

The Great Company Adventures · Book 7 of 50

SHELL THE SUNLIGHT BURIED AT SEA

A curious girl, three wise mentors, and the tank of fuel that carries ancient sunlight across the world.

"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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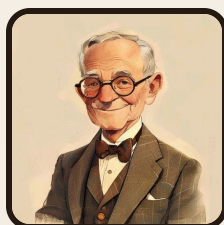
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MEET THE CHARACTERS



SIRI



BEN



WARREN



CHARLIE



NORA

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 TANK THAT WHISPERED AT MIDNIGHT

Midnight. Homework: doomed.
And Grandpa Ben's old brass
compass? Spinning like a top.

SPIN

The needle locked.
Pointing at... the red
fuel can in the garage.
The most boring object
alive.

YOU? You just
smell funny!

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
sunlight buried
at sea."

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Lift a fuel can — it sloshes like dirty water. Yet one tankful can carry a two-ton car across three whole states. That soup holds **ancient sunlight**, squeezed for a hundred million years. So tonight: who buried the sun in a can?

The can's fumes shimmered. A whirlpool of blue light grabbed her.

WHOOSH



Here we GOOO!

SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

New mystery! 📖

- ① How does smelly soup move a two-ton car for hundreds of miles?
- ② Grandpa says this can build one of Earth's biggest companies. A CAN?!
Prove it.

THE DROP THAT WAS A CROWD

She landed beside a city of silver towers and pipes, breathing steam under warm floodlights.



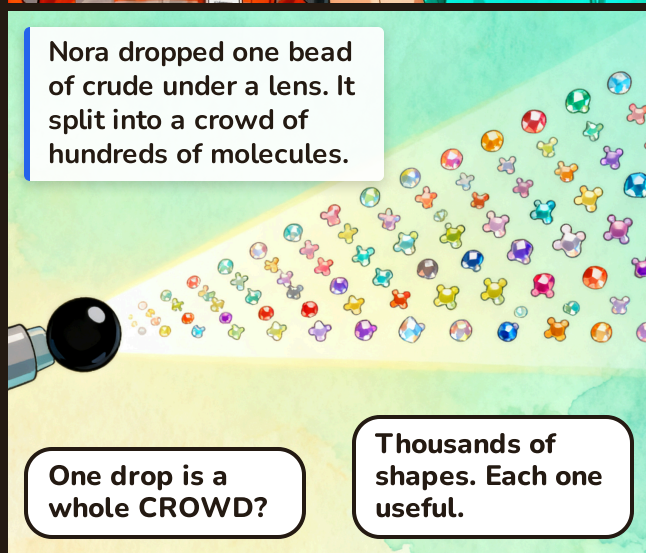
It's a whole CITY made of kettles!

An engineer in an orange hard hat waved. "I'm Nora. I turn buried sunlight into things that go."



Best. Job. EVER.

Nora dropped one bead of crude under a lens. It split into a crowd of hundreds of molecules.



One drop is a whole CROWD?

Thousands of shapes. Each one useful.

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Crude oil isn't one thing — it's a **soup of thousands** of different molecules, all tangled together. Some become fuel for jets, some for cars, some become plastic, crayons, even medicine. The whole job is **sorting the soup**.

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Crude = a soup of 1000s of molecules from ONE black drop. 🧪 Nora says every drop hides a secret. First one: where did this soup even COME from?

A HUNDRED MILLION SUMMERS

3a The secret: fuel is bottled sunshine

"Rewind a hundred million years," said Nora. A warm ancient sea, thick with tiny glowing plankton.

They drank sunlight, died, and rained down. Mud buried them where nothing could rot them away.

A blanket of mud for a hundred million years.

Deep down, heat and weight cooked the buried creatures — slowly — into black oil and gas.

The fuel used to be...
ALIVE?

Earth has a
KITCHEN?!

Low and slow.
The oldest recipe.

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Every plankton was a tiny **solar battery**: photosynthesis packed sunlight into its body. Bury a trillion of them, cook gently for ages, and you get crude oil. Fuel is literally **sunlight that fell on an ancient sea**. ☀️

"Burning fuel just gives the sunlight back — fast." A spark, and the stored sun leapt out as heat.



So the engine drinks OLD sunshine!

