

Eddie, The Ten Year Reunion

Chapter Seven Around the Universes

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Although Eddie and Kathy have had an easy life financially, other facets of their life have been, to say the least, quite difficult. Kathy had a run in with hemolytic anemia when she was a senior in high school. The notorious Mr. Crum did everything in his power to prevent Eddie from graduating high school. At the University, Dean Grimsby was no different and tried to expel Eddie for what later was found out to be a setup. And then, there is all the trouble that Chuckie, the McCutchen family, Brad Evans, Mr. O'Brien, and various teachers caused over the years. And, who can forget Mayor Jamieson and his crew of dirty wrongdoers? But, Eddie and Kathy have not only survived, but triumphed over adversity.

Kathy and Paula have found out over the years that, in the blue universe, things have been more peaceful than either the yellow or red universe. In the red universe, Kathy and Paula have found that, when a problem arises, the trouble is at least one order of magnitude more than what would normally be expected in their universe. In their world, the yellow universe, things have finally calmed down a bit.

Not having visited the blue or red universes recently, Kathy and Paula decide to visit their counterparts in the alternate universes. Eddie, Jr. is at work with Eddie today, and Mark has taken Mark, Jr. and Dawn to the job site today. First on the list is visiting the blue universe, the universe in which Eddie never graduated high school. Also, in the blue universe, Eddie and Kathy both worked long hours, as did Mark and Paula, until Kathy and Paula instructed them how to make money through the portal.

Kathy and Paula, wearing their yellow shirts designating which universe they are from, walk behind Kathy's pool, where Kathy and Paula enter the portal. Kathy commands the portal, "take us to the blue universe." Kathy and Paula arrive in the blue universe, where Paula's first question is, "are we really in the blue universe? Everything appears to be

the same.” Kathy replies, “I think so. It looks kind of like my house does outside.” Paula observes, “your Jasmine wall is gone, just like at your house.” Kathy replies, “I see that.” Kathy carefully looks around at the pool area, and tells Paula, “this is definitely the blue universe. There are cushions on the poolside chairs. In our universe, I put mine in the deck box.”

Kathy hides in the woods, as Paula goes up to the front door and knocks. Kathy’s counterpart from the blue universe opens the door, telling Paula, “I thought you were going to be over a little later. What’s up, girl?” Paula replies, “we came from the yellow universe. Is it safe?” Kathy’s counterpart replies, “yeah! Wow! Come on in.” Paula waves to Kathy, who runs up from the woods. One can never be too careful when universe hopping.

Not wanting her son to see two of her, Kathy asks her counterpart, “is Eddie, Junior here?” Kathy’s counterpart replies, “no. He went to work with Eddie today.” Kathy exclaims, “wow! Just like in my universe!” Kathy’s counterpart explains, “today, Eddie, Junior is going to learn how to rebuild a transmission. He’ll watch as Eddie disassembles it, and ask a million questions. Then, he’ll go into the back yard of the service station, and play there. It’s fully walled off, so he will be safe there.”

Kathy’s counterpart, Kathy, and Paula take a seat in the living room. To Kathy, her counterpart’s living room looks more like hers back home than she remembers from her last trip to the blue universe. After talking for a while, Kathy asks her counterpart, “so, what’s up in your universe?” Kathy’s counterpart replies, “wow! Where do I begin? We’ve been doing really great. And guess what?” Not even giving Kathy or Paula a chance to reply, Kathy’s counterpart exclaims, “the whole group has moved back to the area! I’m so happy! And, Mitchell and Amber are even moving back to town.” Kathy replies, “that’s awesome! I remember you were kind of sad when everyone left the area.” Paula asks Kathy’s counterpart, “where do Mitchell and Amber live in your universe?” Kathy’s counterpart replies, “about six or seven miles South from where we grew up. Everyone else lives closer in. They feel like they’re far away from the rest of us.”

