

Symmetry

Synopsis: Plagued by strange dreams and an unexplainable connection to an unfamiliar woman, a man's world is thrown into disarray when he starts receiving warnings of an imminent existential threat linked to his experiences.

Characters:

- Jacob
- Elise
- Mr. E
- Mrs. J
- Sophia
- Kris
- Tessa
- The Eyeless Man/The Eyeless Woman
- The dwarf

Plot:

Prologue

In a purple world, we find a **young woman**, a **middle-aged woman** and an **old woman** overlooking a house in the middle of a forest. Inside the house, a **dwarf**, who keeps scarabs as pets, convinces an old bearded man to remove his own eyes. The dwarf recites passages from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* about the **eternal return** before giving the old man a knife. The old man proceeds to remove both of his eyes and holds them in the palm of his hands. He becomes **The Eyeless Man**.

Part 1 - Jacob

*Part 1 will focus primarily on matter-universes, which will be shot in **color**.*

*One morning at an old house in a forest, Jacob retrieves a canister containing a letter addressed to him. The sender (Mr. E) briefly discusses current world affairs whereby the Soviet Union finally sent cosmonauts to the moon in 2022. Then, Mr. E dwells on more personal matters and reveals that his relationship with his fiancée, Tessa, is deteriorating and foresees she'll soon leave him. Mr. E wonders if Jacob still dreams of The Eyeless Man and if he listened to his warnings about **the collapse**. In the canister, we find a small box containing a living purple scarab. In the letter, Mr. E implores Jacob to **swallow** the insect alive.*

In January 2025, Jacob lives in semi-poverty inside a shabby apartment owned by an aging Sophia. Sophia adopted Jacob on September 6, 2000 after finding an infant Jacob at her doorsteps back when she was living in her previous house. She not only serves as a mother figure but she's also his only friend. Jacob is plagued by

strange dreams of The Eyeless Man warning him of an impending existential disaster which threatens to end the world. Jacob doesn't pay heed to these "nightmares" and continues to live a lonely and introverted life as a low-paid researcher for a small firm.

Meanwhile in another country, the extroverted and wealthy Elise (who has a **scar** on her forehead) lives a turbulent marriage with her husband, Kris. They've been married for just 1 year and Elise hopes a child will somehow save their relationship. Suffering from a mysterious terminal illness, she doesn't have long to live. One night, she convinces Kris to have a sex with her. It's been a long time since they've made love due to their fading desire for each other. Due to their strange psychic link, Jacob becomes simultaneously aroused and he masturbates whilst Elise has sex with Kris before both Jacob and Elise both orgasm at the same time.

In March 2025, Elise is overjoyed to find out she is pregnant. When she relays the news to Kris, he hides his apprehensiveness behind an artificial glee. She never imagined she would be able to conceive due to her illness and hence sees her pregnancy as some kind of miracle. Elise's happiness is sensed by Jacob who also becomes inexplicably cheerful. His mood swings perplexes Sophia.

At the old house, Jacob retrieves another canister. This time, Mr. E warns him that The Eyeless Man's "messages" have caused a chain reaction which has culminated into a battle for survival that could threaten Jacob's life. A vague warning which Jacob immediately seems to understand.

On March 15, 2025, Sophia dies of old age and Jacob's grief can be sensed by Elise. To cope with such a loss, Jacob succumbs to addiction and injects heroin into his bloodstream, making Elise high as well, much to Kris' confusion. During their sleep, Jacob and Elise dream of the **Black River Coffee** (their **first** shared dream) and without exchanging a single word, they decide that's where they should finally meet.

Some days later, Jacob notes his dreams and recent experiences in his diary. He notes down how his connection with Elise (which he refers to as "the woman") seems to have intensified these past few months, as if a **convergence** is happening. He goes to bury Sophia's body at the old house in the forest (revealed to be Sophia's house and the very same house where the canisters were found). After he buries her, he receives an ominous phone call from Mr. E who warns him that the world is about to end in a few months. He begs Jacob to open a canister, which materializes out of thin air into Sophia's old bedroom. He opens it and finds a **purple scarab**. Mr. E affirms that there's still hope to save the world if Jacob accepts to swallow the scarab alive. He validates his claims by mentioning Jacob's dreams about The Eyeless Man, something Jacob hasn't told anyone about. Perturbed, Jacob hangs up and hears a strange noise stemming from the top floor. He goes to investigate...

