

The Great Company Adventures • Book 36 of 50

SONY
**THE
POCKET FULL OF MUSIC**



seven doors, twelve mental models, and the little machine that taught songs how to travel.

"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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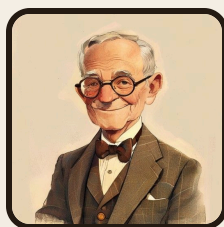
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For readers aged 7 and up. First Kindle edition, 2026.
Published by Omaha Investments.

MEET THE CHARACTERS



SIRI



BEN



WARREN



CHARLIE



HANA

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 SONG THAT PLAYED AT MIDNIGHT

Midnight. Homework: not happening. Because Grandpa Ben's brass compass just started... trembling.

TIK-TIK

It spun. Locked. Pointing straight at—

SPIN

Wait. Seriously?

Down the hall: Dad with headphones. Mom watching a film. Her brother mid-boss-fight. Three kinds of sound. One family.

We swim in sound ALL DAY. And I've never asked where it comes from.

It's never done THIS before.



The little music player.
Asleep in the moonlight.
Smaller than a sandwich.
Utterly ordinary.



The diary flipped open by
itself. Fresh ink.

YOU'RE the next
great company?
You play SONGS.

"Some companies
taught the whole
world to listen,
little one. Start
with the smallest
one in your own
house. The pocket
full of music."

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Really think about it. A song is **moving air** — you can't wrap it up, post it, or put it in a drawer. And yet somebody squeezed a thousand of them into a box this size. So tonight's mystery: **how do you catch a sound?**

The little screen rippled — and a whirlpool of teal light yanked her in.

WHOOSH



Here we GOOO!



SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Biggest mystery yet 🎧

- ① How do you TRAP moving air in a box and let it out again later?
- ② Grandpa says this tiny thing built a giant company. Prove it, compass.

THE PUZZLE INSIDE THE POCKET

She landed in a lab where a music player floated in pieces. Dozens of pieces. A frozen explosion.

It's a **CONSTELLATION** of parts!

A young engineer plucked a copper coil the size of a lentil out of the air. *"I'm Hana. I take sound apart for a living."*

Best. Job. EVER.

A shell. A little board. A battery curled like a sleeping cat. Two headphone drivers, opened like flowers.

What's the flower thing?

A magnet, a coil, and a cone. That's a speaker.

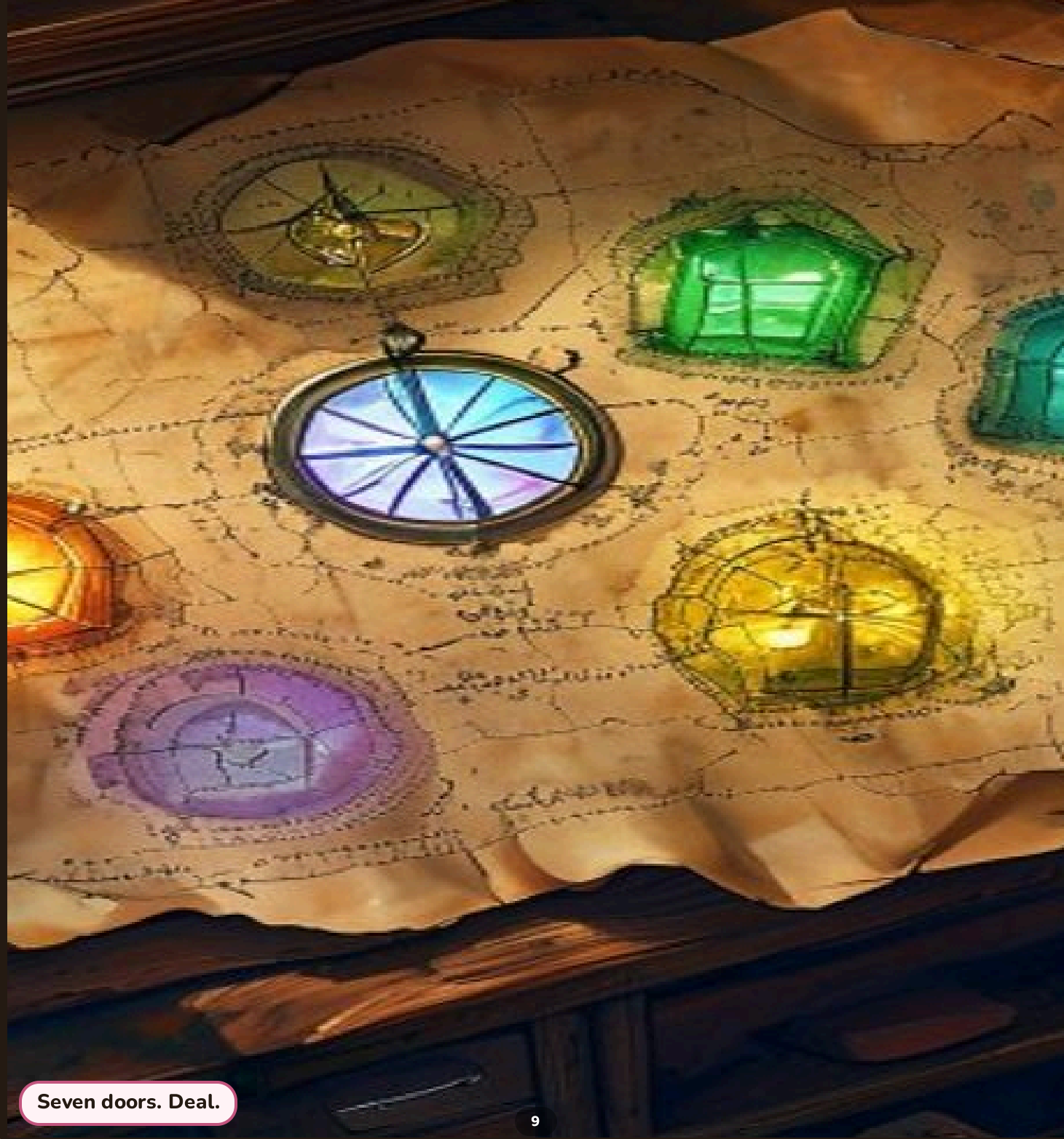
Under the microscope, the circuit board wasn't a board. It was a CITY. Copper roads. Tiny towers.

There are **STREETS** in here!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

A pocket player is a **concert hall in disguise**. It remembers the exact shape of a sound, then rebuilds that shape in the air beside your eardrum — tens of thousands of times a second, all day, never tiring.

Hana unrolled a parchment map. Seven glowing doors.
*"Seven secrets. Open them all and you'll understand
listening better than most grown-ups."*



Seven doors. Deal.



SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK • THE QUEST MAP

- 1 THE WAVE — what IS a sound?
- 2 THE SNAIL — how do ears work?!
- 3 THE SINGER — how does a box push air?
- 4 THE MEMORY — how do you write a song down?
- 5 THE EYE — and why is there a camera in here?
- 6 THE HEART — what keeps it alive?
- 7 THE JOURNEY — who builds it... and WHY?

Let's GO 🌍

THE WAVE YOU CANNOT SEE

3a Door One: sound is a crowd of air

Door one led to a hall with one enormous drum. Hana hit it. The skin shoved the air. The air shoved the air next to it.



So sound is just...
air PUSHING?

She dropped a pebble in a pond. Rings raced away. But the little paper boat only bobbed up and down.



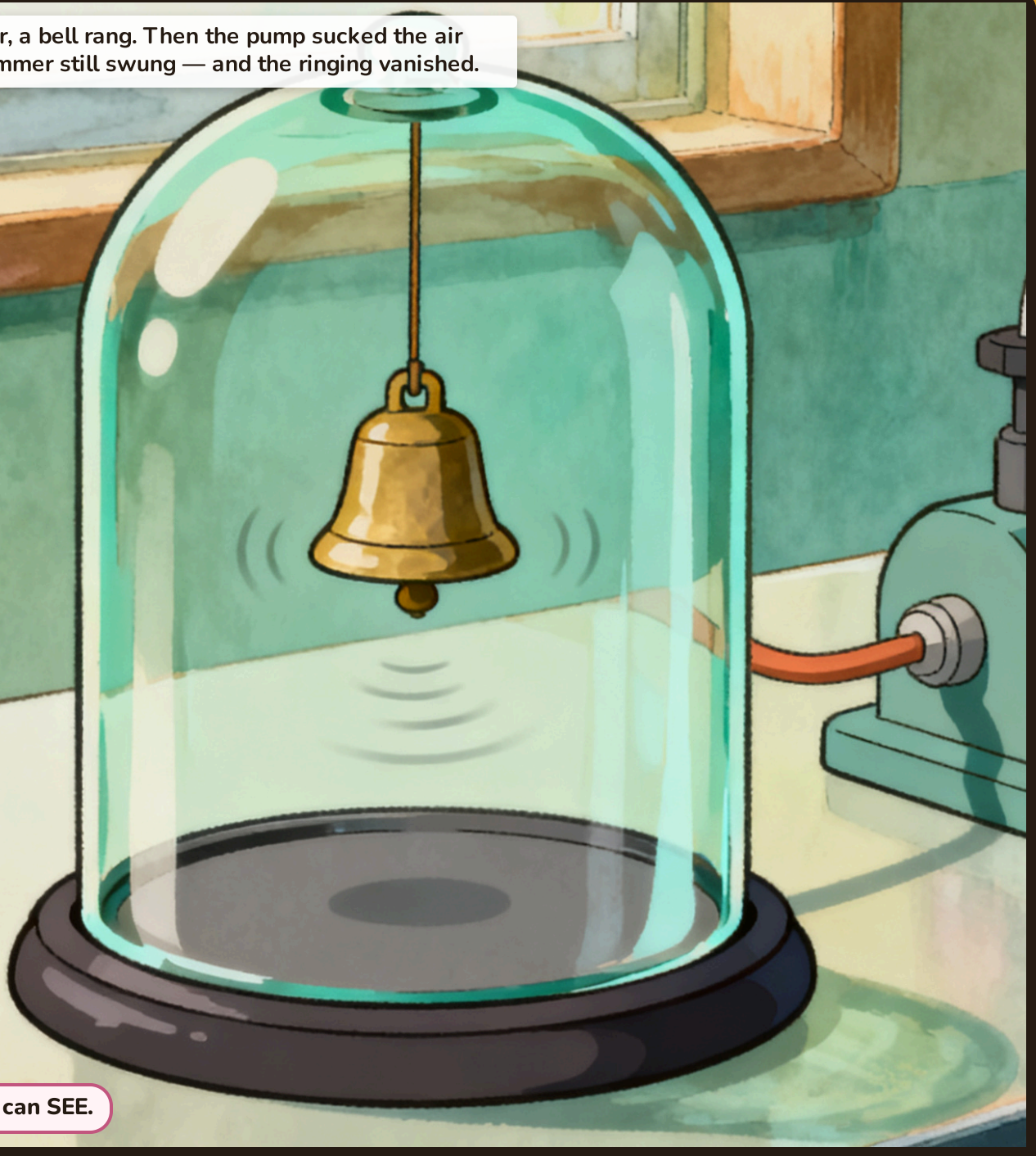
The boat doesn't
travel!

Right. The wave
moves. The stuff
stays home.

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Sound is a **squeeze passing through air**: crowded, spread out, crowded, spread out. Each molecule barely moves — it just nudges its neighbour and settles back. The pattern travels. The air does not. 🌊

In a glass jar, a bell rang. Then the pump sucked the air out. The hammer still swung — and the ringing vanished.

