I said my last goodbye to Stephen at Great St. Mary’s church, a five-hundred-year-old structure in the midst of old Cam­bridge. It was March 2018. I sat on the aisle, and as he passed we were, for one final moment, in close proximity. I felt as if I were with him again, despite the coffin that veiled him from me and the other mourners and that, after seventy-six years, finally shielded him from the dangers and challenges of the physical world.

Stephen believed that death is the end. We humans create buildings, theories, and progeny, and the river of time will carry them forward. But we ourselves will eventually be left behind. That was also my belief, and yet, as the coffin passed, I felt as if, inside that wooden box, he was still with us. It was an eerie feeling. My intellect told me that Stephen’s blip of existence had passed, as would my own in not so many years. Physics had taught me that someday, not just all that we treasure, but all that we are aware of, will be gone. I knew that even our earth, our sun, and our galaxy are on borrowed time, and that when your time runs out, all that’s left is dust. Still, I silently sent Stephen my love and my best wishes for the eternal future.

I looked down at Stephen’s contented face on the cover of the funeral program. I thought of his strength, of his broad smiles of appreciation and his fierce grimaces of disapproval. I thought of our happy times immersed together in something we were both passionate about. I thought of the rewarding times when we spoke of beautiful ideas, or when I’d learn something new from him—and of the frustrating times when I would try to convince him of something and he wouldn’t budge.

Stephen was world famous for stirring up the physics world, for writing about it, and for doing all that from within a broken body. But just as challenging to someone who cannot move, and especially to someone who cannot speak, is to maintain long-term friendships, to develop deep relationships, and to find love. Stephen knew that it was human bonds, love, and not just his physics, that nourished him. And in that, too, he had succeeded beyond reasonable expectation.

Some of the eulogies alluded to the irony that Stephen, who did not believe in God, was having his funeral in a church. To me it made sense, for despite Stephen’s passionate intellectual belief that the laws of science govern everything that happens in nature, he was a deeply spiritual man. He believed in the *human* spirit. He believed that all people have an emotional and moral essence that distinguishes us from other animals and defines us as individuals. Believing that our souls are not supernatural, but rather the product of our brains, did not diminish his spiritual­ity. How could it? To Stephen, a man who could neither speak nor move, his spirit was all that he had.