

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 181: What if ballerinas met with dinosaurs?

File Length: 15:19

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.

Zizi: Greetings, adventurers and welcome back to Guilds & Goblins, the game where your questions and ideas inspire off the cuff adventures. I'm Zizi, you guild master, and today we're starting off with a question from Dea.

Dea: Hi, I'm Dea. One thing I really like ballet and my what if question is what if ballerinas met with dinosaurs. Bye!

Zizi: Dea, I love dinosaurs and ballerinas, too, and I'm excited to work them into our adventure.

Zach: Is there another question, Guild Master?

Zizi: There sure is, Zach, but I'm going to keep it a mystery so that I don't spoil the surprise for you players. Speaking of which, players can you introduce yourselves and your characters?

Scully the Squid: I'm Scully the Squid and my character's name is Scullen Bones! They're a skeleton and a pirate, and they can take their bones off and make them do all kinds of crazy things.

Lola Rabbit: I'm Lola Rabbit, and my character's name's Lowlandra. She's a werebunny by night, halfling by day, and a nature mage all the way.

Zach: And I'm Zachimedes. Well, that's my character. My name is Zach, I'm Zizi's brother, but Zachimedes is my might goblin eggchanter. He casts spells with his magic eggs.

Zizi: Thanks gang, nice going. So if you remember last time, it was Truce Day and all your characters were guardians at the festival where guilds passed the Trumpet of Travel from one guild to the next, but then the trumpet turned out to be cursed.

Lola Rabbit: Yeah, and it sucked up all the guild masters leaving us to free them.

Scully the Squid: But before we could get the trumpet, a bread giant took it!

Zizi: You tracked the giant to Fort Dessert where you were fired upon by frosting cannons.

Zach: Oh, and then we tried to save Bridget the Bread Giant when she was nearly knocked off the bridge by her own cannon fire.

Scully the Squid: And then the bread guild master thought we were working with Bridget.

Lola Rabbit: So they exiled the bread giant from her own guild!

Zizi: Wow, okay, you made that recap really easy. So now, adventurers, you've got the Trumpet of Travel and your new friend Bridget who was most recently your enemy. Where do you go?

[Rising harp scale.]

Zach: Oh, oh, we've got to figure out how to break the curse on the Trumpet of Travel, so Zachimedes suggests we go back to Tinker Town and find the old head tinker.

Scully the Squid: Oh, sure.

Lola Rabbit: Sounds good to me.

Zizi: Bridget the Bread Giant follows behind you all from a bit of a distance. She's still not sure what to make of you three heroes who saved her life even after she stole from you.

Zach: Oh, that's fine. She's probably still afraid of goblins, anyway.

Zizi: Okay, you give Bridget her space as you walk through the deserted streets of Tinker Town. Old inventions lie around half finished and broken down bits and pieces litter the streets. When you get to the door of the old master tinker, you find it ajar.

Lola Rabbit: Can Lowlandra turn into a werebunny form in case there's trouble?

Zizi: Okay, you grow about a foot as you sprout fur and bunny ears.

Lola Rabbit: Awesome.

Zach: Can I do a learn check to see what I notice as we enter?

Zizi: Great idea, Zach. In fact, you can all give me a learn check.

Zach: Hey, my character sheet says I add plus one skill die to learn.

Zizi: So now that you all know the basics of the game, you can either keep playing with the 1d20 roll for everything you do, or if you want to try out a little math, you can start using skill dice.

Lola Rabbit: Oh, I definitely want to use skill dice. Oh, except I get minus 1 learn. Can I change my mind?

Zizi: Haha, too late, Lola.

Lola Rabbit: Aw, man. So I roll a d20 and I subtract a d4?

Zach: But I roll a d20 and I add a d4.

Scully the Squid: If it's all the same to you, I don't want to worry about all those dice, it sounds too confusing.

Zizi: Absolutely, you just keep rolling that d20 for anything for as long as you like. We want the game to be more fun than confusing, right?

Zach: Okay, I'll roll first! [Dice clatter] Aw, a natural 1. But +4, does that help?

Zizi: Oh, afraid not. You're so busy cataloguing your magic eggs that you bump into the door nose first.

Zach: [Laughs] Ow.
[Dice clatter]

Scully the Squid: I rolled a 3.

Lola Rabbit: And I rolled a 9, minus 2, so 7.

Zizi: None of you notice anything out of the ordinary except that the old tinker is gone.

Zach: Uh, I check his work table.

Zizi: Uh, the last goblin master tinker was a girl.

Zach: Whoops! I check her work table, sorry. Are there any eggschematics that I could use to make new egg magic?

Zizi: Um, roll a wonder check because that's a funny idea.

Zach: Thirteen plus three, sixteen!

Zizi: You find a half-finished blueprint for a magical egg of protection. But it looks like halfway through inventing it, she just started writing musical notes.

Scully the Squid: Ooh ooh! Scullen Bones can play instruments so he can read the music.