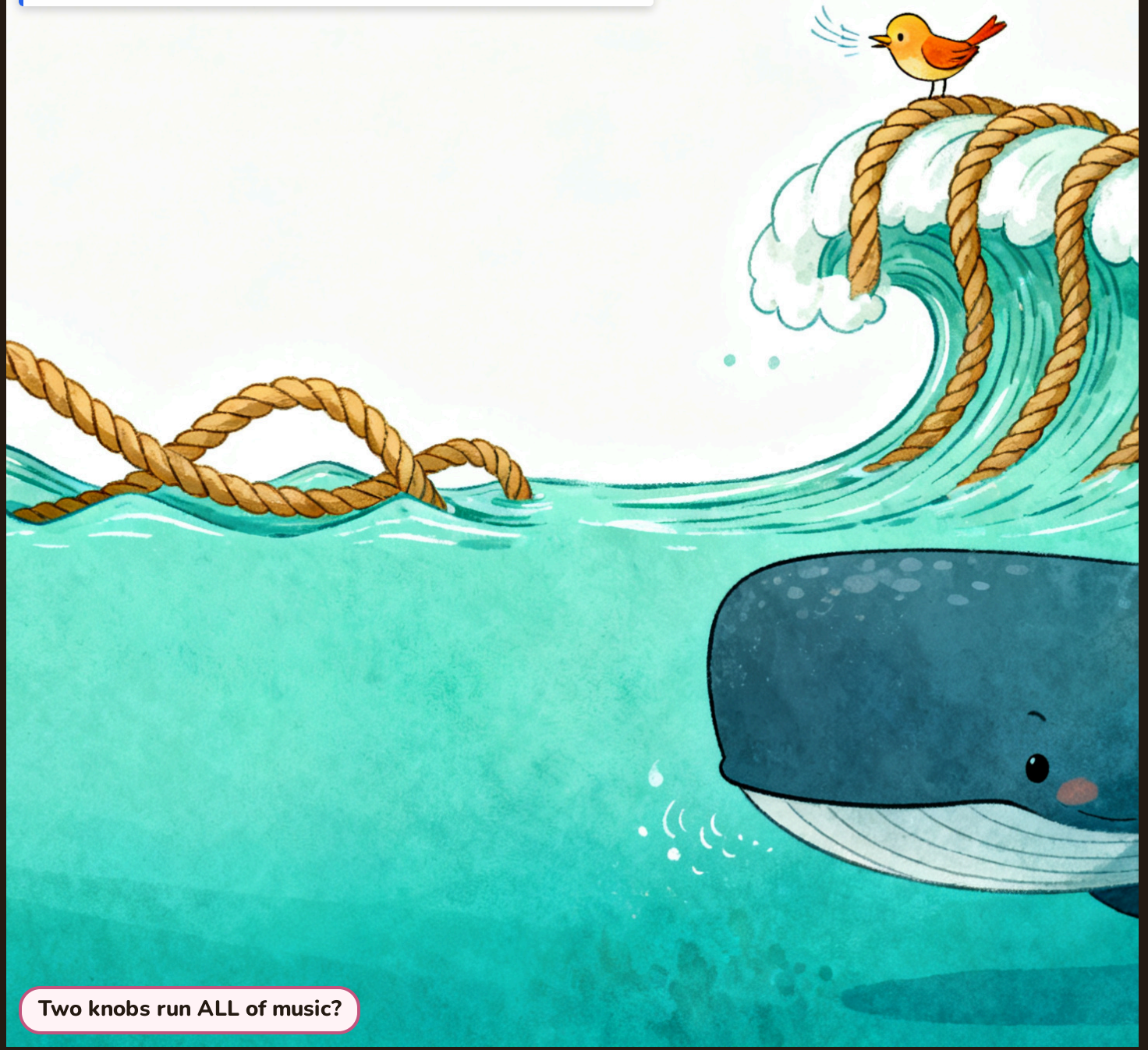


Silence you can SEE.

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

No air, no crowd to squeeze, no sound. That's why space is silent — every roaring space battle you've ever watched is a beautiful lie. In water, sound travels **four times faster** than in air, which is why whales can gossip across an ocean. 🐳

"Fast wiggles: high notes. Slow wiggles: low notes. Big wiggles: loud. Small wiggles: quiet."



Two knobs run ALL of music?



SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK · DOOR 1 OPEN

Sound = a squeeze travelling through stuff. Air stays put, pattern moves.
No air = no sound (sorry, space movies). Speed knob = pitch, size knob =
loudness. 🌊

THE SNAIL IN YOUR HEAD

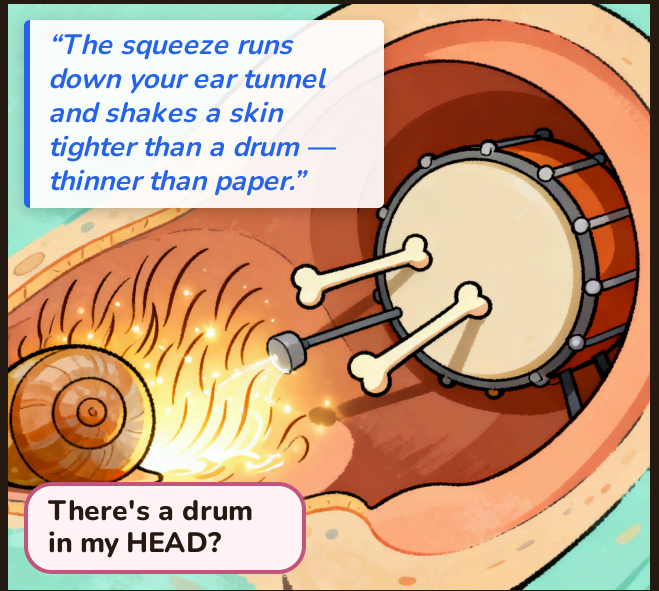
4a Door Two: the strangest machine you own

"Hum," said Hana, holding out a humming tuning fork. Siri pressed her throat and felt the buzz.



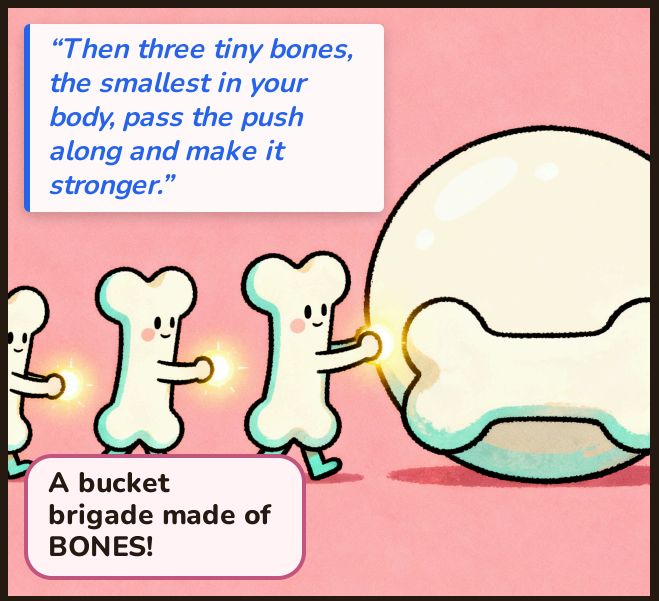
MY VOICE IS A WOBBLE! I'm a drum!

"The squeeze runs down your ear tunnel and shakes a skin tighter than a drum — thinner than paper."



There's a drum in my HEAD?

"Then three tiny bones, the smallest in your body, pass the push along and make it stronger."



A bucket brigade made of BONES!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

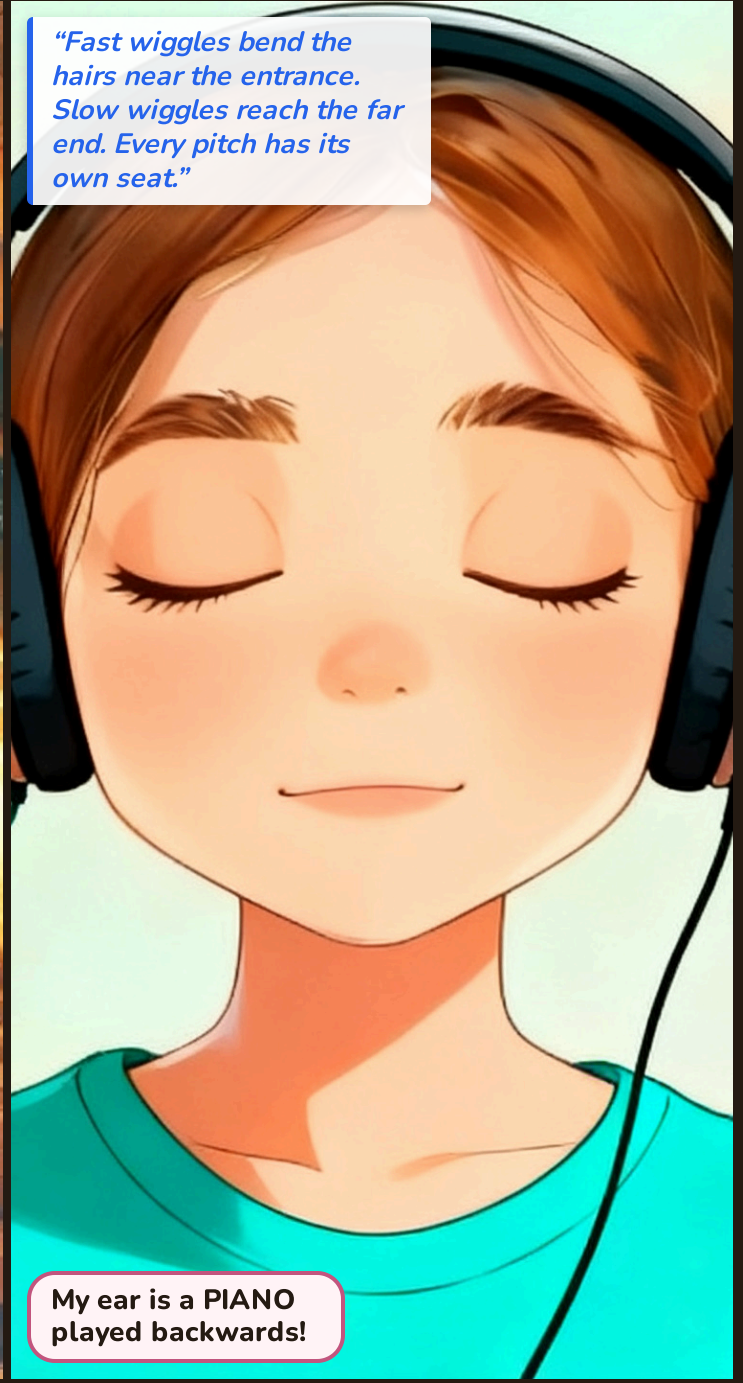
Why the bone levers? Because behind them the sound must move **liquid**, and liquid is much harder to push than air. The three bones act like a lever gang — small push in, strong push out. Without them you'd lose most of every sound. 🦴

"And then: a spiral, curled like a snail shell, filled with liquid and thousands of tiny hairs."



This is inside EVERYONE?

"Fast wiggles bend the hairs near the entrance. Slow wiggles reach the far end. Every pitch has its own seat."



