

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 55: What if restaurants could move themselves?

File Length: 20:30

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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. I'm Mr. Eric, your  
host, and today we've got a question from Annalise.

Annalise:              I'm seven and I like Rapunzel and my What If World question is what if  
restaurants could move by themselves?

Annalise's Mom:      That was Annalise. She's seven years old. She likes Rapunzel, and her  
What If question is, what if restaurants could move by themselves?  
Thank you.

Mr. Eric:               Oh, Annalise, you are in my head. You must know that I really love fairy  
tales and restaurants moving by themselves? That is so creative. Since  
we took Thanksgiving off, I think I want to get straight to our story today.  
What if restaurants could move by themselves?

[Rising harp scale.]

If you ever take a trip to What If World, I suggest you visit the town of  
Chewville where restaurants of all shapes and sizes, of all styles and  
cultures and fusions, get together to pick you up, any time, day or night.  
You can hang out in Hungry Hall and have a whole slew of restaurants  
pass you by all yelping out their Yap reviews and trying to get you to eat  
their food. It's quite an experience, although I'm not so fond of all the  
Yaps.

However, this story takes place long before Chewville was the mangia  
metropolis of What If World. Long before most towns had restaurants at  
every block, back when one restaurant could be king or queen of their  
little town for decades. And the most popular restaurant at that time,  
was Dame Goodgrill. She looked no bigger than a hut and stood or  
squatted on two long chicken legs. And she served up the meanest  
meats in town.

Dame Goodgrill: Oh, it's wonderful having everyone love your food most of all.

Mr. Eric: Said Dame Goodgrill. This was before Yap reviews so you kind of just had to take her word for it. But there was one couple eating inside her cramped little hut who had heard differently.

Diner 1: These wings are fine, Honey. But have you heard of that baby restaurant being born.

Diner 2: You mean Rapunzitti? Oh, I'm so excited for her. Chewville's never had good Italian food.

[Record scratch]

Dame Goodgrill: Whaaaaat?

Mr. Eric: Dame Goodgrill heard them talking inside of her. The little restaurant balanced on one of its long, chicken legs and reached in with it's other big taloned foot to pluck the couple out.

Dame Goodgrill: What's this about a baby restaurant being born?

Diner 1: Oh, it's just Rapunz—

Diner 2: Shh! Honey, she'll be jealous.

Diner 1: Yeah, I mean, it's Rapunz. They don't serve food, you just go and hear bad rapping. We don't serve dinner unless you're a winner, but maybe not then, unless you bring a hen.

Diner 2: If you're hungry, you can clap while we make bad rap.

Dame Goodgrill: That is awfully bad rap, but I need to see this for myself.

Mr. Eric: And Dame Goodgrill shook a handful of patrons out of her hut and stomped on her long legs all the way over to where Rapunzitti had been born. Or, rather, built. Actually, I don't know where restaurants come from. And there she sat, a tiny golden cottage, no bigger than a shed. And out of her back window stretched long, pale tubes of ziti that wove in tight little curves through the meadow behind her.

Dame Goodgrill: Huh?

Mr. Eric: Cried Dame Goodgrill, and the little cottage looked up at her with streakless window eyes.

Rapunzitti: Huh?

Dame Goodgrill: Why, you're not a rapping restaurant at all. You're a real restaurant. You're going to steal my business and then I will wither away.

Mr. Eric: And in a flash of jealousy, Dame Goodgrill balanced on one of its giant chicken feet again, and used the other leg to scoop up the little cottage. Then the chicken-legged hut hopped awkwardly, Rapunzitti in hand, all the way to the highest tower in Chewville. It took Goodgrill many hours, using just chicken legs and long tender trails of pasta, but she managed to stick that little cottage on top of that tall tower, where no one could reach it, except Dame Goodgrill, but only when she stood on the tippy-toes of her long chicken legs.

Many years went by and Rapunzitti grew into a fine cottage restaurant, but no one ever knew about her. However, Dame Goodgrill did suddenly add pasta to its menu. And through the years, despite Dame Goodgrill's efforts, a few new restaurants did open up. One of them was called Prince Pepperoni and he yelped out his own Yap review to a pair of passersby.

Prince Pepperoni: Hey, don't you two love red brick bistros, eh? What about pepperoni? I'm practically made of it. Get in here.

Diner 1: Well, we have always wanted Italian food.

Diner 2: Ever since that rapping restaurant went missing.

Diner 1: Didn't we make the rapping part up, Honey?