Siri cupped a warm drop and felt the weight of deep time in her palm.



A hundred million summers... in one drop.

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

A molecule of fuel is like a **coiled spring** holding solar energy. Burning snaps the spring: fuel and air become heat plus tiny puffs of gas. That heat shoves the pistons that turn the wheels. ⚡



SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

- ① Fuel = ancient plankton + sunlight, buried at sea, cooked for ages 🌊
- ② Burning = giving the old sunlight back as heat. My car runs on fossil SUNSHINE. ☀️

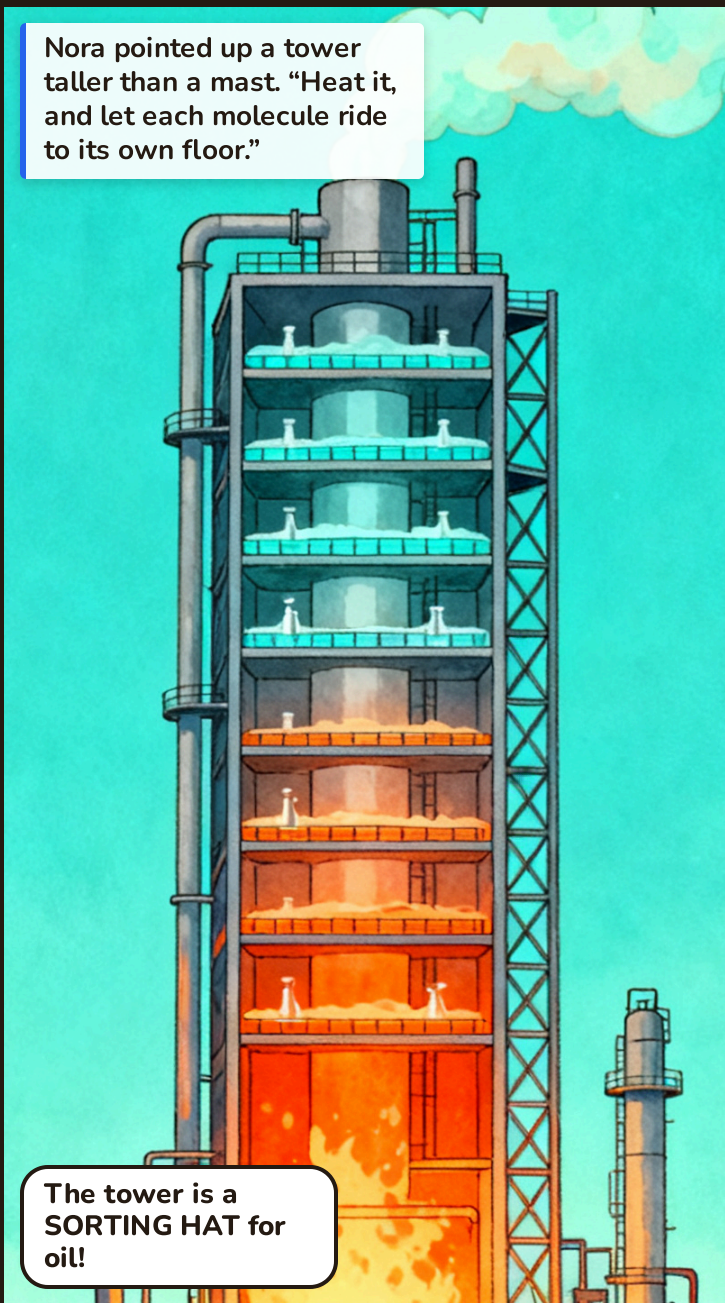
UNMIXING THE SOUP

Back at the towers, black crude poured in — useless as is. “Now we sort the crowd.”



How do you un-mix a soup?

Nora pointed up a tower taller than a mast. “Heat it, and let each molecule ride to its own floor.”



