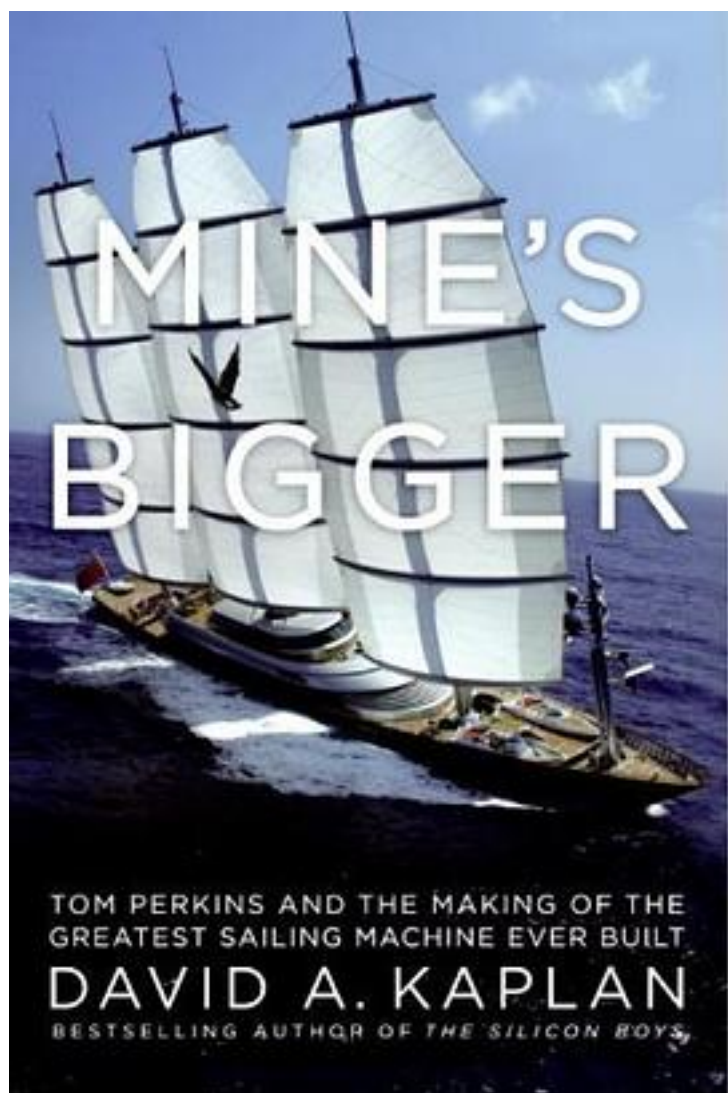


# Mine's Bigger



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Tom Perkins had a dream. It wasn't to get rich, acquire power, or marry into fame. As the man most responsible for creating Silicon Valley, he had done all that. His venture-capital firm, Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, remains the most celebrated money machine since the Medicis. He'd helped found Genentech and fund Google. And in 2006 his resignation from the Hewlett-Packard board triggered the revelation of a spying scandal that dominated the front pages. Along the way, he also managed to get himself convicted of manslaughter in France and become Danielle Steel's Husband No. 5. No, as he hit his seventies, Perkins wanted to create the biggest, fastest, riskiest, highest-tech, most self-indulgent sailboat ever--the "perfect yacht." His fantasy would be a modern clipper ship--as long as a football field, forty-two feet wide, with three masts each rising twenty stories toward the heavens. This \$130 million square-rigger--The Maltese Falcon--would evoke the era of magnificent vessels that raced across the oceans in the nineteenth century. But the Falcon is more than a tribute to the past. Gone are all the deckhands to climb the yardarms. Gone is the intricate rigging that helped give the square-riggers of yore their impressive look. Instead, the Falcon's giant carbon-fiber masts are entirely freestanding and rotate by computer. The bridge looks like something out of Star Trek. And the fifteen huge sails unfurl at the touch of a screen. In short, this is a revolutionary machine--the most significant advance in sailing in 150 years. With keen storytelling and biting wit, Newsweek's David A. Kaplan takes us behind the scenes of an extraordinary project and inside the mind of a larger-than-life character. We discover why any sane man would gamble a sizeable chunk of his net worth on a boat; we meet the cast of engineers who conspired with him; and we learn about the other two monumental yachts just built by gazillionaires that Perkins is ever eyeing. In a battle of egos on the high seas, Perkins loves to preen, "Mine's better! Mine's Bigger !" On the Falcon's climactic maiden voyage across the Mediterranean--sixteen hundred nautical miles from Istanbul to Malta to the Riviera--we revel with Perkins as his creation surges along at record-breaking speeds. This is the biography of a remarkable boat and the man who built it. More than a tale of technology, Mine's Bigger is a profile of ambition, hubris, and the imagination of a legendary entrepreneur.

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