



## The End of Mr. Y

By Scarlett Thomas

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**The End of Mr. Y** By Scarlett Thomas

A cursed book. A missing professor. Some nefarious men in gray suits. And a dreamworld called the Troposphere?

Ariel Manto has a fascination with nineteenth-century scientists—especially Thomas Lumas and *The End of Mr. Y*, a book no one alive has read. When she mysteriously uncovers a copy at a used bookstore, Ariel is launched into an adventure of science and faith, consciousness and death, space and time, and everything in between.

Seeking answers, Ariel follows in Mr. Y's footsteps: She swallows a tincture, stares into a black dot, and is transported into the Troposphere—a wonderland where she can travel through time and space using the thoughts of others. There she begins to understand all the mysteries surrounding the book, herself, and the universe. Or is it all just a hallucination?

With *The End of Mr. Y*, Scarlett Thomas brings us another fast-paced mix of popular culture, love, mystery, and irresistible philosophical adventure.

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## The End of Mr. Y By Scarlett Thomas Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

#### From Publishers Weekly

In Thomas's dense, freewheeling novel, Ariel Manto, an oversexed renegade academic, stumbles across a cursed text, which takes her into the Troposphere, a dimension where she can enter the consciousness, undetected, of other beings. Thomas first signals something is askew even in Ariel's everyday life when a university building collapses; soon after, Ariel discovers her intellectual holy grail at a used book shop: a rare book with the same title as the novel, written by an eccentric 19th-century writer interested in "experiments of the mind." The volume jump-starts her doctoral thesis, but her adviser disappears. And when Ariel follows a recipe in the book, she finds herself in deep trouble in the Troposphere. Her young ex-priest love interest may be too late to save her. Thomas blithely references popular physics, Aristotle, Derrida, Samuel Butler and video game shenanigans while yoking a *Back to the Future*-like conundrum to a gooey love story. The novel's academic banter runs the gamut from intellectually engaging to droning; this journey to the "edge of consciousness" is similarly playful but less accessible than its predecessor, *PopCo*. (Oct.)

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#### From Booklist

British author Thomas bites off a bit more than she can chew in this novel incorporating time travel, Derrida, and the dangers of sadistic trysts. Strange things keep happening to British university lecturer Ariel Manto. First her supervisor disappears; then she discovers the rarest of rare books, *The End of Mr. Y.*, at a secondhand bookshop. The tome was penned by Thomas Lumas, a nineteenth-century scientist who, as luck would have it, is the subject of Ariel's dissertation. (The book tells the tale of a man who swallows a tincture, stares into a black dot, and winds up in a place called the Troposphere, where he travels space and time through others' minds.) Bored and befuddled by real life, Ariel mimics the author's eerie experiment, with mixed results. (On her first trip, she melds minds with a randy rodent and a psychotic cat.) Like her previous novel, *PopCo* (2005), Thomas' mildly amusing second offering aspires to be both wonky and hip: her protagonist obsesses over philosophical matters one moment, her lamentable love life the next. Chick lit for nerds. *Allison Block*

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#### Review

#### PRAISE FOR *POPCO*

"You might say that Thomas has redefined activism for the Digital Age. Inspired by a venerable tradition, she achieves here a scope and a passion to match the intelligence and empathy her fiction has always had."--*Los Angeles Times Book Review*

"Enough code-breaking tips, puzzles and graphs, charts, postscripts and appendixes to satisfy that other mathematician storyteller, Lewis Carroll. "--*The New York Times Book Review*

"An exciting story with a fantastical twist, dive into the world of Ariel Manto and The End of Mr. Y." - armchairinterviews.com

"Not only will you have a great time reading this book, but you will finish it a cleverer person." - Jonathan Coe

"[A] journey of wonder and danger. Delicious cross-genre literary picnic, breezy and fiercely intelligent, reminiscent of Haruki Murakami." - Kirkus

"A combination of postmodern philosophy and physics, spine-tingling science fiction, clever, unexpected narrative twists, and engaging characters." - Library Journal

"[S]mart, stylish and dizzying... Consider 'The End of Mr. Y' an accomplished, impressive thought experiment for the 21st Century." - New York Times Book Review

"Literary manna for would-be philosophy nerds. There are little, 100-percent-literary sugar plums to be found in its pages." - Salon.com

"Exhilarating. A compulsively absorbing thriller. Mr. Y burrows into the reader's brain, stoking a desire for real-world exploration." - Time Out New York

"An exciting story with a fantastical twist, dive into the world of Ariel Manto and The End of Mr. Y."  
(*armchairinterviews.com*)

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