

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 184: What if when you took your hat off it was full of spiderwebs? (President Elect: Part 1)

File Length: 19:49

Transcription by Keffy

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.

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 starting off with a question from a Patron named Izzy.

Izzy:                     Hi, I'm Izzy. My what if question is what if when you took your hat off, it was full of spiderwebs?

Mr. Eric:                Oh, wow, Izzy. That is truly something I've never imagined, and it makes me want to go check my hats. But first, we've got one more question from Miriam.

Miriam:                 Hello, my name is Miriam and I'm six years old. My what if question is what if Fred the Dog had a bike and it had wings and he flew it all over What If City? Bye!

Fred:                    Oh, thank you so much, Miriam. But before I get to that, I've got a shout out for James. Happy belated first birthday, James. And a hello to your little sister, Lulu.

Radbot:                 And I've got a big beep boop to Oren from Riverside, California. He likes Minecraft and Legos.

Fred:                    Well, I got another shout out for Owen, who's seven from Ann Arbor, Michigan, and he likes to play Super Mario.

JF Kat:                 Er, I've got a meow-out for Emma from San Francisco. She's eight years old and she knows how to spell JF Kat correctly. J-F-K-A-T.

Fred:                    Hey, are we spelling or are we shouting out, Jojo?

JF Kat:                 Purr-oceed.

Fred:                    Well, my last shout out is for Atlas, age eight, from Bellevue, Washington.

Abacus: And a very special final shout out to a grown up boy named Rin. Rin's daughter Abby wanted to give her shout out to her father who absolutely loves Legos and playing with his five children.

Mr. Eric: Wow. Rin sounds like one lucky dad.

Abacus: Indubitably.

Mr. Eric: Now, let's find out what if when you took your hat off, it was full of spiderwebs and what if Fred the dog had a bike and it had wings and he flew it all over What If City.

[Rising harp scale.]

Fair Elise was enjoying a dinner at home with her partner Sprite Alright and their daughter, Pixicato. Tonight, they were breaking the dinner rules a little bit by having the radio on so they could hear who won the What If World presidential election!

Poppa Loo: Poppa Loo's News here. Apparently on the radio, now.

Mr. Eric: Poppa Loo's voice came out of a tiny speaker in a little old fashioned radio box.

Poppa Loo: And after lots of kids voted all over the world, the winner by a landslide is... pausing for dramatic effect... and not because I, uh, misplaced the envelope. Hang on, uh... I must have used it as a bookmark, or. Ah.

Fair Elise: Oh, Pixicato, who cares? Let's just turn the radio off and enjoy our dinner.

Pixicato: Mother, it's ever so important who looks after What If World.

Sprite Alright: You know, I'm going to have to agree with our Pixicato.

Fair Elise: Oh, fine, but we're shutting the radio off and enjoying our dinner the moment he announces the president.

[Scene change]

Poppa Loo: Well, it's been an exciting two hours of me searching around my house looking for the envelope that contains the answer to the question you've all been asking. You know, with all the search for the envelope, I forgot what that question was.

Fair Elise: Who's going to be president! Oh, for goodness sake.

Poppa Loo: Fair Elise?

[Record scratch]

Fair Elise: What? Did he just hear me through the radio?

Poppa Loo: No, I didn't just hear you through the radio, it's your name on the envelope.

Fair Elise: Okay, but you clearly heard me that time.

Poppa Loo: To anyone out there who may be shouting at their radio right now. Yes, I did just say it. Fair Elise got more votes by far than any other candidate.

Fair Elise: But I didn't know I was running for president.

Poppa Loo: This just in: Fair Elise didn't even know she was running for president.

Fair Elise: All right, he must be able to hear me, right?

Pixicato: It seems likely, Mother, yes.

Sprite Alright: All right, well, let's celebrate.

Poppa Loo: All ladies, gentlemen, and people of all kinds. A giant, unimaginable creature of horror has just burst its way into my studio.

Cthunkle: And no, this isn't a War of the Worlds type thing. This is actually happening.

Poppa Loo: Cthunkle, how dare you break into my studio?

Cthunkle: This is very clearly a tool shed.

Poppa Loo: Uh-uh. No. When you put a microphone in a place, it's a studio. Mamma Jamma said so.

Mamma Jamma: What?

Poppa Loo: I said you said that wherever a microphone ends up, that's a studio.

Mamma Jamma: I just said that to get you out of the house.

Poppa Loo: Well, it had a nice ring at the time.

