

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 089 What if I could fly over traffic?

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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.

[Gentle bell music.]

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 are going to answer three questions. You might notice that all three of these questions involve flying creatures. As you can imagine, we do get a lot of questions about flying creatures, so if you sent in a question but it's not one of the three that got answered today, believe me, I got it, I heard it, I thank you for it, and you helped to inspire this story.

Let's listen to our first one.

Ezray: My name is Ezray, I'm six years old. My favorite thing is going to the beach. What if I could fly over traffic?

Mr. Eric: Oh, I love going to the beach, too. Is it Ezray? Am I saying that right? I'm sorry if I misheard your name, but I think flying over traffic is a really cool idea.

Next, we have a question from Lola.

Lola: I like monsters and my what if question is what if octopuses and birds could walk and talk?

Lola's Parent: And what's your name?

Lola: Lola.

Lola's Parent: Say goodbye.

Lola: Goodbye.

Mr. Eric: That is a really good one. We've had plenty of squid monsters but never an octopus character. And finally, one more question from Carmen.

Carmen: My name is Carmen and I'm four years old. I [unclear] and my question is what if T-Rexes could fly? Thank you.

Mr. Eric: Thank you, Carmen. I am so glad that flying T-Rexes aren't real, but I think we could have some fun with one in *What If World*. But before we get to our story, I have a big thank you to Owen and Jacob, two of our newest patrons. They wanted to hear from the narrator, himself. That's me.

So, Owen, I used to know a boy named Owen. He was my first gymnastics student and I'm still friends with his family back in New York.

And Jacob? Well, I went to a school called Jacob's School. You didn't happen to own an elementary school in 1992, did you, Jacob?

Well, thank you Owen and Jacob for helping to keep this podcast going. Now, let's find out what if octopuses could fly and birds could walk and talk, what if I could fly over traffic, and what if T-Rexes could fly? Oh, my.

[Rising harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: You might have noticed the last couple weeks we did episodes set in the past, and I'll tell you why, because What If World has been having a heatwave like you wouldn't believe! Mostly all the characters just stayed inside all day trying to keep cool. But, finally, they'd all about had enough. And so, about half of What If World had the same great idea at the same time.

Many characters: Let's go to the beach! Let's go to the beach. Let's go to the beach. Let's go to the beach.

Mr. Eric: So just about everyone you can think of hopped on the Why-way and drove to Sandtucket Beach.

Cthunkle: Could you drive any faster?

Mr. Eric: Asked Cthunkle. He'd finally gotten back to What If World and was visiting his nephew Scully and his foster mother Squiderella.

Squidarella: We can't all just fly over traffic like you, responded Squiderella, curling her tentacle grumpily around the steering wheel.

Scully: But Squiderella, I promised I'd meet my friend, Loctofly at the beach.

Squidarella: Well, if she's anywhere on the Why-way, she's stuck in the same traffic.

Mr. Eric: As it turns out, Loctofly was on the same Why-way. She was sitting on the shoulders of her big friend, Q-Rex, since he'd finally turned old enough to be considered a vehicle. Loctofly was a young lady octopus, who, in addition to all her amazing octopus powers, was able to fly, too. But she wasn't flying now. She was just laying over Q-Rex's back in this incessant heat, her camouflage the same color as Q-Rex's skin, you could barely even see her.

Loctofly: Q-Rex, can you see what's causing the traffic?

Mr. Eric: Asked Loctofly?

Q-Rex: Hey, listen, it's my first time driving so, I'm just trying to play by them rules.

Loctofly: But you could just walk over half of these cars.

Q-Rex: Rules are important, y'all.

Mr. Eric: Said Q-Rex. He was clearly a little nervous about being on the road for the first time without his dad's help. Cars were stalled as far as Q-Rex could see. Even the tiny creature/electric car lane was finally slowing down as a little red bird drove by before coming to a complete stop.

Red Bird: What's the hold up, Carmen Cardinal?

Mr. Eric: Asked Patchy Parrot.

Carmen Cardinal: Well, I don't know. It's got to be something serious, though. Too bad, I really wanted to spend a lot of time on the beach.

Mr. Eric: Said Carmen Cardinal.

Patchy Parrot: Why don't we just fly?

Mr. Eric: Asked Patchy Parrot.

Carmen Cardinal: Well, that wouldn't be fair to all these people who are waiting.

Patchy Parrot: Didn't you see we just drove by Cthunkle?

Carmen Cardinal: What does Cthunkle have to do with any of this?

Patchy Parrot: You know he's just going to fly over all these cars and take over the whole beach.

Carmen Cardinal: Oh, I hope not.

Mr. Eric: And as traffic inched forward at a crawl, Q-Rex tip-toed by Carmen's little red fly, Loctofly still lounging on his back.

