

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 49: What if people that I touch go stuff and anything that's not alive I touch comes alive?

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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 new question from Zach.

Zach: My name is Zach. My What If World question is what if people that are alive I touch go stuff, and anything that's not alive that I touch comes alive? Thank you! Bye.

Mr. Eric: Oh man. You asked that question very well. Let's break it down. What if people that you touch turn into stuff, but then things that aren't alive that you touch turn into people.

[Rising harp scale.]

Once upon a time, there was a furry little boy named Beastie. Beastie lived in a very tiny stone hut with his father, Snarl, and his grandmother Snort. Now Snarl and Snort kept a very tidy stone hut but after they got home from work and Beastie got home from school, they weren't very interested in spending time there.

Snarl: Come on, Beastie. School's out. Daddy's home. Let's go outside and play.

Mr. Eric: Said Snarl.

Beastie: I would love to go outside, but we don't have any stuff to play with out there.

Snort: [Snort]

Mr. Eric: Snorted Snort.

Snarl: Nothing to play with? Just sticks and rocks and trees to climb.

Beastie: I know, but I would just really like a ball or some kind of toy.

Snarl: Now listen here, boy.

Mr. Eric: Snarled Snarl.

Snarl: He's got the whole great outdoors as his backyard and he asks us for a ball.

Snort: Where have we gone wrong in raising him? [Cries]

Mr. Eric: But Beastie had had this talk with his parents often enough and he wasn't much paying attention. Snarl and Snort snarled and snorted at each other all the way through dinner.

Snarl: But he's too good for his mushroom mush now, eh?

Snort: Probably doesn't even want me homemade mice cream for desert.

Mr. Eric: And they kept bickering even as night fell and Beastie brushed his teeth.

Snort: [Snort] Look at him brush his teeth. That toothbrush is stuff and we don't get any thanks.

Snarl: Nor for that toothpaste what's stuff, too.

Beastie: And Beastie took off his daytime collar and put on his pyjama collar.

Snarl: And he's got two collars.

Snort: That's two more than we had at his age.

Snarl: But no, he wants a ball.

Mr. Eric: And Beastie curled up on his bedtime cushion.

Beastie: I know I'm very lucky, Dad. And I'll keep being good and maybe I'll get a ball for my birthday.

Snarl: Oh, did we argue through playtime again, Beastie?

Snort: We just work so hard and get paid in pebbles.

Snarl: And not enough pebbles for a ball just yet.

Beastie: Well, I promise to keep being good as long as you keep saving for a ball.

Mr. Eric: Snarl and Snort gave each other a look as they finished cleaning up after dinner.

Snarl: Good night, sweet boy.

Mr. Eric: But just then, there was a rap on the door [knocking].

Snort: [Snort!] Who could that be at this hour?

Mr. Eric: And Snort padded over to the door, pushing back the heavy stone with a paw.

Sprite Alright: All right good night!

Mr. Eric: It was Sprite Alright, or at least it sounded like her. But she looked like a very old lady in rags.

Snarl: I'm sorry lady, we don't got no alms for the poor tonight.

Mr. Eric: Said Snarl.

Sprite Alright: I'm not looking for alms. I just wanna get in out of this cold.

Mr. Eric: Snort shrugged at Snarl and let the old woman in. Beastie sprung out of bed.

Beastie: Do you want some mushroom mush from tonight?

Mr. Eric: Beastie opened their rockfrigerator and pulled out the little stone pot with just a splash of soup left.

Snarl: Beastie, that's your breakfast for tomorrow.

Beastie: I'll just have some mice cream for breakfast.

Snort: [Snort] Mice cream for breakfast?

Sprite Alright: Oh, it's sprite all right. I don't want to take food out of your mouths.

Mr. Eric: But Snarl nudged the pot towards her with his nose.

Snarl: The boy can have mice cream one mornin' for being so good.

Sprite Alright: All right, if you insist.

Mr. Eric: And that tiny old lady lifted the heavy stone pot with one hand and upended the mushroom mush right into her mouth. And all over herself. And her chair. And the kitchen floor.

Snarl: Now we've got to lick all this up!

Mr. Eric: And Beastie, Snarl, and Snort lapped up every bit of mushroom mush, much to the ticklish sprite's surprise.

Sprite Alright: Ooh, hoo hoo, hey! Quit licking me. Stop it!

Others: [Licking and nomming noises]

Snarl: I think it tastes better off the floor.

Beastie: I just like licking things.