Elise flies to Jacob's country for their first meetup. When Elise arrives at Black River Coffee, she sits at a table and waits for Jacob. When Jacob arrives, he sits at another table. Neither recognizes each other since they only "felt" each other. They sit there for the whole day and when the night falls, only these two are left. Elise realizes Jacob is possibly the one she's been looking for since they've both been sitting there for hours. However, she's baffled by the fact that their **connection is no longer there**. She makes the first step and approaches him. It's quite awkward at first since Jacob is extremely shy, which greatly contrasts Elise's extrovertedness. However, they

connect immediately, as if they've always known each other. They theorize on their mysterious connection, discussing pseudoscience theories and **quantum entanglement** as possible explanations, but conclude that nothing can truly explain what is going on. They share a similar interest in philosophy although their views of free will and determinism diverge.

Jacob argues that they were fated to meet and Elise, an **existentialist**, claims it's an act of free will. Jacob tries to attribute meaning to their phenomena, explicitly mentioning Carl Jung's **synchronicity** theory and their **anima/animus**, but Elise retorts with Sartre's and Albert Camus's views on the fruitless endeavor of attributing meaning to the absurd nature of existence. Jacob explains he has no one in his life post Sophia's death and Elise proposes to bring him with her to her home country so that he can start a new life afresh. Whilst awaiting the day of their flight, Elise spends a few days with Jacob and they develop a platonic relationship.

*At Sophia's old house, Mr. E phones Jacob and tells him (with a modulated voice) that he has completed a "new" form of communication and letters will no longer be necessary. He again tries to convince Jacob to swallow the scarab but Jacob refuses. They discuss how far they've come to ensure their survival and that at some point, they will have to fight each other. Mr. E laments that his life was unfulfilling and disappointing. His engagement with Tessa has ended since she could not cope with his persistent **nihilism, pessimism and depression**. His envious side wonders if "the others" lived a better life and what could have been had his past choices been different. Jacob despises the **inescapable persistence of the past** and the effects of memory on the current self. Mr. E argues that one's memories define who they are and the lack of **memories** negates the existence of **identity** to which Jacob asks, "What even is identity at this point?" Furthermore, both Mr. E and Jacob share the same views on determinism. Out of nowhere, Mr. E asks Jacob about his psychic connection to Elise. A puzzled Jacob denies having any supernatural connection with anyone and seems genuinely unaware of who Elise is.*

On March 25, 2025, Jacob and Elise fly to her country, where she introduces Jacob to her husband. Through the couple's interactions, it becomes obvious to Jacob that their marriage is crumbling. At some point, Elise references their psychic sexual experience in January but Jacob doesn't know what she's talking about. When she asks about his heroin addiction, Jacob says he's never had illicit drugs. These inconsistencies make Elise increasingly troubled and their sudden lack of connection is perplexing. Whilst discreetly rummaging through Jacob's bag, she stumbles on a notebook containing a set of seemingly endless 6-digit numbers as well as two dates and times written on the first page: 23:00 March 25, 2025 and 21:00 September 6, 2025. Yearning to get to the bottom of these mysteries, Elise proposes they go out tonight. Meanwhile, Kris is oblivious to all this, showing how little he cares about his wife.

