

Podcast: What If World

[Episode: 137: What if the lion and the elephant met up to get spaghetti?](#)

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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're gonna start out with a shout-out to Dylan. His hobbies are catching bugs, climbing trees, building animal habitats and playing with Legos, and he's from Warburton, Victoria, in Australia.
- Dracomax: Well, I just flew in from What If World to shout out Dylan, and boy are my wings tired.
- Mr. Eric: That joke doesn't work when you can actually fly, Dracomax.
- Dracomax: It wasn't a joke. My wings are tired. Oh, and Fred is in my mouth. Bleh.
- Fred the Dog: Yeah, I flew here in his mouth because it's warmer than on his back and I wanted to shout out Hudson's brother Jack. Hudson is eight and Jack is ten—
- Mr. Eric: And you both help make this show possible, thank you.
- Fred the Dog: I also got a shout out to Eden who loves swimming and unicorns and mermaids and she's from Placentia, California.
- Mr. Eric: Thank you Eden and Eden's grandma, who I hear listen every day.
- Fred the Dog: And our last big shout out to Enda in Asheville, North Carolina.
- Mr. Eric: Hi, Enda! I hope you and your family are recovering well after Hurricane Dorian.
- Dracomax: So that's a shout out to Enda, Eden, Jack and Hudson, as well as Dylan.

Mr. Eric: Yes. Now, shoo, Dracomax, because we've got a very special guest today.

Dracomax: Oh, fine.

Mr. Eric: Today I am joined by a friend of mine, a writer with great ideas. She even wrote a story that's kind of like a what if story. We'll get to that later. But first, I want to introduce to you, M. Dorsett!

M. Dorsett: Hey guys, I'm so happy to be here with you all.

Mr. Eric: Hey! We're really, really psyched to have you. I know we're known for our off-the-cuff stories but we're going to mix things up today and do kind of an on-the-cuff story because M. Dorsett has written a children's book that I just adore. The illustrations, the story itself, and the ending. That's gonna be kind of a surprise. And we're actually gonna have her read part of it, but don't worry, there is going to be a voice. A very silly voice joining in later on in the story.

M. Dorsett, I really love the lion and the elephant, and can you tell us a little bit about this short story before we read it to the kids?

M. Dorsett: So, the lion and the elephant is a story about two friends that meet in the jungle, and they're having a really good time together until all of a sudden, one day, another character comes in and causes a little bit of trouble for them. So we're gonna find out what they decide to do and what happens.

Mr. Eric: All right, I am looking forward to it. And, don't worry, kids! We will have a what if question later... so, hold onto your horses and listen up to *The Lion and the Elephant* by M. Dorsett.

M. Dorsett: *The Lion and the Elephant.*

The lion and the elephant met in the jungle. They were both lost and they were both little. Once they found each other, they felt safe and they had fun. The lion made the elephant feel brave and the elephant made the lion feel strong.

One day, the queen of the land came to the jungle. The queen saw the lion and the elephant and got mad. [Record scratch.]

The queen said—

Queen: This is not right. This is so wrong. Lions and elephants don't get along. Lions are fuzzy when they are born. They run and they eat meat. They do

not like corn. They have big claws to rule the land. They're the king of the jungle. It's all part of the plan.

Elephants walk. That's all that they do. They drink lots of water and hang out with the crew. They clean the jungle with their long trunks, eating grass and leaves and other junk. Good think that I'm here to set you two straight. Go your separate ways!

M. Dorsett: The queen commanded.

Queen: Before it's too late.

M. Dorsett: Time passed and the lion became the king of the jungle. The lion had lots of followers, everyone loved the lion. But the lion wasn't happy. The elephant never came to visit.

The elephant was also very sad. Even though there were lots of other elephant friends to hang out with, every day the elephant would walk in the jungle, daydreaming about what the lion was doing.

One day, the elephant walked so far that they left the jungle. The elephant found a new land and made new friends. The elephant started singing and dancing. It was so much fun.

Word got back to the lion king about a singing and dancing elephant. It sounded crazy, so the king requested a performance.

Mr. Eric: Wait a second, that's the end? Oh, right. M. I remember, there's more to the story, right?

M. Dorsett: There is more to the story, that's the what if.

Mr. Eric: This is why I love this story, it is open-ended. You get to end the story. There are pages at the end where you write it in. But I wanted to give our own What If World ending to this story and we needed a little help from a listener named Maya.

Maya: My name is Maya. [Giggles]

Maya's Parent: What do you like?

