

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 189: A Cthunkle Carol (Part 1)

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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 Otto.

Otto:                    Hi, my name's Otto, and I am six. I live in Belize and my what if question is what if Mr. Eric had a surprise birthday party for Cthunkle? Bye!

Mr. Eric:                Oh, Otto. What a thoughtful question. Let's get some ideas what we might give Cthunkle, from a listener named Lars.

Lars:                    Hi, my name is Lars. I like dragons. My question is what if Cthunkle managed to take over What If World? Bye, I like your show.

Mr. Eric:                Wow, Lars. Cthunkle is going to be very excited. Folks, many, many kids have asked pretty much this same question about Cthunkle taking over What If World. So if you're listening out there and you asked me any version of that question, I want to thank you.

Now, finally, we're going to add on one Patron question from May. May is seven and she writes, "What if Cthunkle had to help Robot Llama pick the right saxophone, and it took them 12 years?"

Okay, I do not know how I'm gonna fit that one in, but we're going to have fun trying. Now, let's get Cthunkle in—

Cthunkle:               I am already here.

Mr. Eric:                Oh, wow. It's weird how I didn't see a giant squidopus in my office before.

Cthunkle:               I exist in all dimensions at all times.

Mr. Eric:                Oh, then did you already hear the surprise?

Cthunkle:               No, just because I was here doesn't mean I was paying attention.

Mr. Eric:                Well, Cthunkle, all the kids wanted to give you a birthday present.

Cthunkle: Interesting. As a timeless being, it is always my birthday, and never my birthday.

Mr. Eric: I'm getting a weird energy from you, Cthunkle, so I'm just gonna push past this.

Cthunkle: I'm sorry. Ever since I failed to take over What If World for the 14<sup>th</sup> time, I've been feeling a little down.

Mr. Eric: Well then sit back, Cthunkle, and listen to this story. It's about a time where you really did take over the world.

Cthunkle: I can't really sit. I'm a writhing mass of tentacles.

Mr. Eric: Yeah, but if you go criss-cross applesauce?

Cthunkle: I'm afraid that could end the universe.

Mr. Eric: Okay, then just... stand back, and enjoy. We're gonna take a quick break and then we're going to come back with What If World's Cthunkle Carol.

[Rising harp scale.]

Our story starts in a What If World not quite the same as the one you know today, because Jacob Molamo and Ebenezer Cthunkle had taken over.

Cthunkle: Hahaha.

Molamo: He ho ho haa. Maniacal laughter.

Mr. Eric: They ruled What If World with an iron fist, or tentacle and lava hand until Molamo got so old that he finally returned to the earth leaving Cthunkle to rule alone.

Cthunkle: Who ha ha ha, whoa ha ha ha.

Mamma Jamma: [Laughs]

Cthunkle: Barb Cratchit, do not share your maniacal laughter with mine.

Mr. Eric: It was Ifmas Eve, some seven years later, and Cthunkle was working in his drafty little office beside the one clerk he hadn't scared away or eaten.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, you, Cthunkle. I need you to sign off on these outrageous rent hikes for all your tenants across What If World.

Cthunkle: Yes, the perfect Ifmas bonus to them is getting to give me even more money. [Laughs]. Oh, Barb Cratchit—

Mamma Jamma: You can call me Barbara.

Cthunkle: This rent hike is hardly outrageous at all.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, I was just thinking, maybe in the holiday spirit, people have had a rough year, what if we gave them a little break.

Cthunkle: [Groans]

Mr. Eric: Just then, a portly gentleman strode into the office.

Abacus: Portly? I hardly think. Oh, indeed I am portly.

Cthunkle: What business have you with me, portly gentleman?

Abacus: You know, I have a name. Probably. But that's not important. What is important is that this is the season of giving.

Cthunkle: Yes. Giving more power to me.

Mamma Jamma: Here he goes again.

Fred: Yeah, you're not gonna get any donations out of this guy.

Mr. Eric: It was Cthunkle's nephew, Fred.

Cthunkle: Ugh, why are you all bothering me.

Abacus: I'd like a donation.

Fred: I just want to invite you to my Ifmas party.