Cthunkle: Poppa Loo, there must have been some mistake with the presidential election.

Poppa Loo: Well, didn't you hear the envelope. [Crinkles envelope] See? It's right here.

Cthunkle: No amount of paper crinkling would make me believe that the people voted against me.

Poppa Loo: Well, they didn't vote against you. A lot of them voted for you.

Cthunkle: Well, then there you have it. I, Cthunkle, am President of What If World!

Poppa Loo: No. No, I was just trying to soften the blow. You lost. You lost big time.

Cthunkle: Big time.

Poppa Loo: Yeah, Petrina the Pirate got more votes than you. She's been in like four episodes.

Petrina: What's that talk about me?

Poppa Loo: Petrina, what are you doing here?

Mamma Jamma: She's having tea with me! Get back to your radio program.

Cthunkle: I'll take my presidential crown, now.

Poppa Loo: Uh, there's no crown and you're not president so, why don't you just stop absorbing my tool shed into your horrifying mass and uh... you know, uh... go away.

Cthunkle: Oh, I'll go away, all right. I'll go all the way away.

Poppa Loo: Oh, good.

Cthunkle: You didn't... you didn't let me finish. I was pausing here for dramatic effect.

Poppa Loo: Oh, I'm sorry, it's just dead air on a radio show doesn't work so well.

Cthunkle: To the What House.

Poppa Loo: The what? What?

Cthunkle: Go all the way to the What House.

Poppa Loo: Oh, well, enjoy your visit.

Cthunkle: No, I'm going to conquer... oh, forget it.

Poppa Loo: Okay, folks. You heard it here, first. Fair Elise is our new president, and now, since our musical band canceled and my CD player isn't working, I'm going to do some improv scatting for the next 45 minutes. [Clears throat and starts scatting]

Mr. Eric: [Ka-CLICK] Fair Elise turned off the radio.

Pixicato: Mother, it was just getting good.

Fair Elise: Was it?

Sprite Alright: All right, all right, it's bed time Pixicato. Apparently, we have a big day tomorrow.

Fair Elise: I'm going to be president tomorrow?

Mr. Eric: [Knocking] There was a knock on top of their thimble house.

Alabaster: Hey, Fair Elise, uh, it's Alabaster Zero. Your partner.

Fair Elise: Oh, I should have seen this coming.

Mr. Eric: And with a flick of her wand Alabaster had shrunk inside their little thimble house.

Alabaster: Fair Elise, why'd you do it?

Fair Elise: I didn't. The people did.

Alabaster: The people put spiderwebs underneath their hats?

Fair Elise: What? This isn't about me being president?

Alabaster: No, of course not. I'm super happy for you.

Fair Elise: Oh, that's showing a lot of maturity, Alabaster—

Alabaster: However, I am putting you under arrest.

Fair Elise: Oh...

Alabaster: For the crime of putting spiderwebs under the hats of everybody who was wearing a hat at the time. I sentence you to life in pris—

Fair Elise: Alabaster, remember that you can't also do the sentencing, especially not before there was a trial, and...

Alabaster: Oh, right, right right, sorry. I just... getting ahead of myself.

Pixicato: Mother, are you a common criminal?

Sprite Alright: I think there's just been a misunderstanding.

Fair Elise: Yes, Pixicato. Calling someone a common criminal is classist and reductive.

Sprite Alright: No, I mean, I don't think that you should be under arrest for something like spiderwebs.

Alabaster: I'm sorry, but when I lifted up my fedora cap that I sometimes wear when I'm trying to look extra cool, there were spiderwebs under there, and they spelled out your name.

Fair Elise: Alabaster, that means that I am a suspect, certainly, but you wouldn't just jump straight to arresting me. If I'm going to be president, you're going to have to do these things better.

Alabaster: What? No, you'll just help me figure it out along the way.

Pixicato: Mother, I don't think he realizes that you being president would preclude you from working as a detective for a time.

Alabaster: I—I precluded that right away, Pixicato.

Fair Elise: Very well, Alabaster. Let us have one final case before I go part-time.

Alabaster: The case of the spiderweb cap.

Fair Elise: All right, good case name.

Alabaster: Colon, a tangled web. Dash, Zero-Fair Investigations final mission, question mark. Semicolon.

Sprite Alright: All right, you can't have a semicolon after a question mark.

Fair Elise: Sprite, could you just teleport us to New What City so we can do some investigating?

Sprite Alright: All right, Madam President.

