

Podcast: What If World

[Episode 244: Guilds & Goblins 14: What if cupcakes were alive?](#)

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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.

[Guilds & Goblins music.]

- Mr. Eric: Greetings, Adventurers, and welcome back to Guilds & Goblins, the What If World show where your questions and ideas combine with our real-life in the moment dice rolls to create off-the-cuff adventures. I'm Mr. Eric, your host, joined as always by our players.
- Lola Rabbit: Yeah, I'm Lola Rabbit. I play Lowlandra. I'm a were-bunny nature mage.
- Scully: I'm Scully the Squid, I play Scullen Bones, a skeleton trickster.
- Zizi: I'm Zizi Jammaloo and I play Turtok, a turtle timekeeper.
- Zach: And I'm Zizi's little brother, Zach, but you might know my character, Zachimedes, the goblin eggchanter.
- Mr. Eric: Thank you my fearless players, now we've still got a secret question from Silas that we didn't fully reveal last week, except for it involving a big bad wolf. But we also have one more question from a listener named Jane.
- Jane: Hi, my name is Jane, and my what if question is what if cupcakes were alive?
- Mr. Eric: Jane, thank you so much for your questions. The land of Berend seems to be overrun with baked goods and seeing as I'm rather hungry, we should jump straight into the adventure.
- Zizi: Uh, Mr. Eric, shouldn't we do a quick recap, first?
- Mr. Eric: Oh, thank you, Zizi, yes we should.
- Zach: Previously on Guilds & Goblins!

Lola Rabbit: We all escaped the trumpet of travel but were then set upon a bunch of unicars.

Zizi: As well as me, Turtok, the turtle. I'd been sent by the Underlows to help get everybody back to their guilds and bring the heroes of the trumpet of travel to meet the Underlows, themselves.

Scully: Of course, we didn't quite trust Turtok, but she had a magical contract saying she'd do anything she could to help us reach the Underlows.

Zach: So we climbed inside the turtle's shell, seeing that it was bigger on the inside.

Zizi: And then Turtok started flying them far, far away across Berend.

Lola Rabbit: Until we set upon by some kind of giant space chicken that knocked us out of the sky!

Scully: We crash-landed in the ocean and barely managed to swim to safety before passing out!

Mr. Eric: But when the adventurers awoke, they found themselves staring down the snout of a large werewolf calling themself the big bad wolf. So let's jump back into our adventure and find out what if cupcakes were alive?

[Rising harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: The big bad wolf drew closer and closer, their padded, paw-like hands reaching towards you with long, sharp nails.

Big Bad Wolf: Sorry, I laugh when I'm nervous.

Mr. Eric: Said the big bad wolf.

Big Bad Wolf: You look hurt. Do you want to come back to my place and rest up a bit?

Zach: You're not gonna eat us?

Big Bad Wolf: Oh, that would be such a big bad wolf thing to do, wouldn't it? I'm so ashamed of meself.

Zizi: But you're trying to help us and not eat us.

Big Bad Wolf: But I'm a big bad wolf! [Crying] Pronouns he/they, and being bad is all I'm good at so I'll probably mess up trying to help you.

Lola Rabbit: Uh, okay... lead the way.

Mr. Eric: It was night time but the full moon shone brightly and you four had no trouble following after the big bad wolf, though he offered to carry Scullen Bones, who was still a jumble of shipwrecked bones, seaweed, wood, rusty metal, and old pirate bandannas.

Scully: Oh, sure. I'll let them carry me.

Mr. Eric: In the distance, you can see an opulent, well-lit mansion, reaching far above the tropical trees. But the big bad wolf was taking you in the opposite direction.

Zizi: Turtok wonders why you aren't taking us toward that town?

Big Bad Wolf: Oh, sorry, Turtok. I'm too bad to live in that nice town. I'd just ruin everything and stink it up with my wet werewolf fur. But don't worry, I've got a perfectly dreadful hovel inside a cave miles away from town where I can't harm no one.

Zach: Zachimedes is a little confused by all this. Does the big bad wolf seem dangerous to me?

