.

Marsha: I don't think fig bars are really the problem.

Bear: But they're the thing I care about.

Mr. Eric: Said the scruffy bear.

Marsha: I won't promise to fix your fig bars, but I think people in New What City need a lot of help.

Mr. Eric: She pointed to a little marshmallow in the crowd wearing a baseball hat.

Marsha: You there, would you mind taking your hat off for these people?

Mr. Eric: The little mallow shrugged and took off its hat.

Crowd: [Various gasps]

Mr. Eric: Everyone gasped because there was a bite missing from this marshmallow's head.

Marsha: We have bigger problems in this city than fig bars. We need better treatment for all people, not just marshmallows. And if you make me your mayor, I promise to work day and night and maybe one day fig bars would be the worst of our problems.

Bear: So you don't like fig bars, neither?

Marsha: That's not what I said.

Bear: Good enough for me! I'm voting for that lady.

Caterpillar: So am I.

Chuck: This just in, impromptu mayorial madness may make Marsha Mallow our new mayor.

Crowd: [Cheers]

Mr. Eric: At everyone at the port started cheering for Marsha, Merv the Griffin suddenly swooped down into their midst.

Merv: Everybody listen to me. I'm a celebrity. I was just rewatching my footage of my interview with Marsha and Marshall and I realized he doesn't actually say anything that makes sense.

Marshall: [Incomprehensible]

Merv: See? What is that gibberish?

Marsha: He's actually speaking Candian.

Mr. Eric: Said Marsha.

Marsha: It's our native tongue.

Merv: Native, shmative. I was unfair to you, Marsha. And I've learned not to underestimate marshmallows or females.

Bear: Hey buddy. We already came to that conclusion independently.

Merv: But you don't understand, I'm a noble griffin and I'm telling you, you should all get behind this lady. She's smart, she—

Mrs. Jones: She doesn't actually need your endorsement.

Mr. Eric: Said Mrs. Jones.

Mrs. Jones: Everybody already loves her.

Luna: Yeah, you're a little late to the party there, Merv. Sorry.

Marsha: Yeah, I'm basically mayor already.

Merv: That's great. I'm glad it worked out and you didn't need my help after all. Um.

Mr. Mouser: Sorry folks.

Mr. Eric: Said Mr. Mouser.

Mr. Mouser: He's used to feeling more important than this.

Marsha: Well, now you know how I feel.

Merv: What? No, that's not it.

Mr. Eric: Said Merv.

Merv: I just realized I'm late for my interview with the Emperor of the Whatifverse.

Mr. Mouser: I think you're talking about the Empress. She turned us down, if you remember.

Merv: What? Really? Must have been a scheduling conflict. Just gonna fly away now.

Mr. Eric: And Merv the Griffin, fur and feather equally ruffled took off like an arrow and shot straight through the crowds.

Marsha: All right everybody. Let's get to work. We've got a lot to do.

Marshall: [Incomprehensible]

[Record scratch]

Mr. Eric: Asked Marshall.

Marsha: What do you mean this story's gotta end on a joke?

Marshall: [Incomprehensible]

Marsha: Why shouldn't I talk about it.

Luna: Well, it's okay to end on a lesson, too. Like how you shouldn't underestimate—

Mr. Eric: The end.

[Falling harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: Well, Lucia and Esme, I hope you liked your story. I'd like to thank Karen Marshall, my editor and producer. Craig Martinson, who made our awesome theme song. Jason O'Keeffe, our What If World artist. And all you kids at home who give the same respect and consideration to all girls and boys.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]

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