

Podcast: What If World

[Episode: 112: What if when cows mooed, they shot bow and arrows out of their noses?](#)

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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've got a question from a patron named Oliver.

Oliver: Hi, my name is Oliver and I'm five years old. I like robots and my what if question is what if when cows mooed, they shot bow and arrows out of their noses? Bye!

Mr. Eric: Wow, Oliver, that is certainly something I've never considered. I hope the arrows won't be too... gooey.

Believe it or not, I found another cow question from one of you listeners whose name is also Oliver. This Oliver is from Mount Pleasant, Michigan, and he asks, what if cows were just as smart as humans and we could play together and stuff?

Hmm... very good. Well, I hope you two Olivers know that you are cosmically aligned because those are the only two cow what if questions I could find.

Snarizard: Snar snar?

Fred the Dog: Oh, that's Snokemonster talk for really?

Mr. Eric: Oh, hi Snarizard and Fred.

Snarizard: Snary, snarsnarzarnard. Snarzard.

Fred the Dog: He says we giving a shout out to Harper and Elly this week.

Mr. Eric: Oh, well, thank you Harper and Elly, it's so good to hear from you.

JF Kitty: Well, I've got two shout outs to give, myself.

Fred the Dog: It's not a competition, JF Kat.

JF Kitty: But I've got a shout out for Arya.

Mr. Eric: Hi, Arya! Thank you.

JF Kat: And another one for a boy named Nova Luis.

Fred the Dog: Oh, that's a really cool name.

Snarizard: Snarar, snarzar, zardyzard zard.

Mr. Eric: Okay, yes, yes, yes. Thank you to Harper and Elly. Thank you to Arya and Nova Luis.

JF Kitty: I approve this meowssage.

Mr. Eric: Okay JF Kat. Now, let's find out what if when cows mooed they shot bow and arrows out of their noses and cows were just as smart as humans and we could play together and stuff.

[Rising harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: Just a ways outside the city of Whoston, there was one of those little cow towns where the cows outnumbered the humans. Well, of course, that's because these cows raised their humans. Colly, short for Cowlivia, was particularly partial to one young human she raised. His name was Olly, short for Oliver, and she was just headed up the hill to feed him, today.

Colly: Okay, Olly, come and get it.

Mr. Eric: Said Colly, lowering a bag of fruits, nuts, and vegetables over the fence and off of her snout. Olly came running up on all fours.

Olly: Look, Colly! I learned to run like a cow!

Colly: Oh, but it's okay for you to just run like a human.

Olly: I want to do cow stuff, like you. Running errands on all fours, going to the moovies. All I do in this big old yard every day is invent robots and such.

Colly: And you've got lots of inventing to do, today.

Olly: Oh, no, that's okay.

Mr. Eric: There was a big metal cow behind him. Olly pulled a little remote control out of his pocket, pressed a big, red, button, and the cow woke up and started mindlessly chewing a big pile of scrap metal beside it. After chewing each big mouthful, the robovine, that's robot bovine, spit out a little baby robot cow.

Olly: See, I built a cowbot that can make other cowbots. Easy as that.

Colly: Oh, I don't know. I'm trying to make a quick trip today. I'm feeling a... a little under the wea... [Sniffles] A-MOO!

Mr. Eric: And Colly carefully aimed her nose away when she sneezed because a long arrow shot out of either nose! Right into the ground.

Olly: Aw, shucks, Colly. But you're sneezing arrows again. If you had my hands along, sure will make the trip quicker.

Colly: Well, you are awfully clever, Olly. Tell you what. You climb on over that fence and we'll go shopping together.

Olly: Colly, you won't regret it!

Mr. Eric: And Olly hopped over that fence, and he and Colly chased each other all the way to town while the old robovine behind them just kept spitting out little cows. And those little cows kept eating more bits of old metal and getting bigger.

[Time skip noise.]

Mr. Eric: By the time Colly and Olly got to town, Olly's legs were awfully tired from all the running and playing.

Colly: Okay, why don't you just sit on my back for a while. You can help me get groceries after a little rest.

Olly: [Yawns] Okay, but I'm gonna help. Ain't nothing you can do to stop me helping.

Mr. Eric: And Olly was fast asleep, but he weighed next to nothing atop Colly's back. Colly noticed that she and Olly were getting a lot of strange looks.

