

The Great Company Adventures · Book 18 of 50

CORNING THE THREAD OF LIGHT

A curious girl, three wise mentors, and the hair-thin thread of glass that carries the whole world at the speed of light.

"Discovering the businesses that built the modern world"

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THE GREAT COMPANY ADVENTURES

Discovering the businesses that built the modern world.

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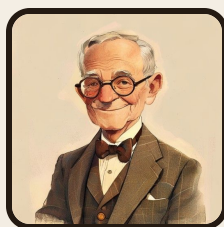
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MEET THE CHARACTERS



SIRI



BEN



WARREN



CHARLIE



CLARA

A curious girl named Siri, a wise old teacher named Ben, and his student Warren with Warren's partner Charlie — together discovering the businesses that built the modern world, one adventure at a time.

THE GLOBAL 50

One great company per volume · Fifty adventures, one modern world

SPACE & EXPLORATION

1. SpaceX — *“The Fire That Comes Back”*

MANUFACTURING & ENGINEERING

2. Toyota — *“The River That Builds Cars”*
3. Siemens — *“The Factory That Builds Factories”*
4. Caterpillar — *“The Machines That Move Mountains”*
5. Boeing — *“The Bird With Six Million Pieces”*
6. Airbus — *“The Plane Four Countries Built”*

ENERGY & INDUSTRY

7. Shell — *“The Sunlight Buried at Sea”*
8. ExxonMobil — *“The Ancient Sunlight Machine”*
9. GE Vernova — *“The Wheel That Makes Lightning”*

COMMUNICATION

10. AT&T — *“The Voice Inside the Wire”*
11. Qualcomm — *“The Whisper in the Air”*
12. Ericsson — *“The Towers That Talk”*

TRANSPORTATION

13. Tesla — *“The Car With No Engine”*
14. John Deere — *“The Machine That Feeds the World”*
15. UPS — *“The Promise in a Brown Truck”*

INFRASTRUCTURE

16. ABB — *“The Arms That Never Tire”*
17. Schneider Electric — *“The Guardian of the Grid”*

MATERIALS

18. Corning — *“The Thread of Light”*
19. DuPont — *“The Inventors of Almost Everything”*

SCIENCE & TOOLS

20. 3M — *“The Factory of Ten Thousand Ideas”*
21. Bosch — *“The Spark in Every Machine”*
22. Honeywell — *“The Dial That Tames the Weather”*

MEDICINE & BIOTECHNOLOGY

23. Pfizer — *“The Shield in a Tiny Vial”*
24. Roche — *“The Detectives of the Blood”*

25. Novo Nordisk — *“The Key to a Billion Locks”*

26. Johnson & Johnson — *“The Little Bandage That Grew”*

FOOD & AGRICULTURE

27. Nestlé — *“The Cup That Wakes the World”*
28. Cargill — *“The Invisible Harvest”*

FINANCE & COMMERCE

29. Visa — *“The Handshake Inside the Card”*
30. Mastercard — *“The Two-Second Trust Machine”*
31. Walmart — *“The Store That Never Runs Out”*
32. Costco — *“The Treasure Warehouse”*
33. FedEx — *“The Race Against the Sun”*

CONSUMER INNOVATION

34. Disney — *“The Factory of Dreams”*
35. LEGO — *“The Brick That Builds Anything”*
36. Sony — *“The Pocket Full of Music”*
37. Coca-Cola — *“The Secret in the Red Can”*
38. Nike — *“The Shoe That Learned to Fly”*

LUXURY & CRAFTSMANSHIP

39. Rolex — *“The Heartbeat on Your Wrist”*
40. LVMH — *“The Suitcase That Conquered the World”*

COMPUTING & DIGITAL CIVILIZATION

41. Apple — *“The Glass That Thinks”*
42. Microsoft — *“The Invisible Machine”*
43. Google — *“The Library With No Walls”*
44. Amazon — *“The Box That Crossed the World”*
45. NVIDIA — *“The Brain Made of Sand”*
46. Intel — *“The First Thinking Chip”*
47. TSMC — *“The Invisible City”*
48. ASML — *“The Machine That Prints With Light”*
49. OpenAI — *“The Machine That Learned to Talk”*

THE FINAL DISCOVERY

50. The Company Yet to Be Built — *“The Adventure You Will Build”*

THE THREAD THAT GLOWED AT MIDNIGHT

Midnight. Homework: unfinished. And Grandpa Ben's old brass compass? Spinning like crazy.

