

The Great Company Adventures • Book 8 of 50



EXXONMOBIL THE ANCIENT SUNLIGHT MACHINE

A curious girl, three wise mentors, and the single drop of oil that carries a buried sun in every bus, plane and city.

"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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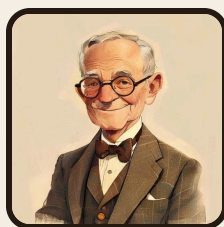
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MEET THE CHARACTERS



SIRI



BEN



WARREN



CHARLIE



IRIS

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 DROP THAT WOULDN'T DRY

Midnight. Homework abandoned. And Grandpa Ben's brass compass? Spinning like a top.

SPIN

The needle froze. Pointing at... one dark drop on the garage floor. Motor oil. Boring.

YOU? You're just a greasy little drop!

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

It's never done THIS before...

"Time to meet the machines that move the modern world. Start with the ancient sunlight."

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Look at a drop of oil. It ran your school bus, softened your sneaker soles, even coloured your crayons. And it's older than the dinosaurs. So... **where did all that power come from?**

The drop rippled — and grew huge. A whirlpool of black-and-gold light pulled her in.

WHOOSH



Here we GOOO!



SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

New mystery! 🗄

- ① How does one greasy drop move buses, planes and whole cities?
- ② Grandpa says it built one of the biggest companies EVER. A DROP?!
Prove it.

THE DROP OF A THOUSAND MOLECULES

She landed in a lab where a single oil drop floated, huge and glowing amber.

A young engineer in an orange hard hat looked up. "I'm Iris. I read what's inside oil for a living."

Best. Job. EVER.

Inside the drop: tangles of tiny beads — chains of carbon and hydrogen in a thousand shapes.

What ARE those wiggly things?

Hydrocarbons. Sunlight, folded into chains.

It's the size of a BEACH BALL!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Oil is a **battery in disguise**. One spoonful holds more push than you could give a heavy cart all day. Where did it get all that punch? Follow me — the answer is 200 million years old.

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Oil = chains of carbon + hydrogen. 🔍 Iris says every drop hides a secret. First up: how does a puddle of goo hold that much power?

ANCIENT SUNLIGHT

3a Where the power came from

"All oil starts here," said Iris. A warm sea, long ago. Thick and green with tiny life.



My bus fuel was a POND?!

"Plankton. Trillions of them. Each catches sunlight and packs it inside — living solar batteries."



They EAT light?!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Every plant and plankton runs one magic trick: sunlight + water + air → stored energy. A leaf is a solar panel that saves its power as sugar and oil. Oil is just that — **sunlight in a lunchbox**. ☀️

"They died and sank. Mud buried them. More mud. More. For millions of years."



Squished under a whole SEAFLOOR.

"Deep down: hot as an oven, squeezed like a fist. Slowly, the buried life turned to oil."



A pressure-cooker the size of a WORLD!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Heat + pressure + time = the kitchen that cooks life into oil. The sunlight never escaped — it stayed locked in chains of carbon. A drop of oil is a **fossil of a summer** that shone before dinosaurs walked. 🦖

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

- ① Plankton pack sunlight inside themselves (photosynthesis) ☀️
- ② They sink, get buried, cooked for millions of years → OIL. My fuel is a buried sunbeam. Whoa.

SETTING THE SUNLIGHT FREE

Iris dripped fuel into a glass engine. One tiny spark — BOOM — a piston leapt.

BOOM

The drop just PUNCHED that piston!