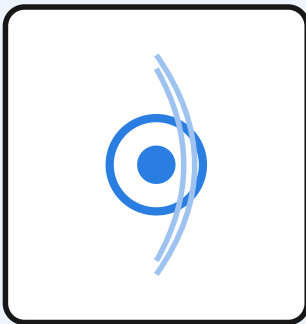
My ear is a PIANO played backwards!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

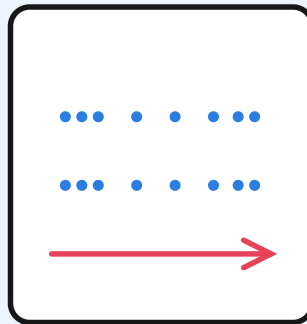
Your ear is a **frequency sorter** — about 20 wiggles a second up to 20,000 for a kid. Loud noise flattens those little hairs, and they do not grow back. Look after them: they have to last you a whole life. 🧐



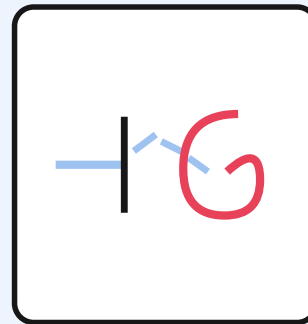
HOW A SONG REACHES YOUR EAR



COIL AND MAGNET
current makes it jump



AIR SQUEEZED
crowded, then spread out



THE SNAIL SORTS
each pitch, its own hairs



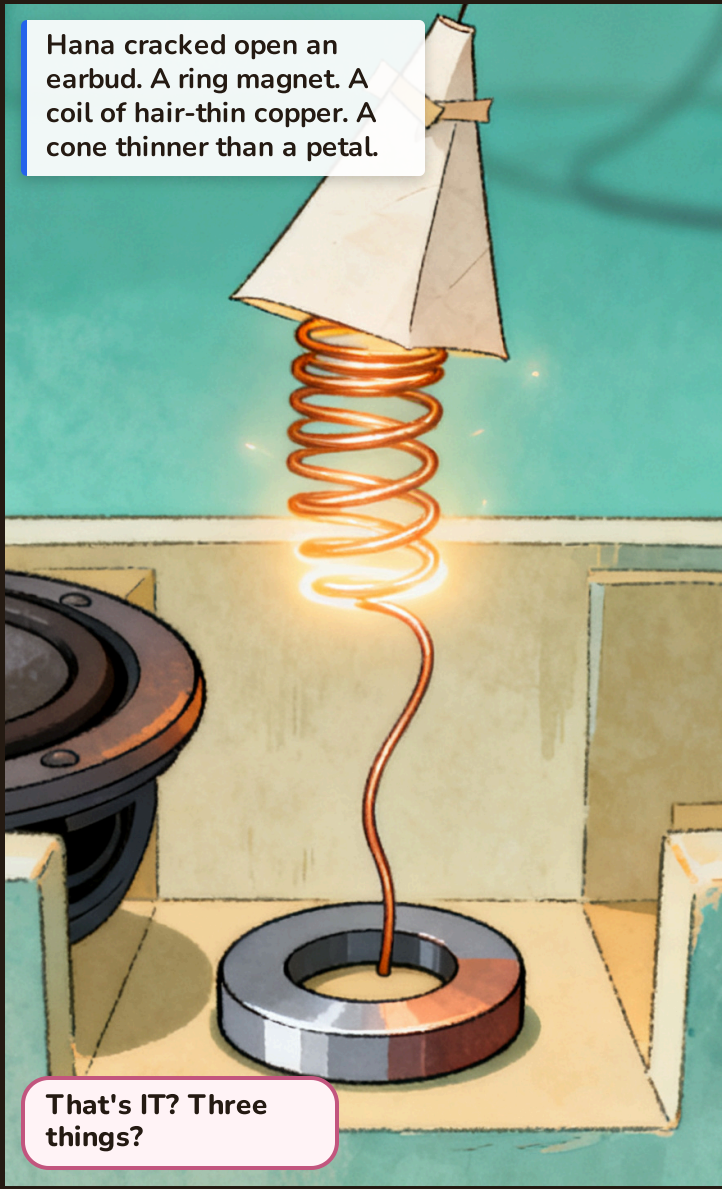
SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK · DOOR 2 UNLOCKED

Tunnel → paper-thin drum → 3 smallest bones
(lever gang!) → liquid spiral full of hairs sorted
by pitch. Hairs don't regrow. Turning it DOWN is
not boring, it's smart. 🦻

THE MAGNET THAT SINGS

5a Door Three: how do you push air on purpose?

Hana cracked open an earbud. A ring magnet. A coil of hair-thin copper. A cone thinner than a petal.



That's IT? Three things?

"Electricity through a coil makes it a magnet. Push, pull, push, pull — and the cone shoves the air."



Electricity turns into a PUSH!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

This is every speaker on Earth, in one line: **a coil carrying current jumps when it sits in a magnet's field.** Wiggle the current exactly like the music, and the cone wiggles the air exactly like the music. Your ear can't tell the difference — and that IS the whole trick. 

She put the headphones on. Air, shoved a thousand times a second, right beside her eardrum.



There's no band in here. Just... very clever pushing.

Hana opened a heavy door. Foam wedges everywhere — walls, ceiling, floor. No echo. None.



My own voice sounds **BROKEN!**

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Engineers build these silent rooms to hear a speaker **alone**, with no walls helping or hurting. It teaches a rule that works far beyond sound: to judge anything honestly, first remove everything that could flatter it. 🚫

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK • DOOR 3 UNLOCKED

Speaker = magnet + coil + cone. Current wiggles → coil jumps → cone pushes air → my snail. Also: silent rooms are TERRIFYING and I want one. 🇨🇪

WRITING MUSIC IN MAGNETS

6a Door Four, part one: the ribbon that remembers

Door four: a brown ribbon sliding past a tiny head. Magnified: millions of microscopic compass needles, being flipped.

Inside a cassette, two reels and a long ribbon. Play it back and the flipped needles nudge the coil — and the song wakes up.

You wrote a **SONG** in magnets?

It's a diary written in magnetism!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Recording tape is one of the great quiet inventions: a wave, frozen as a **pattern of tiny magnets**, that can wait years and then be replayed. Before it, if you missed a performance, it was gone forever. Tape made **time** replayable. 🕒

"But copy a copy of a copy..." Each one fuzzier. Greyer. A faint hiss creeping in behind the music.



It's fading like an old photograph!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Here's the flaw in every **analog** recording: the pattern is a shape, and every copy smudges the shape a little. Tape stretches. Powder wears. Hiss piles up. The song is always dying, just slowly. So engineers asked a wild question: **what if a song weren't a shape at all?**

Down the hall: a real studio. A singer behind glass. An engineer riding a wall of sliders. Take eleven.



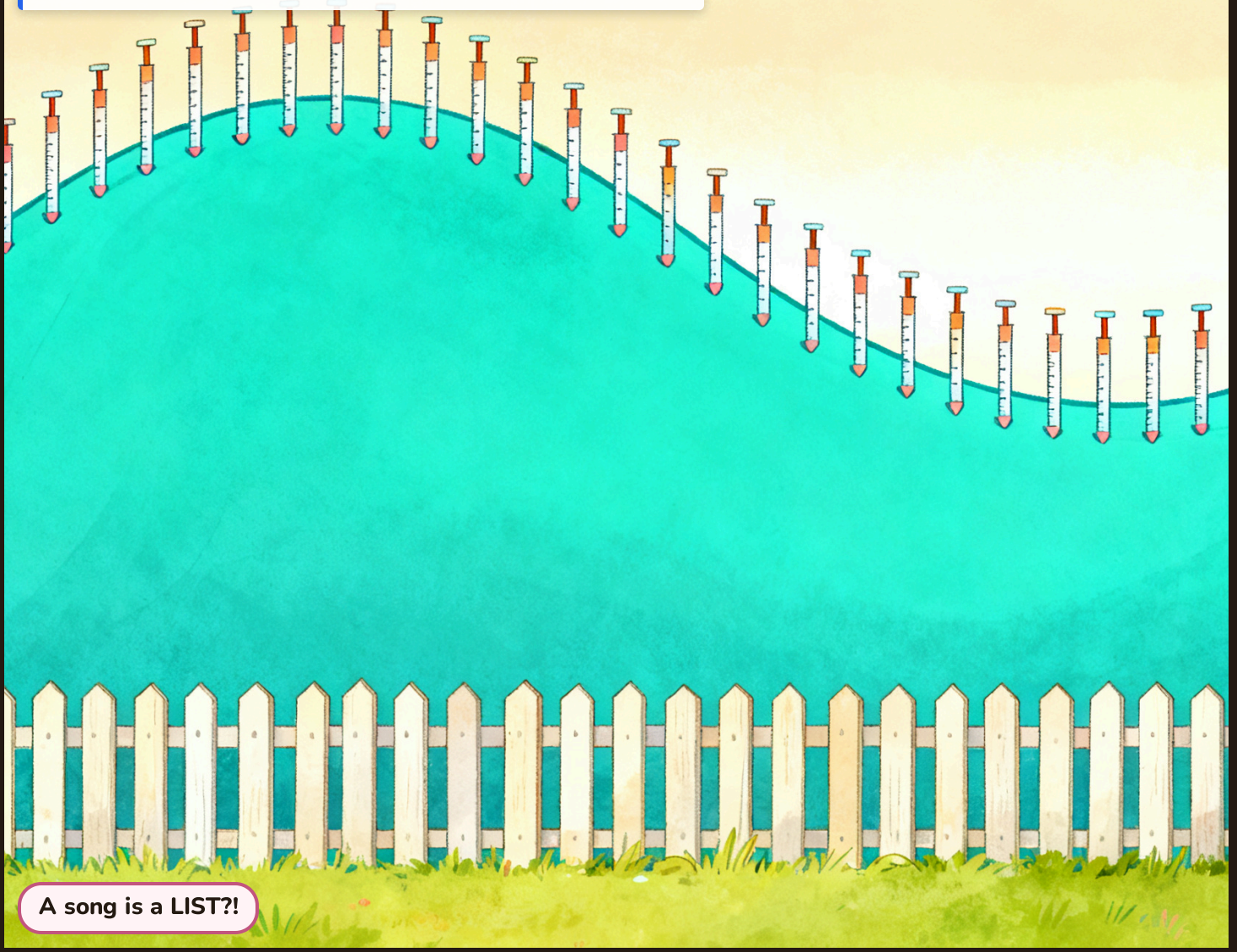
So the machine catches it... but a hundred people MAKE it.

 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK · DOOR 4, HALF OPEN

Tape = millions of tiny flipped magnets = a wave frozen in powder. Miracle! But copies smudge and hiss piles up. Analog songs slowly DIE. Hana says there's a way out. Turn the page. 

THE SONG MADE OF NUMBERS

"Stop drawing the wave," said Hana. "MEASURE it. Height, height, height — 44,100 times every second. Write the numbers down."



A song is a LIST?!

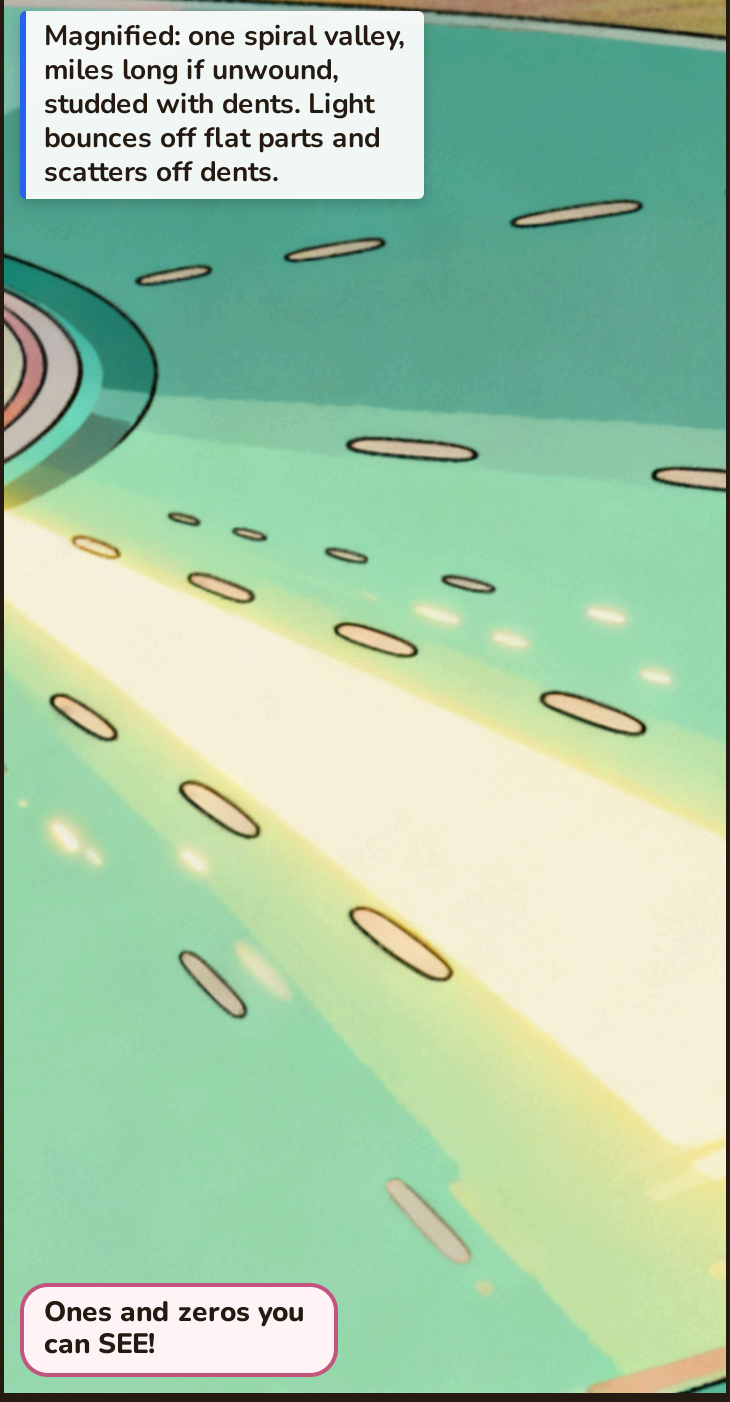
★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Measure often enough and nothing is lost: 44,100 measurements a second captures every wiggle a human ear can hear, and 65,536 possible heights make the steps far finer than your ear can notice. Rebuild the wave from those numbers and you get the **same sound back**.