Mr. Eric: Roll wonder, Zach.

Zach: First roll of the game. That's a natural 1...

Mr. Eric: Your head's still swimming from the effort of getting everyone to shore. You have no idea or not whether you can trust him. Lowlandra, since you have heightened bunny senses, I'd like you to make a learn roll.

Lola Rabbit: Yeah, okay. 19!

Mr. Eric: You notice the big bad wolf has been carefully tiptoeing across the ground. When you see them veer suddenly, slightly to the left, you notice a tiny cupcake person standing in front of you, waving a lit birthday candle.

Jilas: About ye, foul werebeast!

Lola Rabbit: Whoa, whoa, foul werebeast? I'm a werebunny. We're like the cutest of all the werebeasts.

Jilas: There's nothing cute about a horrible cupcake-eating creature such as yourself.

Lola Rabbit: Excuse me? I only eat carrot cupcakes and I would never eat a talking creature, thank you very much.

Mr. Eric: The big bad wolf suddenly rushes over to you.

Big Bad Wolf: I'm sorry, Master Jilas. Please ignore my were friend. She must not realize how bad she is.

Jilas: Then bring her into town tomorrow and we'll have her sign the contract legally stating for all that she is a foul werebeast and that she will do everything in her power to serve the muffin people and their cupcake lords. Then we can all live together in peace.

Zach: That doesn't sound like living together at all.

Scully: Scullen's gonna rattle their bones spookily and say, shoo! Get out of here, you mean old cupcake. I don't want to listen to you anymore!

Mr. Eric: The cupcake called Master Jilas leaps up with a start, nearly dropping their birthday candle torch before fleeing back toward the town.

Jilas: An enchanted skeleton! Surely another big bad creature! I must tell the others! We must draw up new contracts!

Big Bad Wolf: Oh, no.

Mr. Eric: Said the big bad wolf.

Big Bad Wolf: Why were you so rude to Master Jilas?

Zach: We were rude? He was awful!

Big Bad Wolf: He was right. All the little masters are right about me.

Zizi: And how do you know he's right?

Big Bad Wolf: Well, because it's in writing. If it's in writing, it has to be right.

Lola Rabbit: That is not how writing works.

Big Bad Wolf: Now they're going to write you four up, too. You've been around this big bad wolf so long you've all become bad, yourselves.

Scully: That's the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard, except for everything that came out of Jilas's mouth.

Big Bad Wolf: Now we must hurry. You can only rest the night, then I'll do my best to get you off the island before you're all the way bad like me.

Mr. Eric: And the big bad wolf rushed off into the darkness, urging you all to follow.

[Time skip noise.]

Mr. Eric: Before long you find yourself at the perfectly dreadful hovel of the big bad wolf. Everything was damp and mossy and the furniture seemed to be made of old driftwood and salvage, tied together with strands of gluey seaweed. The werewolf starts cooking you all a big pot of seaweed stew, adding a variety of herbs and spices you've never seen and making the run-down home of this wolf seem warm and welcoming.

Zach: How is it that they've built a giant mansion while you sleep made on a bed made of driftwood inside a mossy old cave?

Big Bad Wolf: Well, I helped them collect all the good wood, but I'm a bad wolf, so this scrap's good enough for me.

Lola Rabbit: Okay, you need to stop telling yourself that. You know, when people say a thing to you over and over and over and sometimes it starts to sound true, even if it isn't.

Big Bad Wolf: No, no no no! If you keep telling me I'm not bad, I might start to believe it!

Zach: And what's wrong with that? Why don't you try some positive self talk for a change.

Big Bad Wolf: [Clears throat and grumbles]

Mr. Eric: But the werewolf just grumbled and shook his head, bending back over the seaweed stew.

[Time skip noise.]

Mr. Eric: About an hour passes and you're all feeling tired and full of delicious stew as the big bad wolf starts to slink back out of the cave.

Scully: Hey, where you going?

Big Bad Wolf: Oh, it's not safe for you to sleep next to someone so bad. I'm gonna head to the other end of the island to keep you all safe. Then I'll curl up for a nice nap, and I'll be fresh again tomorrow night.

