

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 59: What if babysitters sat on babies?

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Mr. Eric: Happy New Year from What If World, folks. We're replaying one of my favorite episodes this week. It's a very silly story addressing a question I think every kid has wondered at some point or another. And it's gonna sleep over with some of my favorite characters. We'll be back next week with an all-new single-part episode. And before we get into the episode proper, I just want to take a quick minute to thank all of you for calling in and listening and supporting our show.

Okay, okay. On to the episode.

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 Brooke.

Brooke: Hi, my name—oop. Hi, my name is Brooke, and I like American Girl Dolls and my question is what if babysitters sat on babies? Thank you. Bye!

Mr. Eric: Wow, Brooke, what a great question. I hope you got over the hiccups. You know, I think that every kid has wondered at one time or another why they're called babysitters at all? And that reminds me of this one time in What If World when a few young kids had their very first sleepover.

[Rising harp scale.]

Mamma Jamma: Come on, Zizi, we're running late.

Mr. Eric: Mamma Jamma was tapping her foot, waiting for her daughter Zizi to get ready.

Zizi: I'll be right there, Mom.

Mr. Eric: She'd been trying to pick just the right board game to bring to the sleepover but she couldn't make up her mind.

Zizi: Ugh, Whatopoly just takes so long to play, and...

Mamma Jamma: All right, Zizi, looks like I'm going to the sleepover by myself.

Mr. Eric: Said Mamma Jamma.

Mamma Jamma: I'm buckling my safety belt.

Mr. Eric: Zizi grabbed Tab-who not knowing what else to do, and ran down the stairs.

Mamma Jamma: Zizi, you seem kind of nervous, sweetheart. What's wrong?

Mr. Eric: Asked Mamma Jamma as they put on their safety belts and their rocket ship house took off into the sky.

Zizi: It's my first sleepover, Mom. I just wanted to make sure I picked out the right game.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, I wouldn't worry about that. You're gonna have a babysitter, after all?

Zizi: A what?

Mamma Jamma: A babysitter.

Mr. Eric: Shouted Mamma Jamma. But the rocket ship house was getting awfully loud.

Zizi: What's a babysitter?

Mr. Eric: Shouted Zizi.

Mamma Jamma: Well, a babysitter's a—

Mr. Eric: [FWOOOSH] The engine roared.

Mamma Jamma: --sitting on a—

Mr. Eric: [FWOOSH]

Zizi: Huh?

Mamma Jamma: Exactly, a—

Mr. Eric: [FWOOOOOSH] roared the rocket ship house.

Mamma Jamma: And just make sure you—

Mr. Eric: [FWOOOOOSH]

Mamma Jamma: Or else—

Mr. Eric: [FWOOOOO]

Mamma Jamma: And a horrible—

Mr. Eric: [FWHOOOSH]

Mamma Jamma: And it'll be your own fault.

Zizi: Mom, I couldn't quite make that out. The engines were really loud.

Mamma Jamma: Well, not anymore. We're here.

Mr. Eric: It was night time in Fairy Glen. Pixies and sprites rushed home for the night. Tooth fairies took off for this bedroom or that and little pseudo nymphs cast their spells all over the glen. There was a massive, floating hunk of crystal that all the fairies lived upon. During the day, spells made it look like a big fluffy cloud but at night, as the spells faded, little flightless gnomes used their jetpacks to shoot off and get start light to capture in tiny glass jars.

Mamma Jamma and Zizi were at Pixicato's house already. A little silver thimble you might step on if you weren't careful, but bright warm glowing light shone through every pinpoint hole.

Mamma Jamma: See, the gnomes gather the starlight to make the glen look like any other stretch of night sky.

Zizi: Um, Mom. I know how the Fairy Glen works.

Lola Rabbit: Oh, you didn't know how the Fairy Glen works? I didn't know either but then I knocked over some of that starlight and it got all over me and starlight's really hard to get out, and then I finally figured it out after that, sorta.

Zizi: Lola, you made it!

Mr. Eric: Zizi went over to hug her little fluffy rabbit friend.