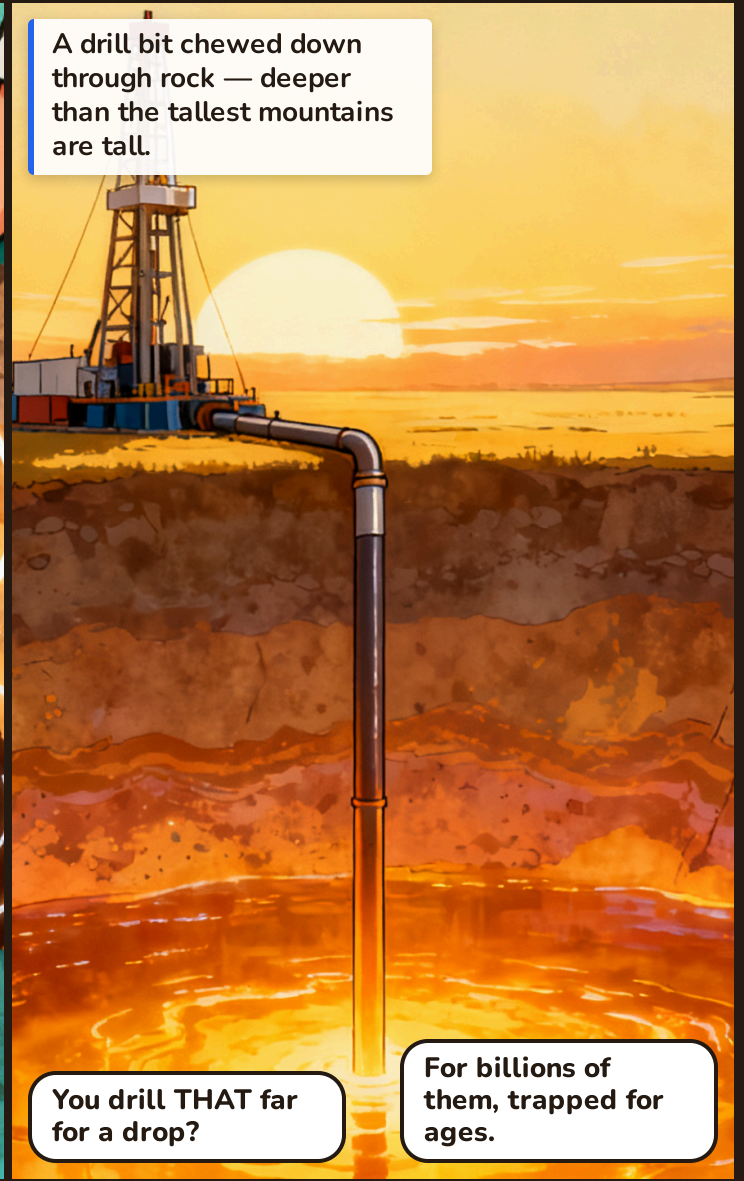
★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Burning is **photosynthesis run backwards**. The plankton pulled sunlight IN; the flame lets it back OUT — as heat and motion. Every mile you ride, a little ancient sun is set free. 🔥

“One spoonful of fuel can carry a car a whole mile. Try pushing a car a mile yourself!”



No THANKS.



★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Oil doesn't sit in lakes — it soaks into rock like water in a sponge, trapped under a stone lid. Finding it is a detective story miles underground. Get it wrong and you drill a very expensive empty hole. 🧐

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Fire = sunlight let back OUT (burning = un-doing photosynthesis 🔥). Finding oil = sound-echo maps + drilling miles down. It's hidden in ROCK, not lakes. Sneaky.