Fair Elise: Oh, you.

Mr. Eric: And there stood Alabaster, and flew Fair Elise, right in the middle of New What City.

Cthunkle: HONK HONK FAIR ELISE.

Mr. Eric: [Honking and lots of screaming of "Fair Elise."] To see a scene of chaos. There were a bunch of people out late at night, all wearing hats and acting very strangely. They were crashing vehicles and chasing each other around and all the while, the people wearing hats were shouting.

Fair Elise: Fair Elise... they're saying my name.

Alabaster: How could you do it, Fair Elise?

Fair Elise: Alabaster...

Alabaster: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. It just seems obvious that you're the villain here.

Fair Elise: It would take phenomenal power to cast a spell on this many people all at once.

Alabaster: That's true. Your power has always been a little more nomenal, really.

Fair Elise: Ouch, that kind of stings.

Mr. Eric: And Alabaster walked over to a little weasel wearing a baseball cap and flapping his half-broken mechanical wings as if he were trying to fly.

Stevie: Fair Eliiiiise, uhhh...

Alabaster: Hey, Stevie Fleasel, um...

Stevie: Fair Elise.

Alabaster: Would you mind if I took your baseball cap off?

Stevie: Fair Elise.

Alabaster: Uh... I'm gonna take that as a yes. I think it might be controlling your brain.

Mr. Eric: When Alabaster removed the cap, a bunch of spiderwebs were underneath. And indeed, written in the silken web were the words, "Fair Elise."

Stevie: Oh, hey. Hands off the merchandise, Alabaster.

Alabaster: I'm sorry, I... I was just trying to free you from a mind control spell.

Stevie: Okay, well, consider me freed. Sheesh.

Fair Elise: Stevie, do you remember how you got these webs under your hat?

Stevie: Well, that's a funny thing. You know, I don't usually wear hats. But I got one or two lying around the house and you know, I heard you was the next president and then, suddenly, there was a hat on my head.

Fair Elise: It's worse than I thought.

Alabaster: Oh, man. That's such a good detective-y thing to say. You really are the master, Fair Elise.

Fair Elise: Thank you, Alabaster. But the problem here is that this isn't just affecting people who put on their caps like you.

Stevie: You mean the hats are finding their way onto our heads?

Fair Elise: I'm afraid so.

Stevie: Aw, now I gotta throw away all my hats that I never wear.

Mr. Eric: And Stevie scrambled off.

Alabaster: That wasn't much of a clue. How can we track a thousand walking hats?

Fair Elise: Come on, Alabaster. Who has the most to gain from besmirching my name?

Alabaster: Huh... who indeed...? Who would want to take down the president. [Gasps] The former president.

Fred: Fair Eliiiiiiiiise?

Mr. Eric: And right on cue [bicycle bell rings] Fred the Dog came pedaling past them, flying through the sky on a bike with wings.

Fair Elise: Oh no, Fred. They got you, too.

Fred: No, I'm just saying look out, Fair Elise, it's me Fred the Dog, trying to figure out how to use this bike. It's really hard, you know, pedaling in three dimensions. I think I need more gears on these handlebars.

Alabaster: Fred the Dog, you're under arrest for framing Fair Elise in order to keep your presidency.

Fred: Oh, that's silly. I don't even want to be president. I just want to fly around New What City on my bike with wings. It was a gift from Miriam.



Alabaster: Oh, but you gotta be guilty. You've got on a bicycle helmet, but your brain isn't controlled so obviously, you made the spiderweb curse with your president powers. So you're immune to it.

Fred: Oh, no. My bicycle was full of spiderwebs.

Fair Elise: Then why aren't you brain controlled?

Fred: Isn't it obvious?

Mr. Eric: Folks at home, is it obvious to you?

Fred: Listen, my tongue gets spiderwebs stuck on it all the time. It's just one of the problems of having a really long tongue, you can't fully control. Bleeaaah.

Mr. Eric: And indeed, when Fred stuck out his tongue, they could make out a clump of spiderweb and a little letter F.

Alabaster: Ugh, okay. I didn't need to see that.

Fair Elise: Yes, we did. It's evidence.

Fred: Oh, good. Then could you get it off of my tongue and put it in one of those cool little evidence bags and label it like Exhibit A?

Fair Elise: You don't label the exhibits until court.

Fred: There's so many more changes I should have made while I was president. Anyway, good luck, Fair Elise.