SPIN

The needle froze. Pointing at... a single hair-thin thread of glass on the windowsill.

YOU? You're just a fleck of glass!

The magic diary flipped open by itself. Fresh ink. Grandpa's handwriting.

It's never done THIS before...

"Time to meet the businesses that built the modern world. Start with the thread that carries light."

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Hold a glass hair thinner than a thread up to the light. Through it race whole libraries, movies, and Grandma's voice from across the sea — all at once. So... **who taught glass to carry the world?**

The thread flared white. A whirlpool of light reached out and pulled her in.

WHOOSH



Here we GOOO!



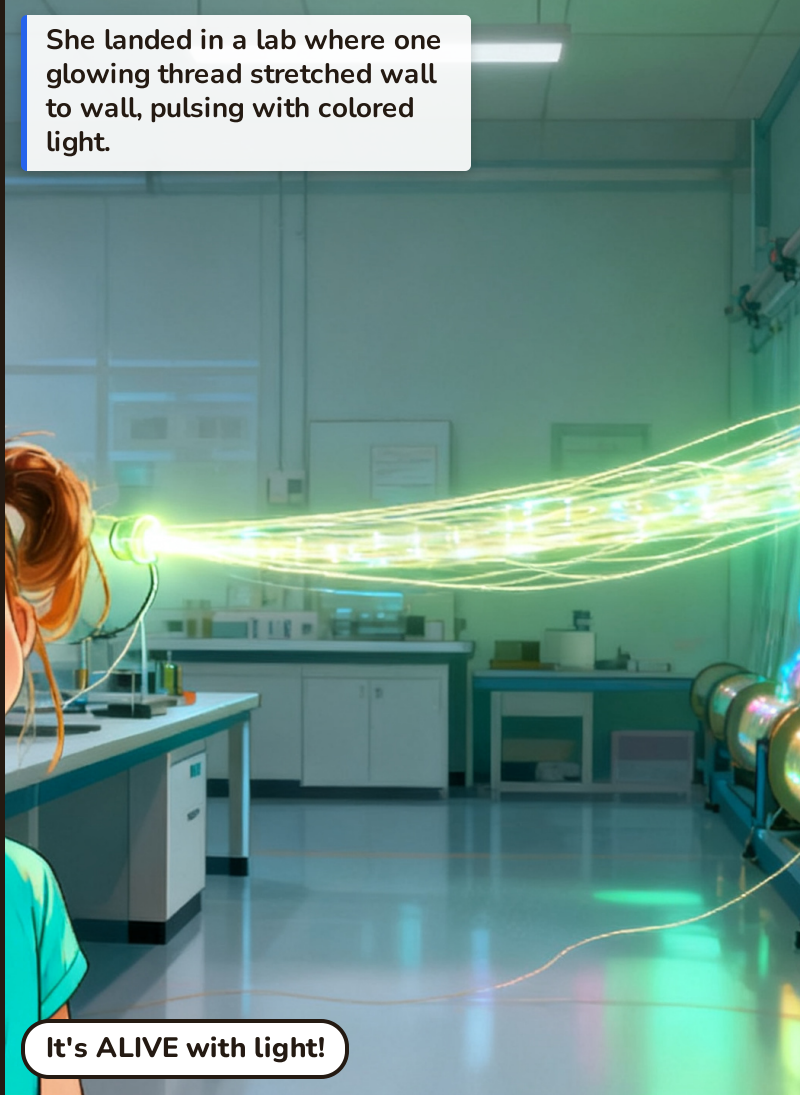
SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

New mystery! 🧵

- ① How does a GLASS HAIR carry libraries, voices, movies — at light-speed?
- ② Grandpa says this thread built a company older than my great-great-grandma. A THREAD?! Prove it.

