

Podcast: [What If World](#)

Episode: 088: What if I jumped on a trampoline and landed on a cloud (and could control the weather)?

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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.

[Gentle bell music.]

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 are joined by a great storyteller named Jim Weiss.

Now, we had just a little bit of difficulty getting all of Jim's audio, so I'm recording a new intro, and you'll get to meet him when the story starts.

Abacus: Oh, that's just perfect bc I wanted to thank George and also George.

Mr. Eric: I'm sorry, Abacus, you wanted to thank George twice?

Abacus: No, no no. I wanted to thank George, our newest Patreon member, as well as his father, George.

Mr. Eric: Oh, I get it. He's like a junior.

Abacus: He didn't say.

Mr. Eric: Can't you, like, figure that out with magic?

Abacus: Well, can't you just ask them right now?

Mr. Eric: No, they're in the future.

Abacus: I don't understand.

Mr. Eric: Well, I record this podcast and then later I publish it.

JF Kitty: This is boring and confusing.

Mr. Eric: Oh, JF Kat, right on time.

JF Kitty: I'm just saying, whether we're in the future or the past, we've got work to do, like thanking Sempie.

Mr. Eric: Oh yeah, Sempie, our other new patron!

Abacus: You know, I could ask people from the future a question if I wanted to.

Mr. Eric: Abacus, let it go.

JF Kitty: Yeah, you're not that good at magic, don't embarrass yourself.

Abacus: I'll have you know I can figure out whether George is a junior right now!

Mr. Eric: It's okay, Abacus. We just wanted to thank George and Sempie.

Abacus: I'm divining into the future and I've discovered-

Mr. Eric: Yeah?

JF Kitty: What is it?

Abacus: He goes by George.

Mr. Eric: George Junior?

Abacus: That's not what I said. Maybe it is. You'll just have to listen back to it.

Mr. Eric: Okay, well, thank you JF Kat and Abacus, as well as George and Sempie. But we have to get to our question. And today's question is from a brother and sister pair, Zealand and Amalia, I know you sent this question in months ago and I'm really glad we finally got to answer it.

Zealand: Hi, my name is Zealand. I like rain, snow, and clouds. I'm ten years old and my what if question is what if I could control the weather? My favorite weather is snow. Thank you! Bye.

Amalia: Hello, my name is Amalia. I'm seven years old. I like to draw and my what if question is what if I jumped on a trampoline and landed on a cloud. Thank you, bye.

Mr. Eric: Ooh, that's a great one. What if I jumped on a trampoline and landed on a cloud and could control the weather. Well, you'll meet Jim Weiss when we start the episode. And stick around at the end, he'll tell you whatever kinds of cool things he's working on.

[Rising harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: Did you know there was a time in What If World when the weather was always bad? The four seasons were snowy, rainy, cloudy, and tornadoes. Amalia was a young lady back then doing her best to survive with nothing but a small farmstead and a cow named Jim.

One snowy day, Amalia's cow started giving nothing but attitude!

Amalia: Hey, Jim, would you mind please giving me some milk today?

Jim the Cow: I'm sick of being cooped up in here, Amalia, with no one to talk to, nothing to eat but cold, dried up grass. By the way, you know Jim is a bull's name, right? What were you thinking?

Amalia: Oh, I'm sorry, Jim. It's just when I hear you talk, you sound like a Jim.

Jim the Cow: Hmm.

Amalia: Tell you what. Why don't we just go for a walk and cool off. It's nice and snowy outside.

Jim the Cow: Oh, well, I'll give it a try.

Mr. Eric: So Amalia takes Jim off into the snowy wilderness for a walk and before they know it, they come across a young man with just a little stubble on his chin, but a big, tall, pointy cap and he's sitting around a little campfire with lots of odds and ends, trinkets of all sorts spread around.

Abacus: Hoo, there, cow! How would you like to be the founding livestock of the Observatorium, a school I wish to set up?

Jim the Cow: A school? I'm a cow, not a fish. By the way, you know, I could squish you with one hoof, right?

Abacus: I know, I know. This world can be harsh, believe me, and I am frightened of you powerful cow, but with you by my side, we'll have nothing to fear. Don't you want to see new lands? Meet new people?

Jim the Cow: Hmm. That does sound kind of interesting. All right.

Mr. Eric: Amalia was sad but her friend Jim really wanted to go explore and see the world.

Amalia: Oh, bye, Jim. I'll miss you a lot.

Jim the Cow: I'll miss you too, Amalia, but this is a big chance for me.

Amalia: I understand.

Abacus: And I understand you will miss your friend, thus I will give you something even better, for this magical trampoline was valued once at 100 cows. You'll need it more than me, now.

