

Who, When, Wow! Mystery Edition

Dinosaurs

Carly. Hello and Welcome back to your favorite secret podcast! Did you miss me? I missed you! I am SO excited to get into some more time-sealed mysteries together. And today's is a DOOZY, it's about a very famous event that radically reshaped the very history of life on planet Earth. Also, there will be teeth. LOTS of teeth. So don't you go anywhere -- I am still Carly Q, and this is still Who When Wow, Mystery Edition!

(THEME SONG)

(Soundbite of Carly entering the office to cheery music.)

Carly. My day started out like usual. Morning Carol!

Carol. Hey Carly Q!

Carly. Coming into the office and saying hi to my work buddies.

Carly. Bryan, looking good!

Brendan. It's Brendan, but thanks!

Carly. As you may recall, this podcast you're listening to is TOP SECRET, so none of these work friends know about it. Or at least I hope they don't! The thing is, I've been having this strange feeling recently...a sense almost that I'm being WATCHED. Which means that even a little thing like.

Carly. Hi Linda! (Silence.) Linda weirdly IGNORING me this morning, has me wondering if something's up. Okay that's weird. I definitely know your name is Linda, is she ignoring me?

Carly. Uh, okay, well I will see you guys later!

(Soundbite of creak of the basement door as the office sounds fade away.)

Carly. I work here at BUTTHED, the Bureau Of Universal Time Travel Historical Exploration Division. I'm a Junior Temporal Analyst, which means I get sent files with random historical events and it's my job to catalogue them in our database and file them away. And I do it all from the cozy comfort of my lonely desk down in the basement.

Carly in the background. Greetings work desk you are looking nice today.

Carly. It's not all bad though. Being down here means I'm right next door to the Bureau's time traveling elevator, which I secretly use on my lunch breaks to explore time-sealed files -- little historical mysteries where the details have been all sealed up. And I share my mystery-solving adventures with you, on this secret podcast! That's why this sense I'm being watched has me so rattled -- I cannot have BUTTHED knowing what I'm up to, or they might shut me down!

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. Nibbles! Good morning! That's my rat friend Nibbles. She's pretty incredible, when we go back in time, she can talk! I've also gotten pretty good at deciphering her squeaks even when we're here at the office.

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. A blueberry rhubarb tart with pie crust made out of red velvet cheese cake?!? Nibbles your dreams are literally THE DREAM!

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. Once we'd finished discussing dessert dreams, I told Nibbles about this sense that something's been off here at the office.

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. No, it's not just Linda. My key card hasn't been opening the door on the first swipe like it used to. And they've been stocking the fridge down here with my LEAST FAVORITE flavor of fizzy water! Celery?!? Disgusting! I know me too.

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. And worst of all? I have been scheduled for a performance review later this month! What is that about?! Do they know we've been secretly using the time elevator?? What if the jig is up?!?

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. Exactly! It's not good at all!

Lewis. (calling out, sing-songy) Oh Carly Quuuuuu.

(Soundbite of footsteps coming down metal stairs.)

Carly. But just then someone paid us a visit: my upstairs coworker Lewis! He used to be my arch-nemesis, and listen we are definitely not besties or anything like that but he is kinda my partner in crime, since he sometimes comes with me on my trips back in time. So I told him that someone might be onto us.

Lewis. Oh pushh, we're fine. The only person here I've ever seen care about somebody else's business is...me! And I already know! Trust me, no one else is paying attention to you. Now do we have another mystery to solve today or what?

Carly. And just then.

(Soundbite of a thumb drive drops down the vacuum tube.)

Carly and Lewis. A new time-sealed file!

Audio File. Event: 66 million years ago (BEEP) Deccan Traps (BEEP) Mass extinction.

Carly. 66 million years! Wow, that is a long time ago.

Lewis. Not just your regular historical mystery, a PRE-historical mystery!

Carly. I pulled out my handheld digital assistance device, that's H-dad for short.

H-dad. H-dad back, powering up!

Carly. And plugged in the clues from the file to get some more info. 66 million years, Deccan Traps, mass extinction.

H-dad. This file most likely refers to the death of the dinosaurs!

Carly and Lewis. Whoa!

H-dad. Dinosaurs ruled the earth for millions of years, before *something* drove them to extinction.

Carly. What do you think it was? Maybe they were all abducted by aliens?? Ooooh or maybe THEY were aliens and so abducted themselves?

