

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 063: What if Transformers could turn into Christmas trees and Christmas trees could turn into Transformers?

File Length: 17:36

Transcription by Keffy

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 Hunter, as well as his little siblings, Kate and Pierce.

Hunter:                 My name is Hunter and I'm five years old and I like transformers and robots and [unclear]. My what if question is, what if transformers [unclear] can turn into Christmas trees and Christmas trees can turn into star destroyers? Thank you.

Hunter's Parent:      And Hunter's younger brother and sister, Kate and Pierce.

Kate or Pierce:        Hi!

Hunter's Parent:      They really like the character Harrigo. Thank you so much. Have a great day!

Mr. Eric:              Well, hello to you, too. That was a lot of question and I want to get right into your story.

[Rising harp scale]

Some of you may remember a tree named Harrigo. For a long time, he'd been the biggest, loudest tree in the whole forest, but lately he'd started acting a lot nicer and with all that niceness came more animals, more friends, and even more trees.

Harrigo had so many friends now that he had a brand new feeling.

Harrigo:                I think people like me, I think maybe even... I'm popular.

Owls:                  Whoo! Whoo!

Mr. Eric: The owls hooted in agreement, and birds on his branches started whistling happily, and the holes in his knotted trunk started humming and Harrigo started to sing.

Harrigo: [Singing] The whole forest loves me now! [Acapella harmonizing in the background.]

They say you're the coolest tree and how. Tell 'em I was nice to everyone. Now we all hang out and have fun. You should try it once, you should try it twice, just try being nice.

Ooh, it's a really good feeling.

I think it's time for a skat break. Are you feeling it? All right.

[Skatting alone] Skoodilydoodilydoodam, bipbah zoobah hoo adaddilydaddily doodoodahbahbahbah oooo an dendah skadah denbah boo day.

Everyone else stopped.

[Loud breathing noises]

Mr. Eric: Everyone in the forest had grown quiet as a fleet of giant starships flew overhead and right before Harrigo's unbelieving eyes they turned into evergreen trees and rooted themselves right next to him.

Harrigo: What is going on?

Cedar: Please don't tell anyone you saw us.

Mr. Eric: Said a big cedar tree.

Fir: I promise all will be revealed to you tonight.

Mr. Eric: Said a slightly smaller fir tree.

Harrigo: Hey, Harrigo's cool. Don't you worry. You're safe in my forest.

Mr. Eric: And the cedar and fir tree stopped talking just as the sun started to rise and when the sun hit a few balsam and pine trees on the other side of Harrigo, they suddenly transformed into giant shiny robots!

Coniferous Pine: I'm Coniferous Pine, but you can call me Connie.

Mr. Eric: The balsam had turned into a giant black and yellow striped robot.

Balsam Bee: Bzz bzzbzzbzz bzz.

Coniferous Pine: And this is Balsam Bee. He lost his voice battling the Evertrons.

Harrigo: Why were you battling these Evertrons?

Balsam Bee: Bzzbzz bzzz.

Coniferous Pine: Because we're the Autogreens, it's our duty.

Mr. Eric: Said Coniferous Pine. She was a big, beautiful green metal robot with accents of red and blue, and she drew a giant axe of green metal that was strapped to her back.

Coniferous Pine: Have you seen any Evertrons? It is our duty to destroy them.

Harrigo: Evertrons, Autogreens, I've never heard of such things.

Balsam Bee: Bzzz bzbzbzz bzzz zhzzz.

Harrigo: Every night they build an evil base in the sky?

Balsam Bee: Zzzzz.

Harrigo: And every day you do your best to destroy it but unless you find the Evertrons themselves, you'll never permanently dismantle their establishment?

Balsam Bee: Bzzbzz.

Harrigo: Wow, they sound like bad news. I hope you find them.

Coniferous Pine: Well, keep an eye peeled, they're dangerous and they can disguise themselves as evergreen trees.

Harrigo: Oh, no! I'm surrounded by trees.