THE RAINBOW HIDDEN IN THE DROP

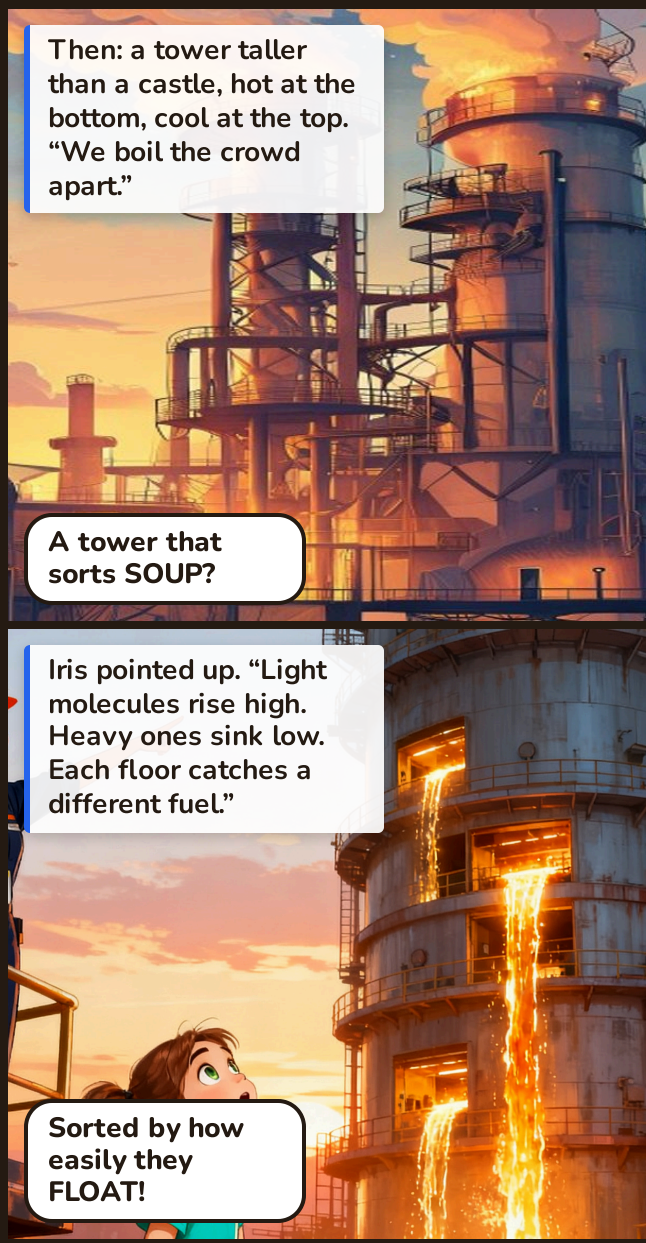
5a Crude oil is a crowd

Fresh crude oil: thick, black, smelly. “Useless like this. It’s a CROWD of molecules, all jumbled.”



Ew. THAT runs my bus?

Then: a tower taller than a castle, hot at the bottom, cool at the top. “We boil the crowd apart.”



A tower that sorts SOUP?

Iris pointed up. “Light molecules rise high. Heavy ones sink low. Each floor catches a different fuel.”

Sorted by how easily they FLOAT!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

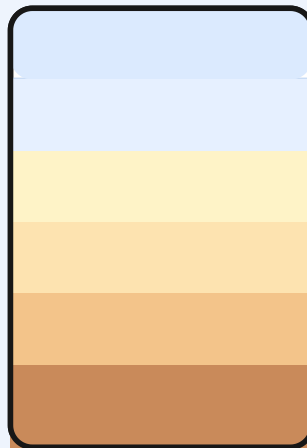
It's called **distillation**. Heat the crowd; the lightest molecules boil first and float up, the heaviest stay low. One black drop becomes gas, gasoline, jet fuel, diesel, wax and tar. 🌈



ONE CRUDE OIL, MANY FUELS

COOL top
light molecules

HOT bottom
heavy molecules



GASES — cook & heat

GASOLINE — cars

JET FUEL — planes

DIESEL — trucks

OILS & WAX — machines

TAR — roads & roofs

Iris waved at a room of stuff: crayons, sneakers, a toothbrush, a raincoat, medicine bottles.



ALL of this came from the drop?!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

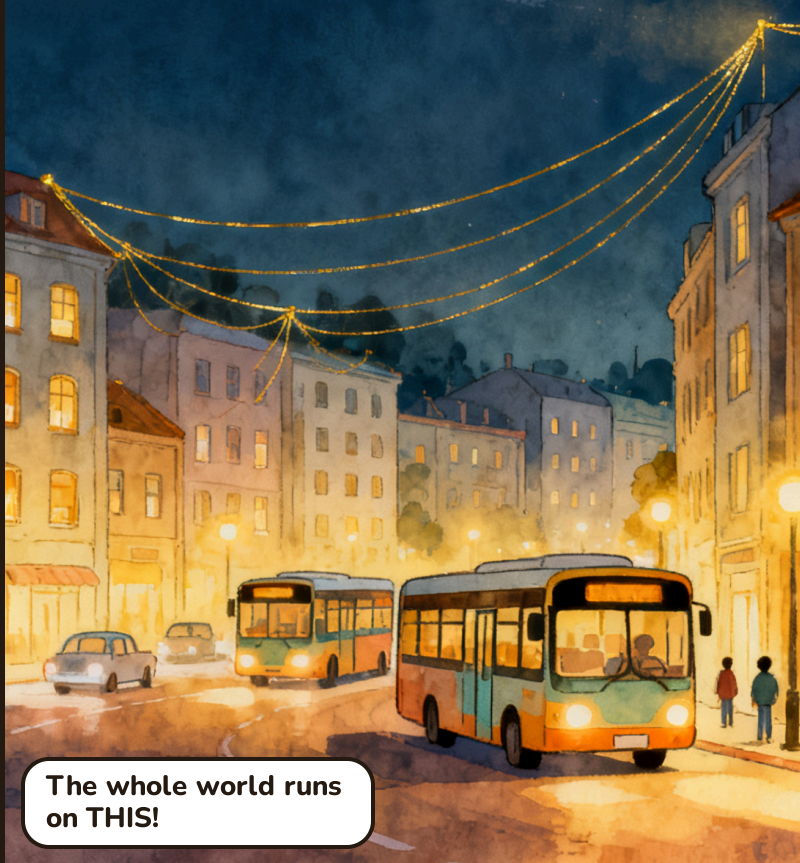
The same molecules can be snapped and re-linked — that's **cracking** — into plastics, medicine, and fertilizer that helps feed half the planet. Oil isn't only fire. It's the **LEGO box** of the modern world. 🌱

