

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 96: What if colors made a civilization and picked favorite humans like how we pick favorite colors (and a space monster ate a spaceship)?

File Length: 00:20:16

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've got six new patrons to thank.

JF Kitty: That sounds like six votes for JF Kat for president.

Mr. Eric: Actually, JF Kat, they didn't all want to hear from you.

JF Kitty: Well, I know that Megan, Willa, and Phoebe wanted a thank you from JF Kat!

Mr. Eric: That's true. Phoebe, Willa, and Megan, thank you so—

JF Kitty: I said they wanted a thank you from JF Kat!

Mr. Eric: You're right. I'm sorry.

JF Kitty: Willa, Phoebe, Megan, I'm sure I can count on your vote to stay president.

Fred the Dog: Oh, wait, Mr. Eric, does that mean that people are voting for me to be president?

Mr. Eric: Oh, hey Fred. Uh, yeah, actually, you're getting a lot of votes. Like, probably the most.

Fred the Dog: Oh boy. That's... uh...

JF Kitty: This stinky old dog? Is doing better in the polls than me?

Mr. Eric: We're actually getting off track. He had some patrons to thank.

Fred the Dog: Oh, that's true. I want to thank Molly, Ruby, and Hayden. Ruby and Hayden just turned seven. Happy belated birthday.

Mr. Eric: Yeah, I hope you had a great seventh birthday. It's a lucky year from what I hear.

JF Kitty: Molly, Ruby, Hayden! I know you all actually want to hear from me. You just maybe thought my name was J Fred Kat, some of you.

Fred the Dog: That seems pretty unlikely.

Mr. Eric: Fred, JF Kat, we actually have a story that we need to get to. Some questions, too.

Fred the Dog: Oh, okay, okay. Ruby, and Hayden, and Molly, thank you again.

JF Kitty: Well, my thank you Phoebe, Willa and Megan is better because I'm a cat.

Mr. Eric: Okay, okay, you two. Thank you. Now, let's hear our first question from Charlie.

Charlie: Hi, my name is Charlie. I am turned 10 like a week ago. I really like my cats. My what if question is what if colors made a civilization and picked favorite humans like how we pick favorite colors. And P.S. I'm a girl! I know my name is Charlie. Good bye!

Mr. Eric: Thank you so much, Charlie. One of my best gymnastics students back in the day was a young lady named Charlie. We're going to add one more write-in question from a patron named Raffa. Raffa is five years old, he likes JF Kat—

JF Kitty: I knew it!

Mr. Eric: He loves his studies, riding his bike, wearing his new watch and building with Magna Tiles. And his question is what if a black space monster who ate electronics ate a whole spaceship and then the people were lost in space forever?

Wow! Oh, those poor people.

Well, Raffa, I might not get to add every single thing you like into the story, like Swatches, Magna Tiles, studying and JF Kat, but I'll squeeze in a lot.

JF Kitty: That makes four shout outs for JF Kat! I'm in the lead!

Mr. Eric: You're still not in the lead for president votes, but for shout outs today, yes.

Fred the Dog: Congratulations, JF Kat.

JF Kitty: I don't need your sympathy. I just need to shout out to Raffaaaaa! I hope you enjoy this story.

Mr. Eric: Me, too. So let's find out what if colors made a civilization and picked favorite humans like how we pick favorite colors, plus a black space monster who ate electronics ate a whole space ship and then the people were lost in space forever?

[Rising harp scale.]

Alabaster Infinity: The year is 20,018. We almost wiped out all life on Earth about five times. But you know what they say... sixth time's the harm.

Mr. Eric: It was the year 20,018 and Alabaster Infinity was talking into his wristwatch when his partner, Dr. Whendiana Joan, interrupted him.

Whendiana Joan: No one says that, Alabaster.

Alabaster Infinity: Third time's the charm, sixth time's the harm. I've definitely heard that before.

Whendiana Joan: Maybe you said it out loud to yourself several times?

Alabaster Infinity: Yeah. Yeah, that's probably where I heard it. But Dr. Joan, there are too many people on this planet again, and we're running out of food and resources again.

Whendiana Joan: We now inhabit every Earth-like planet in the Milky Way galaxy.