Lola Rabbit: Lowlandra steps in front of the entrance of the cave. This is your house, says Lowlandra. Just let us know how we can help you and maybe get you away from these muffin people.

Big Bad Wolf: Don't worry, little critters. I'm happier being controlled by them. That way I know I won't hurt anybody.

Zach: Did you hurt people before?

Big Bad Wolf: I'm not sure but I was a puppy. I can't remember much from those days.

Scully: Well, puppies make mistakes.

Zizi: Turtok made many mistakes as a hatchling turtle. That is how she learned and grew.

Zach: So just tell us how we can help you!

Big Bad Wolf: No, the most bad thing you can do is break into the Muffin Mansion Maze.

Scully: The Muffin Mansion Maze?

Big Bad Wolf: It's where the magic contracts are held. Oh, I shouldn't be telling you that. I'm bad. I'm such a bad wolf.

Zizi: Turtok thinks it is very brave to accept the help of others.

Big Bad Wolf: Oh, they've got traps and guardians everywhere, nevermind the space chicken.

Zach: Yeah, what's up with that space chicken?

Big Bad Wolf: Oh, I'm not supposed to talk about the space chicken. I've got to run away before I do anything else bad. I'll help you off the island tomorrow night. Just rest up, promise me. I don't want anything bad happening to you under my care.

Lola Rabbit: Yeah, we promise, we promise. And listen, if it'll make you more comfortable, then you know, absolutely you can go, of course.

Mr. Eric: But the big bad wolf had already run off, leaving you with a warm, cozy fire burning and some leftover seaweed stew for later.

[Time skip noise.]

Mr. Eric: You all wake up feeling very rested and Scullen? Overnight, all your shipwrecked material seems to have bonded with your bones.

Scully: What?

Mr. Eric: Now you can use driftwood, seaweed, old bandannas and bits of metal when doing your skeleton shapeshifting. And you can give yourself feet again!

Scully: Cool. I'll rearrange myself so I have feet that are made of bones and driftwood screwed together with some old metal and the rest of my beat-up and cracked bones will be wrapped up with seaweed and pirate bandannas.

Mr. Eric: Lowlandra, when you wake up, you see in the dirt, on the cave floor, three perfect carrots have sprouted. One purple, one yellow, one orange, looking like they could have grown straight from the carrot forest of your homeland.

Lola Rabbit: Do I know what they do, yet?

Mr. Eric: Well, Lola Rabbit does, because you helped me come up with them, but maybe Lowlandra isn't quite sure yet.

Lola Rabbit: Yeah, I'll tuck them away for later.

Mr. Eric: And finally, Zach, it's late morning as you've all slept in quite a bit, and resting under the bright, warm sun is a blue egg with purple spots that's as big as Zachimedes, and twice as heavy, and well, tell us about your invention.

Zach: It's a metal oval designed to fit an egg, well, just this size.

Scully: Aren't you the least bit curious where that egg came from?

Zach: Well, I leveled up, so I get a new egg power.

Lola Rabbit: Well, yeah, but it still has to—

Zach: The egg lays on its side and then four legs sprout out from the metal frame and I climb up and ride my new helper, named Egglegs.

Mr. Eric: Egglegs, your helper, opens up a compartment where you can put three of your enchanted eggs to power the machine.

Zach: Yeah, I drop three eggs in there and it closes shut.

Scully: You're gonna need a seatbelt if you want to ride that thing all the time, though.

Zach: Yeah, sitting on an egg isn't as comfortable as I expected, and...

Mr. Eric: And Turtok, you have time to finish tinkering with your little pocketwatch, and that's a thing you can try to use later.

Zizi: Yes, fair guild master.

Mr. Eric: You can just call me Eric.

Lola Rabbit: So what, we're headed into town, right? We got to bust into this Muffin Mansion, find the werewolf's contract and tear it up so they can't treat him like dirt anymore.

Mr. Eric: Well, are you gonna walk through the town in broad daylight? Try to sneak in somehow? Or maybe wait until nightfall and try to get help from the big bad wolf.