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Crude = a jumbled crowd → boil it in a tall tower → light floats up, heavy sinks down = gas, jet fuel, diesel, tar. Same molecules re-linked → plastic, medicine, crayons. One drop, a hundred jobs. 🌈

WHY THE WORLD SAYS YES

Iris dimmed the lights: a city at night — every lamp, bus, plane and warm house sipping the drop.



The whole world runs on THIS!

“And it can NEVER stop. Hospitals, planes, farms — one missed day and life freezes.”



So they can't ever run out?

Never. That's the whole job.

A refinery stretched to the horizon — pipes, tanks, one tall flame. “Cheap only if it's HUGE.”



Bigger somehow means CHEAPER!

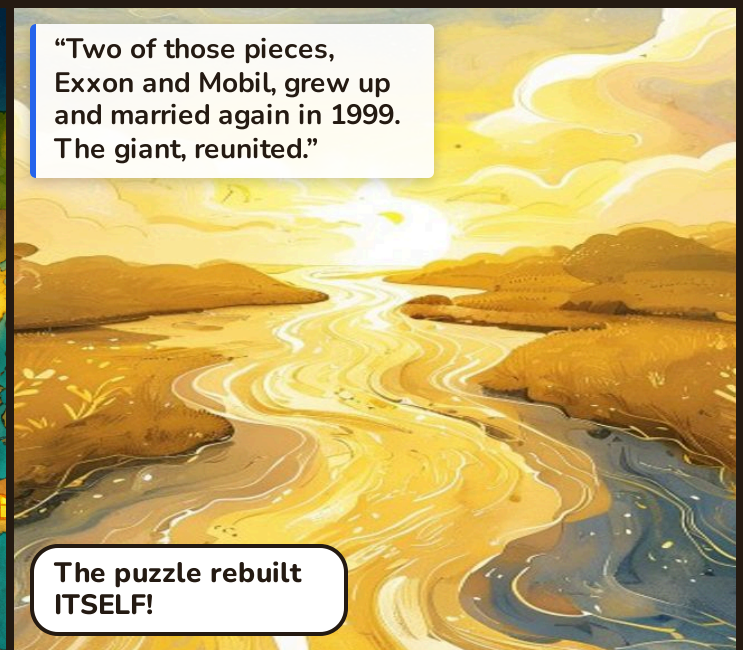
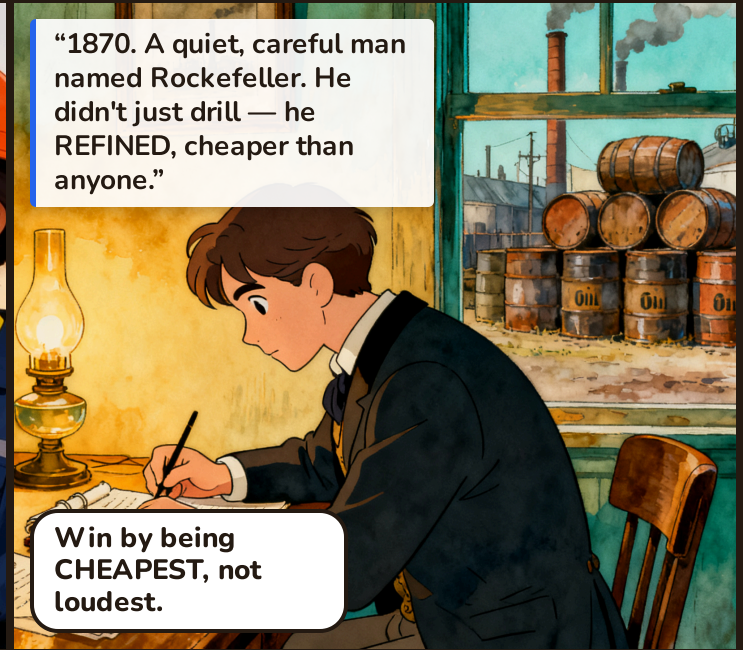
★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Why spend billions on this? Because energy is the thing behind every other thing — food, travel, warmth, light. Make it cheap and reliable at giant scale, and a billion people quietly lean on you every single day. ⚡