Lola Rabbit: Of course I made it. I mean, I don't have a rocket ship house so I tried to hop up here and that was really tough but then Sprite Alright came and

she teleported me and my mom all the way up here! Well, my sister, but—

Sprite Alright: All right, all right.

Mr. Eric: Said Sprite Alright.

Mamma Jamma: Hi, Sprite Alright. Hi, Rola Rabbit.

Mr. Eric: That was Lola's big sister. But she was big enough in rabbit years that she'd pretty much raised Lola herself.

Rola Rabbit: Heya, Ma'am. Heya, Sprite.

Mr. Eric: Said Rola Rabbit.

Rola Rabbit: No sign of the babysitter yet?

Sprite Alright: Oh, not yet. So let's all wait inside.

Mr. Eric: Everyone joined in a circle, putting one hand at a time in the middle, stacking them all on top of each other and then Sprite Alright touched the stack of hands with her wand and—with a little swirl of rainbow dust, they were inside the silver thimble.

Mamma Jamma: I can never get over how roomy it is in here.

Fair Elise: I know.

Mr. Eric: It was Fair Elise. She had been waiting inside with Pixicato.

Fair Elise: We are very blessed. Of course, the way the market's growing, we couldn't afford a button in this neighborhood anymore.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, quit being modest. You've got a beautiful thimble here. Let's celebrate! Got any of that fairy juice?

Fair Elise: I think she means.

Sprite Alright: All right, I know what she means. Let's all go in the kitchen, let the children catch up.

Mr. Eric: So all the grown ups pushed their way into the kitchen, and the door swung closed behind them.

Pixicato: I am just ever so happy you both made it.

Mr. Eric: Said Pixicato, flying up to her friends.

Zizi: Um, you can drop the accent, Pixi. It's just us.

Pixicato: Am I speaking differently? I've been around Fair Elise all day, I hardly notice.

Lola Rabbit: Oh man, you're talking, like super duper fancy and I don't know what you're saying. Well I actually do but it's just the way that you say it I can barely recognize you.

Pixicato: What if I said, "Cram a sock in it, Lola?"

All: [Laugh]

Mr. Eric: Pixicato stopped acting so stiff and the three of them sat down together on a silken rug.

Zizi: So, do either of you know what a babysitter is?

Mr. Eric: Asked Zizi.

Lola Rabbit: A babysitter? Of course I know what a babysitter...it's—

Pixicato: Yes, I... no... it's um...

Zizi: Well, my mom was explaining it to me on the way over and I think I know what it is.

Lola Rabbit: Ooh, tell us tell us tell us tell us!

Pixicato: It does sound rather like a human child thing.

Zizi: Well...

Mr. Eric: And Zizi leaned in closer. And so did Lola, and Pixicato, until their noses were practically touching.

Zizi: I couldn't make out much, but I know that there are a lot of rules to a babysitter. You have to order one in advance and they always show up late.

Lola Rabbit: What else, what else?

Zizi: I'm not sure of all the rules yet, but I think it's like a chair that you have to put together.

Pixicato: Oh, that's easy. I can make a chair with my fairy wand right now.

Lola Rabbit: Shh shh! Let her finish!

Zizi: No, I think you need all the special pieces, like a puzzle. And the chair's only big enough for a baby.

Pixicato: A baby?

Lola Rabbit: But I'm a bigger than a baby?

Zizi: That's right, but it's one of the rules. And we have to build this puzzle chair around us so all three of us are trapped inside.

Pixicato: Oh, so horrible.

Lola Rabbit: It's everything I always feared.

Zizi: And if we build the babysitter wrong, we'll all be squished together forever!

Lola & Pixicato: Aaaa!

Zizi: And it'll be our own fault.

Mr. Eric: Just then, the door to the kitchen creaked open and they heard a low, rough, scraping sound, like four wooden chair legs across linoleum.

Pixicato: Oh dear.

Lola Rabbit: I'm getting out of here fast!