A WHOLE WORLD IN A STRAND

She landed in a lab where one glowing thread stretched wall to wall, pulsing with colored light.



A young scientist lifted the thread onto one fingertip. "I'm Clara. I spin glass into threads of light."

Best. Job. EVER.

She spun a giant reel. "One thread on here — long enough to cross a whole country."

That's ONE thread?!

Fifty miles. No knots.



★ WORTH REMEMBERING

This glass hair is an **optical fiber**. A single strand can carry millions of phone calls at once — and light barely slows down. The whole internet swims through rivers of these threads.

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

One glass hair = millions of calls at ONCE. 🧵 Fifty-mile reels, no knots. Clara says every thread hides a secret. First up: how does light stay **INSIDE** a bendy glass hair?

THE THREAD THAT TRAPS LIGHT

3a The trap: light that can't escape

“Ever swum underwater and looked up?” At a shallow angle the surface becomes a perfect mirror.



The water turned into a MIRROR!

“Send light down glass at that shallow angle, and it bounces along inside — trapped, forever.”



A pipe... for LIGHT!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

It's called **total internal reflection**. Light hitting the glass wall at a low angle can't get out — so it zig-zags down the thread and never leaks, even around gentle corners. 💡

"The thread is really TWO glasses — a fast core wrapped in a slower coat. Light always bends back home."



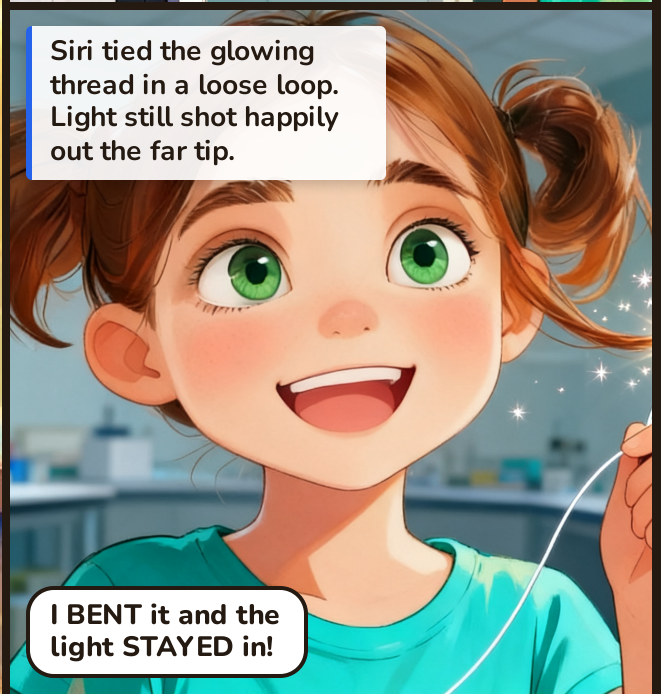
A racetrack with walls of glass!

"Melted into one hair," Clara grinned. "The light never even knows the coat is there."



Sneaky, brilliant glass!

Siri tied the glowing thread in a loose loop. Light still shot happily out the far tip.



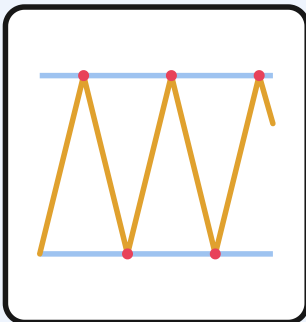
I BENT it and the light STAYED in!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

And the glass is so **clear** that light races fifty miles before it fades. If the ocean were this pure, you'd see the bottom of its deepest trench. Next mystery: how do you make glass THAT clean?