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

People don't cheer for oil — they cheer for warm homes, planes, medicine, food. The job: never stop, never run out, stay cheap. Do that for a billion people = a giant company. Grandpa's rule: sell the thing people can't skip a day without.

THE EMPIRE BUILT ON A DROP



★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Rockefeller's secret wasn't luck — it was **relentless efficiency**: squeeze waste from every drop, own every step, never stop improving. Even split apart, the pieces stayed mighty. Good habits outlive their founder.



THE STORY IN TIME

1859

First US oil well is drilled in Pennsylvania.

1870

John D. Rockefeller founds Standard Oil.

1882

Standard Oil lights lamps across the world.

1911

A court splits Standard Oil into 34 companies.

1911

Two pieces grow into Exxon and Mobil.

1999

Exxon and Mobil merge into ExxonMobil.

2020s

Fuel, plastics and chemicals for billions. 



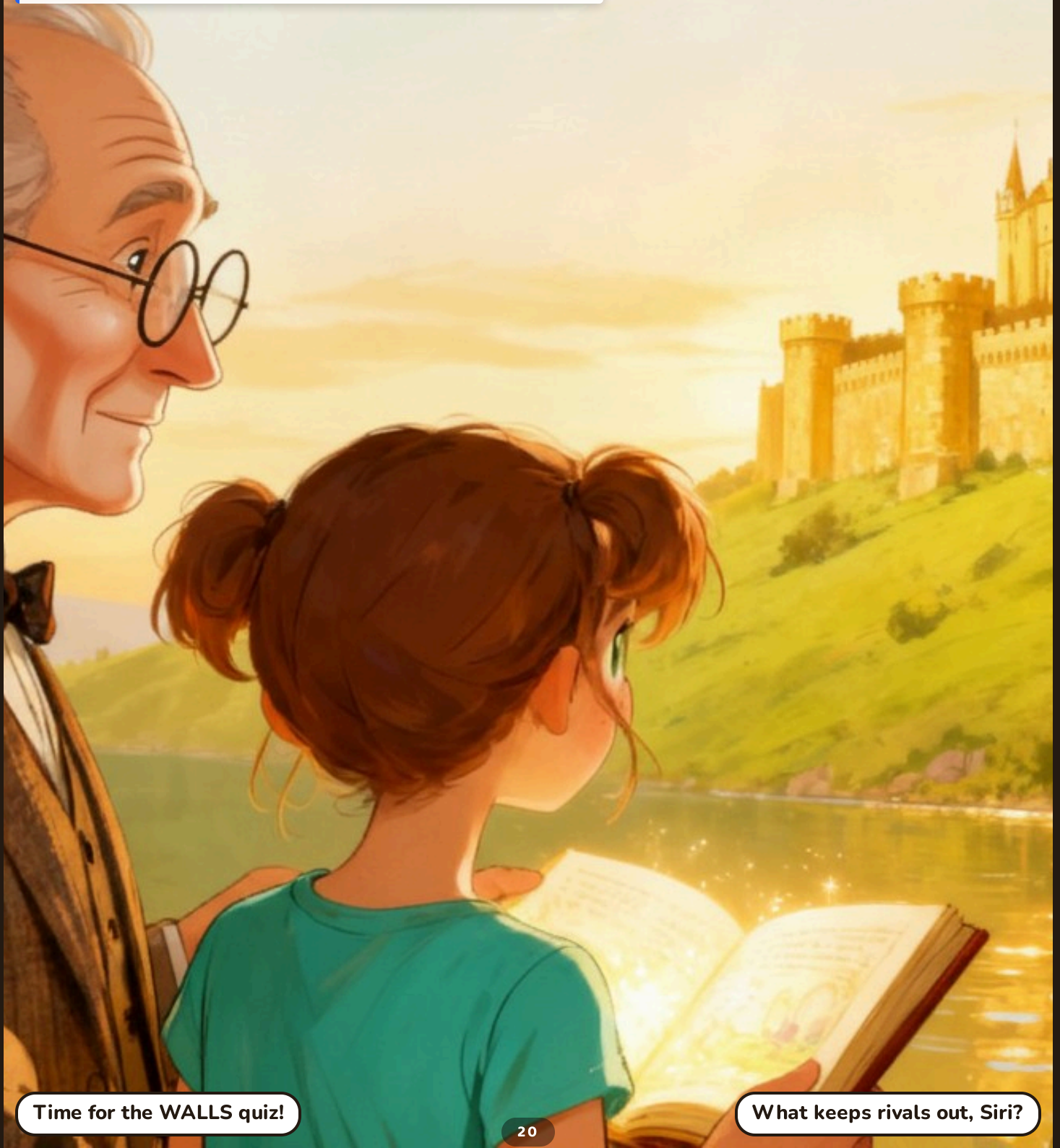
SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Oil built an EMPIRE. Rockefeller (1870) won by being cheapest, not loudest → Standard Oil lit the world → too big, split in 1911 → Exxon + Mobil re-married in 1999. Habits outlive people.