Mr. Eric: And once they had licked Sprite Alright clean, she didn't look so old, or tired, or dirty anymore. And her rags, they looked more like a gown.

Snarl: Hey, what gives?

Snort: Are you some kind of empress in exile?

Sprite Alright: Well, I don't think so.

Snarl: Looks more like a duchess in distress.

Sprite Alright: All right, I don't know.

Snort: A queen in question?

Sprite Alright: That's a good question, but I can't remember.

Mr. Eric: Beastie scampered over to the cushion where he slept and dug out a shiny little pebble from the folds. Then he stood upright on his furry hind legs and held out the pebble in his padded, paw-like hands.

Beastie: It doesn't matter who she was. She needs our help now, and she's been nothing but nice.

Snarl: Beastie, no.

Snort: You were saving that pebble for a ball.

Mr. Eric: But Sprite Alright had already plucked the pebble from his hand, and as she did, her eyes lit up and her hair curled thick and strong, and she grew into her gown and the gown itself shone with every color in the rainbow.

She was no longer skinny and weathered. She was full and flying and free of whatever spell that had transformed her.

- Beastie: You're a fairy!
- Sprite Alright: I'm a sprite, which is a type of fairy. And thank you for noticing.
- Snarl: But you still look kind of old.
- Sprite Alright: Excuse me. Sprites can live a long time. We only start to feel our age when there's no good will around us.
- Snort: None of us is named "Will."
- Beastie: No, good will. Like kindness.
- Sprite Alright: That's right, Beastie boy. Now you get a wish, just be careful, because some wishes have a catch.
- Beastie: That's okay, I'm great at catching.
- Sprite Alright: No, I mean that some things you wish for have unintended consequences. Catch my drift?
- Beastie: If you throw a drift, I'll catch it.
- Sprite Alright: No, I mean, take some time and think.
- Beastie: I wish that people that are alive that I touch go stuff and things that aren't alive that I touch come alive.
- Snarl: Good wishing, boy.
- Snort: Now you can get all the stuff you want.
- Sprite Alright: I should really write a manual for these wishes.
- Mr. Eric: Said Sprite Alright. But the words, "I wish" had already been said and her gown shown even brighter as her curly black hair rolled out in thick waves and wrapped gently around Beastie's forepaws. The furry little boy could feel magic coursing through his entire body as a thin streak of silver hair appeared in Sprite Alright's curls, which pulled back again to crowd her head in a beautiful bunch.
- Sprite Alright: All right, now just be careful. Anything you touch with your front paws—

Mr. Eric: She held up her own right hand and pointed to it. But Beastie was so excited about his wish, he was barely paying attention. He saw her hand go up and said.

Beastie: Yeah, high five!

Mr. Eric: Sprite Alright's eyes went wide as she turned into a lamp!

Beastie: Wow, it's cool you turned into a lamp. I was just thinking how bright and cheery you are. Now let's just turn you back, and...

Mr. Eric: He pulled the little cord hanging down from the lamp and a light went on, but it didn't turn back to Sprite Alright.

Beastie: Do you think maybe this is the catch she was worried about?

Snarl: Naw.

Snort: She probably just teleported away and left a lamp in her place as like a parting gift.

Snarl: Now it's past your bed time. Give old Snarl a hug, eh.

Beastie: Okay. Good night, Papa.

Mr. Eric: And Beastie hugged his big furry father and a giant furry ball bounced out of Beastie's hands.

Snort: Snarl! No balls allowed in the house! Now come here, Beastie. Give old Snorty a hug.

Beastie: Grandma, I think something's wrong.

Mr. Eric: Beastie dodged away from Snort's hug and touched the furry ball with one forepaw, then the other, but it just bounced a little. [Boing boing]

Snort: Too big to hug your grandma, I see. Well, off to bed with you.

Mr. Eric: Beastie slunk over to the cushion on the floor that he slept on and he curled up to think about why his wish wasn't working right.

Squishy Cush: [Rapping] Rock a bye baby on the tree top. When the wind blows the cradle will rock.

Beastie: Woah, who's that.

Mr. Eric: Beastie jumped up to see that the creases in his cushion were making a mouth.

Squishy Cush: Yo, it's me, Grandmaster Squishy Cush!

Beastie: You're kind of loud for a bed.

Squishy Cush: Time to time to time to time to sleep now.

Snort: Snarl, quit bouncing and rapping. Your mother's trying to sleep.

Mr. Eric: Snorted Snort from her own bed. Beastie tried touching the bed with his paws again, but Grandmaster Squishy Cush just kept going on.