Mamma Jamma: I'm honestly just trying to clock out. Gotta get home to the family. It's Ifmas tomorrow, you know.

Cthunkle: I'll make this easy. No donations.

Abacus: Oh, so only a singular donation, I—

Cthunkle: No, none.

Abacus: [Harrumph]

Cthunkle: Fred, I'm not coming to your party. You make all of the hors d'oeuvres with your long, slimy tongue, and it's gross.

Fred: Says a guy with all the oozing tentacles.

Cthunkle: And Barb Cratchit,

Mamma Jamma: Barbara's fine, we've worked together for seven years.

Cthunkle: Which makes firing you all the sweeter. [Laughs]

Abacus: Oh, well, I got off easy.

Cthunkle: No, I'm going to eat you. [NOM]

Abacus: I shouldn't have said anything.

Fred: Okay, I'm just gonna go, Uncle Cthunkle, so don't worry about eating anybody else. Um, Merry Ifmas.

Cthunkle: Everyone who says Merry Ifmas should be eaten by me, and then used as an Ifmas décor—wait, no, because then that would be like, in the spirit of Ifmas or something, possibly. I've got to think of a more on-brand punishment.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, I've got a dozen, but you just fired me so, uh, forget about it.

Abacus: [From inside Cthunkle's stomach] I've got an idea.

Cthunkle: Does it involve me spitting you out?

Abacus: No...? Yes.

Cthunkle: Then save it.

Mr. Eric: And Cthunkle went home. He had a giant fortress in the middle of the city of Whendon, and in the middle of that fortress was a hoard of gold and jewels and toys, all untouched.

Cthunkle: Oh yes. My hoard of all the riches of the world is coming along nicely, I see. Good night, hoard.

Molamo: Good night, Cthunkle.

Cthunkle: Uh, hoard? Was that you?

Molamo: No, it's me, Molamo.

Cthunkle: But you were a volcano that went extinct.

Molamo: Now I'm a ghost of an extinct volcano.

Mr. Eric: And indeed, there floated a ghostly volcano person covered in thick chains.

Cthunkle: Let me guess. Those are the chains you use to imprison those who disobey you.

Molamo: They were, but now they are my own chains because I was mean.

Cthunkle: No, no.

Molamo: It's true. And now you're even meaner than me.

Cthunkle: Yes, I thought you'd be proud. Your last words were, "Be even meaner than I was."

Molamo: I know, I know. But I wasn't a very happy person and I didn't have any friends. You and I didn't even really get along.

Cthunkle: I know. It was a beautiful unfriendship.

Molamo: That's not a thing. I'm going to cut to the chase. You will be haunted by three spirits.

Cthunkle: No, I don't believe in ghosts.

Molamo: You're an interdimensional squidopus talking to an ethereal volcano.

Cthunkle: What's your point.

Molamo: Oh, whatever. Learn your lessons or suffer the same fate as me.

Cthunkle: I'm already alone, friendless, and immortal.

Molamo: Uh, um, but I've also got these chains.

Cthunkle: Phf. I can carry a few chains.

Molamo: No, they're itchy chains, though.

Cthunkle: Itchy chains?

Molamo: So itchy!

Cthunkle: But my delicate tentacles. I already moisturize twice a day.

Molamo: Expect the first spirit soon, and then the next on after that, and so on and so on and so on... and so on...

Cthunkle: Molamo, you're not actually fading away as you talk.

Molamo: Oh, see, it's really hard to get used to ghost powers, too. That's another bad thing.

Cthunkle: Okay, well, I'm just gonna go to bed, then.

Mr. Eric: And Cthunkle left Molamo and his hoard, crawling into his canopy bed and pulling the curtains closed, when—a bright light shone from beyond his curtained bed!

Cthunkle: What's happening. I'm so sleepy.

Fair Elise: It is I, the Ghost of Ifmas Past.

Cthunkle: Do you have any idea how late it is?

Fair Elise: I'm from Ifmas past where it's always earlier than now.

Cthunkle: I still think you're being rude.

Mr. Eric: and the little fairy ghost pulled apart his bed curtains.

Fair Elise: Come. With but a touch of your tentacle upon my robe, we will travel back in time to your past.

Cthunkle: I don't need you to explain time travel to me.