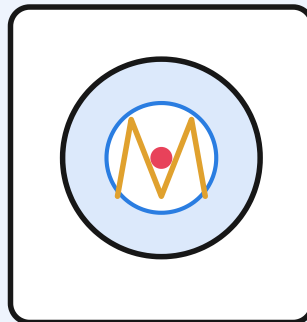


HOW LIGHT STAYS IN THE THREAD



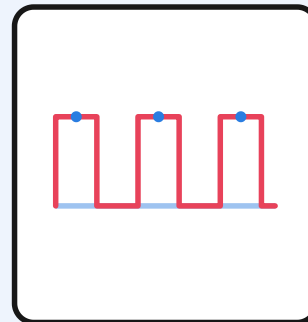
LIGHT BOUNCES

it can't escape



CORE + CLADDING

two glasses



PULSES = MESSAGE

on-off, so fast



SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

- ① Low-angle light = trapped, like the mirror-surface underwater. 🌊
- ② Fast core + slow coat = light always bends home. I bent the thread — light STILL came out. Magic that's just physics! 💡

SPINNING A THREAD OF GLASS

"We don't dig this glass — we grow it." A flame breathed pure white glass powder onto a spinning rod.



It's making a glass SNOWMAN!

Baked clear, it became a preform — a fat glass crayon, purer than a mountain spring.



All THAT becomes one thread?

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Why so pure? For light to travel fifty miles, the glass must be **almost nothing but glass**. One stray speck of iron is a boulder in the river. So this glass is purer than anything found in nature. ✨

The crayon's tip glowed white-hot atop a tall tower. A single thread began to fall.

DRIP

The thread dropped five stories, thinner than a hair, faster than a highway car — mile after mile.

It's dripping...
LIGHT!

Thinner than my
HAIR?!

And, for its size,
stronger than steel.

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

The magic of the draw: pull warm glass and it stretches like honey — a fat crayon becomes fifty miles of perfect hair-thin thread, all the same width. Then light pulses ride it: **on, off, on, off**, billions of blinks a second. That's your message. 🐉

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Grow pure glass from FLAME-powder 🔥 → fat clear preform → melt the tip → pull one 50-mile hair. Purer than a mountain spring. Light blinks on-off billions/sec = my messages. Glass that pours like honey!

THE LONGEST THREAD IN THE WORLD

"One thread, many colors of light — each color a different call, all racing side by side."

A rainbow full of MESSAGES!

Under the sea: a cable no thicker than a garden hose, carrying a continent's worth of talk.

My video calls swim past WHALES!

Clara unrolled a world map. Golden threads dived under every ocean, stitching every land.

The whole planet is sewn with GLASS!

The threads surfaced into humming data halls, then branched to every home, school and phone.

It ALL comes back to my window.

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Here's the wonder: nearly every message you send — every video, game and search — spends most of its trip as **light inside a glass hair** under the ocean. A hello crosses the planet in the blink of an eye. 🌊

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

One thread = many colors = many chats at once. 🌈 Threads dive under EVERY ocean (past whales!). The internet is mostly light in glass. Hello → across Earth in a blink. So who spun the first thread? 🧵

WHY THE WORLD NEEDS GLASS

"Now look around," said Clara. Windows, screens, headlights, lab flasks, ovenware — all glass.

"Nobody goes shopping for 'glass.' Yet nothing modern works without it — the quiet ingredient in everything."

The most important thing nobody NOTICES!

And each glass is invented WITH the maker — a phone screen here, a car dash there — years of teamwork.

It's HIDING everywhere!

They build the glass INTO the gadget!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Why spend billions perfecting glass? Because it's the **invisible ingredient** the whole modern world leans on. And once your glass is built into a customer's product, swapping it out is a nightmare. Be essential, be trusted — and a thousand makers keep coming back. 🍷

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Glass isn't a product — it's the invisible **INGREDIENT** in everything. 🔍 Screens, fiber, cars, ovenware, labs. Invented **WITH** each maker → hard to swap out. Boring + everywhere + trusted = a giant quiet business.

THE TOWN MADE OF GLASS

Through the trees: a river town of glowing furnaces, older than the light bulb. Siri read the name.



