

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 225: What if Tuna interviewed Mr. Eric?

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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.

Tuna: Hey there folks, and welcome back to What If World, the show where
your questions and ideas inspire off-the-cuff stories. Or in this case,
interviews. I'm Tuna, the invisible dog and I'm running the show this
week thanks to a listener named Una.

Una: Hello, my name is Una and I really like Tuna the cat. My What If Question
is what if Tuna interviewed Mr. Eric.

Tuna: Hey, Una! Our names rhyme. One small correction, I am a dog, at least, I
think I am. You know, I have been invisible my whole life so I don't know.
I know that I'm fluffy, I like naps, and I like eating... uh, I mean, maybe I
am a cat.

Mr. Eric: Hey, Tuna. Are we gonna do the interview, or?

Tuna: Oh hey there, Mr. Eric. Welcome to the Tuna-clock news. I learned my
lesson from the last story, when Sloan taught me to only focus on the
truth when I'm dealing out news.

Mr. Eric: That is so inspiring. I've known a few journalists, and they really care
about making sure that the stories they tell are verified and—

Tuna: So let's find out what if Tuna interviewed Mr. Eric, plus there might be
another couple of what if questions along the way.

[Rising harp scale]

All right, Mr. Eric. You heard it here, first. I'm only interested in the truth.

Mr. Eric: Great. I want to be truthful.

Tuna: And I'm not talkin' about the sometimes truth, I'm talking about the
Tunaversal truth.

Mr. Eric: Tuna... versal?

Tuna: Mr. Eric, what was the first time you ever had tuna?

Mr. Eric: Oh, um, well, I don't really remember the first time, but my mom used to make us tuna fish sandwiches for lunch and I liked them for a while but then kids started making fun of me because my locker would always smell.

Tuna: Wait, wait, wait, you're telling me you don't like tuna anymore?

Mr. Eric: No, I still like tuna. It's just that if I took one to work I would maybe just make sure that that lunch box was extra smell-proof.

Tuna: Wrong answer.

Mr. Eric: I'm sorry. I thought we were just saying the truth.

Tuna: Next question. What's your favorite type of tuna.

Mr. Eric: Well, to be honest, I don't eat meat very often anymore. Although, I do occasionally have fish.

Tuna: Oh, boy, this is a real disappointment of you so far.

Mr. Eric: Well, well, Miss Karen makes a really nice tuna salad and she adds corn for extra crunch, which I'd never encountered before but I really like and Callum does, too.

Tuna: What are your feelings on hot tuna?

Mr. Eric: I thought this interview was going to be about me?

Tuna: Yes, I'm asking for your feelings on hot tuna.

Mr. Eric: I guess if the tuna's older, you should definitely cook it.

Tuna: What about a tuna melt?

Mr. Eric: Oh, I do enjoy one of those, although a grilled cheese is usually more up my alley.

Tuna: Now we've got a surprise what if question from a listener named Kari.

Kari: Hi, Mr. Eric. My name is Kari and my what if question is what if kittens turned into fishes. Like they were half kitties and half fishies. Thank you.

Mr. Eric: Ooh, kittens turning into fishes, like a mer-cat.

Tuna: Or a mer-tuna.

Mr. Eric: Oh, cool. Yeah, we always think about the lower half just being generic fish, but it could be a shark fin or a whale body. Or the big body of a tuna.

Tuna: Now I'm starting to wish I was a cat so I could be half tuna, although I wouldn't want to eat my own tail, I suppose.

Mr. Eric: You know, that's a really good point. Sometimes we like things that aren't all that good for us. Like, I love video games, and I deserve to play them every now and then but I found an educational game that helps me learn Spanish, so I try to make sure I only play that game most of the time.

Tuna: Wow, you have gotten way off course.

Mr. Eric: Oh, I'm sorry. I just thought we were, we would sort of dig into other topics as we went along.

Tuna: Next question. Once, I joined a choir but I quit when someone told me I was out of tune-ah. [Cricket]

Mr. Eric: Are you finished?

Tuna: I had finished the tuna, yes, and that's why I quit.

Mr. Eric: So they didn't have enough tuna at choir practice for you, or is this kind of a joke?

Tuna: No, it's the truth. I only ever tell the truth now, and that's all I'm interested in.