Loctofly: Oh, Q-Rex, why don't we just fly there?

Q-Rex: Because I don't want to break the rules!

Loctofly: But didn't you see us drive by those birds? Any second, one of them's going to fly ahead and then the birds will have the beach all to themselves.

Q-Rex: Naw, naw, they wouldn't do that to Q-Rex.

Loctofly: Oh, it won't matter if just one or two of us break the rules.

Q-Rex: Hmm...

Mr. Eric: And as everyone continued to squeeze themselves down the Why-way, Squiderella's car slid by slimily. Scully looked up from the car at Q-Rex's back but he couldn't see Loctofly because of her T-Rex colored camouflage.

Scully: Oh, Squiderella, Loctofly must have already flown ahead.

Squidarella: It doesn't matter, we can't fly anyway.

Cthunkle: Well, I could, of course, squirt you with magic flying ink. It wouldn't last forever, but you'd all be able to fly for the day.

Mr. Eric: Offered Cthunkle.

Scully: Oh, Mom, can we please, can we please?

Squidarella: Why is it that you only call me Mom when you want something?

Scully: Oh, sorry, Momerella.

Squidarella: Oh, I kind of like Momerella. Maybe when the adoption papers finally go through, you could call me-

Cthunkle: K-blast.

Squidarella: No, I was going to say-

Mr. Eric: Cthunkle burst out with ink in every direction. Their windows had been opened to make room for all their tentacles, so of course the ink got everywhere! [Whooshing noises]. Over the birds! Over the dinosaurs! Over the cars, trucks, motorcycles, mopeds, and even the low-flying hover vehicles.

Many: Ugh!
That Cthunkle!
Uh-oh.
Ny'arr.
That's a lot of ink!

Cthunkle: All right. Let's fly.

Scully: Yay!

Mr. Eric: Said Scully, floating out the side window, until one of Squiderella's tentacles reached out and grabbed him.

Squidarella: Scully, you can't just break the rules when it's convenient.

Cthunkle: But it will be so very convenient. For us, in particular.

Mr. Eric: Said Cthunkle, and he was flying out of the car, too. And Squiderella, well, she'd never flown before, so she just couldn't stop herself.

Squidarella: Uhhh... Cthunkle...

Cthunkle: Don't worry, I've got you. Now, if just the three of us head on ahead, there's less traffic for everyone else. A win for every... win.

Mr. Eric: But just then, all the cars started rising up in the air, and all the flying creatures started flying, and even Q-Rex was walking on the sky.

Q-Rex: I'm not afraid of this at all! Loctofly, just like, hold my little claw-paw for no reason, okay?

Loctofly: Okay, Q-Rex.

Mr. Eric: And Loctofly led the nervous Q-Rex ahead.

Scully: Oh, hey, there you are Loctofly. I guess we all had the same idea.

Mr. Eric: Said Scully and—

The Why-way itself started rising into the sky, bits of earth, pavement, and squid ink showering down from it. And as all those flying creatures and objects finally flew forward— [Record scratch.]

They all just bumped into each other.

Scully: What's happening, Cthunkle?

Cthunkle: It seems we're stuck.

Squidarella: In air traffic.

Scully: Oh, why can't we just fly higher, or just move to the side.

Cthunkle: I already thought of that. I was just trying to give you a chance to think of it so you'd feel smart.

Scully: Okay, good idea, Cthunkle.

Cthunkle: Thank you. I will fly higher, and see what the problem is.

Mr. Eric: And as Cthunkle flew up, all of the air traffic started to spread out in every direction. Traffic was thinning out until...

Cthunkle: Oh, dear. Not him again.

Mr. Eric: Cthunkle had finally spied the source of all this traffic.

Scully: Who is it, Cthunkle?

Q-Rex: Yo yo yo, dragon! What are you doing down there?

Dracomax: I'm sorry!

Mr. Eric: Said the distant dragon. Can you guess who it was?

Dracomax: I was hired to expand the highway, but then I just got myself tangled up in it.

Mr. Eric: That's right. It was Dracomax, What If World's biggest dragon. He'd been using his magic breath to add another lane to the Why-way, but he seemed to have only added it to himself. Lanes of Why-way were slowly uncurling from around Dracomax. But instead of falling to the ground, they were whipping wildly all over the sky.

Dracomax: Someone seems to have given this road the ability to fly.

Loctofly: Oh, I can guess who it was.

Mr. Eric: Said Loctofly.

Patchy Parrot: I can guess who it was.

Mr. Eric: Parroted Patchy.

All: Cthunkle. Cthunkle. Was it Cthunkle?

Cthunkle: That's the problem with having unimaginable power. Sometimes it's hard to imagine the consequences.

Carmen Cardinal: Well, when's your little magic going to wear off?