*At Sophia's house, Mr. E phones Jacob again and they ponder on the moral implications of what they do and at what length they will go to survive **the collapse**. Mr. E seems to know why and how the collapse will happen but Jacob refuses to listen to his explanations, feeling that this knowledge is cursed and he just wants to survive. Mr. E reveals Elise is the key to everything that's been going on. He told Jacob about Elise out of courtesy and fairness for their forthcoming battle. He concludes that when they finally meet, either him or Jacob will die.*

At a masked party in a nightclub, Jacob and Elise talk about their psyche and how because of their past connection, they know each other on a level far deeper than anyone else. Jacob knows Elise is pregnant and suffers from an unknown terminal illness. Elise promptly changes topic, pondering instead on the duality of **shadow** and **persona** and their **repressed unconscious** side. She had sensed darkness within Jacob, attributed to an unquenchable anger within him. Jacob admits that his anger stems from a combination of self-hatred and frustration at his loneliness and inability to form meaningful relationships. Additionally, Jacob is plagued by the fear of eternal **recurrence**, especially by the possibility that his biggest mistakes will repeat themselves. Elise disagrees with his views, firmly standing by her existentialist beliefs. She invites Jacob to dance but being introverted as always, he refuses and instead goes to the bathroom. Unbeknownst to him, a **man with a fox mask** has been observing the two for quite a while.

In the bathroom, the man comes in and waits for everyone to leave before attaching a silencer to his gun. When Jacob exits his stall, he is ambushed. After a brutal fight, Jacob snatches off the man's gun and kills him. He removes his mask and sees a doppelganger of himself with a bullet hole on his head. Jacob seems unsurprised and strangely revitalized by this incident. He hides the gun in his coat and joins Elise in her dance.

We connect to the scene when Jacob hears a strange noise stemming from the top floor in Sophia's old house. Another Jacob erupts from the staircase and kills the "original" Jacob. He proceeds to remove the body's fingerprints and eyes, sealing them in a plastic bag. He steals the dead Jacob's rental car and uses the address from his driver's license to go to Sophia's apartment. There, he flushes the plastic bag down the drain and reads the dead Jacob's diary. In it, he reads about his psychic connection to a woman (who he assumes is Elise as mentioned by Mr. E) and finds that they are supposed to meet at Black River Coffee. He opens his notebook containing the series of 6-digit numbers and remembers how he got it:

Jacob dreams of the purple world. In the old house (revealed to be Sophia's house), The Eyeless Man asks Jacob to watch the last lottery numbers for *Fortuna Fables Lottery*, a lottery organization which is about to cease operation. He gives Jacob the notebook containing the 6-digit numbers. Jacob then wakes up and the notebook somehow materializes through his dreams into real-life.

After recollecting this event, Jacob decides to assume the dead Jacob's identity to find out how Elise is the key to his ordeals. He uses the previous Jacob's diary to track down where he is supposed to meet her. The reason Elise no longer feels a connection to Jacob is because this universe's Jacob is dead and the new Jacob has no supernatural connection to Elise or any previous awareness of who she is.

Back at Elise's apartment, Kris is watching TV and Jacob enters the house. As he walks towards the guest room, he finds another doppelganger already there. Jacob kills him but as he turns back, he finds a visibly shocked Kris. Kris runs to reach the phone. Jacob panics and shoots him dead to stop him from alerting the authorities.

Jacob suffers a mental breakdown and temporarily hides Kris' body under the guest room's bed before Elise arrives. When she does, she grows increasingly anxious when Kris fails to answer her calls. She mentions that a dead body was found at the masked party but Jacob feigns ignorance. At 23:00, he turns on the TV to watch the

lottery (the last session for *Fortuna Fables Lottery*) and on seeing that the 6-digit winning numbers match a set of numbers on his notebook, he realizes this **current reality** will end during the collapse. Suddenly, Mr. E bursts into the room and he is revealed to be another iteration of Jacob.

Elise, shocked beyond recognition, begs for answers. Mr. E explains E stands for Elise and all iterations (dubbed eigenstates) of Jacob seen so far are Jacobs from other universes. Each Jacob possesses a notebook from their own version of The Eyeless Man. The notebook serves as a travel diary for all realities The Eyeless Man has visited and which are hence doomed by the collapse; an event where all universes collapse into one. Since Jacob is the only one to possess the power of traveling between realities, we conclude The Eyeless Man is an older version of Jacob, doomed in an endless quest of trying to find the surviving universe. Mr. E explains the purple world is a place beyond our plane of existence (accessible via dreams) where all realities exist in superposition. Any attempt to swap universes through the purple world will inexplicably lead back to Sophia's house on the date she died (March 15, 2025) in the destination universe. Travelling can only happen on the day of the collapse (September 6, 2025) since that's where the universes' convergence is at its maximum. The notebook's origin is paradoxical: since The Eyeless Man is Jacob, he also obtained it from an iteration of The Eyeless Man.