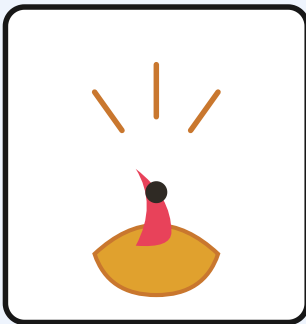
The tower is a SORTING HAT for oil!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Small light molecules boil easily and float **high** up the hot tower; big heavy ones give up low and sink. Draw each off at its own floor — and the soup untangles into gasoline, jet fuel, diesel, tar. It's called **distillation**. 🧪

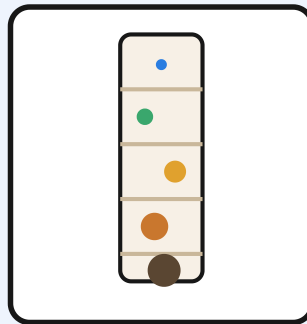


HOW WE UNMIX THE BURIED-SUN SOUP



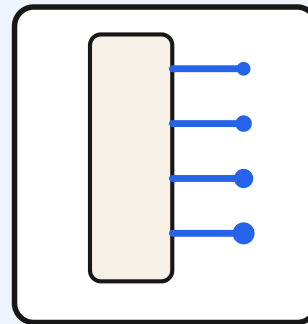
HEAT THE SOUP

crude boils into rising vapor



EACH RIDES ITS HEIGHT

light floats high, heavy sinks low



DRAWN OFF BY FLOOR

gas · gasoline · diesel · tar

"Too much heavy sludge, not enough gasoline. So we CRACK the big ones into small ones."



You SNAP molecules in half?

With heat, pressure, and a clever helper.

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

The heavy leftovers get **cracked**: heat and a catalyst break long molecules into short, valuable ones — more gasoline from the same barrel. A catalyst helps the split without being used up. Almost nothing is wasted. 🔧

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Sort the soup by boiling: light stuff rides HIGH, heavy sinks LOW = distillation. Then CRACK the big molecules into gasoline. One black barrel → jets, cars, roads, crayons. 🛢️

THE LONGEST STRAW IN THE WORLD

"But first you must FIND it, miles down." Trucks thumped the earth; the echoes drew a hidden map.

You see underground with SOUND?!

A drill bit chewed straight down through rock, deeper than the tallest mountains are high.

Oil hides in ROCK, not lakes?

In tiny holes in the rock — a stone sponge.

Then giant tankers longer than skyscrapers carried the crude across whole oceans.

A boat that big is a floating ISLAND!

Some gas was chilled to minus 162° until it shrank into liquid — six hundred times smaller.

You SHRANK a cloud into a cup!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Here's the wonder: **nobody on Earth knows how to make fuel alone.** The searcher reads sound-maps; the driller tames rock; the sailor crosses oceans; the chemist sorts the soup. A great company braids a million skills into one clean pump.

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Find it with sound-maps → drill miles into rock-sponge → tankers and shrunk-down gas cross oceans. 🌍 So many hands. So who's the CONDUCTOR of it all? 🎵

WHY THE WHOLE WORLD SAYS YES

Nora spun a globe. Cars, trucks, ships, planes, tractors, factories — all sipping the same soup.

“And it hides in plain sight: plastics, medicines, roads, the fertilizer that grows your dinner.”

It's in my LUNCH?

“That's why a red-and-yellow station waits on almost every corner, always full, always open.”

It moves EVERYTHING?!

Always there. Like it's part of the road.

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Why would anyone spend billions on this? Because the world runs on **portable, packable energy** — and can't stop for a second. Whoever delivers it everywhere, every day, without fail, earns a river of small, steady yes'es. 🏠

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Fuel moves cars, ships, planes, farms — AND becomes plastic, medicine, roads. People don't buy the smelly soup; they buy GOING. Grandpa's rule: find what folks can't skip a day without.

THE SHOP THAT SOLD SEASHELLS

A giant red-and-yellow sign rose over the towers — a scallop shell. Siri knew it from every roadside.

"It began in 1833. A little London shop selling pretty SEASHELLS and curios from far seas."

SHELL! The buried sunlight is SHELL!

A fuel giant started with... SHELLS?!

"In 1892 a son built the tanker Murex — first to carry lamp-oil safely through the Suez Canal."

"In 1907 the British shell-sellers joined a Dutch oil company. Together: one of Earth's biggest."

From seashells to oil ships!

Two rivals became one giant.