1	2
3	4



Then she held up a mirror-bright disc. A rainbow slid across it.



Magnified: one spiral valley, miles long if unwound, studded with dents. Light bounces off flat parts and scatters off dents.

The numbers live in
HERE?

Ones and zeros you
can SEE!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

The compact disc was agreed in **1982** by two companies from two countries — one Japanese, one Dutch — who chose one shared standard instead of two rival ones. Any player, any disc, anywhere. Standards are boring, invisible, and quietly worth a fortune. 

Hana balanced the disc on one fingertip beside a tower of records and cassettes.



No hiss. No stretch. Copy it a million times and the millionth is a TWIN.

Numbers don't wear out, Siri.

 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK · DOOR 4 UNLOCKED

Analog = a shape (smudges). Digital = a LIST of numbers (doesn't). 44,100 measurements a second. CD = a spiral of tiny dents read by a laser, agreed by rivals in 1982. Songs became immortal. 

THE EYE THAT NEVER BLINKS

8a Door Five: why is there a camera in a music company?

Hana balanced a chip smaller than a fingernail on a fingertip.
"Half the world's photos are born on one of these."

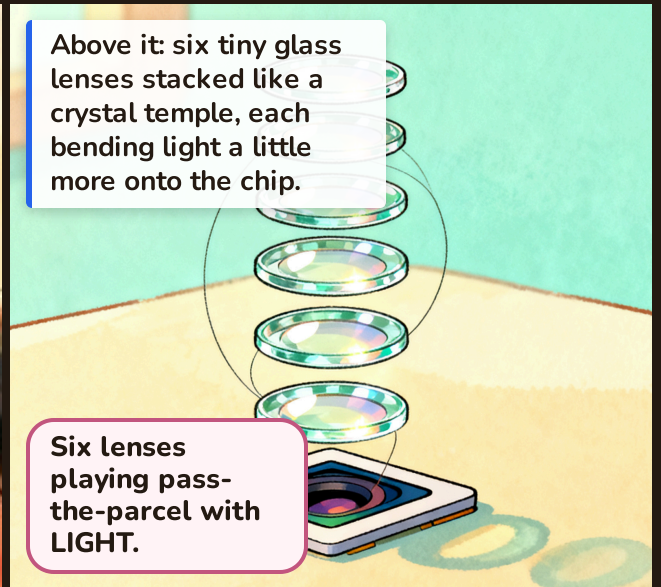


THAT sees better than my eyes?!

In the dark? Better than an owl.

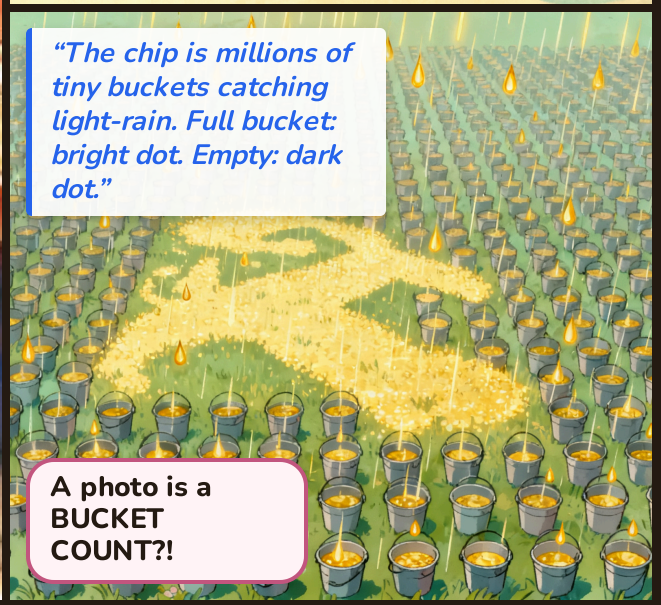
Above it: six tiny glass lenses stacked like a crystal temple, each bending light a little more onto the chip.

Six lenses playing pass-the-parcel with LIGHT.



"The chip is millions of tiny buckets catching light-rain. Full bucket: bright dot. Empty: dark dot."

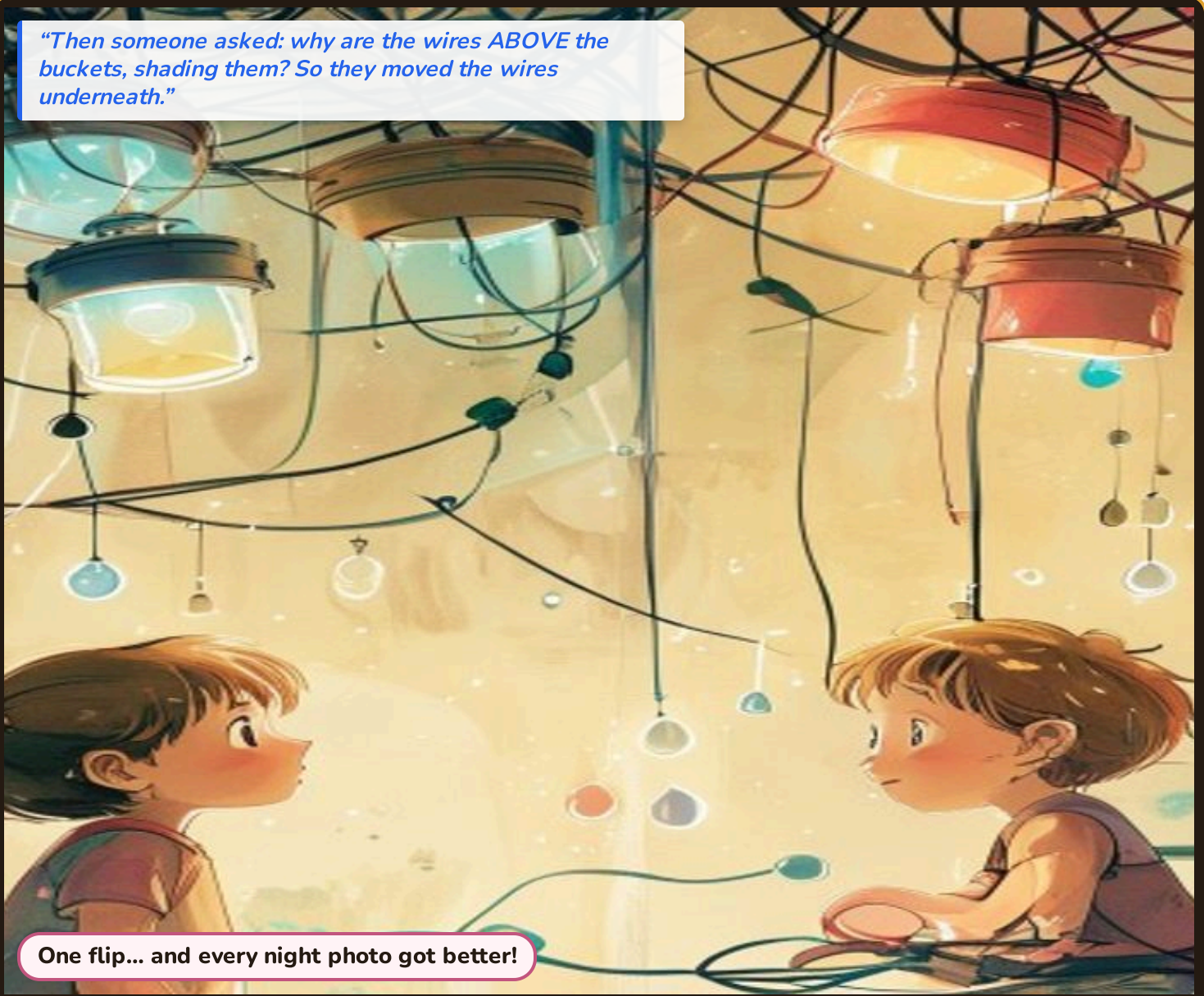
A photo is a BUCKET COUNT?!



★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Light is a wave too — just a wave your eyes are built for and your ears are not. Sound and pictures turned out to be **the same job**: measure a wave, store the numbers, rebuild it later. Learn one deeply and you get the other half free. 🌈

"Then someone asked: why are the wires ABOVE the buckets, shading them? So they moved the wires underneath."



One flip... and every night photo got better!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

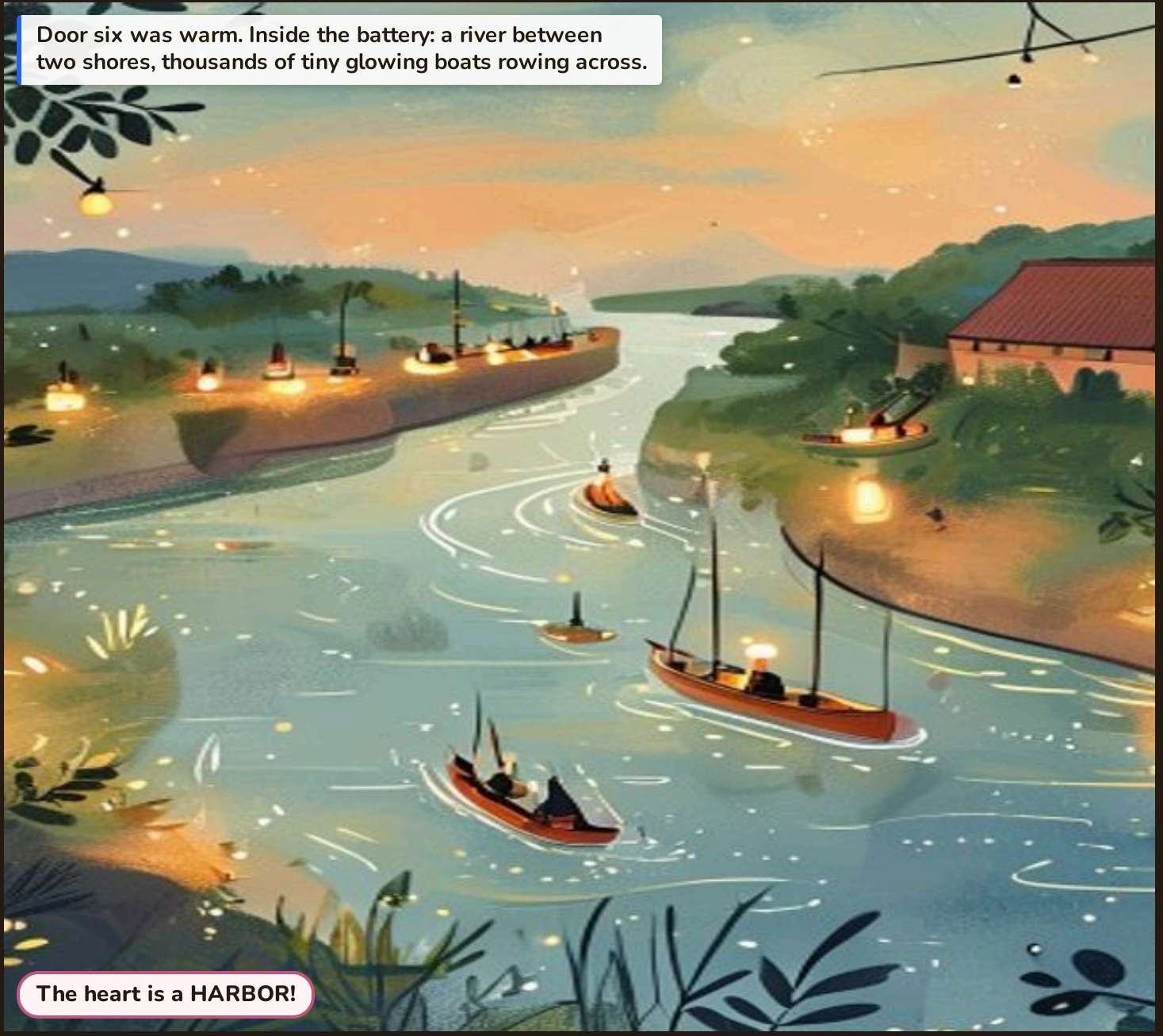
That single rearrangement — **back-illumination** — is a perfect example of how great companies actually win: not one heroic leap, but a hundred stubborn small improvements nobody outside ever hears about. 🧐

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK · DOOR 5 UNLOCKED

Cameras = 6-lens temple → millions of light buckets → numbers again! Sound and light are BOTH waves, both measurable. Wires moved under the buckets = better nights. Boring genius. 📷

THE HEART THAT ROWS

Door six was warm. Inside the battery: a river between two shores, thousands of tiny glowing boats rowing across.