Diner 2: That's right, it was just a baby Italian restaurant.

Prince Pepperoni: Ah, you don't mean Princess Pepperoncini, do you? Who wants mildly spicy vegetables on a pizza, right?

Diner 1: No, it wasn't that. I think it was meant to be a pasta place, sort of.

Prince Pepperoni: But isn't Dame Goodgrill the only pasta in town?

Mr. Eric: Asked Prince Pepperoni.

Diner 2: Some say they locked Rapunzitti away in a tall tower.

Prince Pepperoni: I gotta find her.

Mr. Eric: And the heavy little red brick bistro strapped on six sets of double-wide pepperoni wheels and took off towards the oldest tower in town.

Dame Goodgrill was standing at the end of the meadow on her tippy-talon-toes, just high enough to reach Rapunzitti's pasta.

Dame Goodgrill: Rapunzitti, Rapunzitti, come out to meet me. I really should have developed a better rhyme.

Rapunzitti: Too bad you're not a rapping restaurant, Mom.

Mr. Eric: Said Rapunzitti, pushing herself around with her long ziti tubes of hair to face the woman she thought was her mother.

Dame Goodgrill: A rapping restaurant? Where have you ever heard of such a thing?

Rapunzitti: Oh, mommy, don't put on your evil witch voice. I'm a grown up restaurant now. I have ideas of my own.

Dame Goodgrill: As long as those ideas aren't about leaving your tower.

Rapunzitti: But Mother Goodgrill, it's my birthday.

Dame Goodgrill: Which is why I bought you this book I wrote.

Rapunzitti: 101 Fun Trapped In Tower Activities. Mommy, this is all chicken scratch.

Dame Goodgrill: Well, it's more legible than ziti scratch and you'll notice none of those activities involve asking to leave your tower.

Rapunzitti: But why?

Dame Goodgrill: Hmm, let's see if asking why is one of the fun activities in this book. Flip flip flip, nope!

Mr. Eric: And, still balancing on one of her taloned feet, Mother Goodgrill pushed the little book into the cottage. Then the chicken-legged hut snatched a long stretch of pasta and plucked it right off of Rapunzitti.

Rapunzitti: Ow!

Dame Goodgrill: I'm sorry, my daughter, but there are many dangerous restaurants in the world and I'm just trying to keep you safe. I sell your pasta hair on special but if someone were to discover a whole restaurant full, well, I just don't know what would happen to you.

Rapunzitti: I know, Mother.

Mr. Eric: And Rapunzitti turned herself around, leaving Goodgrill to squat down and stalk away.

Rapunzitti: [Crying] I'll never get to leave this place.

Mr. Eric: Cried Rapunzitti, as her mother stalked out of sight.

Prince Pepperoni: Rapunzitti, Rapunzitti, come out to meet me.

Mr. Eric: The curtain snapped away from Rapunzitti's window eyes.

Rapunzitti: Who are you? What are you doing here? Are you a bad restaurant.

Prince Pepperoni: Ooh, ouch. The way I see it, your mom's the only bad restaurant in town, keeping you locked up like this. It's no gouda.

[crickets]

What's the matter, never heard a joke before?

Rapunzitti: Certainly not today,

Mr. Eric: Said Rapunzitti with a wink.

Prince Pepperoni: Ooh, you got fire. Probably how you cook that pasta. Okay, go ahead and let down that ziti and I'll climb on up there, we'll bing, bam, boom, get you all rescued up.

Rapunzitti: Excuse me?

Prince Pepperoni: Yeah, let down that ziti hair. How else am I supposed to get up there?

Rapunzitti: So I'm supposed to support your entire weight with my hair?

Prince Pepperoni: Ouch, hey. I may have put on a few bricks but I think if I'm gonna save you, the least you can do is give me a climb.

Rapunzitti: Who says I need you to save me?

Prince Pepperoni: That's it, I'm out of here.

Mr. Eric: And Prince Pepperoni turned around on his six double-wide pepperoni wheels and sped off back to the center of Chewville. Light jazz music carried through the night air as Prince Pepperoni came to rest in his usual spot, a short line of customers waiting for him to open.

Duke Wellington: Hey there, Prince. I thought you were gonna be late.

Prince Pepperoni: Hey, keep dreaming, Duke Beef Wellington. My pizza lovers aren't going to get anywhere near your jazz.

Duke Wellington: They will when they learn it's paired with a nice, heavy, doughy, paté-covered cut of the finest beef in town.

Diners: No. Ugh. I'll pass.