Squishy Cush: Sleep, I need someone to sleep. Not just anyone to sleep! You know I need someone to!

Mr. Eric: And Beastie crawled under his own cushion to try to muffle the sounds of his bed.

Squishy Cush: [Muffled] When I was younger but not much younger because I was born today—

Beastie: It's just a dream. It's just a dream. It's just a dream.

Mr. Eric: Beastie said to himself.

Squishy Cush: Never needed anyone to sleep on me.

Mr. Eric: Beastie woke up bleary eyed and pulled himself out from under his cushion, hoping it had all been just a dream, but—

Squishy Cush: I'm sleeping in the rain! Just sleeping in the rain! What a glorious feeling!

Mr. Eric: The bed was still singing and Sprite Alright was still a lamp. And Snarl had rolled to rest against the kitchen counter, and he was still a ball. Beastie got up.

Beastie: I gotta think. I gotta think. He picked up his toothbrush to start his morning routine.

Toothbrush: Please don't stick me in your mouth again, it's full of germs.

Mr. Eric: Said the toothbrush.

Beastie: But I have to brush my teeth.

Mr. Eric: Beastie gave the toothpaste a squeeze.

Toothpaste: [Gasp] You've squeezed out all but a drop of me.

Beastie: You're toothpaste, you're supposed to get squeezed out.

Toothpaste: How would you like it if someone unscrewed your head and squeezed you out every morning onto a dirty stick?

Toothbrush: I'll have you know I am quite clean.

Mr. Eric: Said the toothbrush.

Toothbrush: That is, until he tries to eat me every morning.

Beastie: I'm not trying to eat you. I need to brush my teeth to stay healthy.

Toothpaste: Well, I need to not have my guts squeezed out to stay healthy.

Beastie: I guess now that you're both alive, I won't stick you in my mouth and screw your head off.

Toothbrush: Oh, thank you, thank you.

Toothpaste: Much obliged, Master Furry Monster Child.

Beastie: You can just call me Beastie, because Master Furry Monster Child isn't my name.

Toothbrush: But you've brought us alive and set us free, Master Furry Monster Child.

Beastie: Well, I didn't mean to. A sprite gave me a wish and now I can turn people into stuff and make stuff come alive. But I can't undo any of it.

Toothpaste: Well, being alive, I know that I would not want to be turned into stuff again.

Toothbrush: Why would you make a wish like that?

Beastie: Well, I thought, I don't have a ball, and there's some bad guys in What If World so I would just turn them into balls to play with.

Toothpaste: Sound logic, Master Furry Monster Child.

Toothbrush: No, you can't just decide someone's bad and turn them into a ball forever.



Beastie: I think I'm figuring that out, and that's only half the problem.

Mr. Eric: And Beastie took the toothbrush and toothpaste into his living room.

Squishy Cush: Go to sleep, go to sleep, go to sleep, my dear Master Furry Monster Child.

Beastie: Why is everyone calling me that?

Toothpaste: Cushion, it is 10 am. No one wants to go to sleep.

Squishy Cush: 10 am? It's past my bed time. [Snoring]

Mr. Eric: And Grandmaster Squishy Cush finally quieted down.

Toothbrush: Have you tried asking for the wish giver to take back the wish?

Beastie: I thought of that.

Toothpaste: And?

Beastie: And I already turned her into a lamp.

Both: Oh.

Beastie: Yeah, and instead of turning bad guys into balls, um. I turned my dad into one.

Mr. Eric: And he pointed to the big furry ball in the kitchen.

Toothpaste: Then your only hope is to get back to fairy land and have them undo the wish curse.

Mr. Eric: Said the toothpaste.

Beastie: How do you know so much about magic?

Mr. Eric: Asked Beastie.

Toothbrush: Haven't you read his label?

Toothpaste: 5% fairy dust in every tube.

Beastie: No wonder my teeth are so strong.

Mr. Eric: And Beastie boy, still standing on two legs to make sure he didn't touch anything on accident, shouldered his way out the stone door and ran off into the grassy meadow surrounding his little stone hut.

Beastie: Okay, Toothpaste, which way to fairy land?

Toothpaste: Fairy land is just thataway.

Mr. Eric: And the toothpaste bent its tube until it was pointing straight up towards the clouds.

Beastie: But I can't fly.

Toothbrush: But you can turn anything alive.

Beastie: That's right! I'll just turn this tree into a big wooden dragon.

Mr. Eric: And Beastie ran up to a tall oak at the edge of the meadow and touched it with his forepaw.

