

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 092 What if donuts came to life and went on a journey to find toppings (plus Julie the Mermaid)?

File Length: 14:48

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 doing review questions. I picked two at random, yep, I rolled a 12-sided die twice. And the first question I got was from Grace, who asks: What if donuts came to life and went on a journey to find toppings? And she likes corgis.

Oh, Grace! This is the start of a wonderful adventure.

The second number I rolled led me to Fox's question. Fox asks if I could include a new character named Julie the Mermaid who knows Fair Elise and can morph into a human and loves to drink urchin juice. Ugh!

I like all the details you gave for Julie the Mermaid, Fox. And I will make sure Julie has her What If World debut today.

Let's jump in and find out what if donuts came to life and went on a journey to find toppings? Plus, Julie the Mermaid.

[Rising harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: Have you ever wondered why a Baker's dozen is 13 rather than 12? Well in What If World, it's just in case one comes to life.

Now, Julie was a Mermaid baker but fortunately, she could turn into a human which made getting around the kitchen a lot easier. Her bakery sold all kinds of goods and a bunch of the breads that came alive over the years helped to run it.

A tall baguette worked the register, a dense old bagel rolled fresh dough, and a flaky croissant paced the floors, picking up after itself and cleaning

up everyone else's messes, too. But Julie had never tried to make a donut before. She was reading directions as she fried the circle of dough in some hot oil, and just when the donut looked done, she plucked it out, shook it off, and put it on a paper towel.

Julie Mermaid: Now it says: make sure to add toppings before your donut comes alive and has an eggistential crisis? Bagel, what's an eggistential crisis?

Bagel: Who am I? Why am I here? What am I doing with my life?

[Record scratch.]

Julie Mermaid: Geez, I was just asking a simple question.

Bagel: No, I'm trying to give you an example of—

Donut: I'm aliiiiive! Hey you! I'm alive! What now?

Mr. Eric: Looks like she hadn't got the toppings on fast enough. That donut had sprung up from its paper towel and was spinning around like a coin.

Donut: Being alive is weird. Are you my mommy? What's happening?

Bagel: There's your crisis, Julie.

Julie Mermaid: Oh dear, okay. Hi, little donut. I'm Julie and—

Donut: Are you my mom?

Julie Mermaid: No, I guess that big clump of wet dough is your mom.

Donut: Is he my dad?

Bagel: Nah, that boiling oil's probably your dad.

Donut: I'm not getting much from them.

Julie Mermaid: No, you see, I didn't stick to the recipe and now you came alive.

Donut: But I like being alive.

Julie Mermaid: Oh, and I'm happy you're here, we just have to figure out something for you.

Mr. Eric: The little donut was plain and brown and had finally gotten dry by spinning itself around.

Donut: Well, he kind of looks like me. Can I go talk to him?

Julie Mermaid: Of course.

Mr. Eric: Said Julie the Mermaid.

Bagel: Hey, no, whoa whoa whoa. I'm a bagel. He's a donut. That's, uh-

Mr. Eric: But before the bagel could object more, Julie's mermaid tail had slapped the little donut over to the oven.

Julie Mermaid: Have fun with your nephew, Uncle Bagel.

Mr. Eric: Said Julie, giving Uncle Bagel a wink as she sipped on a frosty glass of urchin juice.

Donut: Uncle Bagel! [Laughs]

Mr. Eric: And the little donut smooched against the tough old bagel in what might have passed for a hug.

Bagel: Hey, listen kid. I knead the dough because I'm big and heavy, and I can roll.

Donut: I can roll. Wheeeeeee!!!!

Mr. Eric: And the little donut rolled right off the counter.

Donut: Ow, I lost a crumb.

Bagel: Hey, I don't think you're gonna cut it as a baker bagel.

Mr. Eric: Said the bagel, leaning over the counter.

Donut: Well, what am I supposed to do? Who am I supposed to be?

Bagel: I don't know. You... you should figure out your toppings, maybe.

Donut: What's toppings?

Mr. Eric: Julie's mermaid fin scooped up the little donut and brought it back to her work station.