Lewis. Another day, another alien theory.

Carly. Okay, but what about these "Deccan trap" things? Maybe they were like rat traps, but for dinosaurs??

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. Sorry! You're right, *rodent* traps.

Lewis. H-DAD, what are the Deccan Traps?

H-dad. A region in modern-day India with considerable volcanic activity during the Cretaceous period. Massive volcanic explosions are one of the leading theories for what caused the dinosaur's extinction.

Carly. And the other leading theories?

H-dad. Analyzing. Analyzing. Analyzing.

Carly and Lewis. Typical.

Carly. Well I guess we should get some work done before lunch, huh?

Lewis. Guess so. See you soon Carly Queeeeee!

Carly. Lewis went back upstairs, I got down to cataloging some files, and a few hours later.

Lewis. Lunch time!

P.A. Voice. Attention, Butthead employees: it's Eat Your Heart Out meal break. Roasted artichoke hearts for all!

(Soundbite of footsteps come down the metal steps.)

Carly. So I grabbed Nibbles and H-DAD, and we all took off for the elevator.

Odie. Basement companion! Lewis.

Carly. Hello Odie! How is the elevator today?

Odie. Oh just fine. How about you two, another time-sealed mystery?

Carly. You betcha! This one is all about what happened to the dinosaurs.

Odie. This is an excellent mystery. And unique, too -- normally I send you back in time to *after* the time-sealed event. But for this I'll have to send you *BEFORE* the event. Otherwise you might go extinct too!

Carly. That is a very good catch, Odie, thank you.

Odie. You will still need to be careful though, since, you know, *dinosaurs*.

Lewis. Also a good catch....wait do you mean actual dinosaurs?

Odie. Okay, let's remember our time travel rules. When you go to the past you cannot change anything. You can observe, and ask questions, but that's it! No meddling or it will throw off the whole timeline.

Lewis. Got it.

Odie. When you arrive back in time, a card reader will remain where you came in. Use this keycard and the elevator will reappear. You can also use it to travel to other locations on the file. So if you can't find enough information at the Deccan Traps, try another spot.

Carly. Sounds good!

Odie. And last but not least, remember that you MUST be back here before the end of your lunch break, otherwise--

Carly. Someone might find out! Don't worry about that one Odie, I'm on it, I'm already paranoid someone's onto us.

Odie. Oh really.

Lewis. I think she's imagining things.

Carly. And I think he's dismissing my keen sense of observation.

Odie. And *I* think it's time for you two to leave. Just remember though: a la Jeff Goldblum...Life,...finds a way.

(Soundbite of wind chimes.)

Odie. Okay here you go and say hi to the T-Rex.

(Soundbite of elevator travel noises.)

Carly and Lewis. Whaaaaatt?

Carly. Wow! I think we may have made it to the pre-historic past.

Lewis. It smells like rotten eggs.

Nibbles. (sniffs) Smells like 66 million years ago to me.

Carly. Lewis?

Lewis. No! Ew!

Nibbles. I'm guessing that would be the sulfur coming outta the volcano!

Carly. Sure enough, on all sides we were surrounded by towering mountains, and directly in front of us? An absolutely ginormous volcano (coughs) I could do without all the ash in the air.

Nibbles. Yeah, pretty sure that's, *also* the volcano.

(Soundbite a pterodactyl screeches above them.)

Lewis. (gasps) Look at the birds!

Carly. Lewis that's not a bird, it's a pterodactyl!

(Soundbite of screaming.)

Carly. Lewis! Can you believe it? We might be the first people EVER to see an actual, living dinosaur!

H-dad. Beep. Correction: pterodactyls are technically flying reptile, not dinosaurs!

Lewis. Well still, look at all those teeth! Do you think *it* thinks it could eat us?

Carly. Noooooo, maybe?

Lewis. Not exactly reassuring, Carly Q!

Nibbles. Okay Okay enough chit chat. We need to find out if these volcanoes caused the extinctions!

Carly. Come on let's get a better view

Carly. There was a peak nearby with a better view, so we started climbing up the mountain.

Lewis. Wish I would have known we were going hiking today. I already got all my steps in!

Carly. How about all this ash and soot in the air? I can barely see the sun!

Lewis. Maybe that`s what caused the dinos to die out?

Carly. I`d say so. Look at the plants, they`re all so wilted.

