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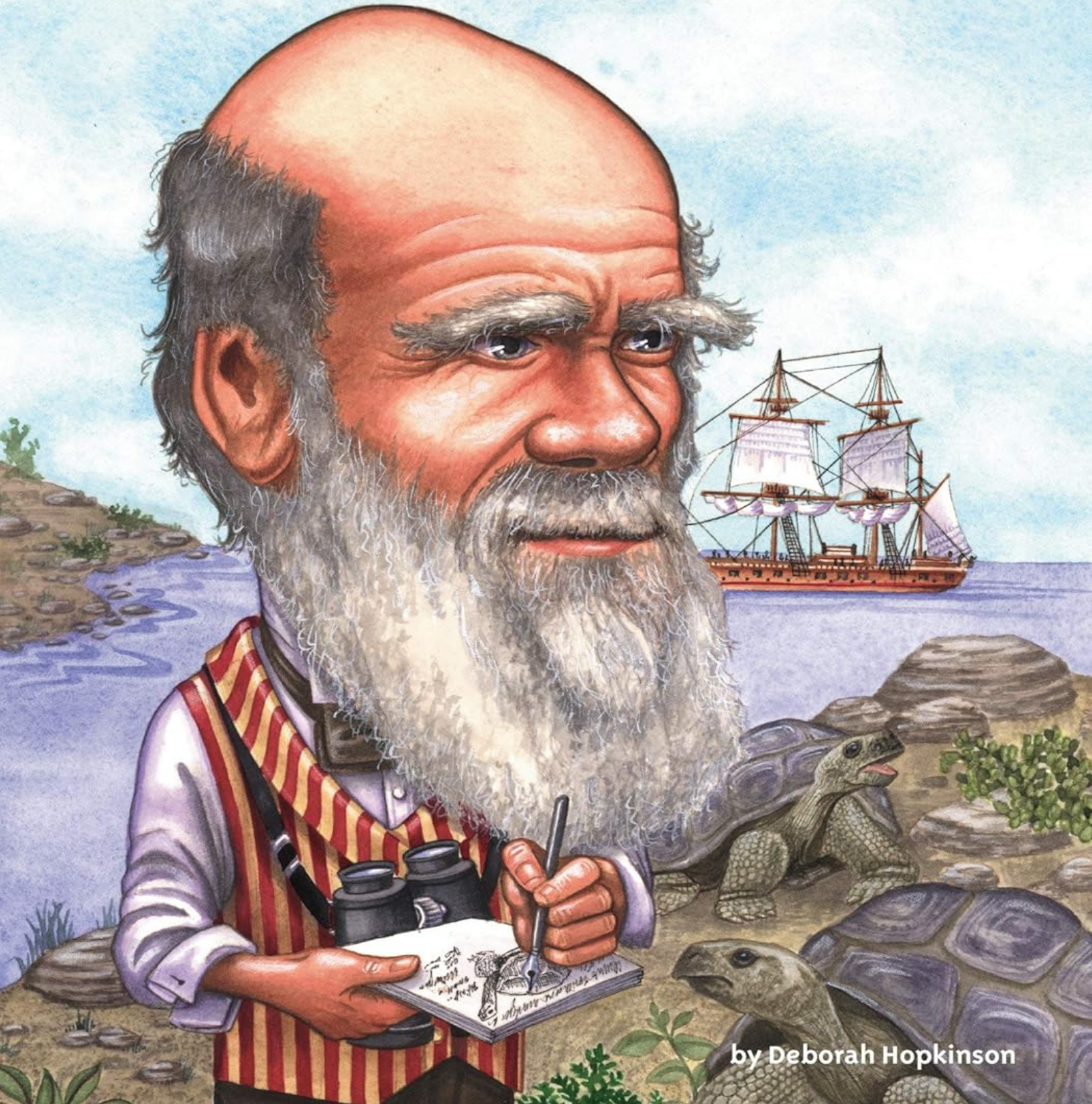
Who Was Charles Darwin?



by Deborah Hopkinson

Who Was Charles Darwin?

By Deborah Hopkinson
Illustrated by Nancy Harrison

Grosset & Dunlap

Who Was
Charles Darwin?

For my wonderful and curious son, Dimitri, who loves to ask questions—just like Charles Darwin—D.H.

To my sisters, for their unwavering belief that anything is possible and always cheering me on—N.H.

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Contents

Who Was Charles Darwin?

An Ordinary Boy

Chance of a Lifetime

Charles Becomes a Scientist

To the Galapagos

Secret Notebooks

Down House

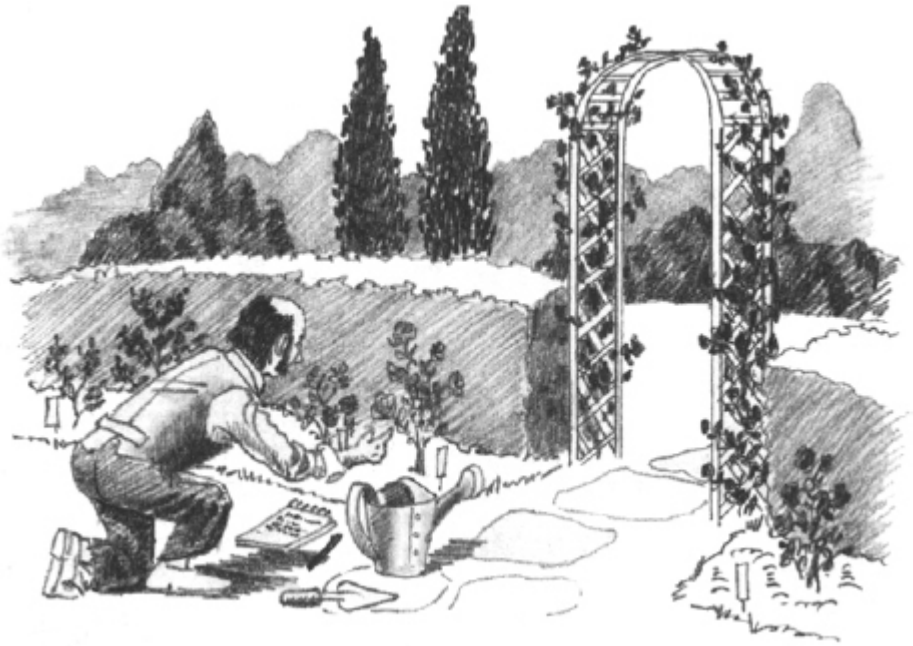
The Origins of Life

Charles Darwin’s Revolution

Who Was Charles Darwin?

Charles Darwin took a five-year trip around the world on a ship called the *Beagle*, but he liked staying home best of all. He lived in a small English village where he raised pigeons, played with his children, and puttered in his garden.

Although he lived a quiet life, Charles Darwin started a revolution—a revolution of thought.



People have always wondered how life on Earth began. When Charles Darwin lived, most people in Europe and America believed God created the entire world in six days, just as it says in the Bible. But Charles Darwin was not most people. The *Beagle* voyage taught him to be a true scientist—to look closely at nature, question everything, and think in a new way about how life on Earth started. He showed how living things could naturally change, or evolve, over a long period of time.

Was Charles Darwin a genius? He didn't think so. Charles thought of himself as simply a scientist. And like all good scientists, Charles was curious—so curious he was never afraid to ask hard questions—and he looked for answers based on what he saw.

Charles Darwin knew his ideas would shock people. They did. Yet today scientists accept evolution as a fact. Charles Darwin is as important as ever.

Charles Darwin changed history. How did he do it?