Mr. Eric: Cthunkle grabbed the fairy's robes and—

Cthunkle: I remember this place.

Mr. Eric: They were in a snowy schoolyard and a young, excited robot llama ran up to Cthunkle.

Robot Llama: What are you doing for the holidays?

Cthunkle: I'm just staying at the school. I'm pretty sure I'm as old as the universe so I don't really have parents.

Robot Llama: Why don't you come with me and help me pick out a saxophone.

Cthunkle: Why are you showing us this memory. It took us 12 years to find that saxophone. We had to leave school and get jobs so that we could afford to continue the search.

Fair Elise: You were a very good friend, weren't you, Cthunkle.

Mr. Eric: And they were at an old music shop. Cthunkle and Robot Llama were closing up for the night when their boss came up to greet them.

Cthunkle: It's old Fuzzywig alive again.

Robot Llama: Oh hello old Fuzzywig. Merry Ifmas.

Petey the Pirate: Y'arr. I keep telling you, it's not a wig. I'm not bald.

Cthunkle: We were just saying your name, old Fuzzywig.

Petey the Pirate: Oh! Y'arr, of course you are, and I was just playing along, knowing of course that I have plenty of luscious hair atop my head.

Robot Llama: What a weird thing to say.

Petey the Pirate: Listen kids, you've been wonderful employees, and as an Ifmas present, I made you that saxophone.

Robot Llama: Wow.

Cthunkle: That's so generous.

Petey the Pirate: Y'arr, it's me finest work.

Robot Llama: It seriously almost good enough. I'll put it in the maybe pile.

Petey the Pirate: Y'arr. About that. You're gonna have to clear out all your own saxophones from the maybe pile in me back office. I've got to close the place down.

[Record scratch]

Cthunkle: No.

Robot Llama: Worst Ifmas ever.

Petey the Pirate: They just keep hiking up the rent.

Cthunkle: That's horrible. We should do something, like take over the world.

Robot Llama: That seems like an overreaction. Maybe we can affect change on a smaller scale. But I like where your head's at.

Petey the Pirate: Y'arr. I can introduce you to me friend Molamo. He's always talking about taking over the world, and such.

Cthunkle: Wow.

Fair Elise: Do you see, Cthunkle? You used to want to help people, and those same people used to care about you.

Cthunkle: Well thank goodness you're not showing me all the horrible things I did after that.

Fair Elise: I really wanted to but we're just running short on time.

Cthunkle: Ha ha ha ha. Come in and know me better, Man.

Fair Elise: Ifmas present. You're supposed to let me get him back to the bedroom first.

Mr. Eric: And a giant, jolly, green dragon crashed through the wall of old Fuzzywig's shop as the ghost of Ifmas past disappeared, floating away like twinkling stardust.

Cthunkle: Ifmas present, why did you burst through the wall after inviting me in?

Dracomax: I don't know. I'm very impulsive. Let's go get smoothies!

Cthunkle: I don't want a smoothie.

Dracomax: No, it's fine. I know a great place.

Cthunkle: [Sighs]

Dracomax: Climb on my back, I will fly us there.

Cthunkle: No, I can fly on my own.

Mr. Eric: And the ghost of Ifmas present picked up Cthunkle and burst through the ceiling of old fuzzywig's shop.

Will Ebenezer Cthunkle change his ways? Will he ever spit out the portly gentleman?

Abacus: Let's hope so!



Mr. Eric: Will Robot Llama ever find the right saxophone? We'll find out next week, with a brand-new episode.

[Falling harp scale.]

Cthunkle: Next week?

Mr. Eric: I know, Cthunkle. But look at the bright side.

Cthunkle: I prefer the dark side.

Mr. Eric: Well, as a timeless being, it'll still be your birthday next week.

Cthunkle: And not my birthday.

Mr. Eric: Yeah, that's confusing. But I hope you enjoyed the first half of your story.

Cthunkle: I can't wait to hear how I finally defeat these ghosts.

Mr. Eric: Yeah... it could happen.

I would like to thank Karen O'Keeffe, our co-creator, Craig Martinson for our theme song and all you kids at home who aren't just generous every now and then, but try to treat others fairly year-round.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]