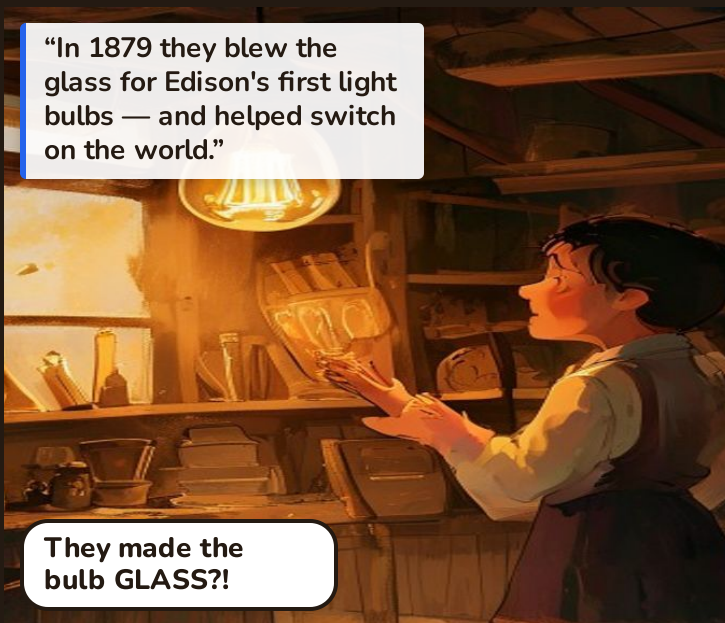
CORNING! The thread of light is theirs!

"Then heat-proof kitchen glass. Then, from a lab oven left too hot, a super-tough milky ceramic."



A MISTAKE became a treasure!

"In 1879 they blew the glass for Edison's first light bulbs — and helped switch on the world."



They made the bulb **GLASS**!?

"And in 1970, three scientists spun the first thread clear enough to carry light for miles. Eureka."



THAT'S the thread of light!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Corning's whole story is one idea: **master glass, then find what the world needs next**. Light bulbs, ovenware, TV tubes, the glass hair of the internet, the tough glass on your phone — a century and a half of patient invention.





THE STORY IN TIME

1851

Amory Houghton starts a glass business in America.

1868

The glassworks settles in Corning, New York.

1879

Corning blows the glass for Edison's light bulbs.

1908

One of America's first industrial research labs opens.

1915

Pyrex — glass that laughs at heat — is born.

1934

A ribbon machine blows bulbs by the millions.

1957

A lab accident yields Pyroceram, a super-tough glass-ceramic.

1970

Three scientists make the first low-loss optical fiber.

2007

Gorilla Glass armors the first smartphones.

Today

Corning glass runs the internet, screens and labs worldwide. 