Zizi: Scullen, even though she didn't write out a whole song with all the bars, you still a strange sense of a slow, hypnotic song, and roll a sway check.

Scully the Squid: Well, for me, that's always just a d20.

Zizi: Oh yeah, go ahead.

Scully the Squid: An eleven!

Zizi: You find yourself kind of purring.

Scully the Squid: Weird, uh... prrrrrrrrrrrr [mimicks purring] That's a hard sound to make, sheesh.

Zizi: Lowlandra and Zachimedes, you see Scullen pick up this note as they walk out the door and then turn west very suddenly.

Scully the Squid: Wait, what?

Zizi: And just then, Scullen, you snap out of it.

Scully the Squid: Whoa, that was weird. It's like the music was moving me, literally.

Lola Rabbit: Well, that's like the only clue we have so I guess we gotta follow. Come on, let's go, let's go, let's go!

Zizi: Lowlandra bounds off to the west and you two follow with Bridget the Bread Giant still trailing a little bit behind.

Scully the Squid: Well, I want to check this song every once in a while to make sure we're headed in the right direction.

Zizi: Okay, but as soon as you do, you feel it pulling at your brain again.

Scully the Squid: Oooohhh.

Zizi: Roll another check.

[Dice rolls]

Scully the Squid: A two...

Zizi: Well, you keep following the music as night falls over the land of Berend and a thin mist spreads over the ground.

Scully the Squid: Ooh, spooky...

Zizi: Bridget the Bread Giant says, "Maybe we should make camp for the night rather than walking around in the mist."

Zach: You're right, Bridget, and I want to learn that protection eggchantment anyway.

Lola Rabbit: What? Just when we was finally getting somewhere?

Zizi: You all start setting up camp, and Zachimedes, you take the blueprints to learn your new eggchantment. But Scullen Bones just keeps walking into the mist!

Scully the Squid: I do?

Zizi: Yeah, remember when you rolled that two?

Scully the Squid: Oh, yeah.

Lola Rabbit: That's great, I didn't want to stop anyway and now that it's night I can stay a wererabbit.

Zach: Okay, I hold out my glow in the dark eggs so we can all see, but then I keep studying that spell.

Zizi: The mist thickens as you follow Scullen Bones. You've been walking through the tall grass of the goblin plains. But you know things other than goblins live here.

[Thump, thump, thump]

Scully the Squid: Ooh, did the scary stomping snap me out of my hypnosis?

Zizi: Oh, fine, give me another roll.

Scully the Squid: An eight...

Zizi: Okay, you come to, but you're really groggy and you have no idea where you are, so you're going to miss your first action as you see a giant T-Rex charge right past you, mist swirling around him. He roars out a blast of wind clearing more mist in front of him, and you see a group of ballerinas.

Lola Rabbit: Hey, I didn't know there was a ballerina guild, cool.

Scully the Squid: What are they, though? Are they orcs or elves, or...

Zizi: Well, there's an orc and an elf, and a skeleton and a goblin, and even a pastrian. They're all wearing different colored leotards and some of them have tutus on, too.

Zach: And let me guess, the T-Rex is charging straight for them?

Zizi: You guessed right, Zachimedes. What do you do?

Zach: I want to try out my new egg shield spell.

Zizi: Okay, but remember, the schematic was incomplete. So roll a wonder check to see how well it turns out.

[Dice clatter]

Zach: Fifteen plus two, seventeen!

Zizi: Oh, awesome. You throw an egg and a see-through ovular shield stretches over all the ballet dancers. The T-Rex headbutts into it.

[Dino voice] Rarr. [THUD] Ugh... oohh...

Zizi: And the shield cracks a little.

[Cracking sounds]

But he doesn't get through.

Lola Rabbit: I want to use my werebunny ears to tickle his tail and try to distract him.

Zizi: Okay, roll dare.

Lola Rabbit: Fifteen plus three is eighteen!

Zizi: The T-Rex turns around but instead of fighting at you, he asks for your help.

[Q-Rex voice] These ballerinas kidnapped my pops dino, so help me chase them until we get what's mine-o.

Scully the Squid: It's Q-Rex, the rapping dinosaur. I didn't know What If World characters could appear here.

Zach: And I didn't know my sister did so many voices.

Zizi: I've been practicing, okay. Ssh shh.

Lola Rabbit: Lowlandra says, "Hey, ballerinas, is this true?"

Zizi: And in response, the ballerinas spring into action, doing flying dancing kicks [CRASH] shattering right through Zach's egg shield, and headed to attack the dinosaur.

Scully the Squid: Is this a new round, can I act now?

Zizi: You sure can, Scullen.

Scully the Squid: Well, I want to shoot off each of my hands towards one of these ballerinas to try to hold them back.

Zizi: Give me a roll.

Scully the Squid: Oh, a three... these dice have not been working for me today.

D20: Sorry, bloke. This old 20-sided die can't always roll natural 20s.

Zizi: Shh. Dice, you said you were going to be quiet this time.

D20: Uhh, sorry.

