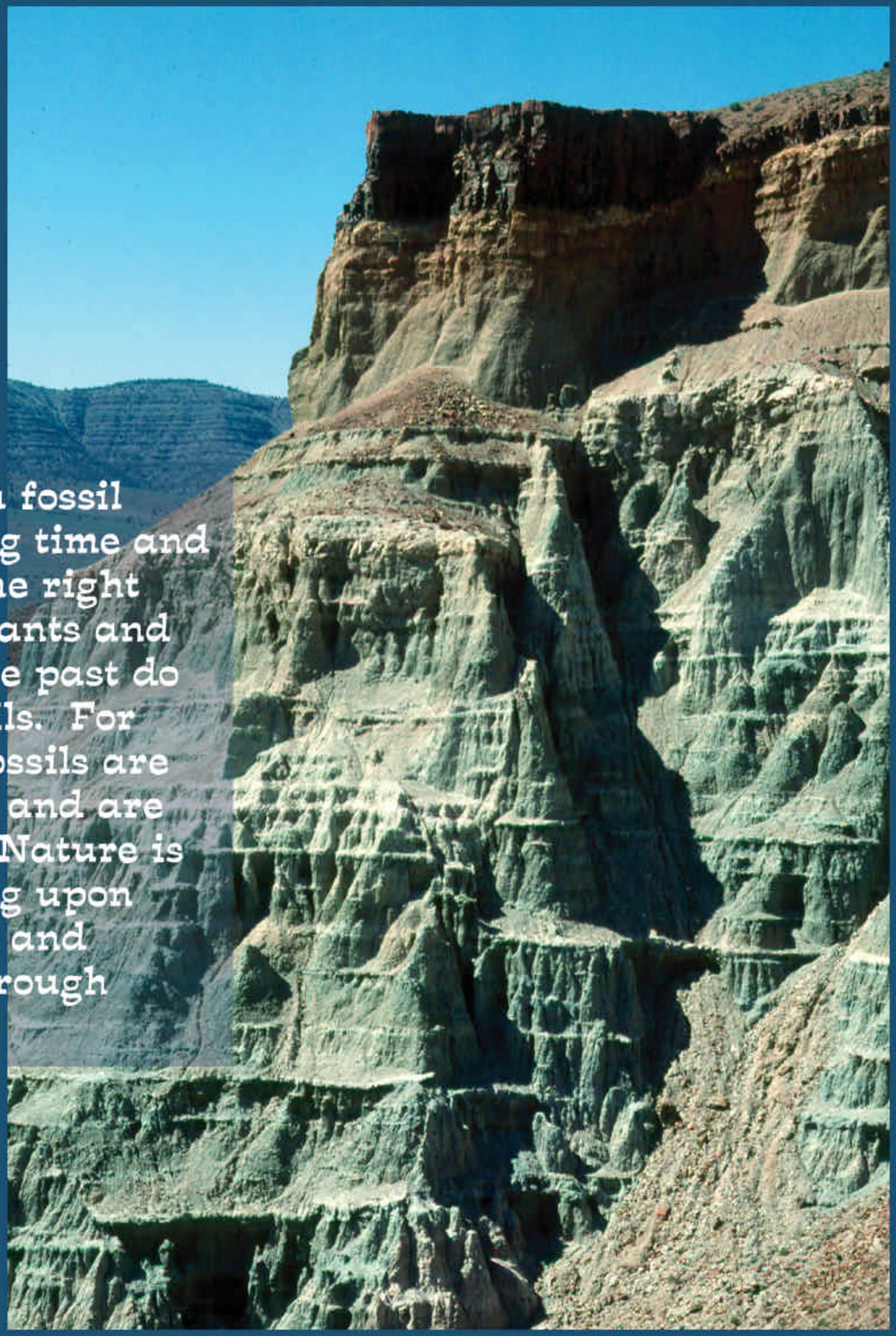The making of a fossil takes a very long time and must occur in the right setting. Most plants and animals from the past do not become fossils. For these reasons, fossils are considered rare and are not renewable. Nature is constantly acting upon fossils to expose and destroy them through erosion.