Balsam Bee: Bzz bzbz.

Mr. Eric: And the two giant robots blasted into the air, trying to find the Evertrons' latest base and destroy it.

Harrigo: What a nice pair of robots.

Hole 1 Oy, Harrigo, you think them evil space ships what they was talking about are them two trees there?

Harrigo: Hmm, what trees?

Hole 2: Harrigo, don't you remember those other two trees? You just talked to them.

Mr. Eric: They were the holes on either side of Harrigo's head. They acted as his ears, but since Harrigo wasn't always the best listener, sometimes they had to give him a little reminder.

Harrigo: Don't you think the Evertrons would have raised their hand when the Autogreens said they were looking for them?

Hole 1: Well, they don't want to be found, Harrigo, remember?

Hole 2: They asked you to keep them safe.

Harrigo: That's right, and I want them to like me, so I'll keep them safe.

Hole 1: But what about the Autogreens. They won't like being lied to.

Harrigo: I won't have to lie. I'll just be nice to them so they'll like me, and I'll wish them luck every day.

[Robotic slam and explosion noises]

Mr. Eric: There was the sound of battle up in the sky. It seemed the Autogreens had found the Evertrons' new base and proceeded to blast it to pieces.

[More explosions!]

Flaming hunks of plastic and metal burned their way through the atmosphere and landed, ooh, pretty close to the forest, but luckily no one got first.

Then Coniferous Pine and Balsam Bee were flying down out of the atmosphere holding between the two of them what looked to be the top of a giant metal castle. They slammed the towering top into the ground and ripped it in two. The grass all through the meadow was burnt up in the calamity, and burning heaps smoked as far as the eye could see.

Coniferous Pine dropped her hunk of metal and she and Balsam Bee walked back towards Harrigo.

Coniferous Pine: How'd you like that action, old tree?

Harrigo: Oh, my name's Harrigo. I'm sorry we weren't properly introduced.

Balsam Bee: Bzz bzzbzz bzzz?

Harrigo: Oh, oh yes, it was quite the battle. I was very impressed. There are a lot of heaping hunks of burning metal and plastic in that field, though.

Balsam Bee: Bzzz bzz bzz bzzzz...

Harrigo: Oh, it's almost night, of course you need to root and recharge.

Hole 1: Oy, maybe you should tell him about the Evertrons.

Hole 2: If you don't, they're just gonna keep messing up the meadow.

Mr. Eric: Harrigo's ears whispered to him.

Harrigo: You know, Connie, I do have something to tell you.

Coniferous Pine: What is it? Did you find the bad guys?

Mr. Eric: Coniferous Pine drew her green metal axe.

Harrigo: Oh, I just wanted to say it was really cool how you tore that castle in half.

Coniferous Pine: I know, Harrigo. It's part of keeping the world safe.

Mr. Eric: And with that, she turned back into a pine tree and her friend turned back into a balsam just as the sun was setting.

[Creaking noises]

And as soon as they finished transforming, that fir tree and the old cedar turned into giant starships again.

Cedar: Did you keep our secret?

Mr. Eric: Asked the largest of the two ships.

Harrigo: Didn't you hear me keeping your secret?

Mr. Eric: Asked Harrigo.

Fir: No, when we finish transforming into trees, we can neither see nor hear.

Cedar: We can only dream of the horrible Autogreens.

Harrigo: Horrible? I thought they were nice and heroes, saving the world.

Fir: Saving the world by tearing down our home every night.

Cedar: We just want a safe place to live when we are space ships.

Hole 1: I don't know, sounded like your little base had a lot of weapons.

Hole 2: Aye, we heard plenty of blasts and battling up there.

Fir: You don't understand.

Harrigo: I would like to understand. I'm Harrigo, if you didn't know.

Mr. Eric: The mighty starship of green, black, and silver introduced itself.

Cedartron: I am Cedartron.

Mr. Eric: And the smaller ship, purple metal run through with red vines and bits of white, introduced herself.