Mr. Eric: Well, of course, but there's so much to learn out in the world so maybe we should sort of expand our horizons outside of tuna?

Tuna: Very well, how do you come up with your stories?

Mr. Eric: That's a really great question.

Tuna: And is there tuna involved?

Mr. Eric: Not often.

Tuna: Then, let's move on.

Mr. Eric: Hang on, hang on. Maybe somebody might be interested in the answer.

Tuna: But surely if I'm not interested, then nobody else is.

Mr. Eric: Oh, now I get it. Pursuing your passions, Tuna, that's very important. But when you're having a conversation, that's a chance to learn about someone else's passions.

Tuna: And how they relate to me and might improve my life.

Mr. Eric: Maybe, or you might just make a cool connection and help support each other and broaden each other's interests.

Tuna: Oh. Okay, so. How do you come up with stories?

Mr. Eric: Well, I call them off-the-cuff stories and that's mostly what they are. Once I've got the question or questions, I'll think about what characters might be in that story and how they might interact and if they might learn something along the way.

Tuna: Like how to properly sear mahi mahi?

Mr. Eric: Sure, but usually more of a moral lesson.

Tuna: Like if it's wrong to steal someone else's tuna.

Mr. Eric: Actually, usually it doesn't have anything to do with tuna. And aren't cats more tuna-crazy than dogs?

Tuna: Are you trying to tell me who I can and can't be? My name is Tuna the Invisible Dog, so please don't map your expectations onto who I am.

Mr. Eric: Wow. Now that would be a really good lesson for a story.

Tuna: Oh, well, go on. You get your question, you figure out your characters and then what? You write out a script?

Mr. Eric: Well, sometimes if I'm having a guest, we'll send out an outline but usually I just like to let my characters talk, and I narrate what I see and then we see how the story turns out.

Tuna: A-ha, I caught you in a lie, Mr. Eric. [Dun dun DUNNNNN!] Your stories are fiction, make-believe! So what you're describing is not possible!

Mr. Eric: That's the beauty of imagination. I have kids send me questions and impersonate our characters and write little stories of their own and they can hear these characters, these make-believe characters in their heads because that's how strong and wondrous the imagination can be.

Tuna: So you're not some kind of for-tuna teller, you're just good at make-believe?

Mr. Eric: Well, I'm okay at it. I practice a lot and that makes my imagination stronger and I have a lot of help from all our listeners, who send in their what if questions and sometimes they send me drawings. And occasionally a kid or grown-up will just send me a nice note and that feeds my soul and helps me keep wondering even if I've had a bad day or I'm feeling a little tired.

Tuna: And when you're feeling tired, what variety of tuna gives you a good pick up?

Mr. Eric: Well, we all feel tired sometimes, Tuna. And if we think and feel and leave ourselves open, we can start to understand the challenges that other people are going through. Some grown-ups think kids have it easy, for example. But I've worked with kids my whole life and now I'm raising two of my own and I see how hard they have to work to learn and do and understand.

Tuna: And if you were a magical kind of creature, Mr. Eric, what would you like to be?

Mr. Eric: Huh, well, I think the correct answer here is, a tunacorn.

Tuna: Oh, ho ho ho. That was the answer I wanted to hear but, uh, what would the real answer be?

Mr. Eric: I've always wanted to see what animals dream, so is there a creature that can do that?

Tuna: Interestingly enough, yes. It's called a tunacorn.

Mr. Eric: That is interesting.

Tuna: We've got one more what if question from a listener named Sophie.

Sophie: Hi, my name is Sophie. I'm eight years old. My favorite thing is my mom and my what if question is what if Abacus P. Grumbler turned into a fish and he fell into a fish bowl and his wizard hat fell under the couch and everybody thought he was a household pet? Thanks! Bye.

Mr. Eric: Thank you, Sophie. I've been wondering why I have a fish tank in my office.

Abacus: Tuna, you weren't going to tell him?

Tuna: Oh yeah, I had Albacore P. Grumbler teleport me here.

Mr. Eric: It's actually Abacus P. Grumbler.

Abacus: Oh, no, I like that name for me when I'm in tuna form.

Mr. Eric: Is that like a uniform that makes you look like a tuna.

Abacus: Sadly, no. The crystal ball I used to channel my magic had a crack in it so when I got here, it turned into a fish bowl and it turned me into a tuna and now here I am.