Zizi: An orc woman in a purple tutu twists around your skeleton hand and a squat little goblin munches on the finger of your other hand!

[Gnawgnawgnaw, ptoo!]

Before spitting it out.

Zach: Okay, I want to see if I can make the grass grow up around them and wrap up their ankles.

Zizi: Roll wonder on that.

Zach: And if I have a plus 0, that means I just roll a d20.

Zizi: Yeah.

[Thud]

Zach: That's a natural 20!

D20: You're welcome.

Zizi: All right! As these ballerinas rush toward the Tyrannosaurus rex, you cause the grass to tangle them up, and they're stuck dead in their tracks.

Zach: Zachimedes hold up his glow in the dark egg and says, "See this egg?"

Zizi: They all nod.

Zach: This magical egg tells me if you're lying so I need you to tell me the truth. Why are you all fighting?

Zizi: Um, point of order. Zach, that's just a glow in the dark egg.

[Record scratch]

Zach: I know, I'm trying to trick them.

Zizi: Oh, oh, okay. So roll sway.

Zach: Sway... oh, I've got a minus one to sway. I guess I'm not the trickiest of goblins.

[Dice clatter]

Nine minus three is six...

Zizi: [Q Rex voice] Yo, little goblin, I wasn't born yesterday and I know eggchantment doesn't work that way.

Zach: Okay, well, tell me the truth anyway.

Zizi: The orc ballerina in the purple leotard seems to be their leader. She pulls at her grass restraints and sighs. [Orc ballerina voice] I wouldn't believe anything that Tyrannosaurus says to you. He has kidnapped our Duchess of Dance and stolen him away into the mists.

Scully the Squid: But he says that you stole his pops dino.

Zizi: [Orc ballerina voice] "We have done no such thing."

Scullen, at that moment, you start hearing the music again even though you didn't look at the sheet.

Scully the Squid: Hmm... errr.... Musiic.

Can I just let myself walk towards it?

Zizi: You sure can. Everyone else, you see Scullen Bones turn from this tense situation and start heading west again.

Zach: Sorry, our friend's under some kind of magic kitty spell, I guess.

Zizi: [Q-Rex voice] Did you say magic kitty spell? Because when my dino disappeared there was a kitty smell.

[Orc ballerina voice] And when our Duchess of Dance disappeared, I could swear I heard a meow.

Lola Rabbit: Then why'd you two blame each other?

Zizi: [Q-Rex voice] Because dinosaurs and ballerinas just can't get along. Our rivalry never ends, unlike this song.

Zach: You know, you're really more of a rhyming dinosaur than a rapping dinosaur.

Zizi: [Q-Rex voice] Hey, rapping dinosaur is what you called me, I don't need no labels, I'm just rhyming free.

Lola Rabbit: I'm glad we're figuring out the difference between rapping and rhyming, but our friend's disappearing into the mist!

Zizi: I'll let you roll strive to stay focused on finding him.

Lola Rabbit: Nine plus four... thirteen!

Zizi: You're catching up to Scullen's clattering bones when you hear a [MEOOOW] in the mist.

Lola Rabbit: Do I understand cat?

Zizi: Well, you do, but this sounds like gibberish.

Lola Rabbit: What? Well, I jump towards the sound.

Zach: Bridget, can you stay here and keep these ballet dancers and dinosaurs from fighting one another?

Zizi: [Bridget voice] You would trust me with that?

Lola Rabbit: Hey, we already trust you, you just gotta trust yourself, byeee! [Boing]

Zizi: Lowlandra leaps off into the mist with Zachimedes right behind, and Bridget stays back to babysit.

Scully the Squid: I guess I'm still under a spell?

Zizi: Scullen, roll one last time to break free.

Scully the Squid: Dice, don't fail me now!

[Thud]

A natural one.

Zizi: Uh-oh, Scully, I think you're going to lose control of Scullen Bones for a little while.

Scully the Squid: What?

Zizi: But don't worry, I've got a really fun idea. Let's take a short rest so you and I can have a little chat.

Zach: I don't like when Zizi gets that look in her eyes!

Zizi: And for now, that's the end.

[Falling harp scale.]

Zach: Oh, that's exciting. We lost Scullen in the mist.

Scully the Squid: Exciting for you, maybe.

Lola Rabbit: I can't wait to figure out where he went.

Zizi: I know, I think it was gonna be a long adventure, so we'll play the second half next week. So Dea and James S, I hope you liked the first half of your story. We'll read James S's question at the end of the next one so it can stay a secret.

Scully the Squid: It's gotta have something to do with cats, though, right?

Zach: Shhh! No spoilers!

Zizi: I'd like to thank Karen O'Keeffe, our co-creator, Craig Martinson for our theme song.

Zach: And all you kids at home who know the blame game doesn't accomplish much of anything!

Lola Rabbit: Yeah, you gotta start working together before you're gonna solve any problems.

Zizi: And until the next adventure, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]

©2020, Eric O'Keeffe/*What If World*