Cow: Does she have a human boy on her back?

Cow 2: I reckon she does.

Cow 3: Humans are animals.

Mr. Eric: So after a few minutes of browsing market stands, she walked down an alley and gently shook Olly awake.

Olly: Huh? Oh! I'm ready to help, Colly, what are we up to?

Colly: Olly, I don't know how to break this to you, but I think you oughta maybe go home.

Olly: What? Why?

Colly: Oh, everyone just thinks it's kinda strange, me being so friendly with a, well, a farm animal.

Olly: But I'm smart! We're friends! We play together all the time.

Colly: Well, I can't get into it now but cows have a long history with humans and it ain't all pleasant.

Olly: Oh, I know, I know!

Mr. Eric: Colly had a satchel slung over her back and out of it, Olly pulled a big white and black blanket.

Olly: See, if I put this over me, maybe some big floppy leaves for ears... oh, and a little rope tail, yeah.

Colly: Well, if you ain't the spitting image of a young cow.

Olly: You mean it?

Colly: Naw, but cows don't look too closely at kids. I think your little cow disguise will work out if you just really try to think and act like a cow.

Olly: Well, I've been practicing like I showed ya.

Mr. Eric: And Olly got down on all fours and followed Colly out of the alley. Sure enough, none of the other bulls or cows gave him a second glance. They went about grocery shopping, filling their totes with all different kinds of fancy grass, and of course some people food for Olly, when a moovie started playing.

Now cow hooves have somewhat limited their inventing capabilities, so a cow moovie was more like a play. One of the cows on the stage was dressed like a wizard and the other cows had big glass globes over their heads, sort of like space helmets.

Cow Actor: Moo please don't dive into the deep ocean with me.

Mr. Eric: Said one cow, doing her best Abacus P. Grumbler impression. And the moon cow actors picked up the Abacus actor and dunked her in a big trough of water.

Olly: [Laughs]

Cow Actor: Oh, that's what happened. I remember. Moo is that laughing? Sounds like a moom—I mean, human.

Mr. Eric: And all the cows watching the moovie slowly turned.

Olly: [Stops laughing slowly]

Mr. Eric: Colly stepped in front of Olly before he could say anything else.

Colly: Oh, don't mind him. He's just really into humans right now. You know, kids. He'll grow out of it.

Olly: Uh, yeah, I love being a cow. MOOOO!

[Record scratch.]

Mr. Eric: And when he gave his biggest, loudest moo, all the other cows dove for cover, expecting arrows to shoot out of his nose.

Cows: [Whimpering] YIKES! Mooooo! Moobicus P. Groombler is very upmoopset.

Olly: I don't get it.

Mr. Eric: Said Olly, taking off his cow disguise.

Cows: [Gasp] He was a human!

Yeah, we all got that.

Olly: You all say moo as part of everyday speech but—

Cows: An uncivilized beast!

All, the moomanity!

Colly: Sorry, I'll get him out of here right away. Come on, let's go.

Mr. Eric: And Colly started backing up, pushing Olly behind her.

Cows: Good riddance!
Bon mooyage.
That one was a stretch, Mooseph.
I know.
[Time skip noise.]

Mr. Eric: Olly and Colly walked back toward their little farm.

Olly: I don't get it. You all moo all the time.

Colly: We say "moo" but when you shout it or sneeze it or scream it, we can moo out bow and arrows from our nose.

Olly: I know, it's really cool.

Colly: I suppose I shouldn't be mad at you, you never knew, after all.

Olly: Knew what?

Mr. Eric: Colly thought long and hard before answering.

Colly: See, when a person's afraid, they start acting like they're the only most important person.

Olly: So they can keep themselves safe?

Colly: Well, yeah. But what do you think would happen if a person acted fearful like they was most important, all the time?

Olly: Well, I guess they'd scare other people.

Colly: That's right. And are two people who are scared of each other ever gonna be good things.

Olly: I think it'd be really hard.

Colly: And if a person don't have no friends, you think they're ever gonna be less scared?

Olly: Well, no. Being alone's even scarier.

Colly: And that's why we don't use our bow and arrow noses anymore.

Olly: So I just scared everyone. Well, then, I promise I'll never be afraid again.

