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George and the Big Bang - Lucy and Stephen Hawking

Publisher: Random House Childrens

RRP \$19.99

An exhilarating combination of fictional novel and factual data about the origins of the universe - and what can go wrong when people try to alter reality. This is the third book in the popular series written by renowned theoretical physicist and cosmologist, Stephen Hawking, in collaboration with his daughter, Lucy.

George and his next-door-neighbour Annie enlist the help of supercomputer, Cosmos, when they need to shift George's pet pig. Cosmos is an incredibly intelligent computer that has been entrusted to Annie's father, Professor Bellis. Through portals into outer space, Cosmos allows travel to other places, including unknown parts of the universe.

Annie's father is studying the theory that the universe began with a Big Bang. He's working with other scientists to activate the Large Hadron Collider in Switzerland, in an attempt to prove the theory.

Unfortunately, dark forces and evil people want to stop the professor's work. Danger engulfs Annie's father and he is kidnapped. When George and Annie try to rescue the professor they are led on a perilous journey through space and time.

Spectacular photos of outer space add relevance to the story. Helpful fact boxes are well-designed and clearly separated from the fictional story. Plus numerous black-and-white illustrations by Garry Parsons flesh-out the characters.

The blend of fact and fiction is an entertaining format for young people who like to be immersed in an adventure, yet still know the background detail is based on factual information. Unique and brilliant.

**Reviewed by children's book author,
Jean Bennett.**

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