Kathy’s counterpart also reveals, “me and Eddie started running and working out again. And, so have Mark and Paula in my universe. Eddie built a gym behind the service station, and we all get together there and work out sometimes. But, Braden and Johnson mostly work out when they’re at work.” Paula comments, “that’s a pretty good deal. They both get a gym with their job.” Again, what is now happening in the blue universe bears a strong resemblance to Kathy and Paula’s yellow universe.

Kathy curiously asks her counterpart, “how’s the track at the high school?” Kathy’s counterpart explains, “it’s gone. Me and Eddie, Mark

and Paula, and Bobby B. and Erika gave the high school a new track. Johnson was really happy about it.” Kathy exclaims, “seriously? That’s just like in my universe!” Paula observes, “it sounds like all three universes are coming into alignment again!” Kathy replies, “that could be.”

Wondering what else may have come together between the two universes, Kathy asks her counterpart, “I hate to ask, but how about the Chuckie and all that crap that was going on? Has that ended?” Kathy’s counterpart explains, “oh, yeah. Braden has a radio and he figured out exactly how the Chuckie was dealing drugs. So, he gave all the information to Erika, and she busted him. Now, the Chuckie is in jail for like ten years or something.” Paula mentions, “that hasn’t happened in our universe yet.” Kathy smiles, and tells Paula, “but, it will. Braden has a bunch of really cool radios, and he’s monitoring the Chuckie. Wendy is really getting impatient, though. She wants the Chuckie out of there like right now.”

Paula asks Kathy’s counterpart, “in your universe, is Mr. Crum in prison?” Kathy’s counterpart replies, “he is. The good news is he’ll be still in jail for the reunion. So he can’t possibly show up, not that anyone would want to see him anyway.” Paula mentions, “in our universe, Mr. Crum is already out of prison.” Kathy adds, “and, he’s already shown up at the service station, wanting his piece of shit Volkswagen Beetle fixed.” Kathy’s counterpart suggests, “maybe he’ll come to the reunion.” Kathy replies, “let’s hope not, girl!”

Kathy suddenly asks her counterpart, “so, show us around!” Kathy’s counterpart replies, “sure,” as they all get up off the sofa and head to Eddie, Jr’s. room first. As they walk around, Kathy realizes that her counterpart’s house in the blue universe is looking more like her’s at home in the yellow universe. Or, could it be that Kathy’s house in the yellow universe is looking more like her counterpart’s house in the blue universe.

Before Kathy and Paula leave, Kathy asks her counterpart, “in your universe, did you find the two geode looking things where we found the other stones?” Kathy’s counterpart replies, “no. Tell me about them.” Kathy explains, “on the West side of the rocky outcropping, next to the large boulder, if you scrape away the dirt, there are two geode looking things about eight inches in diameter. You’ll need a shovel to get them out. Inside of them are twelve stones of each of the three colors, plus twelve clear stones. But, we haven’t figured out what the clear stones do yet.” Kathy’s counterpart exclaims, “wow! I’m definitely going to go look for those geodes!”

Paula informs Kathy's counterpart, "you'll need a grinding wheel to open them. The geodes are as hard as stone." Kathy immediately smiles, prompting Paula to tell Kathy, "don't even say it, girl!" Kathy asks, "say what?" Paula replies, "you were going to say 'they're hard as stone because they are stone.'" Kathy smiles, telling Paula, "I don't have to say it. You just did." Kathy and Paula then draw a map showing where the geodes are so that Kathy's counterpart can easily locate the geodes.

After an interesting time of catching up, Kathy and Paula reenter the portal and return to their universe. Taking a seat by the pool, Paula mentions to Kathy, "it seems like our universe and the blue universe are really coming together." Kathy surmises, "it could be that, somehow, in the past, the future was changed in our universe, creating a diversionary path when compared with the blue universe." Paula laughs, and replies, "it sounds like you're working on another master's thesis!" Kathy laughs herself, and replies, "yeah. You're right! That did sound like a college sentence, didn't it?" Paula laughs, and tells Kathy, "you're just practicing sounding intelligent for when we go to the red universe." Kathy sighs, and replies, "I'm busted."