[Rapid robotic noises]

Mr. Eric: A distant thundering sound was rolling towards them, getting louder as it came. They looked up the hill toward their little old farm and saw an army of robovines clipping and clopping in their direction.

Colly: Um, Olly... is there any chance—

Olly: That my robovine could have gained sentience and decided to take over What If World?

Colly: Uh-yep.

Olly: Uh, yep.

Robovines: Many robotic, chorded moos. Moomoomoomoommoo.

Mr. Eric: And the robovines started shooting big metal arrows out of their nose toward the town. They stuck into the ground and into the sides of houses. The loud thunks alerted the township and soon a herd of cattle were whipping themselves up into a stampede!

Cows: I'm scared!

I always knew robots would take over!

I'm in the mood to moo...

Mr. Eric: And Olly turned to all the townsfolk.

Olly: No, you all promised to never be scared.

Colly: That's not what they promised.

Cows: We can be scared.

As scared as we please!

If'n we don't moo, it's a-okay.

Robovine: Moo moo! Moo moo! Moomoomoomoomoo!

Mr. Eric: The metal arrows were sailing closer and closer to them, but Colly turned to her fellow cows.

Colly: But we did promise never to act senseless when we were scared. It just leads to more people getting hurt.

Mr. Eric: The largest of the robot cows, the first one Olly had built, stomped its way to the front of the small army.

Robovine: Give us the moomote!

Olly: The moo-mote?

Robovine: I mean, the remoote.

Olly: The remoote?

Robovine: Give us the moomoote or we will destroy you!

Mr. Eric: The big robovine was rolling its eyes around, looking every which way for something, something...

Olly: Do you mean the remote?

Mr. Eric: Olly fished it from his pocket and showed it to them. His thumb hovered near the big, red button.

Robovine: Put down the remoote and moove along!

Mr. Eric: But the whole wave of robovines froze.

Olly: I don't get it. It's just an on-off button.

Mr. Eric: And as Olly's thumb hovered near the big red button.

Robovines: [Angry moos!]

Mr. Eric: All the robovines shot their steel arrows towards him in a panic!

Colly: Olly, get out!m

Mr. Eric: Colly dove for her friend, Olly, and the arrows all fell just where he was a moment before.

Cows: They're scared of that, there, moomote.
You oughta use it against them!
Yeah, turn `em off, quick!

Mr. Eric: Olly held up the remote with both hands and then slowly stood up.

Olly: Nobody moo.

Cows: If you can't press the button just give it to me.

Yeah, give us the button.

Mr. Eric: And the real, live cows started closing toward Olly, too. What would you do if you were Olly?

Olly: It's not fair that everybody be afraid of one thing so much.

Mr. Eric: He said, holding up the remote and sliding off the back cover.

Cows: What are you mooing?

Mr. Eric: One by one, he plucked out the batteries.

Cows: Wait! No!

Mr. Eric: He kicked the batteries in one direction and then slowly broke the remote in two. The robovines looked ready to moo, and then they just looked tired.

Robovine: Come on, let's moo home.

Mr. Eric: The big robot said to its whole family.

Cows: Moo-y! Nice work, kid.

Yeah, look at them robovines go.

Olly: Yeah, I was scared the whole entire time.

Colly: Well, wouldn't it be nicer if they stayed and played?

Mr. Eric: Asked Colly. And the family of robovines slowly turned to look at them.

Olly: Yeah, come help us clean up all these arrows and I'm sure you can stay for the next moovie.

Mr. Eric: And the robovines cautiously made their way back, chewing up their metal arrows and spitting out shiny little toys for the young cows.

Cows: And you made these toy-making robovines?

Olly: I sure did.

Mr. Eric: The cows were so happy that they even let all their humans out to play!
And robots, cows, and humans alike all sat down to watch the next
moovie.

Cow: Moo'm Petey Moom Pirate. Mooo-argh. Let's sail moo-cross moo seven
milk seas.

Mr. Eric: The end.

[Falling harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: All right Oliver and Oliver. I hope you both enjoyed your story. I'd like to
thank Karen O'Keeffe, my co-creator, Craig Martinson for our theme
song. My grandparents Barbara and Jack, who came to every silly little
show I ever did. And all you kids at home who know it's okay to be afraid
as long as you still think about safety.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme plays.]