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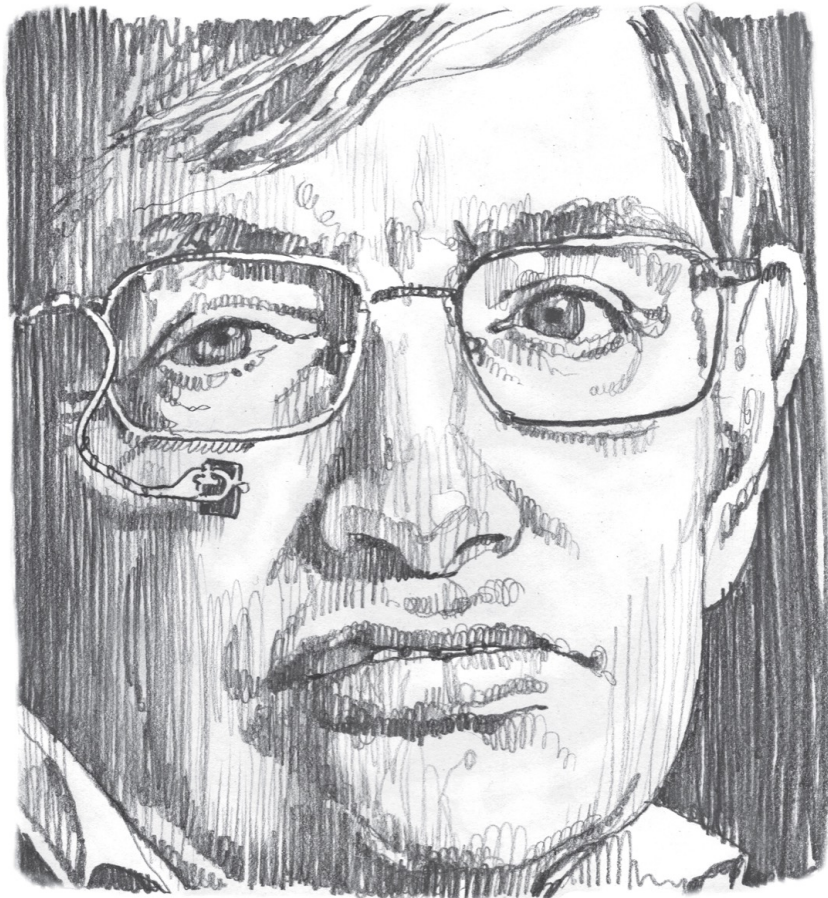


Who Was Stephen Hawking?