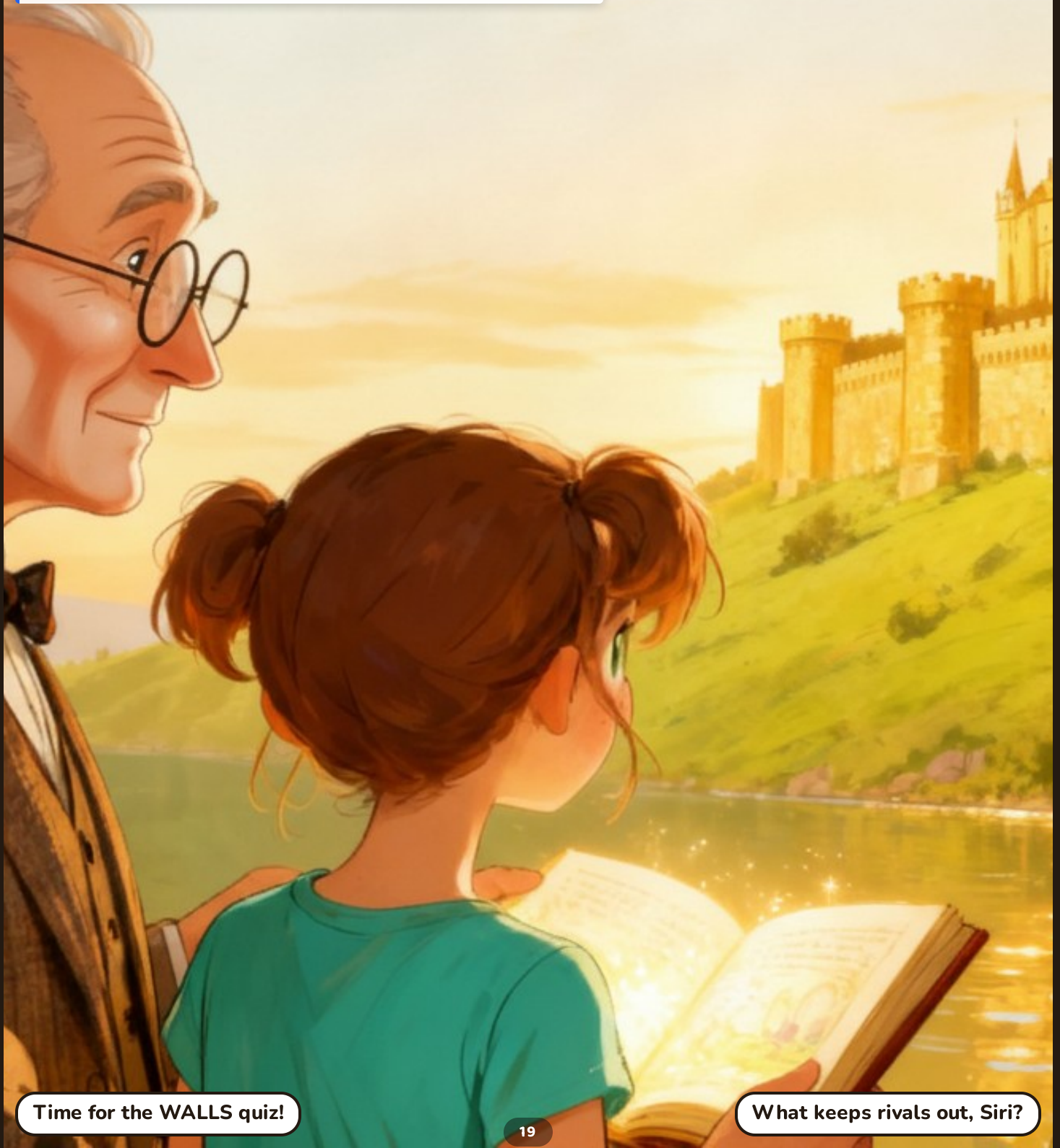


SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

CORNING. Started 1851. Made Edison's bulb glass (1879!) → Pyrex → a super-tough LAB-ACCIDENT ceramic → 1970: the first thread of light → phone glass. Rule: master ONE craft, reinvent it forever. 

THE CASTLE OF GLASS

A warm glow. A whiff of cherry cola. Warren and Charlie, the partners from Omaha, stood before a shining castle.



Time for the WALLS quiz!

What keeps rivals out, Siri?



THE CASTLE WALLS • WHY RIVALS CAN'T COPY IT



Wall One: A Vault of Recipes

A century and a half of glass secrets — how to make it purer, tougher, clearer. You can't rush that much hard-won know-how, and you can't buy it at any store.



Wall Two: Built Right In

Its glass is designed into a customer's phone or car for years. Swapping to an unknown maker means re-testing everything. Almost nobody dares.



Wall Three: The Giant Furnaces

One glass plant costs billions and takes years to build. A garage rival simply can't start — the ticket to enter is a fortune.



Wall Four: The Endless Lab

It spends fortunes inventing the NEXT glass before anyone asks. By the time rivals copy today's glass, it has already moved on.



The Cracks in the Glass

When gadget sales dip, glass orders dip harder. Huge new plants can sit half-full. And cheaper makers chase the simplest glass — so it must keep out-inventing them.