THE CASTLE OF STEEL AND FIRE

A warm glow. A smell of cherry cola. Warren and Charlie, the partners from Omaha, before a castle of steel pipes.



Time for the WALLS quiz!

What keeps rivals out, Siri?



THE CASTLE WALLS • WHY RIVALS CAN'T COPY IT



Wall One: The Giant Machine

One refinery costs billions and takes years to build. You cannot make one in a garage. That alone scares off almost everyone.



Wall Two: Every Link Owned

From the deep well to the fuel pump, they own each step. Owning the whole chain squeezes a little cost out of every single drop.



Wall Three: A Promise of Always

Towns, trucks and planes trust it to never, ever run dry. Reliability like that takes a whole century to earn.



Wall Four: Oil Where It Hides

The best oil pools are rare and hard to reach. Whoever knows the ground best and can afford the risk gets there first.



The Cracks in the Castle

Burning oil warms the planet. Cleaner energy is rising fast. And one big spill can stain a name for decades. Castles must change or crumble.

Charlie tapped his glasses. “Don't ask how to WIN. Ask what would DESTROY it — then don't do that. **Invert, always invert.**”



Find the ways to lose... then dodge them!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Charlie's checklist for ruining an oil giant: waste billions on empty wells. Cause a giant spill. Ignore cleaner energy until it's too late. Forget that cheapness is the whole game. Now — just never do those. 🧠

Warren raised his cola. "A business the world can't skip a day without. I admire any castle that stays useful for a hundred years."