Lewis. Right, because if the plants all died, then the plant eating *dinosaurs* wouldn't have any food.

Carly. Yeah, the sun getting blocked out wouldn't have been good for anyone!

(Soundbite rumble of volcano.)

Carly. A few minutes later we reached the top of the peak, with the full majesty of the volcano before us. Whoaaaaaaa. Brilliant streaks of red lava poured down the mountainside, glowing so bright at the top it was almost hard to look at it. And in the sky above, a huge plume of smoke poured out from the mouth of the volcano. I know it's a deadly natural phenomenon that maybe wiped out all the dinosaurs, but wow is it stunning to look at.

Lewis. You can say that again.

Nibbles. No matter what it did to the dinosaurs, I`d bet other I-- AHHH! Helppp! Woahhh a dino bird got me!

Carly. Ahh! Lewis, get the emergency snack pie from my backpack.

Lewis. "Emergency snack pie"? Why in the world would you have a,

Carly. NOT the time, just get the pie!

Carly. I grabbed onto Nibbles just in time, but the pterodactyl still had her in its claws.

Lewis. Okay, unzipping your backpack, got it-

Carly. Lewis threw it at the pterodactyl, and just like that it let go of Nibbles --

Nibbles. I'm free!

Carly. And absolutely *tore into* the pie.

Carly. I gotcha Nibbles.

Lewis. Huh, so pterodactyls like pie too.

Carly. Come on Lewis, You're *surprised*? Everybody likes pie!

Nibbles. Umm can we maybe skedaddle please! before someone else tries to eat us!

Carly. Good plan Nibbles. Nibbles hopped on my shoulder as we raced back down the mountainside.

Lewis. Maybe we should try Odie's idea to check out another spot? Somewhere with less teeth?

Carly. I think you mean fewer teeth? I pulled out H-DAD and checked the info on the file.

Lewis. Whatever!

H-dad. The secondary location on this file is: Chicxulub, located on the coast of the Yucatan Peninsula. I hear it's lovely this time of year

Carly. Two minutes later we were back at the elevator.

Nibbles. Oh my t-rex.

Carly. I punched in the coordinates and. I hope it's sunnier in the Yucatannnnnn.

(Soundbite of elevator travel noises and then loud thud.)

Carly. We stepped out into a lush jungle, teeming with beautiful flowers and leafy trees. In the distance we could see the ocean.

Nibbles. Well that's a nice change of scenery.

(Soundbite of an animal call.)

Carly. Oh no, what now?

Lewis. More dinosaurs. Triceratops, right?

Carly. I think so! A small group of them was passing through the jungle. They looked like bigger, beefier rhinoceroses, except with three horns instead of one.

Lewis. This is cool and all, but I'm not really seeing anything that's giving, you know, *impending extinction vibes*.

Carly. Maybe there's another volcano nearby?

Nibbles. Or maybe, look up?

Carly. We looked up where Nibbles was pointing and saw it right away --

Lewis and Carly. GASP.

Carly. High up in the sky was a big red spot, getting bigger by the moment.

Nibbles. What is that?!

Lewis. Please don't tell me Carly's right about aliens. I truly don't think I could handle it!

Carly. Ugh, I wish. No, it's an asteroid!!

Lewis. What? Like a meteor?

Carly. Kind of! A "meteor" is usually just a streak of light in the sky. If it breaks into the atmosphere then it's a *meteorite*, but those tend to be smaller space rocks. This looks...bigger. A lot bigger. Which means it's probably an asteroid.

H-dad. Well done Carly, Applause emoji, high five emoji

Carly. I Know a couple things..but thank you H-Dad

H-dad. Party had emoji..No problem emoji

Lewis. Huh, so turns out being obsessed with aliens and outer space does actually come in handy sometimes.

Carly. I am going to take that as a compliment, Lewis.

Lewis. But wait, does that mean it's gonna like....land here?

Carly. In my personal, and admittedly limited, experience with asteroids, I find that they don't tend to LAND so much as...CRASH.

Lewis. Crash?!

Nibbles. This is the other theory for what happened to the dinosaurs!

Carly. Yeah! Once that asteroid hits, the impact is gonna be huge. Remember all that ash and soot back at the volcano? That's gonna look like a clear sunny day compared to this.

H-dad. Analysis complete!

Carly. Oh Yes! What's the deal with this asteroid, H-DAD? And what about the volcanoes?