Alabaster Infinity: Looks like it's time to find... a new galaxy.

Whendiana Joan: Maybe one that's far, far away.

Alabaster Infinity: No, that one was inhabited a long time ago.

Whendiana Joan: Then how about the next on over?

Alabaster Infinity: Perfect.

Whendiana Joan: But you forget, Alabaster Infinity, that even our most advanced rocketships can't travel outside this galaxy.

Alabaster Infinity: I know we can't travel outside of the galaxy. I don't know why I keep saying things that we both already know.

Whendiana Joan: Of course we know all of these things. We've been living through decades of uncertainty.

Alabaster Infinity: Oh, man, we're standing on magnetic exposition tiles again. [Record scratch.]

Whendiana Joan: You mean the tiles that magnetically draw out the obvious?

Alabaster Infinity: Yes, and also you can build with them but they're not called Magna Tiles.

Whendiana Joan: Okay, we should step off of them, then.

Alabaster Infinity: I agree.

Mr. Eric: And so they stepped off the magnetic exposition tiles and started walking through their big space ship.

Whendiana Joan: So if none of our rocketships can get out of this galaxy, then why did we build this ship?

Alabaster Infinity: Because this isn't a rocketship. It's a rock-cat-ship.

Cat Ship: MEEEEOOOOOWWWW.

Whendiana Joan: I don't know, Alabaster, rocketships are my favorite.

Alabaster Infinity: Listen, none of us know what to make of this rock-cat-ship, but we've got to try something new because what we've been doing ain't enough to save this world.

Whendiana Joan: You went really broad there, but I get the jist of it. Let's try the cat ship.

Mr. Eric: They walked to the command center of their rock-cat-ship.

Alabaster Infinity: We're going to need some of the greatest minds of the year 20,018 if we want to explore an unknown galaxy.

Whendiana Joan: Don't worry, Infinity. They're all right here. Drs Whooo, What, Where, When, How, and sometimes Why.

Alabaster Infinity: Why sometimes?

Dr. Why: No, it's Sometimes Why.

Alabaster Infinity: Sometimes why?

Dr. Why: Exactly.

Alabaster Infinity: But why?

Dr. Why: My mother was a vowel.

Alabaster Infinity: Well, now let me meet the rest of these doctors, starting with Dr. Whooo. Do you spell that with one O or two?

Dr. Whooo: I spell it with three. Three Os.

Alabaster Infinity: And I assume you come from a long line of beloved Dr. Whoos?

Dr. Whooo: Yes, but I'm the first female doctor.

Alabaster Infinity: It's about time. It's the year 20,018.

Dr. Whooo: I quite agree.

Alabaster Infinity: All right, doctors. We're about to go into uncharted space. We're going to need to build trust and instant rapport, but I also don't have enough time in this story to talk to you all. So I've just got one question: what's your favorite color? And before you answer, my favorite color's black and if it's not your favorite color, you're off the mission.

Whendiana Joan: Infinity. We really don't have time for this.

Alabaster Infinity: Oh, you're right. I guess we've got to save the planet. Rock-cat-ship? Take us away.

Cat Ship: Do you wish to go far, far, away, far away, or simply away? PURR.

Whendiana Joan: Just one galaxy away, please.

Alabaster Infinity: Dr. Whooo with three Os? Please count us down.

Dr. Whooo: You can just call me Dr. Whooo, it's a common name.

Alabaster Infinity: I like your moxie, Doctor. I'm going to make you into Lieutenant Whooo.

Dr. Whooo: That's a smart move.

Mr. Eric: So, Lieutenant Whooo, Alabaster Infinity, Dr. Joan, and all the rest, strapped themselves in to the rock-cat-ship.

Cat Ship: Meown. Mwine. Mweight. Mweven. Mweix. Mwive. Purr, Mee, Muuu, Mwun. MEOWMOFF.

Mr. Eric: And the rock-cat ship grumbled with a deep, long purr that shook them all in their seatbelts, and then nothing happened.

Alabaster Infinity: Dr. Sometimes Why, report!

Dr. S Why: Yeah, someone put a mirror in front of the ship and it's just looking at itself.

Alabaster Infinity: That's really cute but we've got a mission.