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

The name and the scallop badge are real seashells — kept for almost two centuries. From lamp kerosene, to gasoline for the car age, to gas chilled for ships, Shell kept selling the **same thing** — packaged energy — in new shapes. 🐚



THE STORY IN TIME

1833

A London shop sells seashells and curios from distant seas.

1892

The tanker Murex carries lamp-oil through the Suez Canal.

1897

“Shell” Transport and Trading is born; the badge is a shell.

1907

British Shell merges with Royal Dutch — a global giant.

1900s

Lamp kerosene gives way to gasoline for the age of cars.

Late

1900s

Natural gas and chilled LNG begin crossing the oceans.

Today

Fuel for a billion journeys — plus first steps beyond oil. 🌍

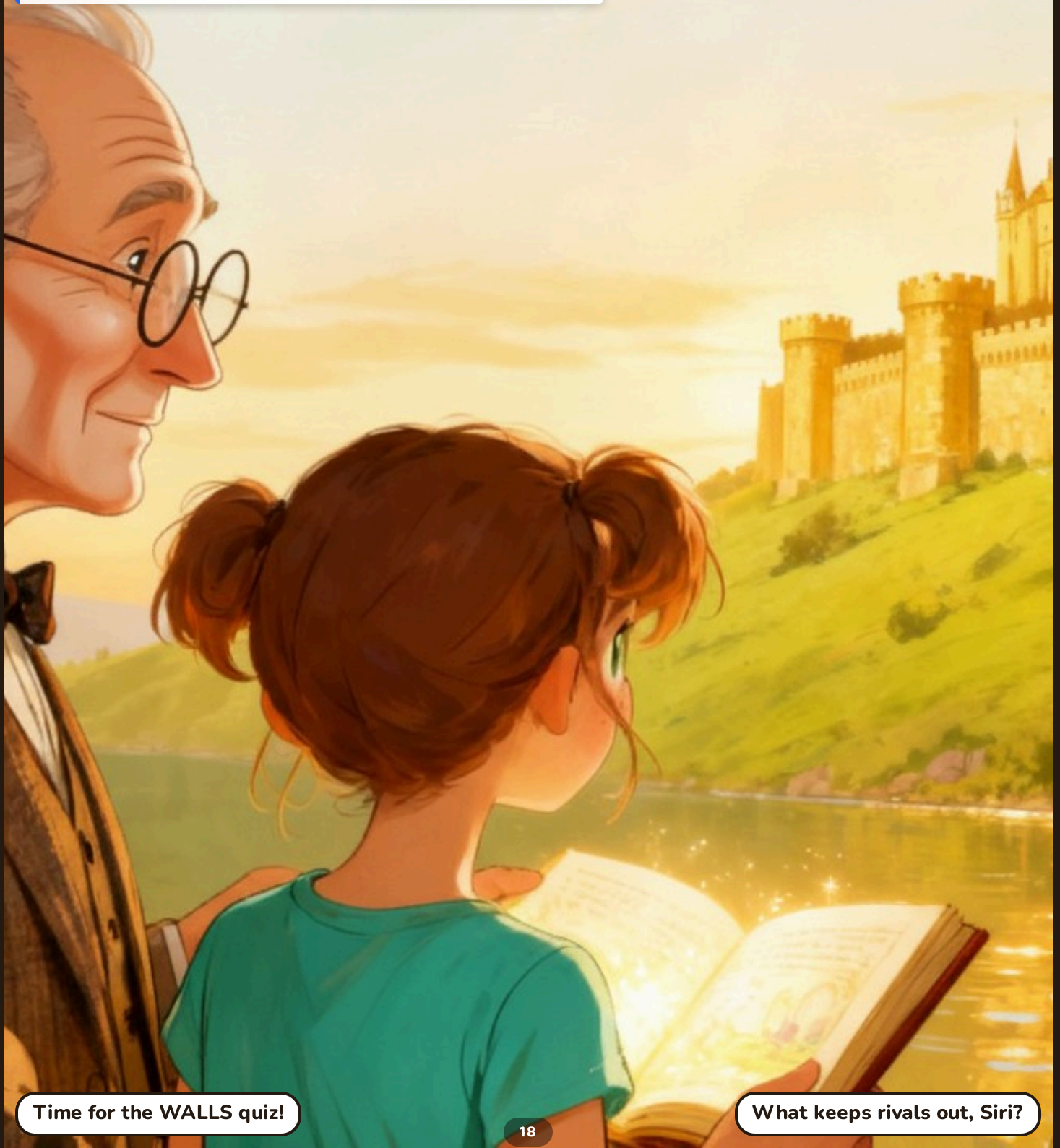


SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Seashell shop (1833) → oil tankers → merged with the Dutch (1907) → global energy. The scallop badge is a REAL shell. They always sold one thing: packaged energy, re-shaped. 🐚