H-dad. Both theories for the extinction of the dinosaurs are still considered valid. While the asteroid theory has generally found greater recognition, a study in 2022 at Dartmouth reinvigorated the volcano hypothesis. Volcano emoji! Research paper emoji.

Lewis. There's an emoji for that?

H-dad. Some scientists also believe *both* theories might be right. The asteroid impact could have worsened the volcano eruptions, and both elements would have contributed to worsening air quality and blocking out the sun.

Carly. Just like we said!

Nibbles. Okay well, we should probably get going before this asteroid hits, right?

Carly. Let's stay just another minute, huh? I just can't get enough of these triceratops.
(Soundbite of dinosaurs in distance.)

Lewis. So majestic. So peaceful!

Nibbles. So growly.

Carly. Uh I don't think that was one of the triceratops. THAT WAS A.

Carly, Lewis and Nibbles. T-REX!

Carly. We watched in shock as a Tyrannosaurus Rex came out of nowhere and attacked the triceratops!

Lewis. How does it have so many teeth?!

Carly. Fewer!

Lewis. Not now Carly Q!

Carly. We started running back for the elevator. But we must have caught the T-Rex's eye, cause it left the triceratops to start following US!

Lewis. No! No, you don't want us!

Carly. We're a terrible snack, we're too chewy!

Lewis. I don't really have any meat on my bones

Carly. Yeah he's all bones. Just a sack of bones

H-dad. Incoming message from Butthed-quarters.

P.A. Voice. Attention employees: it's time to head back from, Lunchtime

Lewis. We know! Someone needs to tell the T-REX.

(Soundbite of T-Rex growling.)

Carly. Oh there's the elevator! Hurry!

Lewis. We made it! I'm changed forever.

Carly. Farewell asteroidddddddd.

(Soundbite of elevator travel noises then thud.)

Odie. Welcome bac-- Oh no, are you two okay?Or atleast Carly

Carly. (breathing heavy) Yep! 100%! Totally Great!

Lewis. Almost just got torn to pieces by a T-Rex before getting burned up by an asteroid, so, you know.

Carly. All in a day's work, right?

Odie. Well I'm glad you made it back safe and sound. Any progress on what happened to the dinosaurs?

Carly. Seems like there are two leading theories: volcanic activity and the impact of that asteroid. Or... both!

Lewis. In both cases there would have been a lot of ash and soot in the air that would have blocked out the sun.

Carly. And without sunlight, all the plant and animal life would have struggled to survive.

Lewis. Sure goes to show how precious and fragile life on Earth really is.Aww

Carly. Yes, except ...we are here WE are, 66 million years later!gasps..Wait a minute, Odie that's what you meant with your riddle!

(Soundbite of wind chimes.)

Odie. Life, uh, finds a way. To be fair I can't take *full* credit for this riddle.

Carly. Lewis isn't wrong that life is precious and fragile...but *also*, it still found a way to keep on going! Even with the dinosaurs, come to think of it, since some of them actually DID survive.

Lewis. What? Which ones? Where?

Carly. Birds! I'm no expert, but I'm pretty sure some land-dwelling dinos did somehow survive, and then evolved wings and became the birds we know today!

Odie. Indeed they did, basement companion.

Lewis. Pretty cool, and you know what else finds a way?

Carly. What?

Lewis. Us! Remember earlier you were sooooo worried about your performance review, and this wild idea that someone's onto us which is like totally ridiculous

Carly. I'm *still* worried about the performance review and I *do* still think someone's onto us.

Lewis. And yet, we didn't let that stop us. And we're not going to! No matter what, life finds a way, and we will too.

Carly. I like that attitude. Good pep talk!

Lewis. Anytime Carly Q. But right now, I think I should probably go wash all this soot off my face before going back to work.

Odie. You might want to do the same basement companion.

Carly. Another good catch. Thank You Odie! And with that, it was back to work. But wow-o-wow, what a day! Pretty cool to the learn that, even if it's wasn't aliens *per se* that took the dinosaurs, it was still something related to outer space. And if you know me, which you do, I obviously found that thrilling. Anyway I gotta keep my eyes and ears peeled for other signs someone might be onto us. But like Lewis said, no matter what, we're gonna find a way -- so tune in next week for another mystery! Until then, this is Carly Q, signing off. And remember: you DEFINITELY never heard this!