Mr. Eric: And Amalia was left to drag a giant trampoline through the snow back to her little house. When she got it back, the last little stretch of grass before her house was covered in rudeweeds, which she had to drag her trampoline over.

Rudeweeds: Ow! Ooh! Ow!

Amalia: Excuse me! Sorry, it's just my magic trampoline?

Rudeweeds: Did you turn your cow into some kind of drop cloth?

Amalia: No, no! It's magic. It's a whole... it's used for... well, you can... um.

Mr. Eric: Suddenly, she realized she didn't know what a trampoline was for.

Amalia: Actually, Rudeweeds, have you ever heard of a trampoline?

Rudeweeds: Well, no. But don't worry, my friends and I will try to figure out this thing for you.

Amalia: Oh, thank you so much.

Rudeweeds: My pleasure.

Mr. Eric: She left the trampoline outside and she went off to sleep. In the morning, she was very excited. She grabbed up some chalk! Maybe the trampoline was for drawing on. She grabbed up some eggs, maybe it was for cooking over! But when she got outside, she just saw rudeweeds all over her trampoline.

Rudeweeds: Amalia, we figured it out for you! It's for growing on. [Laughing]

Amalia: You think everything's for growing on, Rudeweeds.

Mr. Eric: She climbed upon the trampoline to try to pry off some of the rudeweeds, and, well, you know what she figured out. It was quite bouncy! [Trampoline spring sounds.]

Amalia: Wow! WOW!

Rudeweeds: That's amazing! It must be for more than just growing on, I guess.

Amalia: I guess so!

Mr. Eric: And higher and higher and higher she bounced, and no matter how high she went, she always veered right back to the center of the trampoline. Now, folks at home, I hope you all realize that only magic trampolines work this way. You've got to practice caution using real trampolines.

She went higher and higher and higher again! And soon, she was above the snowy clouds and saw a particularly sunny one that she decided to land upon. It held her firmly. Strange... And she saw whirling gusts of wind creating beautiful rainbows. Rain swirled by and shining rainbows followed. It was a glorious sight, but it was getting her a little wet so she rushed for a castle off on one corner of the cloud. She closed the door behind her and was finally out of the wind and rain.

Amalia: He-e-ello?

Zealand the Giant: Fee fi fo furl, I smell the toes of an Iffish girl.

Amalia: I might be Iffish, but my toes are clean! They only smell like—[sniffs] trampoline!

Zealand the Giant: Oh, I'm going to give you such a weathering, you're going to feel as if you just got hit by lightning. That is, just as soon as I can find my goose. Jim the goose, where are you?

Jim the Goose: [Honk honk honk]

Mr. Eric: A beautiful golden goose walked out and laid an egg right in front of this massive giant. And when he picked it up and cracked it open, a flurry of lightning and snow blasted right over young Amalia.

Amalia: Whoa! Hey... you're the one causing all the bad weather! Why are you doing it?

Zealand the Giant: I'm protecting you all from outsiders and from insiders, and inside-outers and outside-inners, and...

Amalia: Aw, that sounds like an awfully lonely way to think. I'm Amalia, what's your name?

Zealand the Giant: My name is Zealand. In fact, it's Old Zealand, because I'm old, as you can see.

Amalia: Well, hi, Old Zealand. I guess I'm young Amalia.

Zealand the Giant: Good to know you, I think.

Amalia: Why is it that you live up here all by yourself and you have such magical powers, you could do so much with them?

Zealand the Giant: Well, the truth is, I love to make rainbows but the first time that I showed my rainbow art to the world, why some people teased me about my size, or for my colorful drawings, or even the medium I was drawing in. One of them said, "You're too large-sized to have anything to do with medium." He thought he was funny. Some of them even said that my goose was doing all the work.

Jim the Cow: [Honk]

Zealand the Giant: She only makes the weather, I tell it what to do. Honestly, that's how it works.

Amalia: That is a sad story, and I think if you like to draw, you should do what makes you happy. But if you're just going to stay up here and rain down bad weather on everyone, I don't think you deserve this goose. Will you reconsider? Will you come back down to earth and give us all another chance?

Zealand the Giant: I absolutely, categorically, unconditionally refuse to come back down to earth.

Amalia: Then I categorically, unconditionally refuse to give you your goose back.

Jim the Goose: [Honk?]

Zealand the Giant: What?

Mr. Eric: And she scooped up the goose and ran out of the castle and rushed towards the edge of the cloud.

Zealand the Giant: What are you doing? Be careful!

Amalia: You can't keep the whole world cooped up and cold forever just because you want to be, so I'm going for a walk.

Mr. Eric: And just like that, young Amalia stepped off the cloud and was gone.