Zach: Oh, he's just going to try to get us to leave. I think we have to do this while he's still asleep.

Zizi: I could fly all of us and land on top of the mansion as long as it's less than an hour's flight away.

Mr. Eric: So rather than trudging through a dangerous jungle without a big bad wolf to scare all the other monsters away, you simply climb inside Turtok and let the heliclockter whisk you away to the top of the Muffin Mansion.

Scully: So luxurious.

Lola Rabbit: Yeah, we should have been flying this whole time.

Zizi: Well, now that my potion fuel wore off, I can only do this for an hour a day.

Zach: Well, we've still got a half hour of flying left to get back so it's perfect, as long as nothing goes seriously wrong.

[Record scratch.]

Scully: Why would you ever say something like that?

Mr. Eric: All right, team. You've arrived at the mansion. You see that Turtok is too big for you to squeeze in through the chimney, but there is a high-up



balcony that leads to a great door and a slightly smaller window. You could try to sneak in through either one.

Scully: Well, let's drop down sneakily and investigate.

Mr. Eric: Both the door and window are locked from the inside and there's no mechanism or keyhole to unlock it from this side, so what do you do?

Scully: Okay, I've got a sneaky trickster idea. I'm gonna use some of my sticky seaweed and stick it to the glass. Then Zachimedes, can you heat up one of your eggs so it's as hot as a laser and try to cut around the glass?

Zach: Yeah, what should I roll?

Mr. Eric: Roll wonder, Zach, but this is pretty precise work, so you'll have to roll kind of high.

Zach: Right... 18 + 3, 21!

Mr. Eric: Zach, you heat up the tippity top of one of your magic eggs until it's laser hot and you manage to cut a perfectly precise hole out of the glass. And Scullen, once you've removed it with your sticky seaweed, it's a simple thing to crawl your hand in, unlock the window, and have everyone climb within.

Now, I need you to all roll dare to see how sneaky you are. At least two of you have to succeed or else you're gonna get noticed.

Lola Rabbit: Yeah, we can do that. 14.

Zizi: 17.

Mr. Eric: Okay, you can stop there, that's enough. You're collectively sneaking off and helping each other quietly go inside, but no one seems to notice. You find yourself in an opulent meeting room with a very small but long table set with tiny, beautifully carved chairs that look just big enough to fit a muffin-sized person, while the ceilings must feel cavernously large to these muffin people. Turtok, you kind of have to duck down to fit comfortably inside.

Zizi: Does it look like there are any contracts around?

Mr. Eric: You think I'd make it that'd easy, Zizi?

Zizi: There's always hoping.

Mr. Eric: Well, no. The contracts aren't in this room and when you step out into the hallway and close the door behind you, you realize the door wasn't made of wood but long, soft panels of beautifully chocolatey brownies. But the seams of the door seem to melt away as the door turns into nothing more than a brownie wall.

Zach: Can I try to reach through it? This could have been our way out.

Mr. Eric: It may look and smell and even feel like a brownie, but when you try to push your fingers and hand through, the brownie wall resists, becoming as hard as stone.

Scully: Do we see any other doors?

Mr. Eric: As you look down to the end of the hallway, it seems to suddenly turn and shift, and at the other end of the hallway, the brownie floors reshape themselves into steps headed down!

Zach: I want to take out an egg light and hang it from Eggleg's neck. Well, collar. I guess the egg doesn't really have a neck.

Mr. Eric: You hang a warm, glowing egg light from your new helper and it swings back and forth like a lantern.

Zach: Can I enchant the light to help reveal doors?

Mr. Eric: As you try to enhance your eggchantment, you feel the magic of this mansion pushing back against you. All wonder checks for this challenge will be team rolls, meaning two or more of you will have to use your turn and succeed on a wonder roll, otherwise your magic fails.

Scully: Can I help even if I don't use magic?

Mr. Eric: You are a talking skeleton, Scullen. But yes, you don't need to be magical to help, you just need to be helpful.

Scully: All right, I'll take one of my lucky pirate doubloons and tie it to the egg with a little string.