Maya: And I like penguins [giggles] what if the elephant and piggy met up and they went to get some spaghetti?

Mr. Eric: Oh man, Maya, her giggles are so infectious. Oh.

M. Dorsett: Maya is great, and I love her ending to this story.

Mr. Eric: So now, let's make up one of an infinite number of possible endings to this story and find out what if the lion and the elephant met up to get some spaghetti?

[Rising harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: The lion, king of the jungle, had used all of its mighty power to book the elephant and the elephant's musical group for a show.

Lion: Elephant! Elephant! Thank you for meeting with me. Yes, yes, come here to this wonderful Italian restaurant that I own, for I am Lion King of the Italian Restaurant.

Elephant: Wow! Lion, it's amazing! I love this restaurant that you have made. I've never seen anything like it.

Lion: Elephant, it's so nice to see you. How have you been?

Elephant: I've been doing great. Dancing and singing away the days.

Lion: Oh wow, that sounds really lovely. I've been king of the jungle, uh, The Jungle is the name of this restaurant. It's a lot of work. I don't really have a lot of friends but at least things are the way they're supposed to be with lions and elephants being separate and not hanging out or getting spaghetti dinners together like we used to. [Crying]

Elephant: Oh, Lion, don't cry! Don't get upset.

Lion: I'm sorry, I miss you every time I look at a length of spaghetti noodle, it reminds me of your trunk.

Elephant: I miss you, too. I think about you all the time when I comb my hair it reminds me of your beard and your fur. Every time I dance, I picture dancing with you.

Lion: Oh.

Mr. Eric: Just then, who should burst in but the queen, themselves.

Queen: What is going on here? Elephants and lions hanging out again! I thought I had fixed this.

Elephant: I left the land where your rules were always to be followed and now I've learned new things! I know how to dance. Elephants aren't supposed to dance. And I know how to sing.

Queen: Sing? And dance?

Lion: Yeah, and you know, I was thinking maybe it would be fun for me to sing and dance, too, and do a little set here, you know, like worlds colliding and whatnot.

Queen: Worlds are not meant to collide! Worlds are meant to be separate and lonely and people listen to you but they don't really like you, and, and... [cries].

Elephant: Listen, Queen. Things don't have to be like this.

Queen: Really?

Lion: Really?

Elephant: Really. It is not wrong. Maybe I'll put it into a song! Lions and elephants can get along. We can eat spaghetti and have fun—

Lion: And can we play with anyone?

Elephant: Yes!

Lion: Whoopee!

Queen: Oh, that sounds lovely.

Penguin: Quack, excuse me? Are you all just gonna sit here, or are you gonna order. This is a business after all.

Mr. Eric: Said their penguin waiter.

Penguin: Elephants are really hungry. Do you want some spaghetti, or, I don't know.

Elephant: Yes, sorry about that. I'll take tall glass of water with no ice and no straw and a side salad, please.

Penguin: For crying out loud, you've been sitting here for an hour and a half, all you're gonna order is a side sal—okay, okay! I guess The Jungle just isn't gonna do much business tonight.

Lion: We're fine. We'll be okay. We're really reconnecting on a personal level.

Penguin: Yeah, well, I need tips, okay? I'm a penguin waiter. This tuxedo doesn't press itself.

Lion: That's your skin.

Queen: Yeah, I think that's your skin. We're gonna play some music now. Could you just go get us all some side salads and glasses of water with no straws.

Penguin: Oh, for crying out loud.

Mr. Eric: And so, eagerly awaiting their side salads and glasses of water, Elephant, Lion, and the Queen tuned up their instruments and started playing. It was such a lovely set that they started their own band playing at The Jungle every third Wednesday of the month.

The end.

[Falling harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: Whoa! We almost broke into actual song, there, M. And there's news for *The Lion and the Elephant* already. Yeah, what are you up to?

M. Dorsett: This week is very exciting for me. We're going around, we're reading this story at different schools and so far I've been able to hear the different endings that the kids are coming up with.

Mr. Eric: Oh man, I can just imagine. I am so, so lucky that I got to work with M. today. Thank you so much for coming in.

M. Dorsett: Thank you so much, Mr. Eric, for sharing this story with your listeners. This is what I love to do so I really appreciate it. Thank you so much.

Mr. Eric: I'd like to thank Karen O'Keeffe, my co-creator, Craig Martinson for our theme song, M. Dorsett, for sharing her awesome story on our airwaves, and all you kids at home who are friendly to all kinds of people. Because given half a chance, they might be just as nice as you.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]