

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 190: A Cthunkle Carol (Part 2)

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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 finishing up a two part story. What If World's Cthunkle Carol.

Cthunkle:              What if they missed the first part or just forgot because your stories are so forgettable.

Mr. Eric:                Cthunkle, I'm doing these stories as a surprise birthday party present for you.

Cthunkle:              I mean, the surprise was last week, now I've just been waiting.

Mr. Eric:                You said you were an interdimensional being that existed in all times.

Cthunkle:              Yes, but I can still get impatient.

Mr. Eric:                Well, let's catch folks at home up so we can finish out our story.

Cthunkle:              Well, if you remember, Ebenezer Cthunkle was a wonderful man who everyone loved and so they let him rule the world. And then for some reason, a bunch of ghosts started haunting him.

Mr. Eric:                Maybe I should do the recap.

Cthunkle:              No, I've got this.

Mr. Eric:                Ugh.

Cthunkle:              My nephew Fred invited me to his Ifmas party and I politely declined without implying that I might eat him.

Mr. Eric:                So I suppose you eating the portly gentleman who asked you for a donation—

Cthunkle:              Was just a convenient coincidence. And he insisted upon being eaten.

Abacus: [Echoing] No I didn't!

Mr. Eric: Well, you did fire Barbara Cratchit.

Cthunkle: Barb Cratchit.

Mr. Eric: She prefers Barbara.

Cthunkle: And I only did that because she refused to increase everyone's rent and everyone always wants their rent to go up. Higher is better. Bigger is better. More is more. See how nice I am.

Mr. Eric: So I guess you being haunted by Jacob Molamo and the ghost of Ifmas Past was just another coincidence?

Cthunkle: More like a misunderstanding. They seem to think I must change my ways?

Mr. Eric: But remember how you used to be so nice, helping Robot Llama find a new saxophone even though it took twelve years?

Cthunkle: Some friend. I haven't seen Robot Llama since I took over the world and made playing the saxophone illegal.

Mr. Eric: What was that last part.

Cthunkle: Oh, he just kept playing it all the time!

Mr. Eric: Okay, buddy.

Cthunkle: Oh, oh! And we left off with the ghost of Christmas Present bursting through the ceiling of Fuzzywig's old shop. I guess we were going to get smoothies or something.

Mr. Eric: Yeah, he's a really impulsive ghost. I don't know where this is going to go.

Cthunkle: It will probably end with me outlawing smoothies and everyone will cheer.

Mr. Eric: Hey, some people like smoothies.

Cthunkle: No, people like milkshakes. They suffer smoothies.

Mr. Eric: Well, I'm lactose intolerant, so—

Cthunkle: Fine, I'll outlaw lactose intolerance, too. Can we just get back to the story?

Mr. Eric: I guess we'd better. So we're going to take a quick break, and then we'll come back with What If World's Cthunkle Carol.

[Rising harp scale.]

Welcome back to A Cthunkle Carol. Remember that this story takes place some time ago in a What If World very different from the one you know. As we focus in on Ebenezer Cthunkle, and the jolly green dragon that is the ghost of Ifmas Present.

Dracomax: Ha ha ha, come in and know me better, man.

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: Ugh.

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

Cthunkle: 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.

Cthunkle: You shouldn't have destroyed his shop.

Dracomax: I did not. Time did. The people who rented from you could never afford to fix the place up and so it fell as has much of this city.

Mr. Eric: And as Cthunkle looked over the city that he ruled, he saw it mostly in shambles. Except for his giant fortress, and even that looked drafty and cold in the moonlight.

Cthunkle: Ugh, now I think I want that smoothie.

Mr. Eric: And they landed in front of a rickety old storefront. Well, actually it was a house, well actually it was a tiny apartment at the bottom of the

building, and half the front wall was missing, which made for a convenient counter, and a very drafty home.

- Poppa Loo: I can't believe that Cthunkle fired you on Ifmas Eve.
- Cthunkle: Oh dear.
- Mamma Jamma: Oh, don't you worry, Mr. Cratchit. We're going to pull through. We always do.
- Zach: [Cough cough] Mom, can I have some smoothie.
- Mamma Jamma: I'm sorry, Tiny Zim, we've got to sell these smoothies. They're too expensive to make.
- Poppa Loo: But I'll whip you up one of Mr. Cratchit's famous street sludge smoothies...
- Zach: Okay, Dad. You do make the finest street sludge around.
- Dracomax: I will take two smoothies please.
- Cthunkle: Oh, no no no no. I can't be seen by her. I just fired her.
- Dracomax: Don't worry. They cannot see us, we are ghosts!
- Cthunkle: I am a ghost in the present? That's really confusing.
- Mamma Jamma: Okay, two smoothies for the floating voices one of which sounds strangely like my old boss.
- Cthunkle: [Putting on a Cockney accent] Oh no it isn't your old boss, gov'ness.
- Mamma Jamma: Oh, I know. He'd never spend a ha' penny on a smoothie. Well, Merry Ifmas to you two. That'll be \$6.50 apiece.
- Dracomax: Do you accept ghost money?
- Mamma Jamma: Oh boy. Mr. Cratchit, we're gonna have to sell the furniture.
- Poppa Loo: I already used it for firewood, honey.
- Mamma Jamma: Oh, this is really not my day.
- Cthunkle: Oh, that's okay. I promise we'll pay ye back and in the mean time, Tiny Zim can have my smoothie.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, you slipped into a little bit of a pirate-y accent there.