Jacob understandably asks how the other Jacobs have managed to track him down. Mr. E reveals that despite countless universes, only a few Jacobs have developed the ability to move from universe to universe (through the purple world). Mr. E himself only recently developed this ability and had to previously resort to a small machine to send small items across universes (like the scarabs and canisters).

Through quantum entanglement, some have developed the ability to detect and locate each other. So how is Elise connected to all this? Mr. E posits that there was only one universe before. The Jacob from that universe caused a split which resulted in the emergence of other universes and fragmented his consciousness between the near-infinite iterations of newborn universes. This was all an attempt to repress a memory of a past event surrounding Elise. Mr. E is the only iteration of Jacob to remember this event post-split. He warns Jacob it is a traumatizing memory and Jacob refuses to know what it is, still vouching for ignorance over knowledge.

Mr. E developed an algorithm installed on his phone to call Jacobs from other universes (linked to March 15, 2025 and onwards) to convince them to swallow the scarab, an eigenstate tracer which kills whoever swallows it and links Mr. E to another Jacob and another Jacob until the algorithm converges to Jacob Prime (the Jacob from the pre-split universe who is responsible for the collapse). Killing Jacob Prime will prevent the collapse. The linkage is achieved through the transfer of subjective experience post-death, a form of quantum immortality even though previous identity is lost due to memory swapping.

Jacob also had Sophia in his universe and her death left a void which he expected would be filled by Elise. But Elise no longer wants to deal with all this madness, after finding Kris' body and correctly deducing Jacob killed him. Jacob grows tired of his endless quest for survival and a happier life. He laments on his **loneliness** and **dependency** on others to rekindle his happiness. With Elise no longer wanting to be with him, his life's purpose now becomes to at least try and save the universes. He thus swallows Mr. E's purple scarab and dies. Mr. E calmly leaves, leaving a traumatized Elise behind.

On the night of September 6, 2025 (day of the collapse): Elise dies during childbirth due to complications related to her illness. It's revealed she was expecting **twins**, a boy and a girl. The **girl died** but the **boy survived**. Mr. E arrives in Jacob Prime's universe, having successfully tracked him down. After an intense car chase, Jacob Prime crashes Mr. E's vehicle, fatally wounding the latter. The collapse will happen at 21:00 and there are only a few minutes left. A dying Mr. E begs Jacob Prime to swallow a purple scarab which will kill him and end the collapse. Jacob Prime has repressed all memories of Elise but he knows about the collapse. Mr. E hands him a **green scarab** which will show him the "truth" but Jacob Prime firmly believes a better life awaits him post-collapse and that ignorance is bliss. When Mr. E dies, a surge of remorse overwhelms Jacob Prime and his curiosity proves to be too overwhelming. He thus swallows the green scarab to unveil the truth:

Interlude

A young Jacob Prime grows up at Sophia's old house where he sees a young Elise as his reflection in mirrors. Akin to possession, Elise sometimes takes hold of Jacob Prime's body. Though Jacob Prime initially loves her as his imaginary sister, her presence in his consciousness leads to symptoms of schizophrenia and split-personality disorder. They grow up together even though Elise doesn't have a physical body and only exists inside Jacob Prime's mind. Elise is occasionally in pain and Jacob Prime grows to hate her because he can feel all her sufferings. One night on September 6, 2010, Jacob Prime feels intensely sick and leaves the house to a nearby cliff where Elise emerges from Jacob Prime in a painful and bloody physical process. Jacob Prime, still feeling her pain, tries to murder her by throwing her off the cliff to put an end to his suffering. Quickly overwhelmed by guilt, he **split** the universe into multiple other universes, each bearing a possible outcome of Elise's fall. He hopes Elise will be alive in at least one of them. However, the split inadvertently repressed all his memories of Elise and compartmentalized them into Mr. E, a version of Jacob who remembers and knows it all. Indeed in only one iteration of the newborn universes, Elise survives her fall but she is terminally ill and amnesic. That version of Elise is found at a riverbank by the police and later adopted by a foreign family.