The heart is a HARBOR!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

A battery is a **rocking chair**: lithium boats row one way to power the music, and charging pushes them all back upstream. Nothing is burned, nothing is used up — the boats just travel back and forth. 🔋

Hana plugged it in. The boats turned, rowing patiently back against the current.



Charging is just...
ROWING HOME.

"But the docks wear a little each trip. And heat is their worst enemy."



So a hot pocket is a
BAD pocket!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

This is why old batteries fade: not empty, just fewer working docks. Every phone, car and player on Earth shares the problem — which is why chemists chasing better docks are quietly some of the most important people alive. 🔥

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK • DOOR 6 UNLOCKED

Battery = boats rowing between two shores. Charging = rowing back. Batteries don't die — their DOCKS wear out. Keep them cool. (Sorry, sunny windowsill.) 🌿

THE RIVER OF SONGS

One more surprise: the little player was breathing rings of invisible light into the evening air.



It's been **GLOWING** this whole time?

"Radio is light your eyes can't see. Towers hand your music to each other like relay runners."



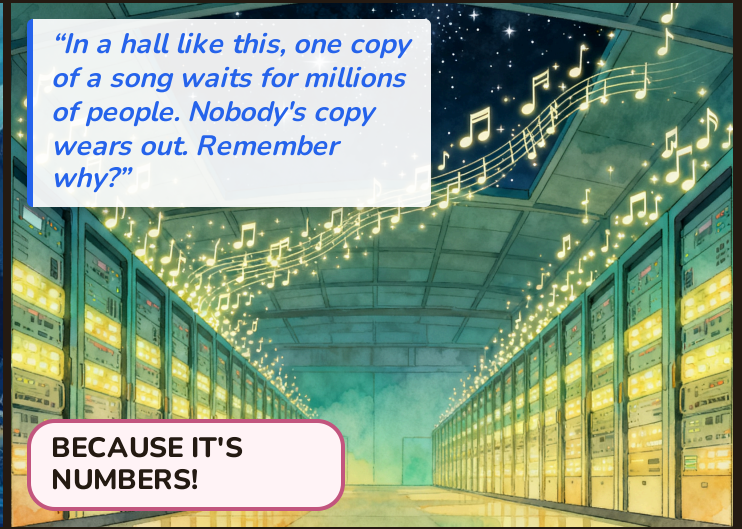
My song is **RIDING** invisible light!

"And between continents, those numbers become laser light in a cable on the OCEAN FLOOR."



My playlist... swims past **WHALES**.

"In a hall like this, one copy of a song waits for millions of people. Nobody's copy wears out. Remember why?"



BECAUSE IT'S NUMBERS!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Follow one song: air → microphone → numbers → laser light under the ocean → invisible radio light → a coil in a magnet → air again → a spiral of hairs. It crossed the planet in a fraction of a second and became **moving air** in the end. It always ends as air. 🌊

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK · DOOR 6 EXTRA CREDIT

Radio = invisible light. Oceans = laser cables (past actual whales). Streaming = one copy, millions of listeners, zero wear. Everything is numbers until the very last centimetre. 🎵

A MILLION HANDS

Door seven filled the whole wall. Behind it: no machine at all. Just... the world.



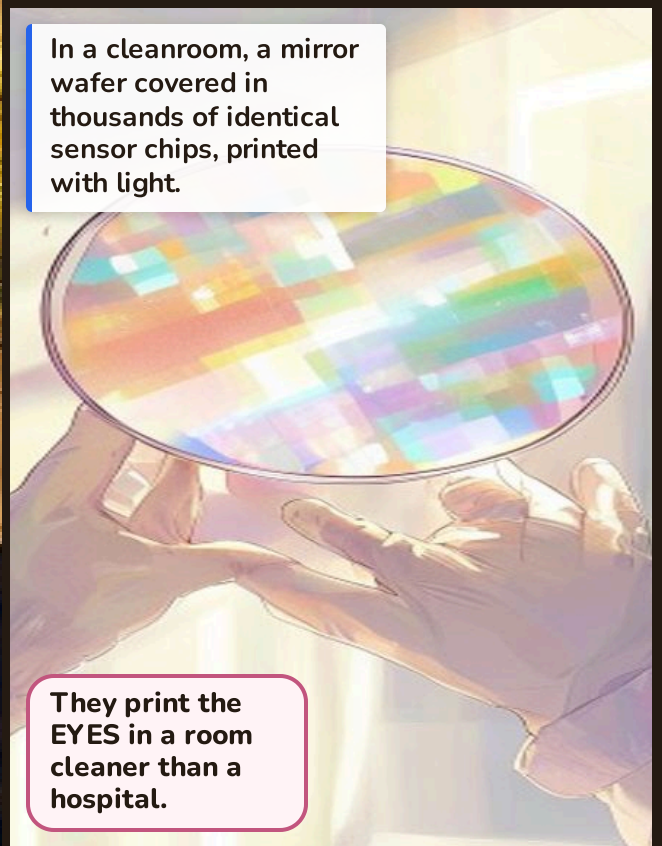
The seventh secret is
PEOPLE?

It starts in the ground:
terraced mines at dawn,
trucks the size of
houses. Copper for
coils. Rare metals for
magnets.



Every song starts
as a piece of a
MOUNTAIN.

In a cleanroom, a mirror
wafer covered in
thousands of identical
sensor chips, printed
with light.



They print the
EYES in a room
cleaner than a
hospital.

*"And the research halls
never go dark. Glass,
chemistry, code, acoustics
— all under one long
argument about what
'better' means."*

The miner. The chemist.
The lens-polisher. The
cleanroom tech. The
recording engineer. The
delivery rider. Each said the
same shy sentence: *"I only
do my small part."*

Arguing IS the job?

The polite kind. For
decades.

But NOBODY
knows the whole
thing?!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Sit with that: **nobody on Earth knows how to make a music player.** Each person masters one sliver — and one company conducts a million slivers into a single object. The conducting, not the parts, is the real invention. 🎵

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK · DOOR 7, PART ONE

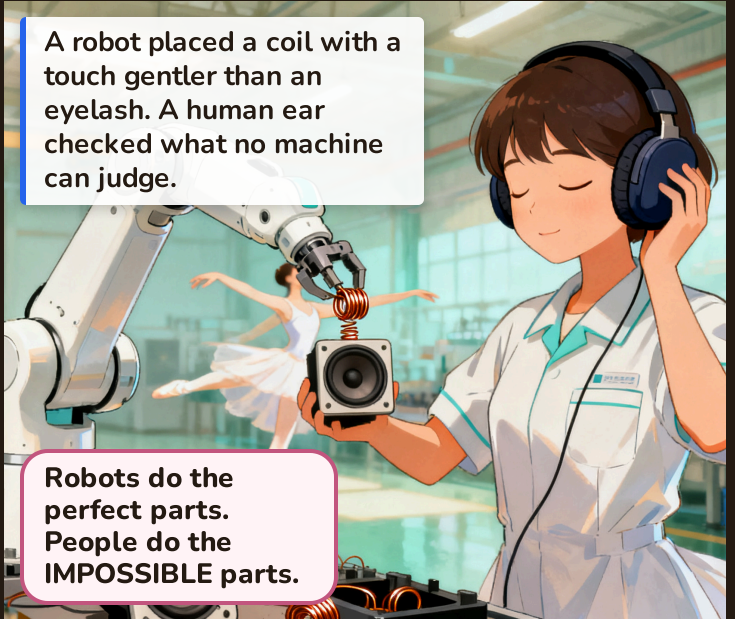
Mountain → mine → cleanroom → studio → a million hands → my ears. No single person knows the recipe. So the real question: WHO'S THE CONDUCTOR? ...I think I'm about to find out. 🧭

THE DANCE OF A THOUSAND STEPS



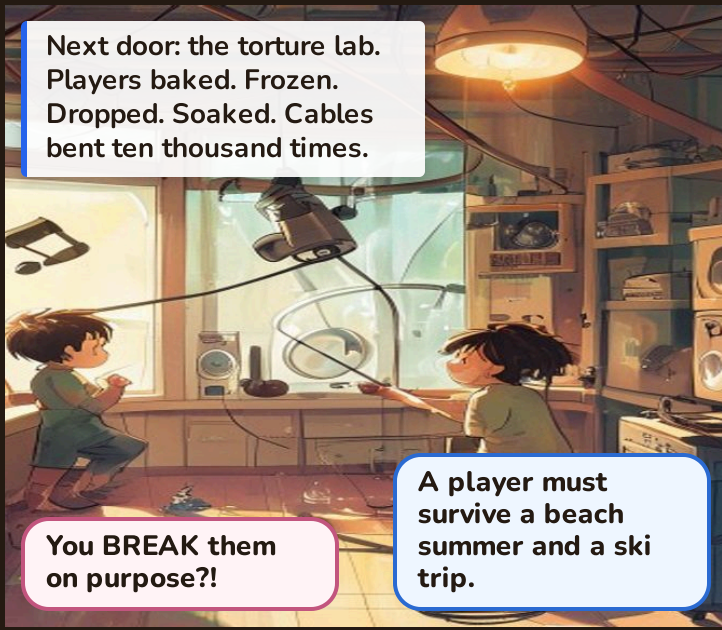
The last door of the journey: a hall stretching to the horizon. People and robots, working as one.

It's not a factory.
It's an ORCHESTRA.



A robot placed a coil with a touch gentler than an eyelash. A human ear checked what no machine can judge.

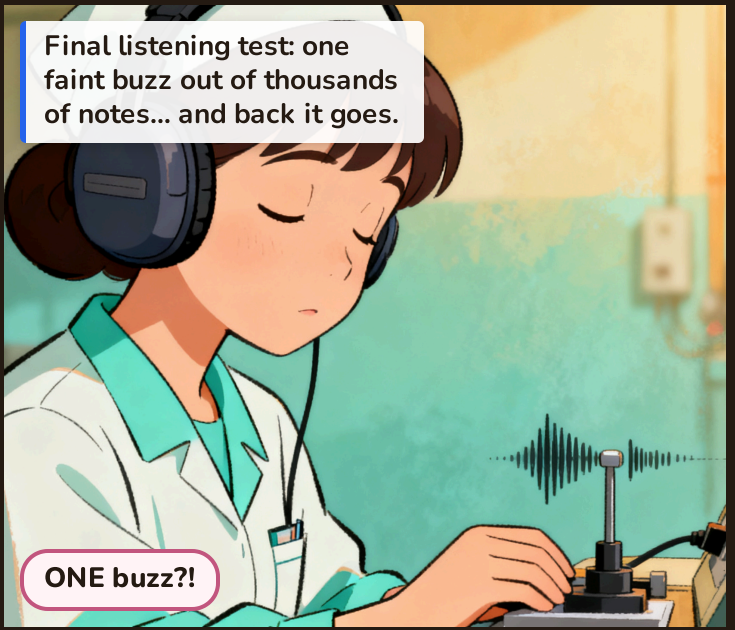
Robots do the perfect parts.
People do the IMPOSSIBLE parts.



