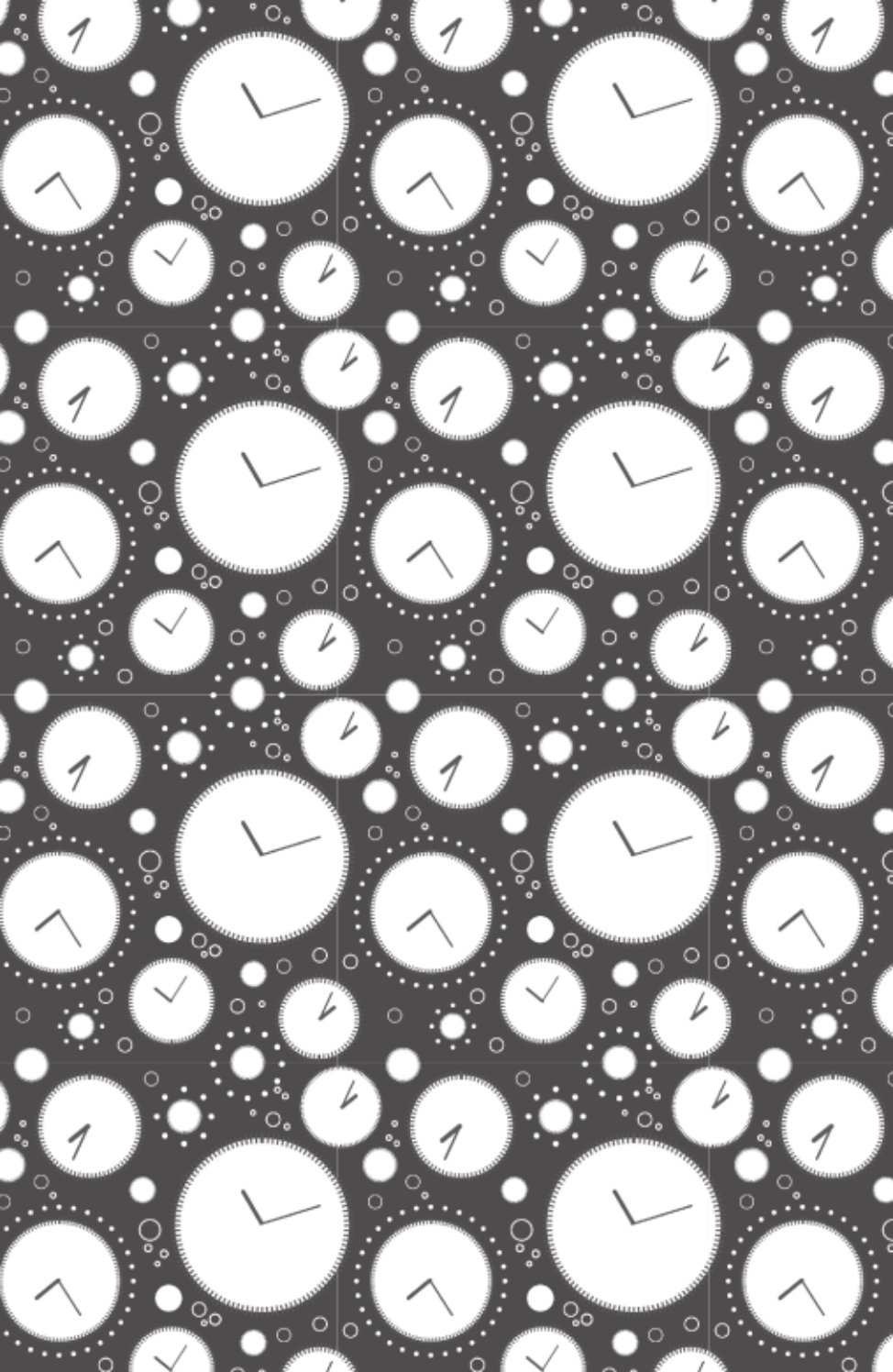
TIME TRAVEL TWINS

THE MAYA SACRIFICE



First published in Great Britain in 2025 by
Andersen Press Limited
20 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SA, UK
Vijverlaan 48, 3062 HL Rotterdam, Nederland
www.andersenpress.co.uk

2 4 6 8 10 9 7 5 3 1

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data available.

ISBN 978 1 83913 558 3

Printed and bound in Great Britain by Clays Ltd, Elcograf S.p.A.



Mum, Dad, Scarlett and Thomas stood around the bed, worrying.

They had driven to Grandad's that morning, intending to have a walk in the woods with him, followed by some lunch. But they could all see that Grandad wasn't going to able to walk anywhere. He looked as if he might not

When he had stopped coughing, calmed down, and managed to start breathing steadily again, Mum gave him a tissue and Dad fetched a glass of water, and the twins stood either side of their grandfather's bed, both of them very upset about his illness. They hated seeing their grandfather like this.

Scarlett had a suggestion for something which might make him feel better. 'Would you like some hot chocolate?'

'I wouldn't say no,' Grandad replied.

'Do you want marshmallows and whipped cream on top?' Thomas asked.

'Go on, then. But I don't think I've got any.'

'Don't worry,' Scarlett said. 'We brought the ingredients from home. We're making hot chocolate for our homework.'

Grandad was amazed. 'Is that what young people do at school these days?'

'We're learning about the Maya,' Scarlett explained.

He pushed the blankets aside, and was about to swing himself out of bed when his body was wracked by another terrible bout of coughing.

Mum ushered him under the covers again, tucked him in and told him to take it easy. This time, Grandad didn't argue. He fell back against the pillows, exhausted by the effort of trying to get up.

'Maybe it's finally time for you to move somewhere more sensible,' Mum said.

'This house is perfectly sensible,' Grandad replied.

'You must be joking,' Mum said. 'This house is like a war zone. No wonder you've got such an awful cough.'

Grandad lived in a little cottage with no heating except a wood fire downstairs. His home had low ceilings and rickety old windows which allowed chilly breezes to whistle from room to room. His bedroom was icy, sometimes

While Dad had a look at the windows, trying to work out the best way to mend the gaps and stop the draughts, Thomas and Scarlett went downstairs to the kitchen with their mother to make hot chocolate for everyone.

Thomas fetched five mugs from the cupboard.



it at home.'

'Grandad might have some,' Thomas suggested.

The twins searched in the cupboards, under the sink, and anywhere else that Grandad might have hidden a tub of cocoa powder or a sachet of instant hot chocolate, but they couldn't find any.

Mum apologised again. She couldn't understand how she could have packed everything else while leaving the most vital ingredient behind. 'But don't worry,' she said. 'We'll make Grandad a nice cup of tea instead.'

'He needs hot chocolate,' Thomas said. 'If he's going to get better.'

'Let's go and buy some cocoa powder,' Scarlett suggested.

'The nearest shop is miles away,' Mum reminded them as she filled the kettle. 'What Grandad needs is something to eat. I'll make him a sandwich.'