Mr. Eric: And Alabaster Infinity slammed his fist down on the Meoverride button.

Cat Ship: MEOOOOW.

Mr. Eric: And the rock-cat-ship disappeared and reappeared in the galaxy next door. And the whole space ship was trembling. Dr. Joan looked at a 3-D holo-projection in front of her.

Alabaster Infinity: Dr. Joan, what's happening?

Whendiana Joan: It seems we're getting some Whatlferference.

Alabaster Infinity: What interference?

Dr. What: I can answer that question.

Mr. Eric: Said Dr. What.

Dr. What: She said What if erference. I'm detecting a what if question interfering with our exploration.

Alabaster Infinity: How bad is it, Doc?

Dr. What: Well, this question has taken the form of a black space monster who eats electronics.

Alabaster Infinity: And the rock-cat-ship is electronic?

Dr. What: That's right. It's not a thinking machine of any kind. It's not alive. it's just purely electronic and if it gets eaten, it's not a big deal.

Alabaster Infinity: Except that we could end up trapped in space forever?

Dr. What: Right, I guess that part? We should look into that.

Mr. Eric: And as they heard crunching and gobbling, they saw Dr. Joan's 3-D display get smaller and smaller as bits of the ship appeared to be swallowed whole.

Alabaster Infinity: I've just got one more question for you, Dr. What.

Dr. What: Okay, sure.

Alabaster Infinity: What color is it?

Dr. What: Well, with the vacuum of space and the absence of light, it appears to be black.

Alabaster Infinity: Super cool.

Dr. Whooo: I'm sorry to interrupt, but we're probably going to all be adrift in space, if not eaten, very soon.

Mr. Eric: Said Lieutenant Whooo.

Dr. S Why: Yeah, hey, since it only eats electronics, I got this bio-organic escape pod bicycle that we could all ride to safety, maybe.

Dr. Whooo: Is it an octo-tandem bicycle so all eight of us can fit?

Dr. S Why: What, do you think I didn't come on this rock-cat-ship with an octo-tandem bio-organic bicycle? Come oooooon.

Mr. Eric: And all of the astronauts got on this extra long bicycle with eight sets of pedals that... sort of grew around them with weird airtight pods. And the last thing they saw...

Raffa-raffa-raffa: Raffa raffa raffa raffa...

Mr. Eric: Was a hungry space monster eating its way into the command center just before they rode their bio-organic bicycle into outer space.

Alabaster Infinity: Dr. Joan, how long are we lost out here?

Whendiana Joan: According to the last what if erference, we're to be lost in space forever.

Alabaster Infinity: I can't believe I was betrayed by my own favorite color. Maybe my favorite color's bad.

Whendiana Joan: No, no. No specific color is good or bad. Would lava be any less deadly if it were blue?

Alabaster Infinity: Well, I guess we'll never know because now we're trapped in space forever. Aw, let's all start pedaling, maybe we'll get somewhere.

Mr. Eric: Alabaster looked inside the big green pod they were all stuck inside. It was stuffy and humid and kind of dark except for some strips of glowing fungus.

Alabaster Infinity: Ugh, now I'm stuck in a swamp. A green swamp. My least favorite color of swamp.

Mr. Eric: But just then, the pod started to break open.

Whendiana Joan: Well, it was nice knowing all of you.

Mr. Eric: Said Dr. Joan. But instead of them all getting sucked out into the vacuum of space, a bright orange gas started spreading through the pod.

Dr. S Why: Oh, blorp.

Mr. Eric: Said Dr. Sometimes Why.

Dr. S Why: This orange gas will keep us alive, which is good, but uh...

Whendiana Joan: But what? What what's the problem?

Dr. S Why: Ah, nothing, I just don't like the color orange.

Mr. Eric: And as that orange gas poured in the bicycle pod they were all riding in suddenly stretched open at the top and all they could see was bright swirling colors in every direction.

Dr. Whooo: What an amazing discovery!

Mr. Eric: Said Lieutenant Whooo.

Dr. Whooo: It's like an entire civilization based off of color.

Mr. Eric: A bright yellow cord cut her off mid-sentence wrapping around Lieutenant Whooo and yanking her out of the podcycle.