Next door: the torture lab. Players baked. Frozen. Dropped. Soaked. Cables bent ten thousand times.

You BREAK them on purpose?!

A player must survive a beach summer and a ski trip.



Final listening test: one faint buzz out of thousands of notes... and back it goes.

ONE buzz?!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Factory rule, business secret: **quality is cheapest at the source**. Fix a flaw on the line: a penny. At final test: a hundred. In a customer's hand: a fortune — because what breaks then is **trust**. Remember this wall. We'll meet it again at the castle.

At dawn, a container ship slid out of the harbour, jets climbing above it. Factory to your local shop: days.

vroooooom



Faster than my homework crosses my room.

 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK · DOOR 7 UNLOCKED

Robots = perfect, humans = impossible. Torture lab = trust insurance. One buzz → rejected. Days to any shop on Earth. All 7 doors OPEN! Now... someone wants to meet me. 💰

WHY A BILLION PEOPLE SAY YES

13a Siri's question Flips

A museum of listening: a gramophone with a brass horn, a radio like furniture, a recorder the size of a suitcase.

Then and now: a kid in 1975 hauling a boombox on one shoulder... and a kid jogging with a gadget lighter than an apple.

Not just smaller.
A whole different LIFE.

Hana's balance scale:
the player's price on one side. Everything it gives on the other.
CRASH.

People don't pay for the box. They pay for what it CARRIES!

Music used to sit STILL.

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Warren's favourite riddle: **price is what you pay, value is what you get.** When the value side crushes the price side, customers don't feel tricked — they feel **grateful**. A billion yes'es a year is what gratitude sounds like. 🍷

Through the window: a runner, a night-shift nurse, a grandfather weeding a garden. Same hour. Three private concerts.



Everyone gets their own soundtrack now!

SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

My question flipped: not 'how does it work' → 'WHY spend billions building it?' Answer #1: it let music leave the room and follow you. Value >> price = a billion smiling yes'es. 🎧

THE PARTY THAT GROWS

Answer #2: the machine is only half. Somebody must make the songs, the films, the games worth pressing play on.

A library where the books SING!

Somewhere, a small team uploaded a game they built over two years. By morning, players in forty countries were lost in it.

A tiny studio can reach the **WHOLE WORLD?!**

"Every new player makes the games worth building. Every great game makes the machine worth buying. Round and round."

The bridge gets stronger as people cross it!

"It's a garden party. Every guest makes it better. Better party, more guests. More guests, better musicians..."

The product isn't the box. It's the **PARTY!**



★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Network effects — one of the mightiest forces in business. A rival can copy a console's plastic, even its chips. They can't copy **millions of players and thousands of studios already at the party**. One thing to pocket for later: the host takes a share at the gate, and not every guest thinks that's fair. 🏰



SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Answer #2: the TWO-SIDED BRIDGE. Players pull studios, studios pull players. A small team in a back room → the world's biggest stage, overnight. (Filing that 'share at the gate' eyebrow-raise under CRACKS. 🤖)

THE PRICE OF TRUST

Answer #3 had its own building: a glowing shop with no shouting. Just rooms where people LISTEN.



It's not a shop. It's a tasting room for ears.

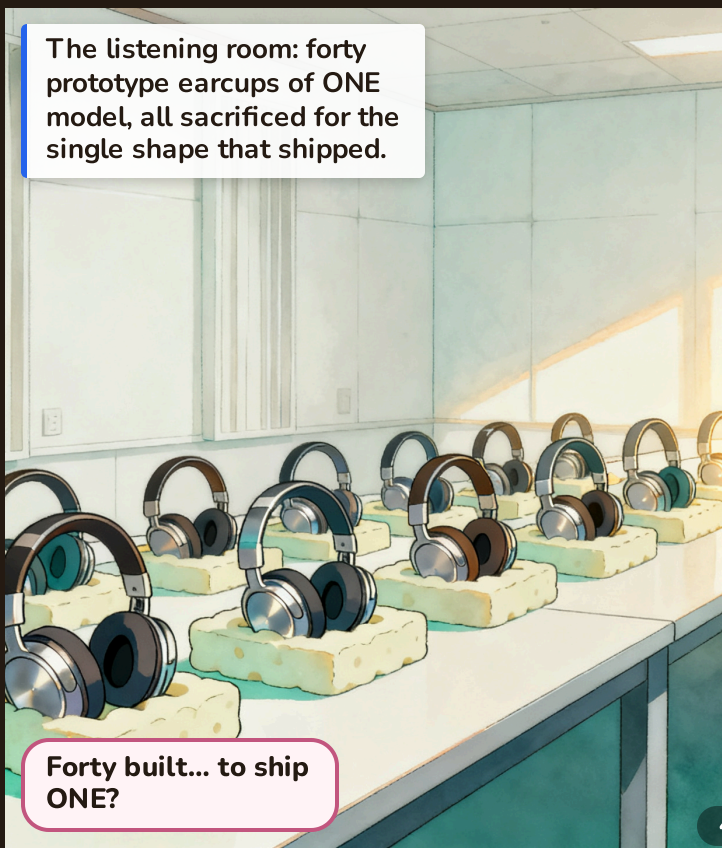
Siri tried a pair of headphones. The city noise outside simply... stopped existing.



Nobody taught me. It taught ME.

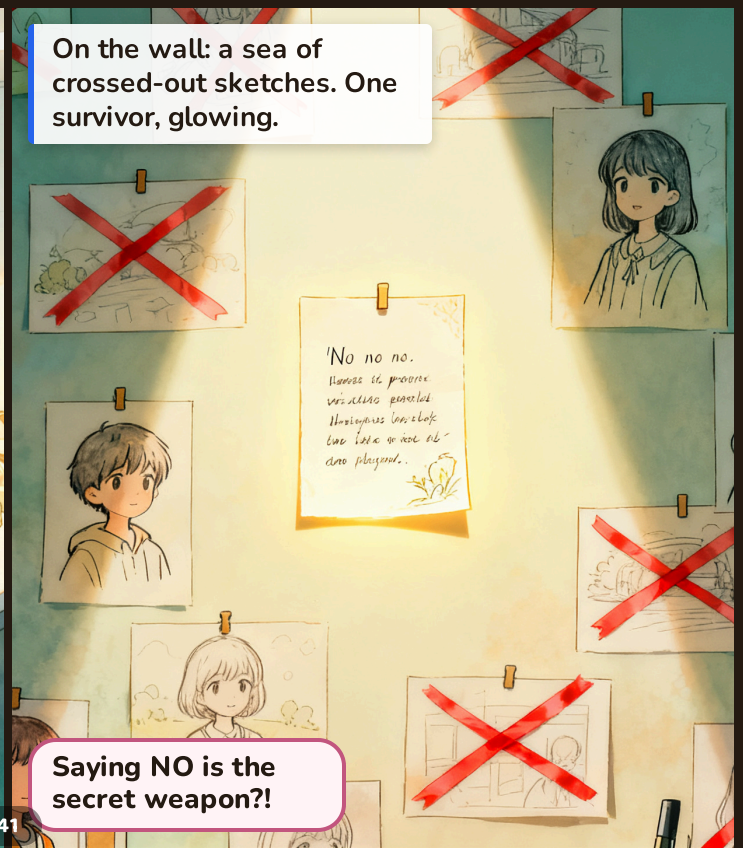
That silence took ten thousand engineers, kiddo.

The listening room: forty prototype earcups of ONE model, all sacrificed for the single shape that shipped.



Forty built... to ship ONE?

On the wall: a sea of crossed-out sketches. One survivor, glowing.



Saying NO is the secret weapon?!



★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Answer #3: **trust, built on purpose.** When a product just sounds right — no fiddling, no regret — a promise forms: *anything with this mark will treat my ears this well.* That's a **brand**. And it comes from the NO's: every killed prototype is a deposit into the promise. Ads don't build brands. Ads only remind you of deposits already made.



SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Answer #3: TRUST. 'It just sounds right' = a promise kept so long it became a mark on the mind. Built from ten thousand no's. Value → Bridge → Trust. Now — WHO built all this? Compass is spinning again 🧭

THE WORKSHOP IN THE RUINS

The compass dragged them across a plaza to a glass tower at sunrise in Tokyo. Siri read the four letters. She knew them by heart.

"It began in 1946. A bombed-out department store. About twenty people, repairing radios with rain coming through the roof."

A BURNT BUILDING?!

"Before a single product, one founder wrote down the point of the company: a place where engineers could work freely, and feel the joy of making things."

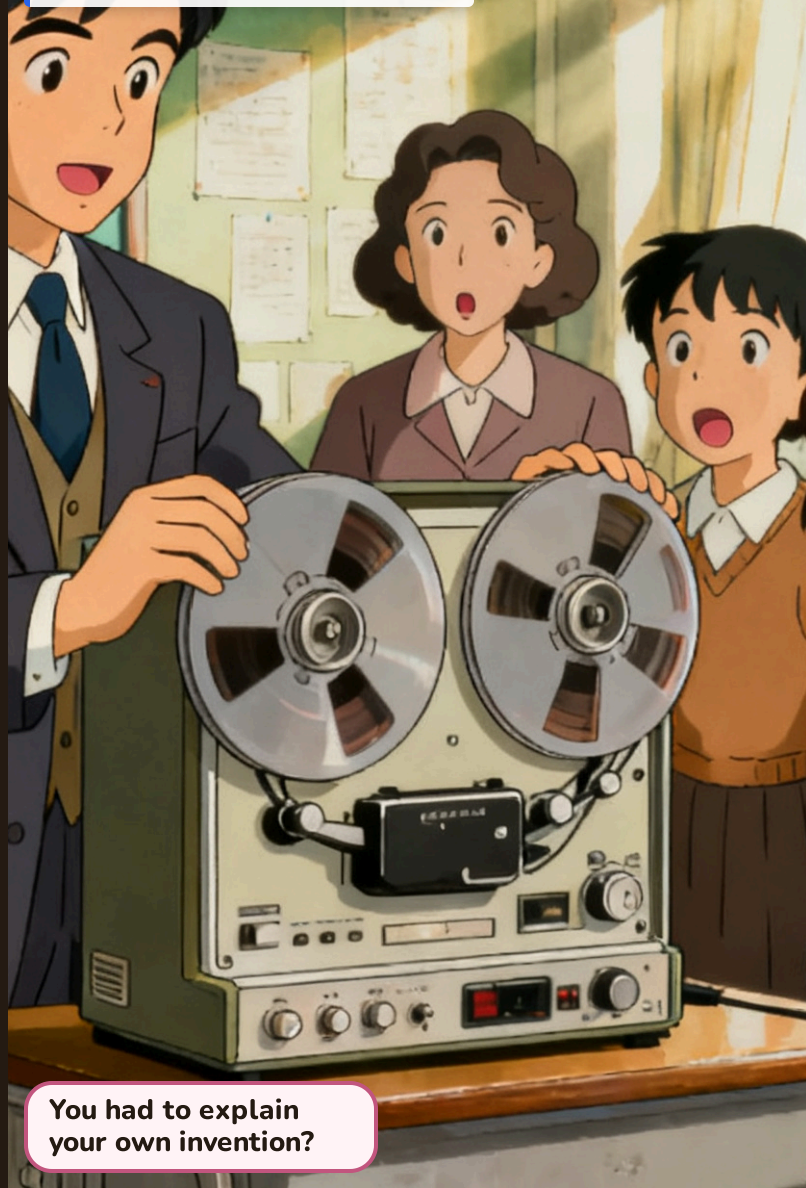
He wrote the **FEELING** down first.

SONY! The pocket full of music is theirs!