Mr. Eric: Pixicato turned invisible. Lola burrowed under the silken rug. And Zizi, too big to hide, turned to face the babysitter.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, hey, Zizi. I thought you might just like some chairs to sit in there. These fairy types are always floating around.

Zizi: Oh, Mom!

Mamma Jamma: Oh, I'm sorry. You don't want me interrupting your friends.

Mr. Eric: It was just Mamma Jamma holding a wooden chair. [Magic crackle] Pixicato appeared and Lola stuck her head out from under the rug.

Lola Rabbit: No, it's okay we don't need a chair at all please get it out of here lickety-split.

Mamma Jamma: Okay you girls.

Mr. Eric: And Mamma Jamma dragged the chair back into the kitchen, talking to the other grown ups.

Mamma Jamma: Isn't it weird how we've been friends for years but this feels like the first time we're ever hanging out?

Mr. Eric: And the door swung shut behind her.

Lola Rabbit: Oh, Zizi, you had us worked all up for nothing.

Pixicato: Well, I wasn't going to say anything. But I think I might know what a babysitter really is.

Lola Rabbit: Oh, of course you know, you're so smart.

Zizi: Quit holding out on us. Tell us!

Mr. Eric: And Pixicato held out her wand. The little globes of starlight hung around her house dimmed in response.

Pixicato: There was once a girl, long ago—

Mr. Eric: She began, dramatically.

Pixicato: And she, too, did not know what a babysitter was.

Mr. Eric: Lola's rabbit foot tapped anxiously. Zizi tried not to chew her nails in fear.

Pixicato: And one night, her mother and father went out. But before they did, they stood a little wooden doll in front of the door. Now you sit here, said her father. Or else this will turn you into a baby. And then they left.

Zizi: I don't believe it.

Mr. Eric: Said Zizi.

Lola Rabbit: M-m-m-me neither.

Mr. Eric: Said Lola.

Pixicato: Well, she didn't either.

Mr. Eric: Continued Pixicato.

Pixicato: But she knew her parents wanted her to be good, so she sat still for a solid hour, reading a book. But as soon as she got up, the little wooden doll looked up and zapped her into a baby! Waaaah!

Zizi: Oh no!

Lola Rabbit: I knew it, I knew it, I knew it.

Pixicato: And she's been stuck that way ever since.

Doll: You've got it half-right, little ones.

Mr. Eric: It was one of Pixicato's dolls!

All girls: Aaaah!

Mr. Eric: Even Pixicato was scared.

Doll: Oh, relax. It's just me.

Girls: Old Lady Baby.

Mr. Eric: That's right. It was Old Lady Baby, one of Pixicato's wiser dolls. She'd been sitting atop the bookshelf listening the whole time. The wrinkly old doll, dressed in a cute yellow onesie, went on.

Old Lady Baby: Only, the little girl was me. And when I was turned into a doll, that little girl came alive.

Zizi: Oh, man.

Lola Rabbit: Oooh, that's too much that's too much.

Pixicato: Are you messing with us, Old Lady Baby?

Old Lady Baby: Ah ha ha ha. Of course I'm messing with you. I'll tell you what a real—ah—ah.

Mr. Eric: And suddenly, Old Lady Baby started fussing.

Old Lady Baby: What a real—aah—babysitter is after—waah.

Zizi: After what? No, please, you've got to tell us now!

Old Lady Baby: Waaaaaaaaaaaaah.

Pixicato: Oh no, she'll go on like this until she's got her bottle.

Mr. Eric: And Pixicato flew up to put a tiny wooden bottle in the old doll's mouth.

Old Lady Baby: Ooooooh.

Mr. Eric: And the Old Lady Baby's eyes closed as she enjoyed her bottle.

Zizi: Oh no.

Pixicato: I guess we'll just have to wait until the real babysitter shows up.

Lola Rabbit: Well, maybe not. I might have an idea.

Zizi: You think we should run out of here and jump out of Fairy Glen, and have Pixicato fly us away forever?

Lola Rabbit: No, I think I might have an idea of what a babysitter really is.

Pixicato: You do always surprise me with what you know.

Mr. Eric: Said Pixicato.