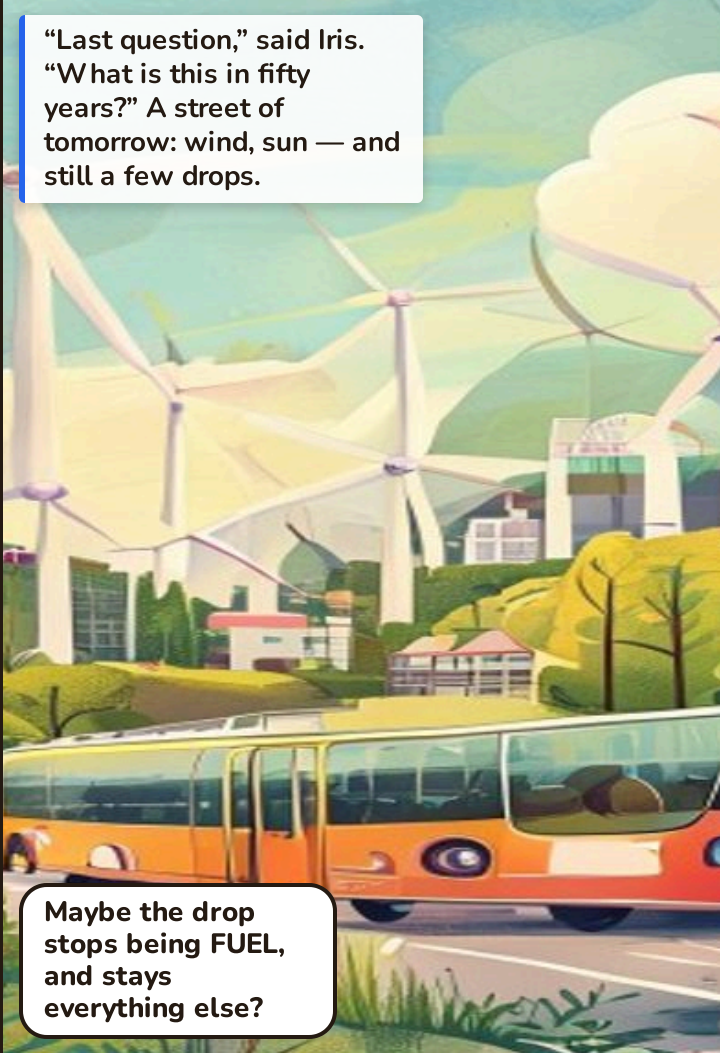
So the treasure isn't the oil. It's the CASTLE.

SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Walls: giant machine 🏢 + every link owned 🔗 + promise of always ⚡ + oil where it hides 🌍. Cracks: warming planet, cleaner energy, spills. Charlie: INVERT. Warren: buy castles that last a century. 🏰

THE NEXT HUNDRED YEARS

"Last question," said Iris.
"What is this in fifty
years?" A street of
tomorrow: wind, sun — and
still a few drops.



Maybe the drop
stops being FUEL,
and stays
everything else?

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



Don't bet on the
fuel. Bet on the
NEED.

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

The deep currents: more sun and wind for power, but oil's molecules still becoming plastics, medicine and materials. Giants who master carbon may capture it, clean it, reuse it. Energy changes shape — the need for it never ends. 🌍

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

2070 watchlist: solar + wind for power, oil molecules for plastics + medicine, carbon capture. Rule: bet on the NEED, not the shape. (Also: I want to see a wind wheel up close.)

COMING HOME

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

Was it real? It FELT real...

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

"The modern world runs on ancient sunlight — and on the patient people brave enough to fetch it."

In the garage, that little oil drop caught the light. Buried plankton. A trapped sun. A hundred everyday things.

You're a fossil of a summer that shone before dinosaurs.

She hugged the diary tight. Somewhere far away, a refinery flame flickered like a tiny sun.

Show me the next one, Grandpa. 💛

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Next time you feel a warm bus or a plane overhead, feel this: sunlight caught by plankton, buried for ages, boiled into a rainbow, set free by a spark. A drop of oil is no longer just a drop. **Nothing, from now on, is just anything.**



SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK · WHAT I LEARNED

- ① Oil = ancient sunlight, packed by plankton.
- ② Buried + cooked for millions of years.
- ③ Burning sets the old sunlight free.
- ④ One tower sorts crude into a rainbow of fuels.
- ⑤ Same molecules → plastic, medicine, crayons.
- ⑥ The castle = scale + every link + reliability.
- ⑦ Invert! And bet on the need, not the shape. 🧡