Tuna: I gotta say, you look great.

Abacus: That is so kind.

Mr. Eric: So are you saying you want to stay a tuna?

Abacus: Uh, maybe if I could get a bigger tank. You know the average Atlantic bluefin is over 500 pounds.

Mr. Eric: Yeah, you do look a little tight in there, Abacus. Maybe let's just find your wizard hat, and—

Abacus: No, no, no. I'm content to listen to the rest of the interview. After all, I'm tuna's ride.

Tuna: Well, I do have one more question for you, Mr. Eric.

Mr. Eric: Oh, thank you. I feel like there's just so much we haven't gotten to.

Tuna: Well, good, because this is a really important one. What are chickpeas and why are they so evil?

Mr. Eric: Chickpeas? Like garbanzo beans?

Tuna: Don't say their real name. You might draw their attention.

Mr. Eric: Well, dogs can eat cooked and plainly prepared chickpeas, but cats or dogs who may happen to have a cat-like digestive system should definitely not eat chickpeas. Chickpeas are not good for cats.

Tuna: What are you, my dietician? I'm asking why they're evil.

Abacus: He's probably referring to the Great Garbanzo, one of the most wicked wizards of our time.

Mr. Eric: Our time? Are you and Tuna both a thousand years old?

Tuna: Heh, he wishes. I'm only 890. Isn't that right, oldtimer?

Abacus: Ha, kids these days.

Mr. Eric: Why does everybody say that? Like, every generation says, "Kids these days?"

Abacus: Well, it's the only thing grown-ups can ever really agree on.

Tuna: Exactly. We've all voted and it's unanimous. Kids these days.

Mr. Eric: No follow up to that?

Tuna: Hey, who's the interviewer and who's the interviewee? I do the follow ups.

Mr. Eric: Heh. Invisible animals these days.

[Dramatic breaking news music plays in the background.]

Tuna: Well, you heard it here first, folks. Mr. Eric doesn't know anything about tuna or invisible animals.

Abacus: Or reversing curses.

Tuna: And he probably did this interview because he was just too busy to do a whole story.

Mr. Eric: I'll have you know I had two sick kids plus a minor surgery. I'm okay, but—

Tuna: Hey, whoa, whoa. The interview's over, here.

[Falling harp scale]

Yeah, see? There's the end sound. We're done.

Mr. Eric: Well, I'd like to thank you for this opor-tuna-ty.

Tuna: Heh heh.

Abacus: Oh yes, he's your biggest fin.

Tuna: Oh, you two. You two need to stop, this is, that's really enough.

Una, Kari, and Sophie, I hope you enjoyed this interview.

Abacus: Wait, am I just gonna stay here and be a fish?

Mr. Eric: Well, Tuna said it. I don't know how to reverse the curse.

Abacus: Can you at least get my wizard hat from behind the couch?

Tuna: Oh yeah, sure. There you go. Now you look like a proper Albacore P. Grumbler to me.

Abacus: Oh, wait. You're not going to eat me, are you?

Tuna: Maybe we'll find out if you ever interview me from inside my stomach.

Abacus: Oh, you do flatter.

Dracomax: Dracomax here to shout out Hubert, age ten. And Hubert's little brother Heath.

Tabby Tallulah: And it is I, Tabby Tallulah, here to shout out Sarah, age eleven. She is a big fan of the show.

JF Kat: Plus there's Kelly. She is five and a half and her favorite character is me, JF Kat!

Cthunkle: Also Micah, who will be six in December. Micah says, "They're all my favorite characters, but I really love Cthunkle." You made the right choice.

Abacus: And finally, it is I, Albacore P. Grumbler here to shout out Simon, age seven and Gideon, age five. Simon likes JF Kat and Gideon likes Fred the Dog. But they chose me to do their shout out. Simon and Gideon like Pokemon, The Legend of Zelda, pizza, playing outside and their doggy, Olive.

Tuna: And I'd like to thank Karen O'Keeffe, co-creator of What If World, Craig Martinson, who wrote and performed our theme song, our awesome helper, Miss Lynn, and all you kids at home who know that talking to others means sharing your interests and not just talking about how much you love tuna even though tuna's the absolute best. Don't forget to tuna in next time.

And until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme plays.]