Mr. Eric: And Prince Pepperoni fired up his brick oven and flung open his doors.

Duke Wellington: Aw, man.

Prince Pepperoni: Hey, listen. Jazz and beef wellington is almost a perfect combination. Everybody knows it.

Duke Wellington: That's true, that's very true.

Prince Pepperoni: But maybe you're just missing that special pasta dish, ever think of that?

Duke Wellington: Dame Goodgrill is the only pasta in town, everybody knows that.

Prince Pepperoni: Well then I got a story for you.

Mr. Eric: Rapunzitti stared longingly at the center of town where the distant sounds of laughter and dining and jazz drifted towards her.

Rapunzitti: [Sigh]

Mr. Eric: Only the jazz part seemed to be getting louder.

Duke Wellington: Ba doopity doop baaa, skit skattily doo-aaow. [Continues skatting]

Mr. Eric: And purple bull statues dragged the matching purple-painted night club behind them. It was Duke Beef Wellington, come to rescue Rapunzitti.

Rapunzitti: Hi there, I like your music.

Duke Wellington: Everybody loves jazz. Except everybody who doesn't.

Rapunzitti: [Laughs] I've often heard you play from far away. Who are you?

Duke Wellington: Name's Duke Beef Wellington and I know all about you. Rapunzitti, Rapunzitti, come out to meet me.

Rapunzitti: Ew. I'm already here. Why did you have to say that?

Duke Wellington: I don't know, it's like magic words or something. Then you let down your hair, and...

Rapunzitti: Did Prince Pepperoni put you up to this?

Duke Wellington: He just said you had nice pasta.

Rapunzitti: And that's all you care about, pasta?

Duke Wellington: No, I just... I came here to help you.

Rapunzitti: Okay, and how are you gonna help now?

Duke Wellington: Well, I was thinking you could let down your ziti hair, and—

Rapunzitti: What, and those three bull statues attached to you are gonna climb up it?

Duke Wellington: No, nothing like that. I have half a brain. My three strong bulls will take that pasta and give it a mighty pull until you come right down off of that tower.

Rapunzitti: Wow. And then what happens?

Duke Wellington: Um, I don't know. Then we open a little pasta wellington place and...

Rapunzitti: I'm not gonna run off with you just because you do one decent thing for me.

Duke Wellington: Oh, you're right, you'll be free to go your own way, if you prefer.

Rapunzitti: I think I'll probably go about a hundred different way when your bulls pull me down and I smash into a hundred pieces.

Duke Wellington: But... I... I was... smart.

Rapunzitti: Wow, maybe my mom was right.

Duke Wellington: Parents are right every now and then. I'm sorry I couldn't help, Princess. I really am.

Rapunzitti: Please don't call me "Princess."

Duke Wellington: Oh.

Rapunzitti: Oh, no, I'm sorry, too. You came here to help and I do appreciate it. I just don't think you've thought this through.

Duke Wellington: Well, I think thinking is like jazz. Kind of keeps going and you never know where it's gonna end up. [Skats] I didn't know what to do. I'm gonna go boo-hoo all the way back to Chewville, yeah.

Rapunzitti: I think he meant that bad thinking is kind of like bad jazz. Isn't there anyone with a half-decent idea around?

King Croissant: Rapunzitti, come 'round to me!

Rapunzitti: I shouldn't have asked.

Mr. Eric: And Rapunzitti turned around to see a miniature wooden castle, no bigger than most restaurants, propped up on four dancing croissant booties.

King Croissant: I am King Croissant, now let down your ziti.

Rapunzitti: Sorry, King Croissant.

King Croissant: Croissant [French pronunciation]

Rapunzitti: I'm sorry. King Croissant [Approximating French pronunciation]

King Croissant: Uh uh uh, King Croissant [French pronunciation].

Rapunzitti: King Croissant.

King Croissant: Eeeeh, King Croissant [French pronunciation].

Rapunzitti: King Croissant [tries again].

King Croissant: King Kwaassaaah.

Rapunzitti: King Kugung?

King Croissant: Very good. Now, let down your ziti.

Rapunzitti: What, so you can hurt me climbing up or hurt me pulling me down.

King Croissant: King Croissant is a gentleman. I will climb up but then I will pull us both down. You see?

Rapunzitti: No, that's like the worst part of the last two plans put together.

King Croissant: You think so little of me, Mademoiselle. But no, I will make sure only one of us gets crushed in the fall.

Rapunzitti: Um, which one.

King Croissant: We will not be sure until we hit the ground, no?