Kathy asks Paula, "are you ready to go to the red universe?" Paula asks, "your house, or mine?" Kathy replies, "how about your house this time?" Paula replies, "sure." Kathy and Paula head back to the portal, where Paula gives the command, "take us to my house, at my portal, in the red universe." Kathy and Paula are immediately transported to Paula's house, on the side of Mark and Paula's detached garage where Paula's portal sits.

Seeing no one around, Kathy walks up to the front door and knocks, hoping someone is home. Paula's counterpart from the red universe answers the door and, seeing Kathy wearing a yellow shirt designating which universe she is from, greets Kathy, "wow! Hi! I'm going to take a wild guess and say you're from the yellow universe since you're sitting in my living room right now." Kathy replies, "you're right! I'm from the yellow universe. Paula is here with me. Is it safe?" Paula's counterpart replies, "sure. Call her over." Kathy yells out to Paula, "hey! It's safe." Paula runs over, and they all head inside.

Paula's counterpart asks Kathy and Paula, "so, what's been up with you guys?" Paula replies, "we haven't hopped universes in a while, so we thought we'd take some time and do that." Paula's counterpart asks Kathy and Paula, "so, what's up in your universe?" Paula replies, "well, where do I begin? A few of us got together and built a new track for the high school. And, we're looking forward to Eddie and Mark's ten-year reunion. And, the Chuckie sued us for messing with him. But, the case was laughed out of court. And, Braden is trying to bust the Chuckie for selling drugs." Paula's counterpart exclaims, "really? In my universe, the

Chuckie has been in jail for a while now.” Paula replies, “we should be so lucky.” Paula and Kathy explain to Paula’s and Kathy’s counterparts all that has been going on in the yellow universe.

Coming around to the subject of what is going on in the red universe, Paula asks, “what’s up with you guys? What’s going on in your universe?” Paula’s counterpart begins, explaining, “in our universe, we also donated a new track to the high school. And, the good news is that the Chuckie, the bitchkrieg, Donna and Dana Harmon, and that clown, Goldshit, are all in prison. So, it has been very quiet around here.” Paula comments, “that’s good news. But, in our universe, the Chuckie and his little gang are still out on the streets.” Kathy mentions, “I wonder why Chuckie going to jail is lagging so far behind in our universe.” Paula replies, “because Braden wants to bust all their asses at once.”

Kathy tells her’s and Paula’s counterparts, “we were at the blue universe earlier today. It almost sounds like the yellow, red, and blue universes are coming together somehow.” Kathy’s counterpart observes, “I’ve noticed that, too, over the years. It seems to me that the big divergence was in how Eddie handled that incident when the Chuckie threw the javelin at him when he was a senior in high school. I’m sure there were other minor divergences, and a few are still going on. But, looking at the big picture, I agree. Everything is becoming more congruent.”

Now curious, Kathy asks her counterpart, “in your universe, where is Eddie, Junior right now?” Kathy’s counterpart replies, “he’s at the service station today, with Eddie. He wants to learn how to repair cars. So, occasionally, Eddie will take him to work with him.” Paula asks her counterpart, “now, I have to ask. Where are Mark, Junior and Dawn today?” Paula’s counterpart replies, “Mark took them both to the job site. Today, Mark is working over at what used to be Emily’s photography studio. Since it’s right next door to Eddie’s Service Station, Mark, Junior, Dawn, and Eddie, Junior will eventually be playing around somewhere. Most likely, they’ll play behind the service station.” Kathy exclaims, “wow! That’s just like in my universe and in the blue universe!”

Kathy asks her red universe counterpart, “in your universe, did you find the two geodes at the rocky outcropping where we found the other stones?” Kathy’s counterpart replies, “we sure did! We dug that place up from one end to the other. We opened them up, and there are twelve red, blue, and yellow stones in each of the geodes, and twelve clear ones.” Paula observes, “wow! Again, just like in our universe.” Kathy mentions, “in the blue universe, they haven’t found the geodes yet. So, I drew a map showing where they are.”