THE CASTLE OF OIL

A warm glow. A whiff of cherry cola. Warren and Charlie, the partners from Omaha, 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: The Bottomless Purse

A single platform or refinery can cost billions. Only a handful of companies on Earth can even buy a ticket to play.



Wall Two: The Whole River

Shell finds it, pumps it, ships it, refines it AND sells it. Owning every step means it earns in fair weather and foul.



Wall Three: A Corner Everywhere

Tens of thousands of stations, always stocked. The shell on the sign means clean fuel, honest pump. Trust you can drive to.



Wall Four: The Patience of Giants

Big projects take a DECADE to pay back. A rival needs not just money, but the nerve and skill to wait that long.



The Cracks in the Wall

Shell can't set the oil price — the whole world does. Fields run dry, so it must keep finding more. And a warming planet is turning toward cleaner energy.

Charlie tapped his glasses. “My trick: 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 don't!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Charlie's checklist for ruining an oil giant: overpay for reserves, drown in debt, bet the whole company on one field, ignore the clean-energy tide, or lose the public's trust. Now — just never do those. Worry, turned into a to-do list.

Warren raised his cola. "I judge an energy giant like a candy store: will the world still need it tomorrow, and can anyone else afford to build it?"



So the treasure isn't the fuel. It's the WALLS.

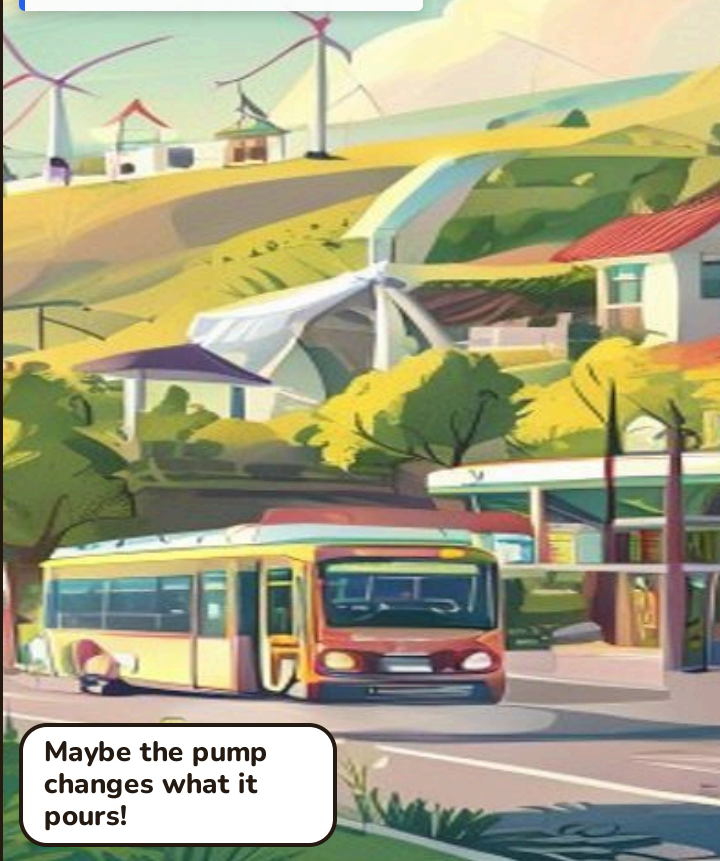
SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Walls: deep purse 💰 + whole river 🌊 + corner everywhere 🏠 + giant patience ⌚. Cracks: no price control, drying fields, a greening world.