Mr. Eric: Asked Carmen Cardinal, still flicking squid ink off of her feathers.

Cthunkle: It will take a day or so.

All: Aw, oh. Ah, man.

Mr. Eric: But right at that moment, Q-Rex started floating back down to the ground, first slowly, then much faster. Then Scully was falling! And Squiderella! And the entire Why-way!

Q-Rex: Ah, man. This happens every time you break the rules.

Mr. Eric: Said Q-Rex as he plummeted towards the earth.

Scully: You briefly gain the ability to fly before hitting air traffic and plummeting to your doom?

Q-Rex: I mean, in What If World, yeah.

Mr. Eric: Even the flying creatures suddenly couldn't fly. Cthunkle had never really fallen before and before he realized what was happening, Scully and Squiderella were already out of his reach.

Cthunkle: Dracomax, can you fire bubbles at all of these people?

Dracomax: I can shoot the bubbles, but I am not accurate enough to catch everyone!

Cthunkle: Then fire at me?

Mr. Eric: And the sky darkened as Cthunkle grew to his greatest size and spread out with every tentacle he could summon, just as Dracomax launched bubbles faster than rockets at the great squid beast, and—

[Bubbles shooting like laser noises.]

All of Cthunkle's wavy arms bounced the bubbles to catch one creature or another and the rest he deflected to catch the Why-way itself before it could crack into a million pieces on the ground. And just before Scully smacked down to the ground, he found himself inside a bubble. And so did all the other creatures and cars and as their bubbles landed softly, they all started rolling together.

Scully: Hey, we're rolling closer to the beach.

Q-Rex: Finally, we're almost there!

Loctofly: You do realize we're still stuck in a bubble.

Mr. Eric: Said Loctofly, as her bubble rolled up to stick next to Scully.

Scully: After almost being squished, being trapped in a bubble's kind of comforting.

Mr. Eric: And so all the bubbles joined together under that big stretch of bubbles still holding up the road.

Dracomax: Uh-oh. I was afraid this might happen.

Cthunkle: Oh, what is it now?

Bubblemax: I... am... Bubblemax!

Mr. Eric: All the bubbles had formed into a giant bubble dragon.

Q-Rex: Hey, everybody give it up for Bubblemax! She saved our lives!

Mr. Eric: Said Q-Rex.

Bubblemax: Who... wants... to go...

Scully: To the beach?

Bubblemax: To...

Creature: To the beach?

Bubblemax: The...

Cthunkle: Oh, to the beach?

Bubblemax: Ocean.

Scully: We owe you our lives, lead the way, Bubblemax.

Bubblemax: Oh, uh...

Dracomax: Okay, be careful with her. She was just breathed into existence.

Bubblemax: Oh...kay...

Mr. Eric: And the mile long bubble dragon slowly squeezed out from under the road, gently resettling the Why-way. That part only took an hour.

Scully: An hour?

Patchy Parrot: That took forever.

Cthunkle: Just let me out of the bubble. We'll just walk to the beach.

Bubblemax: I have to keep you safe. But we'll get there.

Scully: Hey, you're learning to talk faster.

Bubblemax: Whaaaaaaaaaat?

Mr. Eric: Said Bubblemax, ever so slowly rolling toward the beach.

Q-Rex: I knew if I broke the rules, this'd happen.

Scully: You'd end up missing the whole beach day while trapped inside a giant bubble monster?

Cthunkle: Is it considered rude to pop a bubble person?

Squidarella: Don't even think about it, Cthunkle.

Patchy Parrot: Hey, someone's bouncing a bubble.

Mr. Eric: And everyone looked up to see one of Bubblemax's smaller bubbles being passed to and fro like a beach ball. When the bubble came to you, you just smacked the top of your own bubble to send it on to the next person.

Scully: Yay, send it over here.

Q-Rex: Oh, I'm gonna tail-smack that bubble!

Dracomax: Can Dracomax have a turn?

Mr. Eric: And the day's last colorful rays of sunlight streamed through that bubble as friends and strangers alike all sat in their bubble traffic together, cracking their coolers full of food and drink, sharing stories with perfect strangers, and slowly rolling toward the beach.

Bubblemax: Hey everybody. We're... heeere!

Mr. Eric: The end.

[Falling harp scale.]

All right, Lola, Carmen, and Ezray, I believe. Again, sorry if I'm saying your name wrong. I hope you all enjoyed your story.

I'd like to thank Karen Marshall O'Keeffe, my co creator, Jason O'Keefe for our artwork, Craig Martinson for our theme song, and all you patient kids out there for waiting in lines and traffic, and everywhere else. Try to make the best of those quiet moments even though it's hard. How could you make the next boring wait a little more fun? Let me know.

And until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]