Kathy asks her counterpart and Paula's counterpart, "have you guys figured out what the clear stones are for?" Kathy's counterpart explains, "not exactly. But, I have a good idea what they may do. I hypothesize that, when all three universes converge and are in congruence, the clear stone will allow us to travel within the one universe. For some people, the three facets of their universe may already be in agreement. For them, I'm guessing they'll be able to travel only by using the clear stone. Or, perhaps, they can still travel using the red, yellow, and blue stones and get to different facets of their universe."

Paula smiles, and tells Kathy, "wow! She still sounds smarter than you." And, justifiably so. Everyone has figured out that, in the red universe, the mind is dominant, in the blue universe, the spirit is dominant, and in the yellow universe, the physical body is dominant. Already knowing this about the three universes, Kathy looks at Paula, and just smiles.

Paula's counterpart shows Kathy and Paula around her home, where Paula sees a very strong resemblance to her house back home. Mark, Jr.'s. and Dawn's rooms in the red universe look amazingly similar to theirs in the yellow universe. More convinced than ever, Kathy and Paula can see the three universes coming together.

Kathy and Paula reenter the portal, and head home. Arriving back at Kathy's portal, Paula mentions, "I'm quite surprised that life is so peaceful in the red universe now." Kathy replies, "I know what you mean. I was expecting to walk into World War Three." Paula exclaims, "yeah, seriously!" Kathy suggests, "maybe the war zone has moved to our universe. After all, the Chuckie is still on the loose in our universe." As they walk inside, Paula replies, "lucky us."

It's not only Kathy and Paula who have been traveling around the three universes. While at work, Eddie and Bobby B. have been traveling to the future to buy and sell gold. After an early morning grueling lower body workout in the gym behind the service station, Eddie asks Bobby B., "hey. Are you ready to go to the future to get some gold and sell it?" Bobby B. replies, "yeah. I brought my cash. By the way, the service station seems more like a front for our gold expeditions." Eddie agrees, telling Bobby B., "I never thought of it that way. I guess you're right."

Eddie and Bobby B. walk their bicycles out of the gym. Eddie goes inside and gets some money out of the hidden safe in the service station. Eddie and Bobby B. walk onto the marble portal that Eddie had installed behind the service station many years ago. Eddie announces, "May 8, 1972," and they are immediately transported to the vacant home behind the service station. Bobby B. asks, "why did you pick May 8, 1972?" Eddie replies, "because the price of gold is about 60 dollars an ounce. We can

get a lot more for our money. And, besides, that's the next date on the list." Bobby B. replies, "oh, yeah. That's right." Over the years, Eddie has been keeping track of all the details as to where they buy and sell gold.

Eddie and Bobby B. ride their bicycles to Jimmy's coin shop, which is located in a strip shopping center on the way to the mall. Bobby B. finds it difficult to keep up with Eddie, but that is part of the workout. If Eddie gets too far ahead, he'll ride in circles for a while, waiting for Bobby B. to catch up. But, Bobby B. has nothing to complain about. In the gym, no one can keep up with Bobby B., and he doesn't cut anyone any slack.

Arriving at the coin shop, Bobby B. asks, "are we using our usual procedure?" Eddie replies, "sure." Bobby B. hands Eddie his money, and Eddie walks into Jimmy's coin shop where he hears Jimmy announce, "good morning! If it isn't my favorite mechanic! How much are we getting today?" Eddie replies, "one hundred ounces." Jimmy replies, "no problem. Let me go back and get it out of the safe."

Jimmy returns with 100 ounces of gold and Eddie hands over seven-thousand dollars in cash. Eddie places the gold, a little more than eight pounds worth, in his fanny pack. Eddie reminds Jimmy, "next year is the year. I hope you've got enough gold to keep me in business." Jimmy replies, "don't worry. I have enough to keep us both in business." Eddie tells Jimmy, "I'll catch you in a few weeks."