Charlie tapped his glasses. “My trick: don't ask how to WIN. Ask what would DESTROY it — then never do that. **Invert, always invert.**”



Find every way to lose... then don't!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Charlie's checklist for ruining a glassmaker: let the lab go cold in a bad year, and a hungry rival leaps the walls. Or bet the whole company on one gadget's boom. Turn every worry into a rule you never break. 🏰

Warren raised his cola. "A business the modern world simply can't run without — patient, trusted, always inventing. The kind of castle you'd want to hold for a lifetime."



So the treasure isn't the glass. It's the KNOW-HOW.

 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Walls: vault of recipes  + built-right-in  + billion-dollar furnaces  + the endless lab . Cracks: boom-and-bust orders, half-full plants, cheap copycats. Charlie: INVERT. Warren: buy know-how, not gadgets. 

THE NEXT THIRTY YEARS

"Last question," said Clara.
 "What does glass become
 in thirty years?"
 Tomorrow's street
 shimmered.



Glass is going
EVERYWHERE!

On a rooftop at dusk, Siri
 thought it through the way
 Grandpa always taught her.



Bet on the **NEED**,
 not the shape.

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

The deep currents: glass that folds like paper, glass dashboards curving across whole cars, ultra-safe glass vials guarding medicines, threads carrying even more of the internet, and mirrors of glass steering sunlight for power. More light, more screens, more glass. 🌟

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

2056 watchlist: foldable glass, whole-car glass dashboards, medicine vials, faster fiber, solar mirrors. More light everywhere = more glass. Rule: bet on needs, not shapes. (Also: I want a foldable-glass notebook NOW.)

COMING HOME

Her own bed. Morning. The compass: quiet. The house: somehow different.

Was it real? It FELT real...

One fresh line dried on the diary's glowing page.

"The modern world is not magic. It is millions of ordinary people doing small hard things, together, for a long time."

At breakfast, sunlight poured through the window glass — and one glass thread hummed inside the wall.

You carry the whole world, quietly.

She hugged the diary tight. Somewhere far away, a river town of furnaces glowed against the dawn.

Show me the next one, Grandpa. ♡

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Feel the next unlock: a glass hair purer than spring water, light trapped and bouncing a million times a second, honey-glass drawn into fifty-mile threads, a century and a half of patient invention. A window is no longer just a window. **Nothing, from now on, is just anything.**



SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK · WHAT I LEARNED

- ① Light stays trapped in glass by total inside-reflection.
- ② A fast core in a slow coat guides the light home.
- ③ Purer-than-nature glass carries light for fifty miles.
- ④ Fat preforms are drawn into hair-thin threads.
- ⑤ Recipes + built-in trust + giant furnaces = a castle.
- ⑥ Master one craft, reinvent it forever.
- ⑦ Bet on needs, not shapes. 💛



OUR PHILOSOPHY

We believe the greatest gift we can give a child is the ability to think.