Missfir: And I am Missfir. We are Evertrons.

Cedartron: But we only added weapons to our base to protect it.

Harrigo: If you say it, I believe it. Now, let's all just be good friends.

Missfir: I'm sorry, there is too much work to be done.

Mr. Eric: And Missfir started collecting all the bits of broken up space station that were still smoking in the meadow.

Cedartron: Yes, perhaps tomorrow if our space station still stands, we can play and be friends.

Mr. Eric: And Cedartron left, too, to go put their space station back together.

Hole 1: You're just gonna let them build a bunch of weapons.

Hole 2: I think I believe them.

Harrigo: Oh, little ears, you forget what matters most.

Holes: What?

Harrigo: They like me.

Mr. Eric: The Evertrons came back just before the sun was about to rise.

Missfir: Thank you for letting us rest here.

Mr. Eric: Said Missfir.

Cedartron: And if you ever find the Autogreens.”

Mr. Eric: Said Cedartron.

Cedartron: Let us know, that we might destroy them and finally be safe.

Hole 2: I think you should tell them, them Autogreens are no good.

Hole 1: What? The Evertrons are the real bad guys.

Missfir: What were your ears saying?

Harrigo: Don’t pay them any heed, just get some rest, the sun’s almost risen.

Mr. Eric: And when the sun rose, the Autogreens were back.

Coniferous Pine: Any luck finding the bad guys, Harrigo?

Balsam Bee: Bzz?

Harrigo: I do know exactly where their base is.

Balsam Bee: Bzzz bz bz bz.

Coniferous Pine: Wow, Harrigo. That’ll save us so much time.

Balsam Bee: Bzz bzz bzzzz bzzzz.

Harrigo: I know, I`m the best.

Mr. Eric: The Autogreens destroyed the Evertron base twice as fast, leaving them lots of time to hang out with Harrigo. And then Harrigo, with the help of his forest friends, got all the broken pieces of the star base together so that when the Evertrons came back that night.

Cedartron: Harrigo, you’ve got a base half-built for us. You are a true friend.

Mr. Eric: And that night, Harrigo’s Evertron friends had twice as much time to hang out with him, and on and on it went. The Autogreens and the Evertrons both grew to love Harrigo as the meadow around them got more and more burnt and scarred and all the other forest creatures got more and more tired of collecting broken bits of castle and space port.

Harrigo: [Singing, with acapella backing] Go a go a ha-arri-go. I’ve got even more friends than before. It’s better than having, it’s having mooooore. Try it out for yourself, then you’ll see, it’s best to be friends with everybody. Don’t matter what they want, just give it to them.

No matter what you want, just give it to them.

Mr. Eric: The Autogreens and the Evertrons had never been happier. Every time they woke, they battled and built, and before they slept, they got to play with their new friend. But Harrigo was having less and less friend.

Harrigo: Oooh, Harri don't feel so good.

Hole 2: You're burning the candle at both ends, Harrigo.

Hole 1: You think you're making everybody happy, well it's not going to work out that way.

Harrigo: Oh, no, no, it's fine. I mean, how many times can you break and fix the same space station. They'll get bored in a couple more days. [Coughs]

Mr. Eric: What was once a meadow that stretched as far as Harrigo could see was now a broken, polluted wasteland.

Hole 2: They've already stripped the meadow bare. What if they start hurting the forest, too.

Harrigo: Oh, they love the forest.

Mr. Eric: But that night, when the Evertrons came awake, Missfir had a question for Harrigo.

Missfir: The pieces of our space station are too broken. Might we search the forest for fresh materials and ore?

Harrigo: Well... sure.

Mr. Eric: And then, the next morning, after the Autogreens destroyed their new base yet again, Balsam Bee asked.

Balsam Bee: Bzz bzzbzbzbzzbzbzz?

Harrigo: Why do you want to destroy part of the forest?

Coniferous Pine: Don't worry.