Part 2 - Elise

*This section will be shot in **black and white** unless scenes are set in the **purple world** or the matter-universes.*

Now we are in an antimatter-universe in January 2025. Here, Elise (her **scar** gone), lonely and introverted, lives with Sophia in her impoverished apartment. Sophia serves as her mother figure since she found an infant Elise on September 6, 2000 at the doorsteps of her previous house. Jacob (who has a **scar** on his forehead) is married to Tessa but their marriage is turbulent. One night, Jacob and Tessa have sex and Elise masturbates whilst sensing their lovemaking.

In March 2025, it's revealed Tessa is expecting twins despite Jacob suffering from a terminal illness which has supposedly rendered him sterile. This makes Tessa's pregnancy a miracle and even though Jacob has just a few months left, he hopes he'll be able to see his children. The events play out like in **Part 1** wherein Sophia dies on March 15, 2025. Elise's grief is sensed by Jacob and on that night, she injects heroin into her bloodstream and

Jacob becomes inexplicably high as well. During their sleep, they dream of the **White River Coffee**, the place where they shall meet.

After burying Sophia at her old house, she receives a phone call from Mrs. J imploring her to swallow a purple scarab, delivered to Sophia's room, or the world will end. She mentions Elise's dreams about **The Eyeless Woman** warning her about the collapse to validate her claims. Elise's call is interrupted when she is killed by another version of Elise. That version of Elise reads her diary and takes over the dead Elise's identity.

Jacob flies to Elise's country where they bond at White River Coffee and stay a few days together at Sophia's apartment (even though their psychic connection is gone). Jacob then invites her to fly to his country so that she can start a new life. They land on March 25, 2025. After partying at night, Elise returns to Jacob's house where she confronts her doppelganger from another anti-universe. She kills her but Jacob, having witnessed the whole scene, tries to alert the authorities. During the ensuing confrontation, Elise involuntarily and fatally injures Jacob before tearfully watching him die in her arms. Teassa, who's currently working abroad, unsuccessfully tries to call Jacob. Elise watches the lottery (last secession of *LuxeLotto Ventures*) and realizes that the current universe will end during the collapse. Like Jacob in **Part 1**, she knows this by comparing the winning numbers to the set of lottery numbers in her notebook (given to her by The Eyeless Woman through her dreams).

Shortly later, she meets Mrs. J (which is another Elise). They despair over the collapse and that their beliefs in free-will seem incompatible with the fatalistic nature of reality. Mrs. J says she has since approached a **compatibilist** set of beliefs and she's fighting to make sure the collapse doesn't happen. With Jacob dead, Elise lost the will to live. She swallows the purple scarab and dies.

Mrs. J uses her eigenstate tracking device to find the next Elise from another anti-universe. She successfully convinces various Elises to swallow the scarab by explaining why the split happened and why the collapse will happen if they don't swallow the purple scarabs:

Elise Prime caused the split on September 6, 2010 when she pushed the newly emerged Jacob from a cliff, just like the Jacob from the matter-universe threw Elise. Jacob survives the fall in only one anti-universe but he is terminally ill. The collapse has been programmed within Elise Prime to collapse all anti-universes into the one anti-universe where Jacob lives. But she didn't realize that since Jacob will soon die from his illness, the collapse will end ALL anti-universes and collapse into the matter-universe where Jacob isn't sick.