Julie Mermaid: Well, you see, I was going to make you a donut with sprinkles or maybe with a pink glaze. I actually wanted to make one with jelly inside. Ooh, ooh, or powdered sugar.



Donut: You—you're gonna eat us?

Alabaster Zero: Whoa whoa whoa. No, I wouldn't eat... I don't eat talking food. I'm not a monster.

Donut: [Wails]

Alabaster Zero: I'm sorry. You're crying. You should probably brush some of those onions out of your eyes.

Donut: I don't want you to eat us.

Alabaster Zero: Okay, okay. Just, I'll just buy a bottle of water.

Donut: Do you have a carafe we can refill?

Alabaster Zero: You don't know what a bakery is but you know what a carafe is?

Donut: Well, I'll sell you one this time, but you gotta promise to recycle.

Alabaster Zero: You know, there used to be a time a detective would get some respect around here.

Donut: Ooh, you're a detective?

Alabaster Zero: Yeah, you wanna buy me that bottle of water now?

Donut: No. That'll be four dollars and fifty cents. But what do you think I should have as my toppings?

Alabaster Zero: Four dollars and fifty—maybe you should have some spare change as your toppings.

Donut: Okay!

Mr. Eric: And the little donut spun like a vortex, whipping off its onion bits.

Alabaster Zero: [Sputters] Oh, geez. Old, dried onion in my eye.

Donut: Sorry!

Mr. Eric: Then the little donut fell into the tip bowl and started rolling around.

Alabaster Zero: Oh. Okay. I'm... I'm gonna just take my water bottle and here's—here's my money.

Mr. Eric: And Alabaster Zero slowly backed out of the bakery.

Baguette: Saw you scared that customer away. That was pretty cool.

Mr. Eric: Said the Baguette. It was taking its break on a long, but little, couch, stretched out at the end of the counter.

Baguette: And I like the coins sticking out of your face. What's that, like a political statement?

Donut: It's spare change.

Baguette: Cool. That's really deep, man.

Donut: What's a man?

Baguette: Whoa. Touche.

Mr. Eric: The baguette seemed to stretch as it stood up from the long couch and hopped back over to the register.

Baguette: But just keeping it real, man, thanks for covering for me.

Donut: What do I do now?

Baguette: Psst, look. Julie the Mermaid's coming. Look busy.

Donut: Okay.

Mr. Eric: Julie had given herself legs again so she could walk around inspecting the bakery.

Julie Mermaid: You know, Alabaster didn't buy nearly as much as he usually does. Was he okay?

Donut: I'm busy.

Baguette: Oh, man.

Julie Mermaid: It's your first day so I'm gonna let that slide, but I am sort of the boss around here.

Donut: I'm... very busy?

Julie Mermaid: Donut, are those coins sticking out of your face?

Donut: It's a political statement.

Julie Mermaid: Wow. I guess you're a teenager already.

Donut: I don't know what I am. I wish you'd just given me a topping. I don't know what I'm doing!

Julie Mermaid: It's okay, little donut. We all feel that way, sometimes. You just need to see a little bit more of the world.

Donut: But I don't know what's out there.

Julie Mermaid: That's okay, you won't be alone. You've got family out there.

Donut: I do?

Julie Mermaid: Of course. Are you ready to take a trip all the way across the floor—

Donut: [Whimpers]

Julie Mermaid: To visit your Aunt Croissant?

Croissant: Ugh, I despise when you call me that.

Julie Mermaid: Sorry, your Aun' Croissan'.

Croissant: That is even worse, somehow.

Mr. Eric: And with a sigh, Julie plucked the little donut off the counter once again, put him down on the ground, and whoo, gave him a little roll across the floor.

Donut: Whoa whoaaaauuuhhh.

Mr. Eric: The little donut had come to lie flat on the ground, its plain brown back sticking up into the air.

Croissant: Little beignet.

Mr. Eric: Said Aunt Croissant, flipping herself end over end to come meet the donut.

Croissant: This is not a safe place to lie down.

[Door rings]

Mr. Eric: A little fairy opened the door. It was Fair Elise holding a very long leash attached to a cute, fluffy corgi.