by Jim Gigliotti

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by Jim Gigliotti

illustrated by Gregory Copeland

Penguin Workshop

For Michelle, for overcoming life's challenges and following your dream—JG

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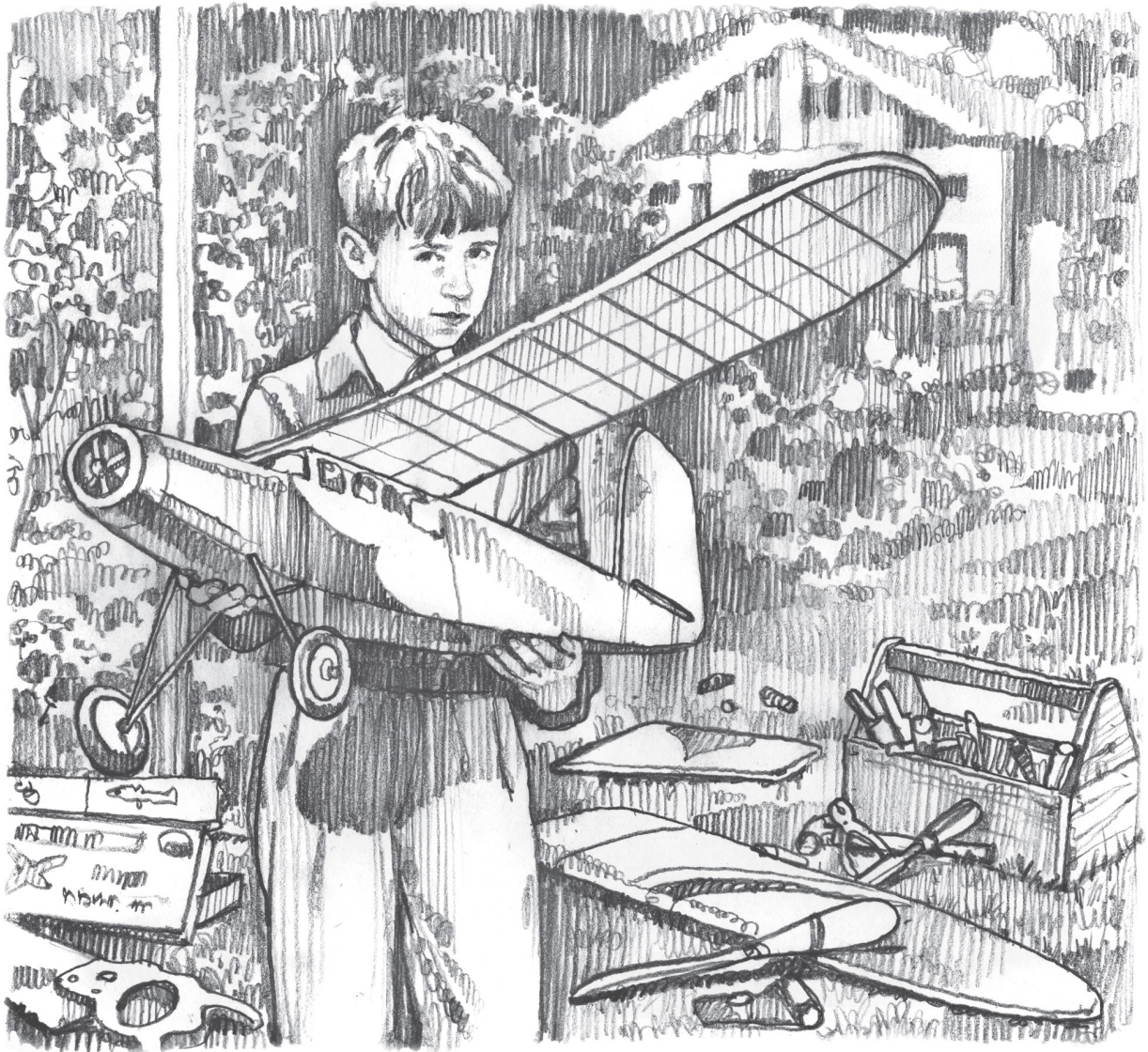
When Stephen Hawking was a young boy, he wanted a toy train more than anything else in the world. But he lived in England in the mid-1940s, during World War II. Toy makers weren't making toys at that time. They were too busy helping the war effort. Their factories were being used to help build planes and bombs for soldiers. Toy trains were hard to come by.

So when Stephen was three years old, his father made him a wooden train. But Stephen didn't think of it as a *real* train. He had to push it to make it go. Then Stephen's father managed to find a windup train. After he turned the key, it moved on its own, but it still wasn't the kind of train Stephen wanted.

Stephen was hoping for an electric train with real moving parts. He wanted to study how the train worked—what made it go and what made it stop. Finally, when he was old enough, he took out all the money he had in his bank account and bought himself an electric train set. That was more like it!

Stephen soon moved on to bigger things. He started building model airplanes. Then he worked on making toy boats. He didn't really care how they looked.

Instead, he was more interested in how they worked. Sometimes he took things apart. He wasn't very good at putting them back together, but that didn't matter. He wanted to study how all the different parts worked with one another.



By the time he was a teenager, Stephen started thinking about how even larger things worked—really big things, like the universe, for instance. *How did it*

start? he wondered. Does it get larger? Does it get smaller? Will it ever end?

Those are big questions! Stephen never stopped asking those big questions. Nothing could stop him. Not even a disease that kept him in a wheelchair for most of his life. Not even losing his ability to speak, and then to move at all.

Instead, he overcame the challenges of his disease and became a physicist. Physics is the study of matter (what all things are made of) and energy. People who study physics take a close look at how matter and energy move through space and time.

Stephen kept thinking about the big questions his entire adult life. He wrote articles and books about black holes, the origin of the universe, and all kinds of things. He was a famous scientist, an important thinker, and an inspiration to people all over the world.