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Ian:

Hey there, Ian here. We've missed you. We are hard at work on season three, and we're very excited for you to hear it. That'll be coming out in the spring. For now, what you're listening to is a little bonus episode for Radiotopia's fundraiser, more about that at the end of the show. But if you like, you could pause this and make a donation right now based solely on the strength of this rambling intro. You do that by going to radiotopia.fm. We'll get on with the show now. Can you introduce yourself for us?

Magic 8 Ball:

Yes.

Ian:

Okay. What's your name?

Magic 8 Ball:

Concentrate and ask again.

Ian:

Well, I'll introduce you. You're Magic 8 Ball.

Magic 8 Ball:

It is certain.

Ian:

And I think what I'm getting here is you can only say the things a Magic 8-Ball says.

Magic 8 Ball:

It is decidedly so.

Ian:

So you have a name, but no one can ever know it because you can't ever say it.

Magic 8 Ball:

Yes.

Ian:

I'm curious. It's maybe a weird question, but what should I be thinking of you as? Would you call yourself a toy?

Magic 8 Ball:

My reply is no.

Ian:

So you don't like being called a toy?

Magic 8 Ball:

Without a doubt.

Ian:

Should we just call you a spiritual adviser?

Magic 8 Ball:

Yes, definitely.

Ian:

Well, let me ask you some questions that I know you can answer. What's your favorite corporate email software?

Magic 8 Ball:

Outlook, good.

Ian:

I agree. Outlook is great. Would you describe yourself as a procrastinator?

Magic 8 Ball:

Ask again later?

Ian:

What's your advice for dealing with a broken Abacus?

Magic 8 Ball:

Don't count on it.

Ian:

What's your advice for dealing with a broken heart?

Magic 8 Ball:

Reply hazy. Try again.

Ian:

Sure. Try again. Get back out there. Good advice. Magic 8 Ball, what's your favorite prog rock band.

Magic 8 Ball:

Yes.

Ian:

Great band. And I guess I have to ask, are you the owner of a lonely heart?

Magic 8 Ball:

Yes.

Ian:

Yeah, I guess it would be hard to tell somebody how you feel if you can only say exactly 20 things.

Magic 8 Ball:

It is certain.

Ian:

Let me ask you this. What's the worst type of orange juice made from?

Magic 8 Ball:

Concentrate and ask again.

Ian:

What's the worst type of orange juice made from?

Magic 8 Ball:

Concentrate and ask again.

Ian:

This would just keep going on forever if I let it, wouldn't it?

Magic 8 Ball:

As I see it, yes.

Ian:

What's it like when people ask you more serious questions? Like, when someone asks you about death, what do you say to them?

Magic 8 Ball:

You may rely on it.

Ian:

Like, you're saying death is inevitable.

Magic 8 Ball:

As I see it, yes.

Ian:

Yeah. Like, sometimes we think we'll live forever, but-

Magic 8 Ball:

Outlook, not so good.

Ian:

Talking about this, I think the time when I most understand what it's like to be you is when someone dies.

Magic 8 Ball:

Yes.

Ian:

Because I have so much that I want to communicate to the people they left behind, but I always end up saying the same three things. My condolences, I'm thinking of you, I'm sorry for your loss. And it's never really what I'm thinking. And it's never really sufficient. Is that what it's like for you all the time?

Magic 8 Ball:

It is decidedly so.

Ian:

I realize we can edit the sound and we have all these things you've said.

Magic 8 Ball:

Yes.

Ian:

So I could just take everything and break apart your phrases and pull out the words and we could rearrange it to say whatever you want to say to your someone.

Magic 8 Ball:

Signs point to yes.

Ian:

Well, okay. So what if I took this and move this here?

Magic 8 Ball:

Yes.

Ian:

And then should we keep this?

Magic 8 Ball:

My reply is no.

Ian:

Okay. So I'm going to take this and cut off this.

Magic 8 Ball:

Yes.

Ian:

And then we can move this over here and then we just do that. Is that what you want to say?

Magic 8 Ball:

As I see it, yes.

Ian:

Okay. Well, I'll just play it.

Magic 8 Ball:

You may rely on my certain reply without a doubt. It is certain. It is you. Signs point to you. My sources point to you. I point to you. As I see it, as I say it, it is you. I without you, you without I, not better, not better, not better. I with you, you with I, very better, very better, very better.

Ian:

This is Everything Is Alive. Thanks to Jennifer Mills, Donna LaPietra, Suzanne McFalls and Emily Spivack. The Magic 8 Ball, whose name we shall never know was played by Bill Kurtis. Music and this episode from Blue Dot Sessions. Everything Is Alive is a proud member of Radiotopia from PRX, Julie Shapiro, Executive Producer. And about that, Radiotopia is fundraising right now. It's the one and only time of year when we ask you to support the shows you love financially. But more than that, I think of it as a chance to tell the world what you want. Do you want to someday soon put on your headphones and hear something that is unlike anything you've ever heard before?

Ian:

Radiotopia is looking for that feeling. They have been looking for that feeling since the beginning, and they've been finding it. And with your help, they will continue to look for it and to find it in the future. It is certain. You can rely on it. It is decidedly so. Go to radiotopia.fm right now to be a part of it. radiotopia.fm. Your help means a lot to all of us. Thank you.