

SHE

by Sam Lewis

Companion Book

CONTAINS SPOILERS

The Story

I've been thinking about this story for a very long time. It first began to take shape back in 2007. Only the idea of being trapped in another world existed back then, without any of the characters.

Over the subsequent decade I developed the story further. I added Eir as a character, and wondered what would happen once Sophie started to explore time and space.

Katalin arrived in the story when Sophie landed in the desert, just as she does in the final version. Indeed, the order of events in the story is very close to the order in which it was conceived, though the details have changed over time.

The prospect of writing the story down was always daunting for me. I considered writing a shorter version that would begin during Eir's rescue and continue beyond Katalin's death.

It was only this year that I tried writing it from Sophie's perspective after most of the events had already occurred. I was surprised at how easy it was to explore the story from this angle.

It is a great relief to finally see the story completed. I will miss having Eir and Katalin as constant companions in my imagination, but now they're free to meet you. Thank you.

Sam Lewis

Eir Via Tey

(1569–c. 1630)

Eir loves to write stories. She's particularly interested in writing about faraway lands and the people that live there. Her stories are very focused on individual people and their thoughts and feelings.

Her habit of observing people leads her to suspect that Sophie isn't what she seems, and it is this realisation that draws the two together. Eir finds Sophie's story fascinating, but their romance quickly grows beyond that as they learn to confide in each other.

When they meet in 1588, Eir is only 19 years old and Sophie is about the same age, perhaps a little older.

The Story Behind Eir

Eir's name was originally written *Aeir*. It was a simple corruption of the English word *air*.

Eir's brightly-coloured poncho has always been a part of her character, but the tradition of weaving one's family history into it was a concept I added later.

It's not mentioned in the story, but Eir knows how to sail a boat.

Fun Fact

Sophie was mistaken about Eir's hair being black; it's actually dark brown. Sophie doesn't remember even though she has photos!

Katalin A.

(1717–1738)

Katalin is an interesting person. She's very strong-willed and doesn't take no for an answer. On the other hand, she has a silly side and enjoys teasing people.

Although Katalin is only 21 years old, she is much more mature than Sophie and often gives her advice. Their relationship can perhaps best be described as frictional friends.

Katalin doesn't like to reveal much of her past. She ran away from home when she was young and joined the monastery. I could tell you why, but I'm afraid she wouldn't approve.

The Story Behind Katalin

Katalin was originally named Katrina after a character in the Australian-Polish television show *Spellbinder*. I altered her name slightly to give it a different feeling.

In earlier versions of the story, Katalin first met Sophie while she was guarding a wagon train that was leaving the Lilliamion. The *Icarus* didn't exist yet, so they travelled the long way to Lucia.

I describe Katalin as having diamond eyes. Am I referring to the colour, the shape, or the gaze? I want you to imagine for yourself.

Sophie

(born 1980s)

Although Sophie is the protagonist of the story, she doesn't reveal much about her own history. She doesn't discuss her family, her friends, or her previous life, except when she talks with Eir.

If you were paying attention when reading, then you probably noticed that she has a flip phone. She is because she left our world in 2007, before more advanced smart phones were widely available.

Q&A Corner

Q: How did Sophie's phone last for so long?

A: She was smart enough to take the battery out when she wasn't using it.

Sophie often gets into trouble because she isn't as strong and fearless as she wishes she could be.

The Story Behind Sophie

When it came time to name the protagonist, I only had a few requirements. I wanted a name that was simple, friendly, and without any significance.

I chose to use a first-person perspective in the story so that Sophie's thoughts would be exposed. Another option was using second-person perspective, but that would make her an audience stand-in, which is something I wanted to avoid.

The Icarus

If you were wondering how the *Icarus* works, I can explain.

When the gravimetric drive is in operation, it creates a microscopic wormhole through time and space. Information from the other side of the wormhole is used to zero in on the target destination.

As the wormhole is projected further through time, it remains attracted to the gravitational field of the planet, so the *Icarus* will never materialise in open space.

When the destination is reached, the wormhole can be expanded to encompass the entire ship, transporting it to the destination.

The Origin of the *Icarus*

In earlier versions of the story, the *Icarus* didn't exist as it does now. It could only send someone through time and space, and would not travel with them.

When Sophie landed in the desert, she had a much longer journey ahead of her, and had to hope that the machine had been carefully hidden for 150 years.

The story possibilities were limited, so I gave the *Icarus* an upgrade.

The Timeline

Time travel is confusing, so here is a list of events in chronological order. The right-hand column shows the order of events as witnessed by Sophie herself.

Year	Events	S
c. 1510	The <i>Icarus</i> test pilot lands on Myr island	
1569	Eir is born	
1587	The test pilot activates the gravimetric drive Sophie is transported outside Yurat	1
1588	Sophie travels West to find the test pilot	2
	Sophie meets Eir for the first time	3
	Sophie inherits the repaired <i>Icarus</i> and leaves	4
c. 1590	The test pilot dies of old age	
1597	Sophie and Katalin arrive to rescue Eir at sea	9
	Eir leaves the <i>Icarus</i>	10
1598	Eir publishes a complete version of <i>The Star Girl</i>	
c. 1630	Eir dies of old age	
1717	Katalin is born	
1738	Sophie and Katalin travel to the monastery	11
	Katalin is killed	12
	Sophie arrives outside Pama	5
	Sophie meets Katalin for the first time	6
	Katalin boards the <i>Icarus</i>	7
	Sophie and Katalin travel to Lucia	8
Present	Sophie returns to Lucia after Katalin dies	13

The Endings

There are three different endings to the story.

By returning to Eir when she was younger, Sophie is effectively changing her original decision to leave. However, she will also undo Eir's decision to end their relationship 9 years later.

If Sophie decides to rescue Katalin instead, she will have to face the possibility of meeting her past self. She also doesn't know Katalin well enough to understand her wishes.

In the third ending, Sophie makes a different decision. I won't spoil what it is, so you'll have to find it yourself.

The morality of time travel is an interesting topic. I gave Sophie justifications for each decision, but I wonder which ending is the most satisfying. Which ending did you find?

Quiz Corner

Q: Sophie stayed in the town of Yurat before she travelled West, but what was the name of the kingdom she was in?

- a) Arda
- b) Aria
- c) Arna
- d) The story doesn't say

She
She cared
She was so special
She lived many years ago
She was just here
She's gone
She

But I'll remember her

2018