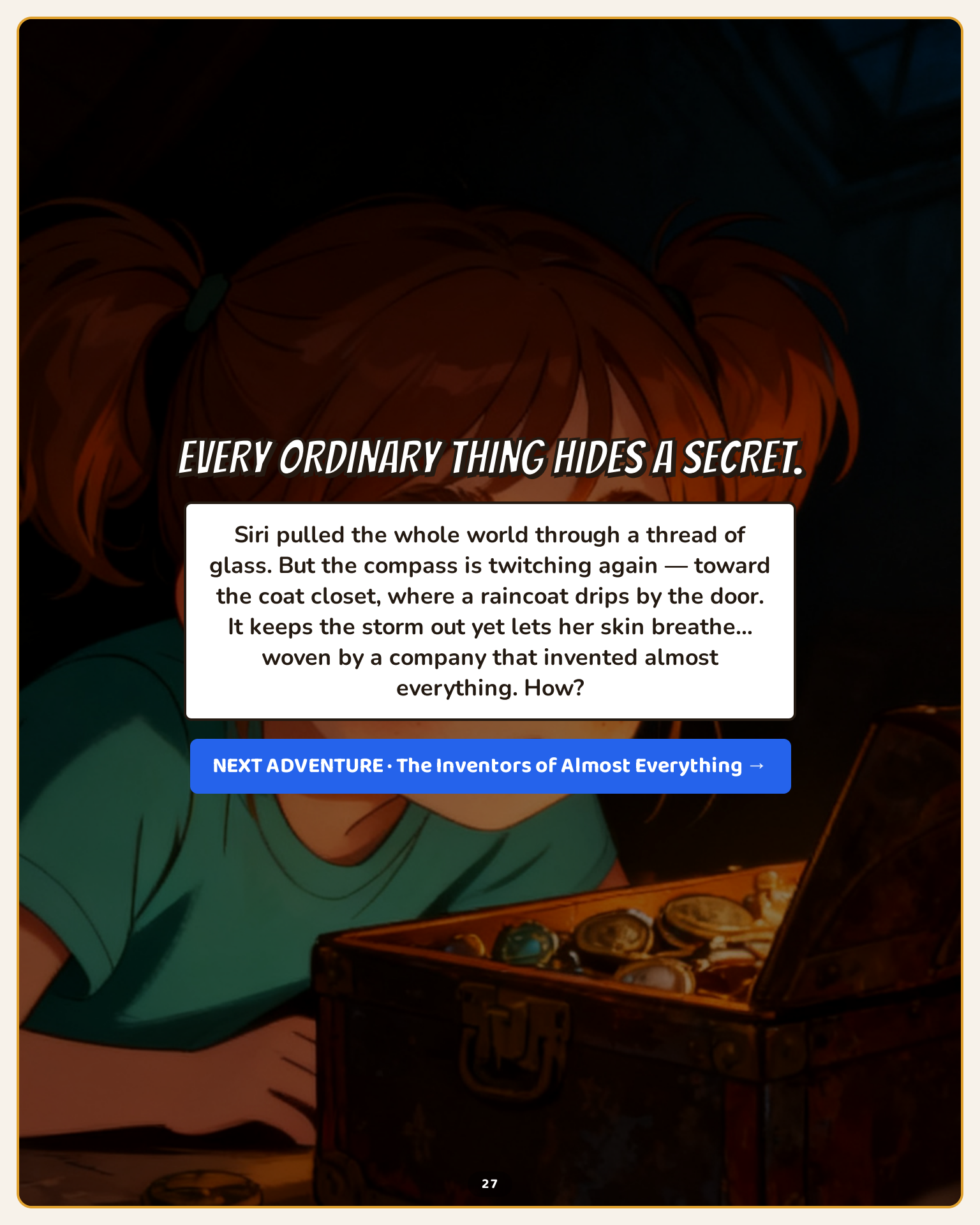
Inspired by the multidisciplinary thinking of [Charlie Munger](#) and the rational, long-term philosophy of [Warren Buffett](#), our comics connect science, technology, business, history, and human behavior to show how the real world works.

Every story begins with a scientific idea and follows its journey into innovation, industry, and the businesses that create value for society. Along the way, children learn that great companies are built on curiosity, experimentation, integrity, and long-term thinking.

Our goal is not to teach children how to invest, but to help them build the mental models needed to understand the world, ask better questions, and think independently.

The companies featured in *The Great Company Adventures* are educational case studies—not investment recommendations. They show how knowledge, innovation, and perseverance turn ideas into products, services, and enduring businesses.

LEARN THE SCIENCE. • UNDERSTAND THE BUSINESS. • THINK FOR LIFE.



EVERY ORDINARY THING HIDES A SECRET.

Siri pulled the whole world through a thread of glass. But the compass is twitching again — toward the coat closet, where a raincoat drips by the door. It keeps the storm out yet lets her skin breathe... woven by a company that invented almost everything. How?

NEXT ADVENTURE · The Inventors of Almost Everything →