OUR PHILOSOPHY

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

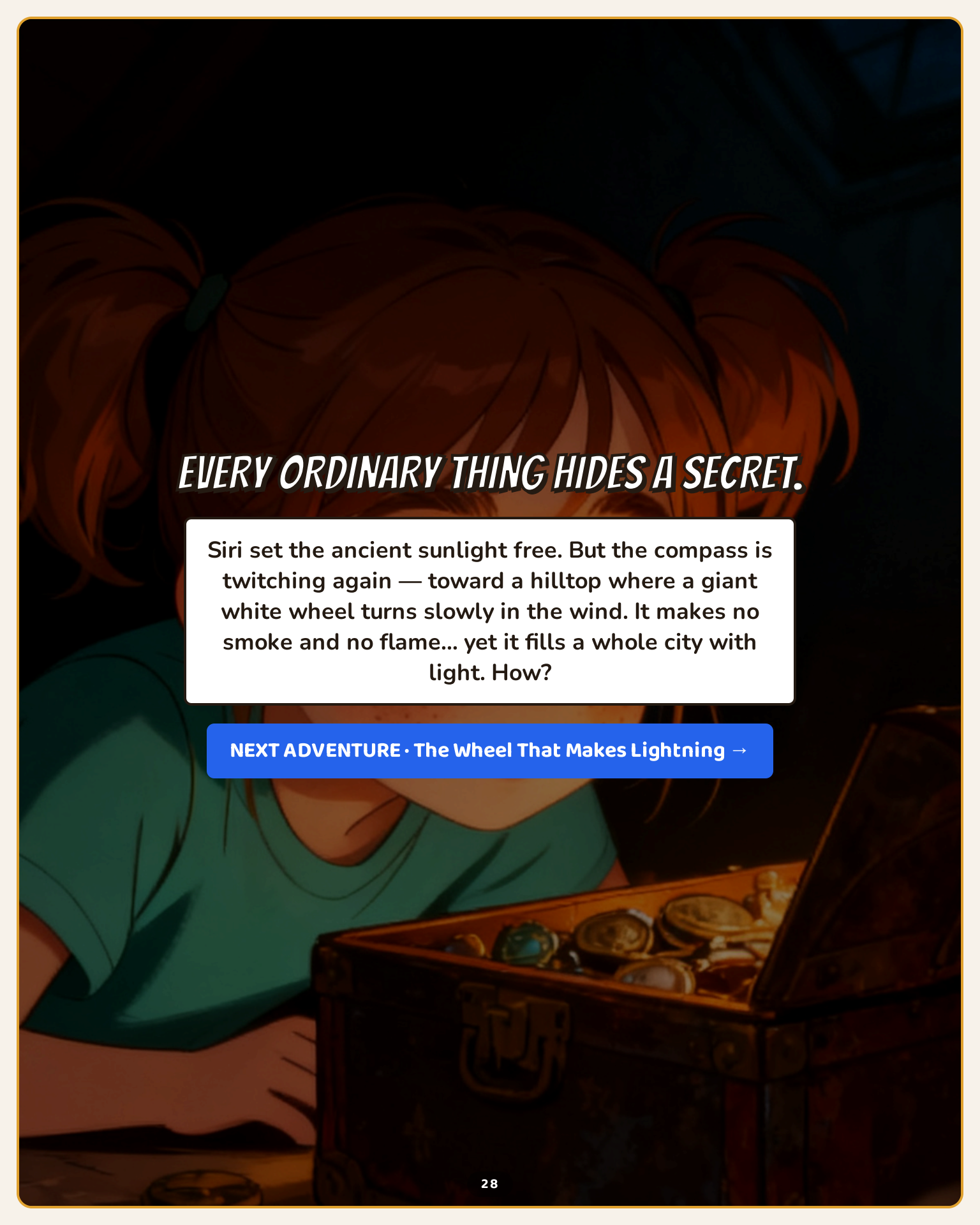
Inspired by the multidisciplinary thinking of [Charlie Munger](#) and the rational, long-term philosophy of [Warren Buffett](#), our comics connect science, technology, business, history, and human behavior to show how the real world works.

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.

A girl with red hair in pigtails, wearing a green shirt, is looking down at an open treasure chest filled with gold coins and jewels. The scene is dimly lit, with a warm, orange glow emanating from the chest. The background is dark and indistinct.

EVERY ORDINARY THING HIDES A SECRET.

Siri set the ancient sunlight free. But the compass is twitching again — toward a hilltop where a giant white wheel turns slowly in the wind. It makes no smoke and no flame... yet it fills a whole city with light. How?

NEXT ADVENTURE · The Wheel That Makes Lightning →