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Read that again, because it explains everything that follows: the goal was not a product, or a size, or a market. It was **a workshop where clever people would want to stay**. Companies are built out of what their founders decide to care about. 🌱

"Their first hit was Japan's first tape recorder, in 1950. Almost nobody wanted one — so they went out and found the people who did."



You had to explain your own invention?

"Then 1955: Japan's first transistor radio. In 1957, one small enough for a pocket. Music walked out of the living room."



They shrank the radio!

"In 1958 they threw away their old, long, hard-to-say name and became four letters that work in every language on Earth."



They named themselves for the **WHOLE PLANET** before they were famous.

SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK • THE REVEAL

SONY. Ruins 1946 → joy-of-engineering written down FIRST → tape recorder 1950 → transistor radio 1955 → pocket radio 1957 → a four-letter name for the whole world, 1958. And the greatest gadget hasn't even happened yet. **TURN THE PAGE.**

THE JOY OF MAKING THINGS

"1968: the Trinitron television. Brighter, sharper colour — from a tube nobody else had bothered to rethink."



Even **TELEVISIONS** got redesigned from scratch?

"1979. A boss wanted music on his long flights. Engineers were told: take a tape player, remove the speaker, remove the record button."



REMOVE things? That's the invention?!

The Walkman. Salespeople predicted disaster. It sold by the hundreds of millions and put headphones on a generation.



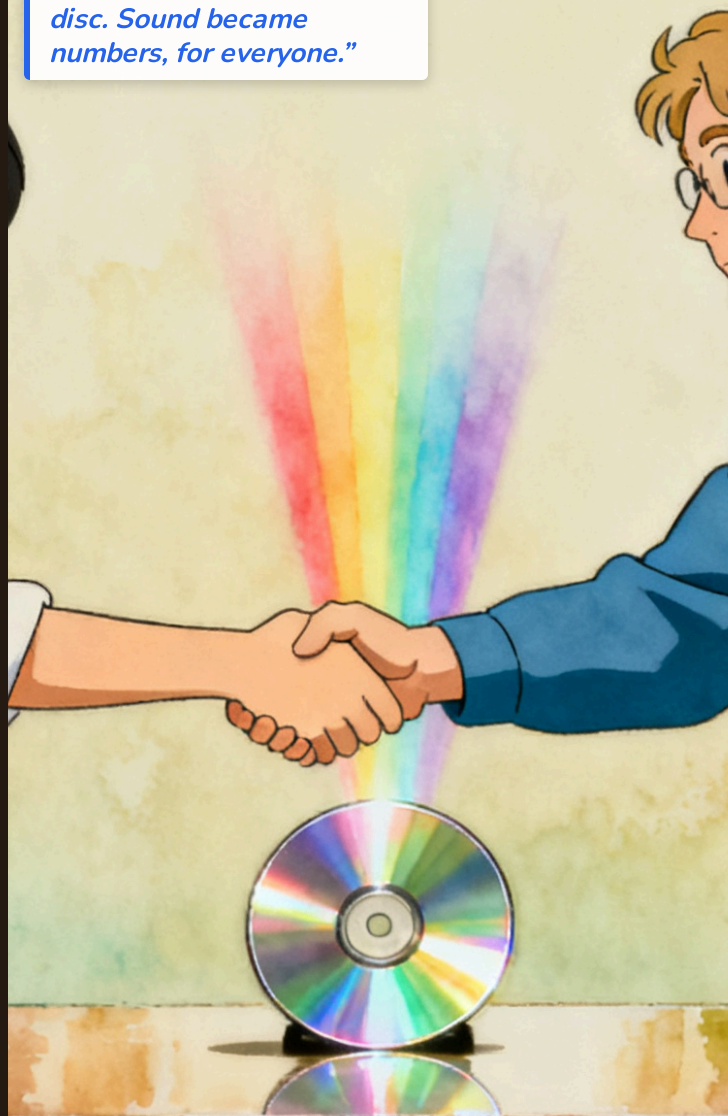
Sometimes the brave move is taking things **AWAY**.

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

The Walkman didn't invent a single new part. It **removed** parts, added headphones, and changed where music could happen: on a bus, on a run, on a walk home in the dark. The invention was the **situation**, not the circuitry.



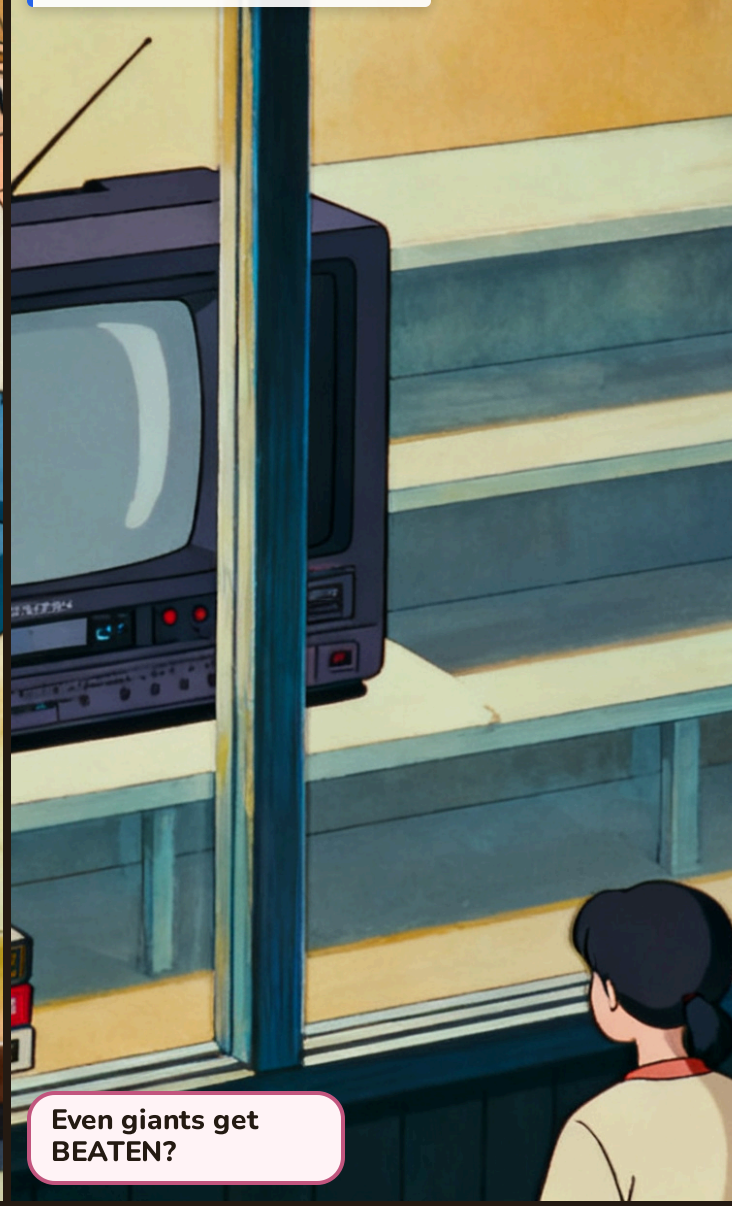
"1982: with a Dutch rival, they agreed one shared standard for the compact disc. Sound became numbers, for everyone."



They teamed up
with a
COMPETITOR?

Better one big road
than two half
roads.

"And they lost too. Their home-video format was beaten by a rival's. Being technically better didn't save it."



Even giants get
BEATEN?

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

That loss is the most useful page in this book. Their format was fine — but rivals had more films to play on it. **The machine is never enough; what plays on it decides.** A few years later Sony bought a music label and a film studio. They had learned the lesson the expensive way.

"Then 1994: a games machine, born from a partnership that fell apart. It turned a toy business into a world."



The best thing came from a DEAL GONE WRONG?



THE STORY IN TIME

1946

Twenty people start a repair workshop in bombed-out Tokyo.

1950

Japan's first tape recorder — and nobody knows they want one yet.

1955

Japan's first transistor radio. 1957: one that fits a pocket.

1958

The company renames itself Sony — four letters for every language.

1968

Trinitron: colour television made brighter and sharper.

1979

The Walkman. Music learns to walk.

1982

The compact disc, agreed with a rival. Sound becomes numbers.

1980s

Their video format loses. Lesson: content decides.

1988–89

They buy a music label and a film studio. Machines AND stories.

1994

The PlayStation turns games into a world.

Today

Most of the world's camera sensors are made by Sony. 



SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

Trinitron → WALKMAN (invented by REMOVING things) → CD with a rival → a format LOSS that taught them everything → music + films → PlayStation → camera sensors. Seventy years of curiosity, including the failures. 🎧

THE CASTLE OF SOUND

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

On a bench under a maple, the two old friends let her lay out the walls, one by one. Nodding. Chuckling. Correcting.

The only question that matters for a hundred years, Siri: what keeps invaders OUT?

Walls! I've been collecting them ALL BOOK!

Scarier than any school quiz. And a hundred times more fun.



THE CASTLE WALLS • WHY RIVALS CAN'T COPY IT



Wall One: The Eye Nobody Can Copy

Most of the world's camera sensors come from one place. Thirty years of tiny improvements — a rival can't leap that in a hurry, and the factories cost a fortune to build.



Wall Two: The Playground

Millions of players on one side, thousands of studios on the other, each making the other side worth joining. A rival must build BOTH sides at once — the hardest trick in business.



Wall Three: The Vault of Songs and Stories

Music and films made decades ago still earn today, on formats nobody had invented when they were made. You cannot build a catalogue that already exists.



Wall Four: A Promise Kept

Headphones, cameras, speakers that just sound and look right, decade after decade. Copying a product takes a year. Copying trust takes a generation.

Charlie tapped his thick glasses. *"My trick: turn the telescope around. Don't ask how Sony wins — ask what would DESTROY it. Then check they're not doing it. Invert, always invert."*



Find every way to LOSE... then don't go there!



THE CASTLE WALLS · WHY RIVALS CAN'T COPY IT



Crack One: The Console Wave

Game machines rise and fall in long waves. A weak machine at the wrong moment can hand the party to a rival for years.



Crack Two: Few Customers, Big Orders

Most camera sensors go to a handful of phone makers. When a giant customer changes its mind, a whole factory feels it.



Crack Three: Hits Can't Be Ordered

Films and songs can't be manufactured to schedule. Some years the vault fills. Some years it doesn't.



Crack Four: Someone Else's Better Idea

They were beaten once by a rival with more content, despite better engineering. Being right is not the same as winning.



★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Charlie's ruin-Sony checklist: stop improving the sensors. Squeeze the studios until they cheer for a rival. Chase every shiny gadget and finish none. Forget that the engineers came for the **joy**. Now — just never do those. Inversion turns worry into a checklist.

Warren raised his cola. *"Find a business whose walls are older than its rivals, and whose people would still show up if the building burned down. That second part is rarer."*



The treasure was never the gadget!



SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK · THE CASTLE

WALLS: the eye 👁️ playground 🎮 song vault 🎵 promise 🏆. CRACKS: console waves 🌊 few big customers 📱 unpredictable hits 🎬 a better idea elsewhere 🧪. Charlie: INVERT. Warren: buy walls, not gadgets. 🏰

THE JUDGE'S QUESTIONS

Then Warren built a tiny courtroom under the maple — and put the PLAYER on the witness stand. *“Every business answers a judge someday, Siri. The judge is the future. Today, that's you.”*

TOK TOK

Siri banged the tiny gavel and fired Warren's five eternal questions.

Order in the court!

Question one, witness: will people still NEED you in thirty years?



★ WORTH REMEMBERING

The Owner's Court: ⚖️ Enduring need? —
'Music, stories and pictures. Older than writing.'
⚖️ Trust earned? — 'Put me on your ears and
judge me in one second.' ⚖️ Reinvesting wisely?
— 'Billions a year into sensors, studios and
games — and I once bought a film library
because losing taught me to.' ⚖️ Copyable with
money? — 'My plastic, in a year. Thirty years of
sensor tinkering and a catalogue of classics? No.'
⚖️ What breaks you? — 'Comfort. The day the
engineers stop arguing.' Court adjourned for
lemonade.