Mr. Eric: And Fred hopped back on his bike holding onto the handle bars with his two forepaws and pumping the pedals with his rear paws.

Fair Elise: Um, Fred, do you have any tips for me on how to be a good president?

Fred: Well, Fair Elise, it's kind of like being a parent, you know? Nobody gives you a manual.

Fair Elise: Actually, there are thousands of books on parenting.

Fred: Oooh.

Fair Elise: And peer-reviewed studies.

Fred: Okay.

Fair Elise: There are podcasts and workshops, support groups and—

Fred: Okay, okay, well there's no handbook for being president.

Alabaster: Haven't there been like, thousands of books written about all the past presidencies?

Fair Elise: And prime minister-ships?

Alabaster: And kings and queens and emperors...

Fred: Okay, yeah. But nobody hands it to you, is what I'm saying. You know, nobody gives you the parenting or the president handbook. You gotta just figure it out for yourself.

Alabaster: Well, either way, Fred. We could use a little help.

Fred: Oh, fine. I guess I'm still technically president until I hand over my presidential crown or whatever.

Fair Elise: There's no crown.

Mr. Eric: And Fred, Fair Elise, and Alabaster Zero went around pulling the hats off of everyone who'd been zombified. Fred the Dog licked them off with his tongue, Alabaster pried hats off with his hands, and Fair Elise worked fastest of all, using her magic to zip off hats rapid fire.

Fred: Okay, it's getting late, everybody. I'm glad you're not brainwashed anymore, so I'm going to turn on my radio and ride off into the night.

Poppa Loo: [Still scating on the radio]

Fred: [Radio clicks off] Okay, I'll just... I'm gonna just skip the radio part, then, and ride off into the night, never to be heard from again. For like an episode or two. Or maybe less.

Mr. Eric: And off Fred went to enjoy his retirement.

Fair Elise: All right, Alabaster. Maybe we'll pick this up in the morning?

Alabaster: No, no, you'll be president in the morning. We've got to solve this case, now.

Fair Elise: My friend, I'll never stop being your partner in crime-solving.

Alabaster: Yes, you will. Everything's gonna be different.

Fair Elise: You know what? You're right. Many things will be different but you are my friend and my detective protégé.

Alabaster: I think you're a real pro, too.

Fair Elise: [Sighs]. Do you have a hunch, perchance? About who could have perpetrated this crime?

Alabaster: Oooh, well, you've taught me I can't just follow my gut all the time.

Fair Elise: That's because your gut was not digesting enough information. Now, I dare say, you're paying more attention. Maybe you should take the lead on this one.

Alabaster: Oh, well... um... We know it's gotta be someone who's got even more magic than you.

Fair Elise: Yes.

Alabaster: But probably not Abacus, he respects you, too much.

Fair Elise: Hmm, probably not.

Alabaster: Then maybe it's someone who wants to be president because it happened right after you were elected.

Fair Elise: Indeed.

Alabaster: But it's not Fred, and it wouldn't be Sprite Alright, even though she was in the running.

Fair Elise: Yes, we were having dinner together, and we're partners.

Alabaster: Ooh, ooh. I think I have a hunch.

Fair Elise: Lead the way, detective.

Alabaster: Hey, hey, Fred!

Fred: What?

Alabaster: Could you give us all a ride?

Fred: Oh, come on, I just flew off all cool-like.

Alabaster: It wasn't that cool. Remember the scattin'.

Fair Elise: Yes, it's like, now you get a chance at another cool exit.

Fred: I don't know, riding triple on a bike doesn't sound that cool.

Alabaster: Uh, it's cool when one of the people is wearing a fedora.

Fred: No, you all have to wear bicycle helmets.

Fair Elise: It is the law, Alabaster.

Mr. Eric: And an hour later, Fred the Dog had dropped them off at the woods outside the What House.

Alabaster: You're not coming? We're gonna, like, save the presidency.

Fred: Did the word retirement mean anything to you, Alabaster?

Alabaster: It's not when you change the tires on your car?

Fred: No, it isn't! BYEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE.

Mr. Eric: To be continued.

[Falling harp scale.]

Oh, I know it. Sometimes a story just gets away from me, and Fair Elise becoming president needed to be bigger than 20 minutes. So we'll be back next week with the conclusion.

I'd like to thank Karen O'Keeffe, my co-creator. Craig Martinson for our theme song, and all you kids at home who know that relationships change over time. But that doesn't mean they have to disappear. And it certainly doesn't make your time together any less special.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]