Cthunkle: N'arr I did no. Okay, I'm leaving.

Mr. Eric: And as Cthunkle walked away from the dark storefront, he found himself in the middle of a brightly lit room where a bunch of well-dressed people seemed to be having a holiday party.

Fred: And then he ate the guy who was collecting donations!

Dracomax: They are talking about you!

Cthunkle: Yes, I understood that. Mm-hmm.

JF Kat: Ah, first, I bet he said, "Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?"

Fred: No, he didn't have time for a cool line like that. There were like three things happening at once.

JF Kat: What a pathetic individual.

Fred: I know, he's sad and lonely and mean, but he's still my family.

Cthunkle: Oh, he still loves me.

Fred: Which is why I'm gonna tell him that I won't put up with that kind of abuse anymore.

[Record scratch]

Threatening to eat his own nephew!

JF Kat: Good purr you!

Fred: [Unclear] makes me so mad I'm going to go eat a stick.

JF Kat: I thought you were trying to cut back.

Fred: Give me a break, Jojo [chewing noises] nomnom angry chewing...

Cthunkle: Ugh. Can we please get to the last ghost, that was rough.

Dracomax: Fine. I wanted to go chase that butterfly anyway.

Mr. Eric: And as the ghost of Ifmas Present flew off into the distance, the bright room faded away and Cthunkle found himself in the middle of his fortress again, except it was even darker than usual.

Cthunkle: Something's missing.

Mr. Eric: Cthunkle noticed a robed figure towering over him and it pointed a big bony hand toward the center of the fortress, where a massive hoard had once climbed all the way to the vaulted ceiling.

Cthunkle: Yes, something's definitely missing.

Mr. Eric: The hand pointed even more insistently toward the missing hoard of gem and jewels and toys.

Cthunkle: I know! It's your skin. You're a skeleton.

Scully: Oh, Cthunkle! All your treasure's gone!

Mr. Eric: Said the ghost of Ifmas Yet to Come.

Cthunkle: No. No! How could this have happened, I've learned my lesson. I'll be good! Just please don't take away my riches.

Scully: Uh, I don't think you've learned your lesson at all.

Mr. Eric: The skeleton snapped its hand and they were in front of that old smoothie storefront.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, thank goodness that Cthunkle's gone!

Poppa Loo: And everyone in What If World got a fair share of their money back.

Zach: It was truly an Ifmas miracle [weak cough]. I just wish it could have happened before I turned into a sludge monster.

Mamma Jamma: Me too, honey. Me too.

Poppa Loo: But you being a sludge monster allowed you to finally defeat Cthunkle and imprison him inside an extinct volcano forever.

Zach: I know that, Dad. I don't know why you feel the need to say that every day.

Poppa Loo: I'm just really happy about how things turned out for us.

Cthunkle: No! If only I had treated others fairly, I wouldn't have eventually been overthrown. I've been such a fool.

Scully: Well, yeah. But also maybe you would have made some friends and been happy.

Cthunkle: Quick, take me back to the present, I've got to spread Ifmas cheer so that this future never happens.

Scully: Yeah, well, I'll take it, I guess.

Mr. Eric: And with a snap, Ebenezer Cthunkle was back in his four-post bed. He sprung out, tentacles flailing, and put on his finest, least slimy suit. Then he scuttled all the way to Fred's house.

Cthunkle: [Knocks] Fred!

Fred: Oh, what is it.

Cthunkle: I want to come to your party.

Fred: Oh, I guess. But can you tone down your attitude for a minute.

Cthunkle: I'll tone it down forever. You know, a little.

Fred: Uhh...

Cthunkle: And also, I'll make you partner at the firm, Cthunkle and Fred.

Fred: Oh, that sounds pretty good.

Cthunkle: Now, help me rehire my clerk, Barb Cratchit.

Fred: I think she prefers Barbara.

Mr. Eric: And off they rushed to the drafty apartment building where Barbara, Mr. Cratchit, and Tiny Zim all huddled together while making smoothies.

Cthunkle: You know, this isn't zoned for commercial use.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, come on, Cthunkle.

Cthunkle: And who wants a smoothie in the middle of winter.