Charlie: INVERT. Warren: judge the BUSINESS, not the barrel. 🏠

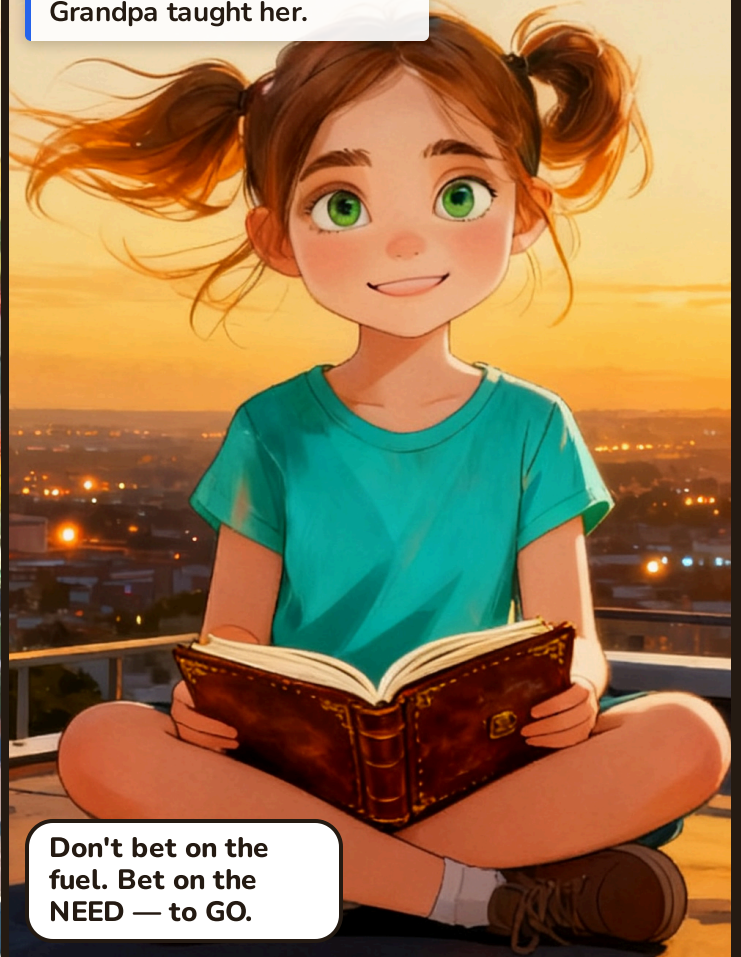
THE NEXT THIRTY YEARS

"Last question," said Nora. "What is fuel in thirty years?" A street of tomorrow: chargers, hydrogen, clean ships.



Maybe the pump changes what it pours!

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



Don't bet on the fuel. Bet on the NEED — to GO.

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

The deep currents: batteries and chargers for cars, hydrogen for heavy trucks, cleaner fuels for planes and ships, and catching the smoke before it escapes. The **shape** of energy will change; the world's hunger to move and make will not. The winner keeps delivering — cleaner each decade. 🌍

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

2056 watchlist: EV chargers, hydrogen trucks, clean ship fuel, catching carbon. Rule: bet on the NEED (to go), not the fuel. Energy giants must change their spots — or fade.

COMING HOME

Her own bed. Morning. The compass: quiet. The world: 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, the car keys lay by the milk. Ancient seas. Buried summers. A million hands at the pump.

You're a hundred million years old, little can.

She hugged the diary tight. Somewhere far away, a scallop sign glowed against the dawn.

Show me the next one, Grandpa. 🍷

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Next unlock, feel it: a hundred million years of sunlight, buried at sea, cooked to a soup, sorted in a tower, and set free in a spark to carry you anywhere. A tank of fuel is no longer just fuel. **Nothing, from now on, is just anything.**



SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK • WHAT I LEARNED

- ① Fuel = ancient sunlight buried at sea.
- ② Refining = sort the soup, crack the big ones.
- ③ Find with sound, drill through rock, cross oceans.
- ④ Nobody makes fuel alone — companies conduct.
- ⑤ Need → reliability → trust → castle.
- ⑥ Invert! And judge the business, not the barrel.