Fair Elise: Oh, Julie, are you in?

Mr. Eric: Said the fairy as the corgi came over to sniff the fallen donut.

Donut: I can't pick myself up.

Croissant: Look out for the little pup!

Mr. Eric: Just as that corgi came sniffing around, Julie's big, wet mermaid tail came smack down between it and the little donut.

[Corgi whines.]

Fair Elise: I'm sorry, we found this little corgi wandering the streets. Has anyone reported one missing recently?

Julie Mermaid: Oh, hey, Fair Elise. Sorry, we haven't heard anything about a missing dog.

Mr. Eric: The little donut was still struggling to lift itself up. It tried to fold itself in half and push up with its head, but that's pretty tough without arms or legs. And just as it was starting to rise.

[Dog sniffing.]

The corgi started climbing over Julie's mermaid tail. Then it saw all the coins sticking out of the little donut.

Corgi: That's weird. Why do you have metal sticking out of your face?

Donut: I don't know. Why do you have fur sticking out of your face?

Corgi: I'm a dog.

Donut: I'm a donut!

Corgi: I'm a dog.

Donut: I'm a donut.

Corgi: I'mmmm.

Donut: You're a dog?

Corgi: You're a dog?

Donut: You're not, like, a smart dog.

Corgi: And you're not like a nice donut! [Cries]

Donut: Um, sorry! I'm still learning how to talk to people and dogs.

Croissants: Ugh, no wonder the corgi did not want to be your friend. All that metal sticking out of your face.

Donut: You're saying my toppings have to do with the way people see me?

Croissant: It's the first thing people see and not everyone is as open minded as your fluffy, flaky, Aunt Croissant.

Donut: Oh, what do I do, Aunt Croissant.

Croissant: No, it's [Pronounces Aunt Croissant with a French accent].

Donut: What do I do, Ann, Crusann? Do you think if I had fur like the dog, he'd like me more.

Croissant: Eh, probably.

Donut: Okay!

Mr. Eric: And the donut spun fast to get all the coins zipping out of it again! Then it flipped end over end like it had seen the croissant do, picking up all the dog fur the corgi had shed.

Donut: How do I look?

Croissant: You look like a furry donut.

Donut: Mission accomplished.

Croissant: Look at me. I am old. I am flaky. My accent is inconsistent.

Donut: I think you're the flakiest, fluffiest, most beautiful croissant I've ever seen.

Croissant: What I'm saying is, you can change your toppings, but people will not like you until you like yourself.

Donut: But how do you like yourself when no one likes you?

Croissant: I would maybe start by washing off the dog fur.

Donut: Oh.

Croissant: And then, remember that you have a family here. Croissant, and bagel, baguette and mermaid. And we all love you and want you to find the person inside who you love, too, toppings or no.

Donut: So I should get sprinkles.

[Croissant sighs.]

Donut: I got you, Aunt Croissant!

Croissant: You sly little beignet.

Donut: [Laughs.]

Mr. Eric: And then the donut rolled away, shaking off the dog fur and the last couple of coins and maybe losing one little piece of onion bit.

Croissant: You can roll, but you cannot hide.

Mr. Eric: Said the croissant, continuing to flip after the little donut.

Baguette: Julie Mermaid, can we close yet?

Julie Mermaid: It's 3 o'clock.

Bagel: The story feels sort of over.

Julie Mermaid: Story? We're running a business here.

Donut: I'm a plain donut!

Croissant: I'm a buttery croissant!

Baguette: Okay, I'm going to take a break then.

Julie Mermaid: We haven't sold a single baked good. These donuts keep coming alive!

Donut 2: Who am I?

Donut 3: Existing is weird.

Donut 4: What language am I speaking?

Donut: Don't worry, little brothers and sisters, I'll save you!

Mr. Eric: And as the little donut rolled itself up a ramp to meet its new family, Julie poured herself another glass of ice cold urchin juice.

Julie Mermaid: I think four donuts is enough.

Mr. Eric: The end.

[Falling harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: Okay Grace and Fox. I hope you enjoyed your story. Thank you all so much for your support and your great questions and for making this show possible.

And until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]

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