Alabaster Infinity: We've got to save Whoooey Looooey.

Whendiana Joan: Who?

Alabaster Infinity: Exactly.



Mr. Eric: And Alabaster unbuckled his safety belt and leapt into the orange sky where a big squishy gray triangle caught him in midair.

Charcoal Grey: I can't believe it. I'm gonna look so good in Alabaster Infinity! It's my favorite human.

Alabaster Infinity: Your favorite what now?

Charcoal Grey: Whaa! You can talk.

Mr. Eric: Said the triangle.

Alabaster Infinity: I come from a galaxy where all humans can talk and also most other things. Depends on the day.

Charcoal Grey: That's crazy. Out here we just use different types of humans to wear out to social events or to paint our houses with.

Mr. Eric: Alabaster looked back and saw that everyone in the podcycle was slowly being taken away by different kinds of colors.

Alabaster Infinity: So what's gonna happen to me, now? Are you gonna eat me or something.

Charcoal Grey: No, we only eat technology.

Mr. Eric: So that monster that ate our ship?

Charcoal Grey: Oh, Raffa-Raffa-Raffa? Yeah, he's always wandering around eating space ships.

Alabaster Infinity: Now I understand. You're all bad guys, no matter what color you are.

Charcoal Grey: Uh, no, what? No. Raffa's a perfectly kind monster. He's just never met an Alabaster Infinity that could talk.

Alabaster Infinity: Whoa, hang on, wait. There are more of me?

Charcoal Grey: Oh, yeah. Just all you gotta do is mix some Batman with just about any dad from a 'gos sitcom and—

Alabaster Infinity: Oh, wow. Am I really that basic.

Charcoal Grey: Basically.

Alabaster Infinity: Well, you know how we get charcoal gray where I'm from?

Charcoal Grey: Wait a second, you've got charcoal gray triangles, there?

Alabaster Infinity: And charcoal gray squares and rectangles. Once on a dusty day, I sneezed charcoal gray.

Charcoal Grey: And you call me the monster!

Mr. Eric: Charcoal Grey took Alabaster Infinity back to his house. The outside was painted entirely Fair Elise.

Alabaster Infinity: My greatest grandfather had a Fair Elise partner.

Charcoal Grey: It's just a good cheery tone for outside. Holds up well.

Alabaster Infinity: Oh, poor Fair Elise.

Charcoal Grey: What are you talking about? It's just an object. It might look like this historical figure of yours, but it's not alive. It doesn't have feelings.

Mr. Eric: And then they got inside the house which was wall to wall to floor to ceiling Alabaster Infinities.

Alabaster Infinity: I'm walking on my own face.

Charcoal Grey: Yeah, face floors are kind of in fashion right now.

Alabaster Infinity: Okay, um, ooh. I know that humans aren't people to you, but the people that came here are humans.

Charcoal Grey: What?

Alabaster Infinity: Yeah, that's not going to make any sense. Okay, okay. If you get a boo boo, what color comes out?

Charcoal Grey: You mean what person?

Alabaster Infinity: I... I guess.

Charcoal Grey: Well, that's a tough question. You see, when it's inside my veins, it's Fred the Dog, but when I get cut and it pours out, it's JF Kat. Take some anatomy lessons.

Alabaster Infinity: Perfect. See, my blood is blue when it's in me. But when it's out of me, it's red.

Charcoal Grey: That's disgusting. My mother was red.

Alabaster Infinity: Really? I would have had like a gray parent and maybe a darker gray parent.

Charcoal Grey: I don't really know you well enough to get into that but my mom's my mom, no matter what she looks like.

Alabaster Infinity: Yes. Yes! Exactly. And my friends are my friends even if they look like colors. I mean, your people. I mean, your humans... oh, I'm so confused.

Mr. Eric: And Charcoal Grey was confused, too. It tried to put Alabaster on top of its mantle, but of course, Alabaster kept climbing down. It tried to feed him microchips but he just chewed them a little and spit them out.

Alabaster Infinity: Not even candy microchips.

Charcoal Grey: Microchips ARE candy.

Mr. Eric: By that night, Alabaster was so thirsty that Charcoal Grey was really starting to worry. It took Alabaster to a picnic where all the other colors had brought their new humans. The long yellow stripe was gently nudging at Lieutenant Whooo.