Rapunzitti: What?

King Croissant: I will hope that is me, however.

Rapunzitti: I don't want you to get crushed, either!

King Croissant: But you are a damsel in distress. I must come to your rescue.

Rapunzitti: No, no. You mustn't. Just please go. Only, could you leave those giant cute croissant booties?

King Croissant: My shoes? Mademoiselle. A king would never give up his shoes unless [ding] his new shoes had just finished baking. Okay, here you go.

Mr. Eric: And King Croissant left his four giant fluffy booties at the base of her tower before pulling out four warm, freshly baked ones and walking off on them. It was morning now, as the little castle waddled out of the meadow.

Rapunzitti: All right, my ziti may not have been able to lift a bistro or a bunch of bulls or a castle. But maybe it can hold me for a minute.

Dame Goodgrill: [Squawk]

Mr. Eric: She heard Mother Goodgrill squawk in the distance.

Rapunzitti: Oh no, she's gonna come to get today's pasta soon.

Mr. Eric: And Rapunzitti lashed out with every long tube of ziti she'd ever saved, wrapping them around herself and the tower. Then she slowly, strainedly, creakingly started shimmying her way down the old tower. She could hear the distant stomping and crashing of Mother Goodgrill walking through the woods.

Rapunzitti: Oh, she'll make it to the clearing any minute.

Mr. Eric: Rapunzitti shimmied faster. Older, staler bits of pasta cracked against the stone tower as she climbed down and her grip loosened and she slid down.

Rapunzitti: Aaaaa!

Mr. Eric: She whipped up some tiny doughy strands of ziti in an instant and flung them out of her kitchen. They slowed her down just enough to see Mother Goodgrill enter the meadow.

Dame Goodgrill: Rapunzitti, Rapunzitti, you can't defeat me!

Rapunzitti: That's not a great rhyme, Mom!

Dame Goodgrill: [SQUAWK]

Mr. Eric: And her long, chicken legs stretched and the little old hut sprinted toward the tower.

Rapunzitti: Well, it's now or never.

Mr. Eric: And Rapunzitti loosened her strands of pasta just enough that she started a slow slide down the tower. Snap! Crack! Crunch! The friction of the stone was breaking her pasta strands one by one and suddenly that slow slide was a fast crash, but... she was already landing atop four giant fluffy croissants. Other than her broken hair, she was fine.

Rapunzitti: I'm okay. I'm okay.

Dame Goodgrill: Not for long.

Mr. Eric: And Mother Goodgrill leaned over her daughter.

Rapunzitti: I'm not afraid of you, and you can't stick me back up there.

Dame Goodgrill: Alright, then you can stay here and just keep giving me your pasta every—

Rapunzitti: No. The Goodgrill won't be serving pasta anymore. But I will.

Dame Goodgrill: No. Did one of those other restaurants put you up to this? Don't think I didn't see those croissants.

Rapunzitti: Mom, it's pronounced kwazaah, and no. They all wanted to help me for the wrong reasons, but you just wanted to help yourself.

Dame Goodgrill: But I kept you safe. I made you books.

Rapunzitti: And you taught me everything I know, but you can't stop me from growing up, and you can't stop yourself from getting older. It's time we both lived our lives, Goodgrill.

Dame Goodgrill: Mother Goodgrill?

Rapunzitti: Maybe when you start acting like one.

Dame Goodgrill: Fine. Go run to your other restaurants.

Rapunzitti: I think I need to be my own restaurant for a while. Besides, I didn't need any of them to escape.

Stone Tower: What about me?

Mr. Eric: It was the stone tower she'd slid down.

Rapunzitti: You're a restaurant?

Stone Tower: I used to be. And you couldn't have gotten down if I hadn't stood strong.

Rapunzitti: And I also could have not been trapped if you hadn't stood at all. See ya!

Mr. Eric: And Rapunzitti stretched out her short strands of pasta to march herself, spider-like, out of the meadow.

Stone Tower: Hey, Goodgrill.

Dame Goodgrill: Oh, what do you want.

Stone Tower: If your menu needs a new special, I make a mean stone soup.

Dame Goodgrill: Oh, good gravy.

Mr. Eric: The end.

[Falling harp scale.]

All right, Annalise, I hope you liked your wacky fairy tale. I'd like to thank Karen Marshall O'Keeffe, my editor and producer. Craig Martinson for our perfect theme song. Jason O'Keeffe for our artwork, and all you kids at home who try to solve your problems the right way, which isn't always the same as the easy way.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]

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