Zealand the Giant: Stop! Wait! Oh, what have you done. Well, I'll just scoop you up with the wind. Wait, my powers don't seem to be working. Ooh. Fee, fi, fo, fly, I can't save you and I don't know why.

Mr. Eric: But somewhere far below the clouds, Amalia was landing gently back on her trampoline and after a few little bounces she let the goose go, too,

and looked up at the clouds to see if Old Zealand had followed. But there was no sign of him.

Amalia: Oh, come on and visit, you old grump! Your goose is here waiting for you!

Mr. Eric: She said to the clouds. But then she heard something like thunder behind her. She turned to see Old Zealand storming towards her.

Zealand the Giant: What were you thinking? I was so afraid when you just stepped off like that! [crying].

Amalia: Oh, I'm sorry Old Zealand. I have a magic trampoline, I was never in any danger.

Zealand the Giant: I didn't know. I wish I had. But, well, here we are. What now?

Mr. Eric: Well, his old goose could tell that he was upset and it stretched out its golden feathers to light upon his face. And when he cracked the smallest of smiles through the tears, she handed him one more golden egg. And when he cracked it open, golden light shot straight up into the sky.

Zealand the Giant: Oh, how beautiful. Well, this is just too marvelous to keep to myself. I know, I shall spread it through all the lands.

Mr. Eric: And, indeed, as Old Zealand wiggled his fingers about, the warm light melted all the snow.

Zealand the Giant: Now, I'll see that the rain evaporates back up into the sky and look, now I'm drawing rainbows in the sky.

Amalia: Wow.

Zealand the Giant: Just see all those beautiful patterns and colors.

Amalia: Oh, my goodness.

Mr. Eric: The rainbows danced to and fro, it was the most beautiful thing either of them had ever seen.

Zealand the Giant: Oh, look at that.

Amalia: This is wonderful, Old Zealand. This is what you should be sharing with the world. Maybe they didn't give you enough of a chance before. I think you should try again.

Zealand the Giant: Thank you for this, Amalia. I'm still a little scared but I will try. And thank you, too, my good and faithful goose. What would I do without you, Jim?

Jim the Goose: [Honk]

Amalia: Hey, you know that Jim is a gander's name, right?

Zealand the Giant: Now, who's being closeminded? [chuckles]

Jim the Cow: [Honk honk.]

Mr. Eric: The end.

[Falling harp scale.]

Mr. Eric: All right, Jim! I'm so happy you were here for this story, and, you know, you were half of the characters. I know you were coming on here to help me out and make a great story together, but I really want the folks at home to hear about your latest work, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, right?

Jim: Yes, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, which is a story I first heard when my father told it to me when I was a boy, along with *The Three Musketeers*, which was written by the same author, Alexandre Dumas, a wonderful French writer who published these two masterpieces, believe it or not, in the same year.

Mr. Eric: Wow.

Jim: *Count of Monte Cristo* is a very dramatic story with all sorts of thrills and surprises, hidden treasures and, I know you do a lot of lessons in your *What If World*, and this is a story that has a lot to with a lesson. It has to do with, do you lower yourself to the level of somebody who's not being nice to you, or do you try and rise above that and hope that you can contribute something better to the world. I think all the great stories have lessons in them.

Mr. Eric: I agree. I read *The Count of Monte Cristo* in 5th grade and I remember my teacher, Mr. Ridge, one of my favorite teachers, suggested it to me because it was just about a really determined individual and he made something out of himself when everything was taken away from him. And really, the kindness is something that you kind of gloss over as a kid, but he doesn't solve all his problems with violence.

Jim: Yeah.

Mr. Eric: I also, I just am excited to hear your reimagining of it, too, because you do tweak them a little bit, right?

Jim: Yeah, thank you.



Mr. Eric: Thank you. Thank you one more time, Jim. It was just such a pleasure. I feel like there's a lot I can learn from you, and—

Jim: Well, it was a real delight for me, Eric. It is great fun when I have the opportunity to work with somebody else, or in this case, to play.

Mr. Eric: Yeah. It does feel like that. It's just a real playful good time. And Jim Weiss, I'm going to let you go. I hope to hear from you again, soon.

Jim: Thank you for inviting me to be part of *What If World*, I had a grand time.

Mr. Eric: Me, too. All right, bye Jim!

Jim: Bye bye!

Mr. Eric: I'd like to thank Karen Marshall O'Keeffe, my co creator, Jason O'Keefe for our artwork, Craig Martinson for our theme song, and all you kids at home who pursue your interests even if they're not shared by every kid you meet. It's a big, wide world out there, you're going to find like minded friends.

And until we meet again, keep wondering.

[What If World theme song plays.]