Mrs. J knows Elise Prime's repressed memories and performed complex calculations to prove the following: Jacob's consciousness was superimposed with Elise Prime. Why is he terminally ill? Because the newborn Jacob (**born from Elise and Kris**) from the matter-universe tried to transfer his consciousness into one of the twins birthed by Tessa as an instinctive survival mechanism since the matter-universes were about to end. However, when Tessa will birth her twins on September 6, 2025, only one twin will survive (the girl aka Elise) and Tessa will die during childbirth. Thus infant Jacob from the matter-universe superimposed himself into Elise Prime's consciousness from the anti-universe. But a consciousness originating from a matter-universe is highly unstable

in an anti-universe, leading to the emergence of Jacob from Elise Prime and Jacob's unknown terminal sickness. **This also makes Jacob both Elise's twin brother and her father.**

Similarly, when Elise was born in the anti-universe, the collapse caused an infant Elise to transfer her consciousness into one of Elise's twins from the matter-universe. But since the girl died and the boy, Jacob Prime, survived, infant Elise had to superimpose her consciousness into Jacob Prime from the matter-universe to survive. This again results in an instability within Elise due to a consciousness originating from an anti-universe existing in a matter-universe.

Mrs. J finally tracks down Elise Prime on September 6, 2025 night and ambushes her at her house. Just when Mrs. J is about to shoot Elise Prime, Elise Prime demands to know why she'll cause the collapse and what caused the split. This greatly contrasts Jacob Prime's penchant for ignorance over knowledge. Unlike Jacob Prime (who narcissistically believes himself as an **Urbemann**), Elise Prime feels guilty for her **solipsism** and the **subjective** nature of the surviving universe post collapse. Mrs. J gives her a **blue scarab** which she swallows.

Mrs. J obtained the **blue scarab** when meeting The Eyeless Man in the **purple world**. He regurgitated it and told Mrs. J the scarab contains all his knowledge and hidden memories. Whoever swallows it will know about his life, his endless quest for survival, and his realization that all matter-universes will end during the collapse. He became paranoid that he was Jacob Prime and repressed his responsibility for the collapse. He thus removed his eyes believing that would prevent him from collapsing universes through observance, as per the **von Neumann-Wigner interpretation** of quantum mechanics and as per the dwarf's instructions. He also did it because he's seen too much by traveling so many universes and prefers blindness over repeatedly witnessing the death of universes. After losing hope in his quest for survival, he decided to reside in the **purple world** with the dwarf and The Eyeless Woman. His messages through dreams was a last resort attempt to reach Jacobs and turn them against each other, hoping Jacob Prime will be killed in the chain reaction he created. Mrs. J also sees a brief ghostly apparition of three iterations of Sophia (a young, middle-aged and an old version of Sophia) weaving a tapestry bearing a drawing of **the endless knot**. Upon swallowing the **blue scarab**, Elise Prime relives The Eyeless Man's (aka old Jacob) life by experiencing his memories. She gains all his knowledge about the matter-universe and its ultimate fate.

Mr. E obtained the **green scarab** when meeting The Eyeless Woman in the **purple world**. Similarly, upon swallowing the **green scarab**, Jacob Prime relives The Eyeless Woman's life. The life of The Eyeless Woman (aka old Elise) is similar to The Eyeless Man's. He gains all her knowledge about the anti-universe and its fate.

Because of the tremendous guilt from what they did to each other on September 6, 2010 and hoping to ensure the survival of each other, they both refuse to prevent the collapse. Elise Prime snatches the gun off Mrs. J and kills her. Meanwhile, Jacob Prime squashes the purple scarab given to him by Mr. E and proceeds with the collapse. Stars start to disappear and the matter-universes and anti-universes both end.

In the purple world, Jacob Prime and Elise Prime finally meet. They're both about to die from the fallout of the collapse. Jacob Prime realizes the matter-universes collapsed into the anti-universe (where Elise is alive and well)

whilst Elise Prime realizes the anti-universes collapsed into the matter-universe (where Jacob is alive and well) even if this simultaneous collapse resulted in the annihilation of both the matter-universes and the anti-universes on September 6, 2025, the date they were both set to die. They discuss how their eigenstates would never understand their true purpose, which was to save each other. Out of the twins birthed by Elise in the matter-universe and Tessa in the anti-universe, only one could ever survive. Even when one twin survived, the other lived in superposition with the other until they separated from the other's body. Still, the separated twin remained entangled with the surviving one but that twin was also terminally ill and couldn't live long. Their illness is a direct result from the fact that they are NOT supposed to exist.