Last exhibit: a painting of 2056. A girl hearing something — from where? Above? Inside? But doing the same eternal thing: listening to a song she loves.



The SHAPE changes. The NEED never does.



SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK • JUDGE ANY BUSINESS

Warren's five: ① enduring need? ② trust earned? ③ reinvests wisely? ④ copyable with mere money? ⑤ what breaks it? Works on soap, railways, red fizzy cans — anything. (He never once mentioned a stock price. The judge judges the BUSINESS.) ⚖️

THE NEXT THIRTY YEARS

One last walk: a street of tomorrow. Sound placed above you, behind you, beside you — headphones that build a room out of air.

"And those little eyes keep improving: cameras that see in near-darkness, and give robots and cars something to see WITH."

The camera in my pocket is the same idea as a robot's eye!

"Films, games and music are blurring together. Soon the story may notice you're watching."

The song stops being IN my ears. It's all AROUND me!

Stories you can STAND INSIDE.



★ WORTH REMEMBERING

No crystal balls — just visible currents: sound placed in space, sensors that see in the dark, machines that see for themselves, stories you enter instead of watch. Siri's rooftop rule: **don't bet on the box — bet on the needs.** Whoever keeps people's ears and eyes in 2056 will still be doing the 1946 job: making things clever people are proud of. 🌐

On a rooftop at dusk, she added the honest last line: headphones are a wonderful place to hide. Sometimes you should take them off.



Best servant. Worst master. Same as fire.

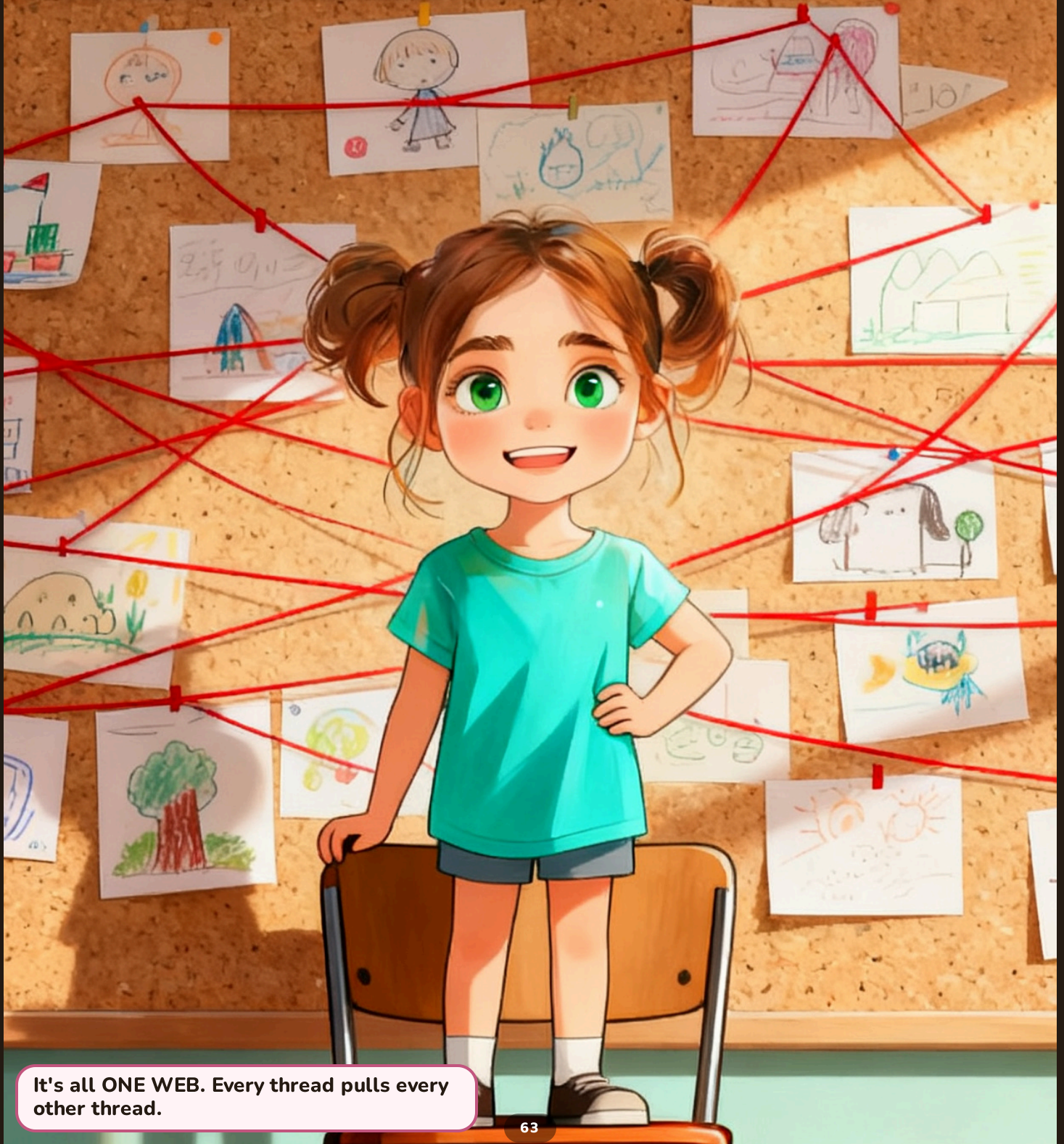


SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

2056 watchlist: sound-all-around, night-seeing sensors, robot eyes, stories you stand inside. Rules: bet on needs, not shapes · trust is the crown · take the headphones off sometimes. 🌟

THE SECRET NOTEBOOK

Home stretch. Siri pinned every discovery to her wall and joined them with red string.



It's all ONE WEB. Every thread pulls every other thread.



★ WORTH REMEMBERING

The Science Web, one breath: a squeeze travels through air → a paper-thin drum and three lever bones pass it on → a liquid spiral sorts pitch with tiny hairs → a coil in a magnet's field pushes air right back → tape freezes a wave in powder → numbers freeze it forever → light is a wave too, so buckets catch it the same way.

Ordinary physics, stacked extraordinarily.



★ WORTH REMEMBERING

The Business Web, one breath: value (music that follows you) → bridge (players ⇌ studios)
→ trust (ten thousand no's become a promise)
→ castle (the eye, the playground, the vault, the promise), patrolled with Charlie's inversion, judged by Warren's court. And underneath everything: a founder who wrote down **joy** before he wrote down a product.

The true test: she retold the **WHOLE** thing to her little cousin. With a shoebox, a magnet and a rubber band. He got it.



If you can't build it out of junk, you don't really know it yet.



SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK · THE LATTICEWORK

Charlie's word for my string-wall: a
LATTICEWORK of mental models. Twelve from
ONE gadget: waves-not-stuff · measure-don't-
draw · standards-beat-rivalry · remove-to-
invent · content-decides · small-improvements-
compound · price-vs-value · network effects ·
brand=promise · scale · invert · the owner's
court. 

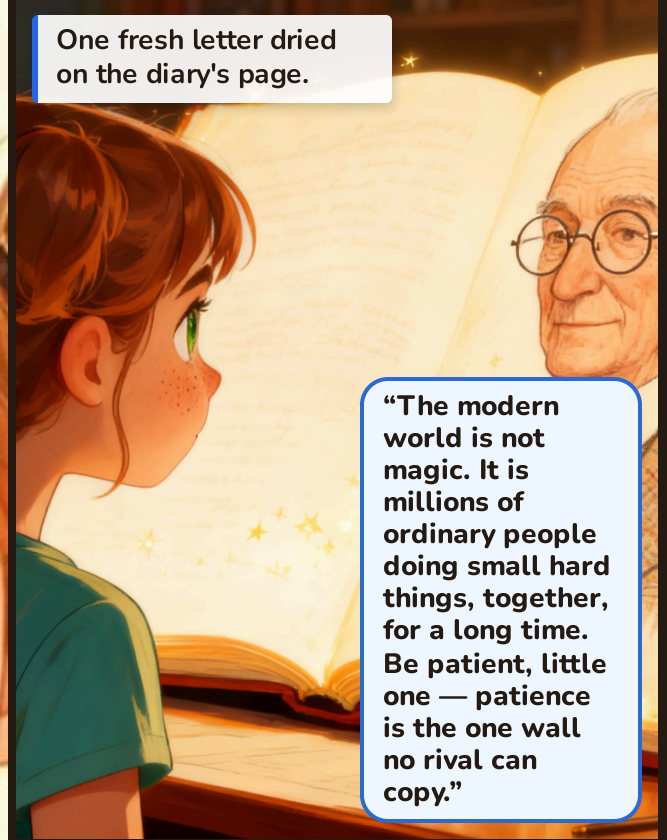
COMING HOME

Her own bed. Morning. The compass: quiet. The house: lit differently, somehow.



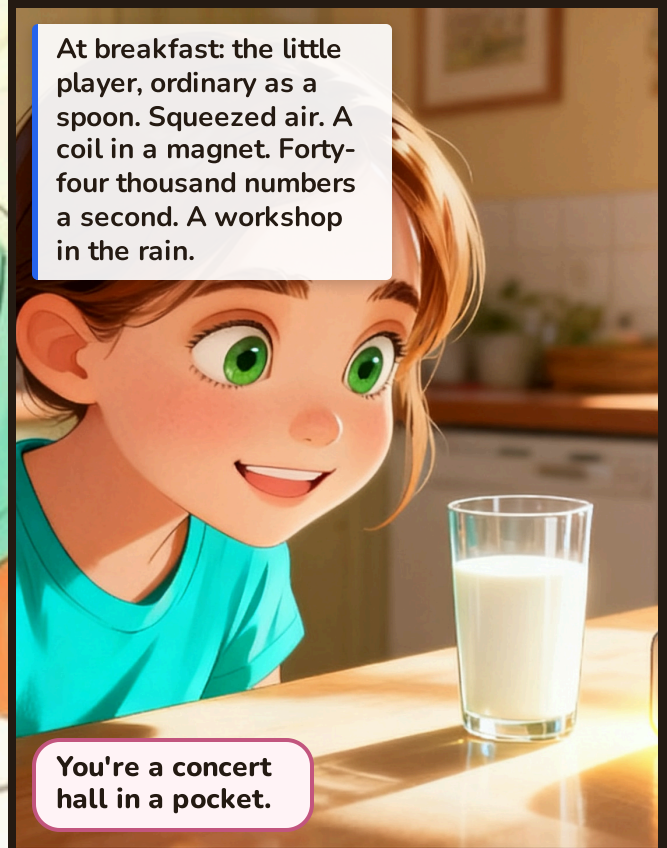
Was it real? It FELT real...

One fresh letter dried on the diary's page.



"The modern world is not magic. It is millions of ordinary people doing small hard things, together, for a long time. Be patient, little one — patience is the one wall no rival can copy."

At breakfast: the little player, ordinary as a spoon. Squeezed air. A coil in a magnet. Forty-four thousand numbers a second. A workshop in the rain.



You're a concert hall in a pocket.

Then she put the headphones down — and listened to Grandma's old story instead. Sound, arriving the oldest way.



Best servant.
Worst master. MY
rules now.

She hugged the diary tight.
Somewhere far away, a
glass tower caught the
morning sun.



Show me the next
one, Grandpa. 🧡

★ WORTH REMEMBERING

Next unlock, feel it: a squeeze of air arriving at a spiral of hairs — a coil leaping in a magnet's grip — a song written as numbers that never fade — a burnt-out workshop where somebody decided joy was the point. **Nothing, from now on, is just anything.**

📖 SIRI'S SECRET NOTEBOOK · VOLUME CLOSED

Seven doors. Twelve mental models. One castle. One famous failure that taught more than the wins. But the compass is twitching toward the kitchen... something red... something FIZZING... and Warren is already grinning. Next volume. 🧭🥤



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 opened all seven doors of the pocket full of music. But the compass is twitching again — toward the kitchen, where a little red can sits hissing with bubbles. It has kept the same secret for 130 years...
and Warren drinks five a day. Why?

NEXT ADVENTURE · The Secret in the Red Can →