Mr. Eric: Said Coniferous Pine.

Coniferous Pine: We just need to destroy the bits that they're taking from to build their ships. Your forest will be safer in the long run.

Harrigo: I...



Mr. Eric: Harrigo looked out to the meadow. A little red fox, now silver with soot was nosing around what was once its home. And he looked to his own forest. Bleary-eyed birds and ruffled owls too tired to keep cleaning up after these tree robots.

Harrigo: No, I can't.

Balsam Bee: Bzzzz?

Coniferous Pine: Harrigo, you always help us!

Balsam Bee: Bzz bzz bzz!

Harrigo: I know I'm the best, but look what we've done to the meadow.

Coniferous Pine: We promise we'll clean it up this time.

Balsam Bee: Bzzz bzbzbz bzz bzzzz.

Harrigo: I am not having a cow!

Mr. Eric: Four tiny roots from Harrigo's tree suddenly sprouted from the ground. Two touched the Autogreens and another two touched the Evertrons, turning them from trees back into starships.

Cedartron: Autogreens!

Mr. Eric: Said Cedartron, charging up his cannon.

Missfir: Don't worry, Harrigo! We'll protect you.

Mr. Eric: Said Missfir.

Balsam Bee: Bzz bzzbzbzbzz?

Coniferous Pine: You two are friends with Harri?

Mr. Eric: Asked Coniferous Pine.

Harrigo: All of you are my friends and I know you don't like each other but you just have to stop fighting.

All bots: But they're the bad guys! Huh?

Harrigo: You've all tried to hurt each other and that's bad.

Hole 1: Oy, you tell 'em 'arri!

Hole 2: Oh, finally he's sticking up for himself.

Harrigo: So now every morning before you transform, you'll spend one hour talking together.

All bots: Wha? [Gasp!]

Harrigo: None of that lip!

Coniferous Pine: Harrigo.

Mr. Eric: Said Coniferous Pine.

Coniferous Pine: You're being so uncool.

Harrigo: [Acapella backing, Go go harri go go go repeating]

[Singing] You can't just fight and fight, hurting others isn't right! Now please, please listen to me. I was trying to be cool but I looked just like a fool so now please listen to me. You must say what they must hear, you cannot give in to fear, just please, please listen to me. It's better to be kind than to let your friends be blind, now please listen to me sing!

Harrigo!

Mr. Eric: The Autogreens and the Evertrons looked at Harrigo, then at each other.

Missfir: So if we take down our weapons—

Coniferous Pine: So if we don't destroy your base—

Balsam Bee: Bzz bzz bzz bzzbzz?

Cedartron: We can stop fighting?

Harrigo: So you were listening to me.

Hole 1: Y'see Harrigo? You should've said something a long time ago.

Hole 2: Oh, it wasn't easy for the poor tree. This little ear's proud of you.

Harrigo: Oh, shucks.

Mr. Eric: And the Autogreens and Evertrons got to know each other a little better. They even all worked together to rebuild the starship base, and then the creatures of the forest gave what they could to the meadow, and all the transforming trees did their best to clean it up. And maybe they didn't all

think Harrigo was the coolest anymore, but now the Autogreens and the Evertrons could get to know their new friend for real.

Balsam Bee: Bzzbzbzbz bzz?

Harrigo: You don't sing all the time?

Cedartron: We've never learned how.

Harrigo: Well, then let the lesson begin. Memememememe! A muhmuhmuhmuh woosaaaaaaaa aaaaaaaaa aaaaaaa! Where'd everybody go.

Mr. Eric: The end.

[Falling harp scale]

All right, Hunter, Kate and Pierce, I hope you liked your story.

I'd like to thank Karen Marshall O'Keeffe, my editor and producer, Jason O'Keeffe for our artwork, Craig Martinson for our amazing theme, and all you kids at home who know it's more important to speak your mind than to have everyone like you.

Until we meet again, keep wondering!

[What If World theme plays.]

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