Barkorel: I am Barkorel, mighty tree dragon... ugh. [Sad trombone]

Mr. Eric: But the tree was still just a tree.

Beastie: I guess my powers don't work that way.

Barkorel: Nonsense. I will fly, Master Furry Monster Child. Into the clouds!

Mr. Eric: And Barkorel strained all its limbs straight up into the air, with creaks and cracks and shedding leaves. Then its roots tore themselves up from the ground and all its branches started flapping together.

Barkorel: I'm doing it. I'm doing...eeeeaaaaahhhhh.

Mr. Eric: But trees aren't exactly aerodynamic, and down came Barkorel.

Barkorel: Oh dear...

Mr. Eric: Crack!

Barkorel: I apologize, Master Furry Monster Child, but climb upon my trunk and I will roll you into the sky.

Beastie: I'm sorry Barkorel, that's not how flying works either.

Barkorel: Barkorel is... embarrassed.

Mr. Eric: And Barkorel, the giant oak tree, started pushing itself with its roots and limbs until it was rolling away down a slight slope in the meadow.

Fair Elise: Sprite Alright! Sprite Alright!

Mr. Eric: Beastie heard a call in the distance. A tiny fairy less than half the size of Sprite Alright was flitting about in the sun, looking panicked.

Beastie: Hey, are you a fairy?

Mr. Eric: And the fairy zipped over to him in an instant.

Fair Elise: I am, indeed. Have you seen someone like me, only bigger, with thick curly hair and a rainbow gown.

Beastie: I think you mean a sprite, not a fairy. I know the difference.

Fair Elise: Yes, little one, a sprite indeed.

Beastie: I know exactly where she is. Here, hold my talking toothpaste.

Mr. Eric: And Beastie threw the tube up to Fair Elise, then held the toothbrush gently in his mouth and ran on all fours back to the house.

Meadow: Ooh, ow! HEY! Watch it!

Mr. Eric: Cried patches of the meadow as he turned them alive.

Beastie: Sorry, ooh, sorry. Pardon me!

Daffodils: What's your hurry?

Mr. Eric: Cried a cluster of daffodils.

Beastie: I gotta fix my magic before I make things worse.

Mr. Eric: Beastie called back, but the daffodils had already blown away in a great gray cloud.

Daffodils: Good luck with that! Hey, where are we going? I think we're pollinating, whatever that means.

Mr. Eric: Beastie burst through his own door again.

Door: OW!

Mr. Eric: Complained the stone door.

Beastie: Well, here she is.

Mr. Eric: Said Beastie.

Toothpaste: You're welcome, madam.

Mr. Eric: Said the toothpaste.

Fair Elise: Um, thank you very much for showing me this beautiful lamp.

Mr. Eric: Fair Elise said carefully.

Toothbrush: [high pitched mumbling]

Mr. Eric: The toothbrush mumbled, still stuck gently in the side of Beastie's mouth, until he pulled the toothbrush out.

Toothbrush: That is Sprite Alright, I'm afraid.

Fair Elise: Oh, why didn't you say so.

Mr. Eric: And Fair Elise opened a little pouch at her side and pulled out a wand ten times longer than the pouch was deep. It looked about big enough for a sprite.

Fair Elise: You're lucky you found me, for fairies cannot undo each other's magic, but...

Mr. Eric: And she balanced the wand gently over the lampshade. And there was Sprite Alright holding the wand up high!

Sprite Alright: All right, all right!

Mr. Eric: And she pointed her wand at the ball that had been Snarl and—

Snarl: Oh, what an uncomfortable nap.

Beastie: You did it, Fair Elise!

Mr. Eric: Shouted Beastie, jumping up to give her a high five.

All: No! Wait!

Sprite Alright: All right.

Mr. Eric: And Sprite Alright nudged aside his arm with her wand.

Sprite Alright: Do you think you maybe want to trade all those powers for a nice new ball?

Beastie: I don't know, these powers are pretty cool...

Mr. Eric: Then Grandmaster Squishy Cush started up again.

Squishy Cush: 99 bottles of milk on the wall, 99 bottles of milk. You take one down, it's nap time now and—

Beastie: Yeah, actually I think I could lose the powers. That'd be okay.

Mr. Eric: The end.

[Falling harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: All right, Zach. I hope you liked your story today. I'd like to thank Karen Marshall, my editor and producer. Craig Martinson for our awesome theme song. Jason O'Keeffe for our artwork and all you kids at home who know that having good people in your life is more important than having good stuff.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]

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