

RESET EARTH

ONE OZONE. ONE PLANET. ONE CHANCE.

CHAPTER 2



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In an abandoned library, a teenage boy is engrossed in a book, oblivious to the two figures rushing towards him – until he hears a familiar voice.

“Ah, Terran ... Seriously man, it looks like it’s been over 30 years since anyone dusted in here.”

Terran looks up to see his old friend, Sagan, along with Knox – and the time machine.

“What?! A time machine! ... Sagan, if this is real ... I mean, we have no idea what this could possibly mean ... Imagine the implications ... ”

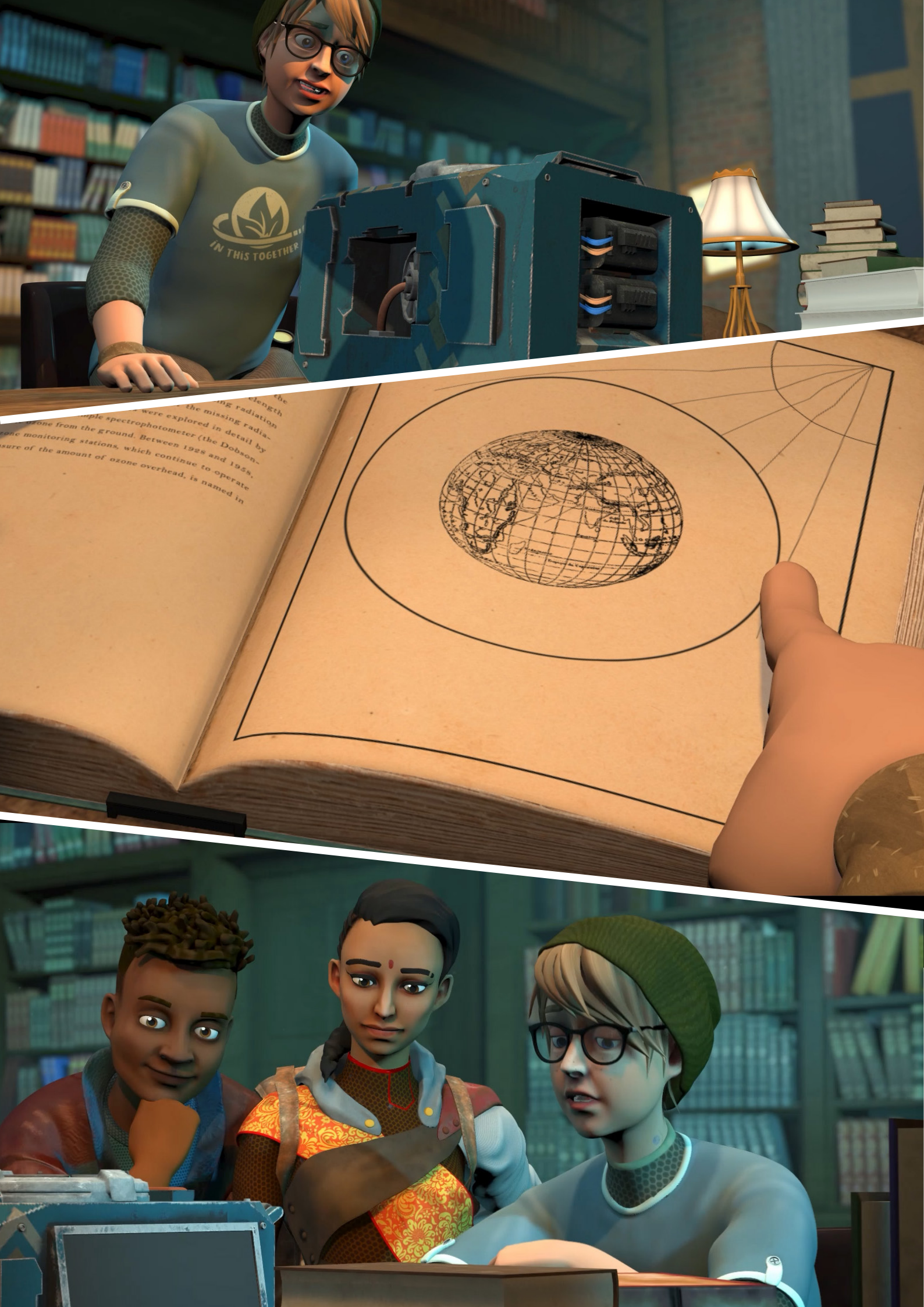
Terran’s mind runs away with all the possibilities, but Knox knows there’s no time to waste. “Hey! ... Hey!” she calls, snapping Terran back to reality. “Look ... Sagan says you can help us. We need to know when the ozone layer was destroyed. We just need a date and a location, and then we’re out of here.”

Searching for the right information, Terran stretches his mind back to what he remembers reading about the ozone layer. “It wasn’t a single moment that destroyed our ozone ... It’s something that has been happening for over a hundred years now.”

Opening a book, he launches into a long explanation, describing how the ozone layer is a protective shield high up in the atmosphere, how it’s made up of ozone molecules that absorb most of the harmful ultraviolet radiation from the sun – but that many of these molecules have been destroyed over time by gases people have been releasing into the atmosphere. Gases such as chlorofluorocarbons or CFCs, which people have been using in their fridges, air conditioners, aerosol cans and many other things since the early 1900s.

“At first, we thought nothing bad would happen, but eventually these CFCs caused a problem,” says Terran. That problem was a hole in the ozone layer, allowing too much harmful UV radiation to reach Earth.

“And that was bad ... This layer was all that stood in the way of everyone getting skin cancer and going blind,” he says.





It dawns on Knox that the purpose of the smog was to be Earth's new shield, protecting people from UV radiation. Except it had one deadly side effect: the Grow.

"If we can stop CFCs, then the ozone layer is safe, right?" she asks.

"I guess," Terran replies. "But I don't think it's that simple ... Much more powerful people tried before. And failed."

He returns to the bookshelves to find out when and where the patent for CFCs was signed – but before he is able to tell them that destroying it won't help, Knox and Sagan disappear in a flash of light.

"Oh ... this is not good!" he moans.

Knox and Sagan have jumped back to 1928 and are frantically searching for the patent in a room full of papers – before Terran appears in the doorway holding exactly what they need.

As Knox lunges forward to grab it from him, she knocks over her bag – and the flyer from 2055 falls out, unnoticed.

"You know this won't help, right?" Terran argues, trying to hold on to the patent. "This is just a piece of paper. We can destroy it, but nothing will change. The idea is already in everyone's minds. In 1928 ... CFCs are the future."

"This is my last chance, I'm destroying it," says Knox, determined, moments before a flash of light takes them back to 2084, where it feels as if nothing has changed. Well, nothing except their Grow, which has become a lot worse.

Sagan feels betrayed by Knox: "How could you send us into this machine knowing what it would do to us?"

Knox feels awful. She knows she should have told her friends, but she's also desperate to try and stop the Grow. Overwhelmed by everything she is feeling, all she can do is run away.

"I was so sure it would work," she sighs. "It should have cured the Grow, not made it worse."

But then she notices that something has changed. New graffiti spells out words she's seen somewhere before. Words from the flyer in her bag: "We destroyed our ozone."

Suddenly, Knox has a thought that could change everything.



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