Before he leaves, Eddie hands Jimmy a piece of paper with his favorite stock picks that are sure to go up by the third quarter of the year. Over the past few years, Eddie has been giving Jimmy, the proprietor at the coin shop, a list of his stock picks that are guaranteed to earn money during his time. Taking Eddie's advice, Jimmy has been investing in the stock market, making huge sums of money. Jimmy has been taking his windfall profits, and buying huge amounts of gold, allowing him to better supply Eddie's demand.

Eddie and Bobby B. ride back to the vacant house behind the service station, where they'll make another trip, this time to the future, to sell the gold. Entering the portal, Eddie and Bobby B. return to their place in time. Bobby B. suggests, "it's getting hot out here. Why don't we just tell the portal to take us behind the coin shop?" Eddie asks, "what's the matter, bro? Are you worn out?" Bobby B. replies, "yeah." Eddie tells Bobby B., "wow! You're all worn out already. And, I had to carry the gold."

Leaving their bicycles behind, Eddie and Bobby B. re-enter the portal, where Eddie gives the command, "May 8, 2011, behind Jimmy's coin shop." Arriving at their destination, Eddie hands Bobby B. the fanny pack with the gold, and tells him, "it's your turn, bro." Bobby B. walks around to the front of the building to sell the gold.

Bobby B. walks into the coin shop, where Jimmy greets him, asking, "good morning! Are we buying or selling today?" Bobby B. replies, "I'm selling today. I got a hundred ounces. Can you cover me?" Jimmy replies, "I sure can. And, I have as many old bills as you want." Bobby B. smiles, telling Jimmy, "great." Bobby B. places the gold on the counter, where Jimmy, who is now getting up there in years, counts it. Jimmy counts the cash, and hands it over in a fabric coin sack. Bobby B. tells Jimmy, "I'll see you in a few weeks. Next time, I'll be bringing the mother lode." Jimmy replies, "I'll be waiting for you!" Bobby B. walks to the back of the building, where Eddie is waiting for him.

Eddie and Bobby B. walk back into the portal, arriving back to their time and place. Walking into the office, Eddie and Bobby B. divide up the cash. Making about 70,000 dollars apiece this morning, Eddie tells Bobby B., "I guess it's time to get to work." Making more money through the portal in an hour than most people make in a year, Bobby B. asks Eddie, "why are we still working?" Eddie replies, "because, if you don't do what you love, you just rot away." Eddie and Bobby B. open up the shop, and take a seat in the office.

Bobby B. asks, "when is our next trip?" Eddie replies, "two weeks later. May 22, 1972. And, we sell it May 22, 2011. We can go and do that whenever we want." Bobby B. informs Eddie, "I told Jimmy that, next time, I'm bringing the mother lode." Eddie replies, "good. We'll bring the back pack. I'll carry the gold, and maybe next time you'll be able to keep up with me." Bobby B. quickly replies, "I did more work in the gym this morning." Eddie replies, "yeah. But, you gave out first. I could have kept going." Bobby B. responds, "not if you were lifting the same amount of weight I was." Neither Eddie nor Bobby B. will ever win this argument. They just mess with each other.

Eddie gets his notepad out of the drawer, and writes the dates on a piece of paper, just so he can keep the dates straight. After all, Eddie doesn't want to accidentally show up at the coin shop three times in one day. Using the same procedure with many different coin stores, Eddie and Bobby B. quite often bring home a big bonus. Mark does the same, occasionally joining Eddie and Bobby B. in their gold hunting endeavors. Jimmy, at the coin store, however, is the only one from the past who receives Eddie's stock market advice.

Braden, Johnson, and Mitchell, however, have kept to making money in the stock market. Braden tends to use the portal to go to the future and buy things, such as radios, that do not exist at his time. Johnson has, on several occasions, traveled to the future to see the outcome of a track meet. Mitchell and Amber often use the portal to travel to the beach, where they can train without fighting traffic.