Zizi: Yeah, you are always much more clever than you look.

Mr. Eric: Said Zizi.

Lola Rabbit: Hey, what do you mean?

Mr. Eric: Asked Lola the Rabbit, batting her floppy ear in irritation.

Lola Rabbit: Oh, that's better.

Pixicato: Um, Lola? You were going to tell us a story.

Lola Rabbit: Oh, that's right. I was reading this story that takes place in What Is World and it's this kind of creature that usually takes the form of a teenager. And after you go to sleep it comes into your house and plays on its cell phone, and it eats all your favorite chips.

Zizi: What?

Pixicato: I'm sorry, that does sound ridiculous.

Lola Rabbit: Well, I didn't finish. They pay it in something called "pizza money."

Zizi: So their money's like pieces of pizza that they fold and put in their pockets?

Lola Rabbit: I don't know. I guess.

Pixicato: And the creature is a teenager, despite having nothing to do with babies or sitting.

Lola Rabbit: I know, you're right, it's really far-fetched.

Mr. Eric: Said Lola rabbit. Then there was a knock on the side of the thimble.
[Knock knock knock]

Lola Rabbit: Oh no, it's a teenager.

Pixicato: No, it's a doll that turns you into a baby!

Zizi: No, it's a spooky chair trap, I know it.

Mr. Eric: And they heard a [whistle] as Sprite Alright teleported outside and then a [whistle] as Sprite Alright teleported back inside along with the babysitter.

Babysitter: Boock boockboock. [Chicken noises]

Mr. Eric: It was a giant hen big enough to fill half their living room.

Zizi: Mom, what is going on?

Mamma Jamma: I told you all about it. It's Babs, your babysitter. Babs you got everything you need?

Babs: Baaaa boockboock!

Mr. Eric: The giant hen bent its neck to pick a little bug out of its feather.

Babs: Boock boock.

Mamma Jamma: Okay Babs, don't let these kids give you any trouble.

Babs: Boooock.

Mr. Eric: The giant hen flattened her wings and gave the three kids a shrewd look.

Sprite Alright: Oh, I almost forgot.

Mr. Eric: Said Sprite Alright. And with a snap of her wand, a big circle of hay appeared in the middle of the living room.

Mamma Jamma: All right, girls' night out! And little girls' night in. Bye kids!

Mr. Eric: And all the grown ups joined hands and with a tap of Sprite Alright's wand, they disappeared.

Babs: Boooock, bock bock.

Lola Rabbit: What was that, Babs?

Mr. Eric: Asked Lola.

Babs: Bockbock!

Pixicato: She said, "It's Mrs. Sitter, to you."

Mr. Eric: Corrected, Pixicato.

Zizi: And, um, what do you do, Mrs. Sitter?

Mr. Eric: Asked Zizi.

Babs: Baaaooooock.

Mr. Eric: And the giant hen unfolded her big gray wing and wrapped the three girls up in a downy hug.

Zizi: Oh, this is nice.

Lola Rabbit: I knew it, I knew it was going to be nice all along.

Pixicato: I don't really know what we were so worked up ab—bleeggh.

Mr. Eric: And the giant hen was sitting on top of all three of them, like a big, heavy, fluffy blanket.

Zizi: Well, it could have been worse.

Mr. Eric: Said Zizi.

Lola Rabbit: [Muffled]

Mr. Eric: Squeaked Lola.

Pixicato: You're right. It is quite comfortable. Hmm.

Mr. Eric: Translated the pixie, and the three young girls, tucked out from their spooky storytelling, fell fast asleep under the giant hen who then poked her head into the kitchen and ate all their favorite chips.

The end. [Chicken eating noises].

[Falling harp scale.]

All right, Brooke. I hope you enjoyed your story. And I hope you all feel lucky that What Is World babysitters are usually a lot better than a giant hen who sits on you.

I'd like to thank Karen Marshall O'Keeffe, my editor and producer. Craig Martinson, for our awesome theme song. Jason O'Keeffe, our artist, and all you kids out there who use your wonderful imaginations. But don't let them get the better of you.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]