OUR PHILOSOPHY

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

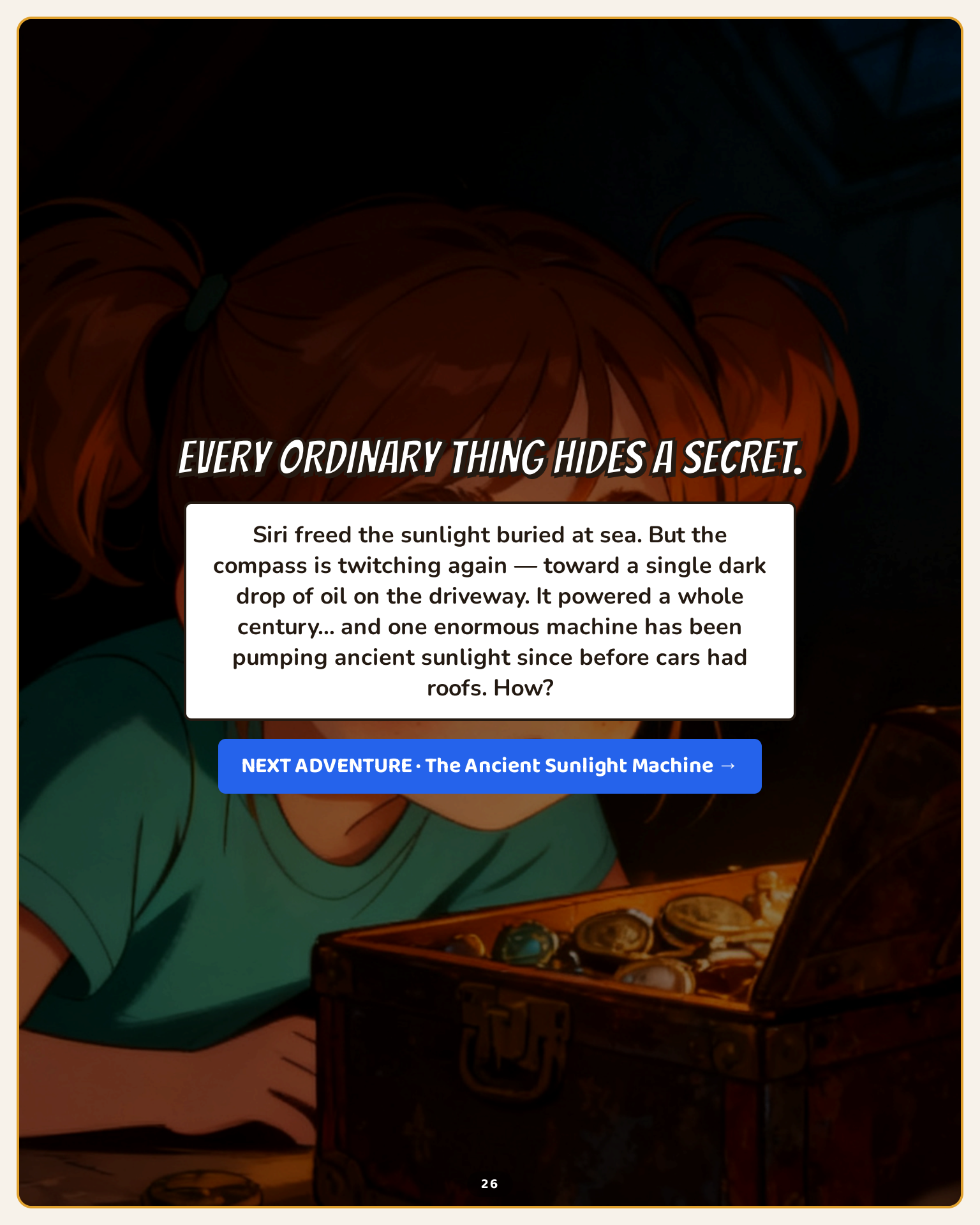
Inspired by the multidisciplinary thinking of [Charlie Munger](#) and the rational, long-term philosophy of [Warren Buffett](#), our comics connect science, technology, business, history, and human behavior to show how the real world works.

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.

EVERY ORDINARY THING HIDES A SECRET.

Siri freed the sunlight buried at sea. But the compass is twitching again — toward a single dark drop of oil on the driveway. It powered a whole century... and one enormous machine has been pumping ancient sunlight since before cars had roofs. How?

NEXT ADVENTURE • The Ancient Sunlight Machine →