Jacob Prime and Elise Prime realize that if the collapse had indeed worked, they should have been in their ideal reality (where the other twin also lives a long life). But the fact that they met the Prime self of each other shows that such an ideal reality does not exist. This points to only one logical conclusion: Jacob Prime and Elise Prime have all this time been trying to collapse into each other's universe to ensure the other's survival. A loop has to have been created since one question remains: the collapse happened so what did the universes actually collapse into?

The dwarf arrives and reveals that the key to understanding the loop lies in Sophia, her house and the non-linear nature of time. Sophia's house was built in a place where various time periods often exist in superposition, thus explaining why eigenstates could technically travel back in time to March 15, 2025 (the day Sophia died) when hopping between universes. She left her house because she would inadvertently gain time traveling powers where she would dream of the purple world and jump between various time periods unconsciously. Thankfully, neither Jacob nor Elise lived long enough in that house in their respective universe to develop such powers. All of this explains why each time Jacob's or Elise's eigenstates would swap universes, they always arrive at Sophia's house. Her house is an anomaly in the fabric of spacetime.

As mentioned previously, a loop has to have been created. Jacob and Elise were adopted by Sophia in their respective universe and anti-universe on September 6, 2000, 25 years before the collapse. This means infant Jacob and Elise somehow time traveled even though they don't have such powers. The only explanation is that Sophia is responsible for this. The **three** ghosts of Sophia arrive and explain it's now their turn to ensure the preservation and continuation of both the matter-universe and anti-universe.

Various iterations of The Eyeless Man and The Eyeless Woman have explained the situation to Sophia's ghosts (now residing in the purple world). A few minutes before the collapse, one of her ghosts (the young Sophia) time travels to September 6, 2025 in the matter-universe and unseen by mortals, she steals an infant Jacob from the hospital and delivers him at her own doorsteps back in September 6, 2000 (pre-split). The second ghost (the middle-aged Sophia) does the same for infant Elise in the pre-split anti-universe. Finally, the third ghost of Sophia (the old Sophia) receives two **black scarabs** from the dwarf. She makes infant Jacob and infant Elise swallow one in their respective universe. The reason is simple: the black scarabs have a 50% chance of killing whoever swallows them and a split will happen where in one matter-universe, infant Jacob survives and in the other, he dies thus creating a new matter-universe branch where Jacob doesn't exist. This universe will not

collapse and will thus keep evolving. Likewise, infant Elise's probabilistic death will create a new anti-universe branch unaffected by the collapse.

Old Sophia understandably asks the dwarf why not give the black scarabs to Jacob Prime and Elise Prime in 2025. The dwarf explains that branches created post-split could inadvertently be impacted by the collapse. Thus, the easiest solution is to give them the scarab pre-split when they are still babies, defenseless and ignorant.

It's now obvious that the choice of which of the twins got to live (i.e Jacob lives) has been predetermined by the opposite twin (i.e Elise), which loops back to September 6, 2000. This date is the point in time where the universes collapse into one other. The union of Jacob and Tessa resulted in Elise's birth (superimposed with Jacob) and Elise and Kris resulted in Jacob (superimposed with Elise). The cycle hence continues. Finally, Jacob Prime and Elise Prime wish each other farewell, understanding that they shall meet again and again in their 25 years old loop which encompasses their whole existence.

The Eyeless Man hugs The Eyeless Woman, having both chosen to live in the purple world. It is only in this plane of existence, separated from the constraints and limitations of real universes, that they can coexist together as siblings and as each other's parent.

Epilogue:

After leaving the masked party, Jacob walks despondently through the city towards Elise's apartment. He receives another call from Mr. E who affirms this is their last phone conversation and next time they meet, it'll be face to face. Mr. E tells Jacob to not get attached to Elise and to now stay off her life, knowing very well how Jacob's past relationships and mental state have always led to disastrous results. He sticks with his beliefs on determinism and the eternal recurrence to prove his point. He told Jacob about Elise to push him towards the truth but this inadvertently led to Jacob befriending Elise. Jacob ponders on the matter and agrees with Mr. E. When asked why Jacob still wants to maintain a relationship (albeit platonic) with Elise despite knowing it will end in disaster, he simply replies, "I'd like us to be wrong."

The End