Lola Rabbit: You won't have to tie it because I'm gonna use my nature magic to make little vines hold it into place around the egg.

Zizi: I'll stand watch, as I'm still not sure if they trust me.

Mr. Eric: All right, Scullen, Lowlandra, and Zachimedes, give me a roll.

Lola Rabbit: Ooh, that's an 8.

Zach: That's a 14.

Scully: It's all down to me... that's a 5.

Mr. Eric: You're all concentrating together, trying to get your magic to work. And while it doesn't quite fizzle, your efforts are interrupted as you hear a loud, strange noise behind you that interrupts your concentration! You look down at the floor and see what you thought was marble is actually hardened cookie dough with swirls of chocolate. And up from that floor rises a doughy guardian. It looks like a large, muscly person made entirely of chocolate chip cookie, except that it's missing its head! And it starts stomping towards you.

Zach: Can we out run it?

Mr. Eric: It does seem pretty slow.

Lola Rabbit: And it might not be a bad idea to get moving.

Zach: Okay, we run downstairs away from the guardian.

Mr. Eric: You're fast enough to keep ahead of it, but just barely. It keeps reaching out to try to grab you, which might make it hard to focus on the future.

Zizi: I'll run ahead and start tapping on walls, seeing if any sound hollow and might lead to a room.

Mr. Eric: Roll learn, Turtok.

Zizi:  $9 + 1$  is 10.

Mr. Eric: That's not gonna cut it for this challenge.

Zizi: I was afraid you'd say that.

Mr. Eric: You're inspecting a portrait of a royally dressed muffin person, replete with crown and cape. You think maybe it could be a secret passageway, but when you wiggle the frame, discs start shooting out of the walls, all down the hallway. And by discs, of course, I mean stale muffin tops, hard as a fruitcake and twice as deadly!

Zach: Who would throw away muffin tops!?

Lola Rabbit: They're the best part!

Scully: They're monsters!

Zizi: Wait. Can I turn back my timepiece and try that roll again?

Mr. Eric: Okay, Zizi, but try to let me know a little sooner next time, before I spoil my trap surprise.

Zizi: Rolling again. 11 + 1...

Mr. Eric: You all feel a moment of confusion as all the discs seem to start moving backwards through the air, into the wall. Turtok, with your knowledge of the future, you touch a different part of the portrait and instead of triggering a trap, a secret door opens in front of you. You're all able to duck through just before the baked good guardian crashes into the wall one second too late as the secret door closes and you find yourselves some place new.

What's on the other side of the secret door? Will our adventurers ever escape the Muffin Mansion Maze? Can they free the big bad wolf from an even bigger, badder contract? I'm afraid we'll have to find out next week.

[Falling harp scale.]

Zach: Oh, man!

Zizi: I thought we'd finish this time.

Mr. Eric: I know, I know, but we like to keep our stories short. And on the plus side, that means you're getting another new episode next week. The next story will be the end of our Guilds & Goblins block and the end of this particular adventure.

JF Kitty: Speaking of meow outs, I've got three to give this week!

Mr. Eric: Wow, Jojo Fluffy Kat, you are popular.

JF Kitty: Pawbviously.

Mr. Eric: Paw-bviously? Oof.

JF Kitty: It's a perfectly good pun. Anyway, the first meow out is to Elijah Hars, age nine. Elijah has a brother called Albie, and they live in Brighton, England. Then, there's Nolan Haim, who listens every night. Nolan is seven years old, really loves cats, and is from Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Mr. Eric: Thanks, Nolan!

JF Kitty: Finally, there's Asa Mitten, age five and his sister Naomi Mitten, age seven. Asa and Naomi are huge fans of the show, and of course, huge fans of me.

Mr. Eric: Well, who wouldn't be? And I'd like to thank Karen O'Keeffe, my co-creator, our producer Miss Lynn, Craig Martinson for our theme song, and all you kids at home who know that how we're baked cannot tell us who we are. Figuring that out can be the wonderful adventure of a lifetime.

And until we adventure again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme plays.]

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