Yellow Stripe: She won't drink any of the electricity I give her.

Mr. Eric: All the colors started talking amongst themselves and the people did just the same.

Dr. Whooo: I think they intend to keep us as pets.

Dr. S Why: Uh, that's if they can keep us alive for another night. I need water.

Whendiana Joan: They don't understand what water is. They just can't understand us even though we speak the same language despite all odds.

Dr. S Why: Oh, no. That's just a translation field around the podcycle.

Whendiana Joan: We know about the bio-organic octo-tandem podcycle's translation field.

Alabaster Infinity: Yeah, everybody knows about that.

Dr. S Why: I'm sorry, I'm standing on one of these magnetic tiles.

Whendiana Joan: It didn't get eaten?

Dr. S Why: I guess the outer magnets don't taste like electronics or something.

Alabaster Infinity: That's especially bad exposition.

Dr. S Why: Eh, well, you think you could do better? Catch!

Mr. Eric: And Dr. Sometimes Why picked up the magnetic tile he was standing on and threw it towards Alabaster. Floating out here in colorful space, it didn't slow down at all.

Alabaster Infinity: Whoa!

Mr. Eric: Alabaster dodged out of the way and... it smooshed right into Charcoal Grey.

Charcoal Grey: Oh, it doesn't matter if we don't like all the same things. Even if we're very different, we've still got to help these people.

Bright Yellow: Yeah, I know. That's why Raffa and I have already scooped them all up and are flying towards the nearest planet.

Mr. Eric: Said Bright Yellow.

Charcoal Grey: Sorry, this weird magnetic tile makes me talk funny.

Mr. Eric: And Charcoal Grey scooped up the rest of the humans as all the colorful creatures spread out across this galaxy looking for a new home for these eight thirsty souls.

Raffa-raffa-raffa: Raffa! Raffa raffa raffa raffa!

Mr. Eric: Raffa called from only a few thousand light years away.

Charcoal Grey: Raffa must have smelled a blue planet. Hopefully it's blue because of water and not some toxic fumes.

Mr. Eric: And all the colors flew their thirsty friends across space and time in an instant to get them to this lonely planet orbiting an unknown star. Alabaster Infinity woke up to the sound of a bubbling brook where all the Doctors were busy drinking.

Alabaster Infinity: Oh, thank goodness.

Mr. Eric: After five or six thirsty gulps, he looked into the sky where an orange cloud moved towards the horizon to meet the setting sun.

Alabaster Infinity: I thought they were gonna eat us, but they saved us.

Whendiana Joan: Fascinating. I think I could invent a device that allowed them to stay here longer so that we could become friends.

Dr. S Why: Yeah, too bad they ate our space ship and we're still stranded here forever.

Raffa-raffa-raffa: Raffa raffa raffa raffa raffa raffa!

Mr. Eric: A furry black ball came streaming away from that orange cloud and raffed up their whole space ship! All in pieces and chewed up pretty bad, but all there.

Alabaster Infinity: Oh, I knew you were my favorite color, Raffa.

Mr. Eric: And with something that might have been a nod, Raffa sped back towards the orange cloud.

Alabaster Infinity: Now to start the incredibly arduous task of rebuilding civilization on this new planet.

Whendiana Joan: Infinity, you're standing on the tile.

Alabaster Infinity: Oh, yeah. Oh, sorry.

Mr. Eric: And Alabaster stepped off the magnetic tile.

Alabaster Infinity: Now I can finally say something original. Um... to infinity--

Whendiana Joan: Oh, dear.

Dr. S Why: Don't do it.

Dr. Whooo: He wouldn't.

Alabaster Infinity: And back.

Mr. Eric: The end.

[Falling harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: We did it! I hope you all learned a new vocab word today, and Charlie and Raffa, I hope you enjoyed your story. I'd also like to thank Karen Marshall O'Keefe, my co-creator. Jason O'Keefe for our artwork, Craig Martinson for our theme song, and all you kids at home who know that your favorite things might help define who you are, but they do not define who you can get along with. If you keep an open mind, your next favorite thing might be right around the corner.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme plays.]

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