Zach: [Cough cough] I would like one.

Poppa Loo: You get out of the hole in the front of my house, Cthunkle.

Cthunkle: All right, but not before I hire you back, Barb Cratchit, at double your salary.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, oh, oh... okay.

Cthunkle: So give that boy some fruits and vegetables so he doesn't turn into a sludge monster or something.

Fred: Yeah, and guess what? He made me partner.

[Record scratch]

Mamma Jamma: Excuse me?

Fred: Yeah, it's an Ifmas miracle! I don't even know anything about landscaping.

Mamma Jamma: No, he's a landlord of the entire world.

Fred: Okay, sounds fun. As long as I get to eat sticks.

Mamma Jamma: Cthunkle, why wouldn't you make me partner?

Cthunkle: Fine.

Mamma Jamma: Okay, Cthunkle, as your partner, first things first. Spit out the portly gentleman.

Cthunkle: What? I can't. I have finished eating him.

Abacus: No, he hasn't.

Cthunkle: Oh, sorry, I was just working on my ventriloquism act. No, he hasn't.

Abacus: That wasn't me. I'm here, in his belly.

Cthunkle: That wasn't me, I'm here... you're not buying this, are you?

Mamma Jamma: I am not.

Cthunkle: [Groans] [Blech]

Abacus: Eugh. Hey, do you know he's got a clown museum in his stomach.

Mamma Jamma: Okay, Cthunkle, now give him a donation. A big one.

Cthunkle: Oh, isn't not eating him enough?

Mamma Jamma: Cthunkle. I thought you were trying to be better.

Cthunkle: I just should have made Fred partner.

Fred: I probably would have had you not eat him, too. Well, if I'd remembered. Which I probably wouldn't have. So I really do think that Barbara Cratchit's a better person for the job.

Cthunkle: Fine.

Mr. Eric: And Cthunkle was begrudgingly better than his word. Mostly because he'd hired somebody competent to do his job and Barbara Cratchit gave away most of Cthunkle's vast fortune and adjusted rents and interest rates so that people could live affordably.

Cthunkle: Barbara, I thought we were just going to send a couple of presents to an orphanage or something.

Mamma Jamma: Oh yeah, we're doing that, too. To all of the orphanages.

Cthunkle: Ugh.

Mamma Jamma: I'll need another one of those rubies the size of my head.

Cthunkle: Oh, but that was my second to last one.

Zach: Don't worry, Uncle Cthunkle.

Mr. Eric: As Tiny Zim had come to call him.

Zach: I made you a papier mâché ruby in art class.

Cthunkle: Great.

Mr. Eric: And while not everyone in What If World could ever really get behind Cthunkle, they mostly didn't dislike him anymore. And Cthunkle's icy fortress had been converted into a year-round ice skating rink.

Mamma Jamma: By the way, I had your fortress converted into an ice-skating rink.

Cthunkle: Oh, that was my second to last fortress.

Mr. Eric: And if you ever visit Cthunkle's last fortress, deep beneath Squid Lake, you won't find as many gems or jewels, but you will find a papier mâché ruby carefully encased against the water and somehow shining brighter than any riches ever could.

The—

Robot Llama: I found my new saxophone! [Saxophone playing] It only took twelve years, but then I got bored of it.

Cthunkle: Robot Llama, you're back! I used my vast riches to commission you the finest saxophone ever made. I've missed you, old friend.

Robot Llama: It's made of solid platinum with sapphire keys.

Cthunkle: That's right.

Robot Llama: A pure magic mouthpiece.

Cthunkle: I hope you like it.

Robot Llama: I'll put it with the maybes.

Cthunkle: [Groans]

Mr. Eric: The end.

[Falling harp scale.]

Well, May, Lars, and Otto, I hope you enjoyed your story.

Cthunkle: What a nice surprise birthday present. I'd totally forgotten about that time I used to own the world.

Mr. Eric: I know, weird, right? Well, happy birthday, Cthunkle. I'm glad you liked it, too.

I want to thank you all for sticking with me through this year. I've seen so many nice reviews and emails, and heard so many kind words from kids and parents alike, and it's truly meant a lot to me.

Fred: Speaking of which, I've got a shout out for Amos, age seven, who likes building with K'Nex and playing Mario Kart.

JF Kat: Purr, I'm here to meow out Ewan, who's seven and is a huge fan of What If World, and his little brother Lucian.

Fred: Oh, I've got a woof woof for Carson, also age seven, who loves Pokémon, Beyblades, his family, and nature.

Cthunkle: Ooh, I get to give a shout out on my special birthday, to Cuan, also seven, and his little brother Orin who is four, from Dublin.

Fred: Finally, Isabel, age seven, who loves her big, black puppy named Twilight.

Mr. Eric:

And 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 being kind and fair sometimes takes a lot of work but it always feels great.

Until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]

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