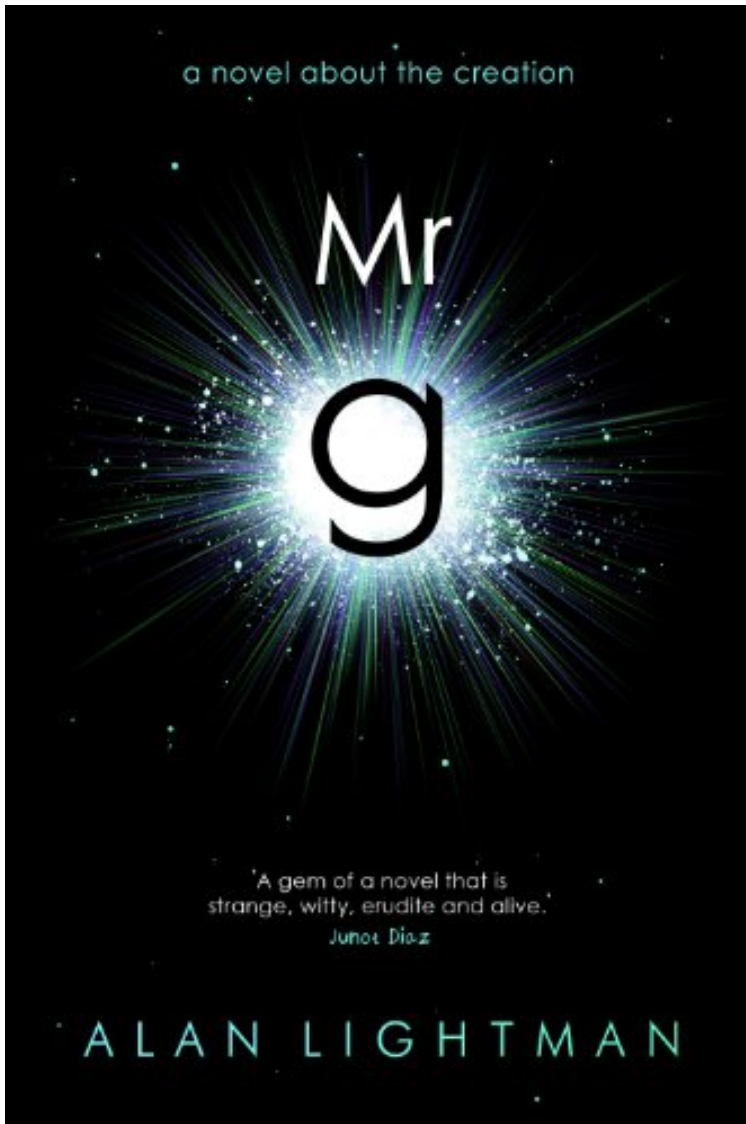


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Mr g: A Novel About the Creation (English Edition)



Par Alan Lightman
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurWith echoes of Calvino, Rushdie, and Saramago, this is a stunningly imaginative work that celebrates the tragic and joyous nature of existence on the grandest possible scale."As I remember, I had just woken up from a nap when I decided to create the universe." So begins Alan Lightman's playful and profound new novel, Mr g, the story of Creation as narrated by God. Bored with living in the shimmering Void with his bickering Uncle Deva and Aunt Penelope, Mr g creates time, space, and matter-then moves on to stars, planets, consciousness, and finally intelligent beings with moral dilemmas.But even the best-laid plans can go awry, and Mr g discovers that with his creation of space and time come unforeseen

consequences-especially in the form of the mysterious Belhor, a clever and devious rival. An intellectual equal to Mr g, Belhor delights in provocation: he demands an explanation for the inexplicable, requests that intelligent creatures not be subject to rational laws, and maintains the necessity of evil. As Mr g watches his favorite universe grow into maturity, he begins to understand how the act of creation can change the Creator

himself.ExtraitTimeAs I remember, I had just woken up from a nap when I decided to create the universe.Not much was happening at that time. As a matter of fact, time didnt exist. Nor space. When you looked out into the Void, you were really looking at nothing more than your own thought. And if you tried to picture wind or stars or water, you could not give form or texture to your notions.Those things did not exist.

Smooth, rough, waxy, sharp, prickly, brittleeven qualities such as these lacked meaning. Practically everything slept in an infinite torpor of potentiality. I knew that I could make whatever I wanted. But that was the problem. Unlimited possibilities bring unlimited indecision. When I thought about this particular creation or that, uncertain about how each thing would turn out, I grew anxious and went back to sleep. But

at a particular moment, I managed . . . if not exactly to sweep aside my doubts, at least to take a chance.Almost immediately, it seemed, my aunt Penelope asked me why I would want to do such a thing. Wasnt I comfortable with the emptiness just as it was? Yes, yes, I said, of course, but . . . You could mess things up, said my aunt. Leave Him alone, said Uncle Deva. Uncle toddled over and stood beside me in his dear way. Please dont tell me what to do, retorted my aunt. Then she turned and stared hard at me. Her hair, uncombed and knotted as usual, drooped down to her bulky shoulders. Well? she said, and waited. I never liked it when Aunt Penelope glowered at me. I think Im going to do it, I finally said. It was the first decision

Id made in eons of unmeasured existence, and it felt good to have decided something. Or rather, to have decided that something had to be done, that a change was in the offing. I had chosen to replace nothingness with something. Something is not nothing. Something could be anything. My imagination reeled. From now on, there would be a future, a present, and a past. A past of nothingness, and then a future of something.In fact, I had just created time. But unintentionally. It was just that my resolution to act, to make things, to put an end to the unceasing absence of happenings, required time. By deciding to create something, I had pressed an arrow into the shape- less and unending Void, an arrow that pointed in the direction of the future.

Henceforth, there would be a before and an after, a continuing stream of successive events, a movement away from the past and towards the futurein other words, a journey through time. Time necessarily came before light and dark, matter and energy, even space. Time was my first creation.Sometimes, the absence of a thing is not noticed until it is present. With the invention of time, events that had once merged together in

one amorphous clot began to take shape. Each event could now be enveloped by a slipcover of time, separating it from all other events. Every motion or thought or the slightest happenstance could be ordered and placed exactly in time. For example, I realized that I had been sleeping for a very long time. And near mebut I couldnt say how near, because I had not yet created spaceAunt Penelope and Uncle Deva had also been sleeping, their loud snores rising and falling like something or other, their tossings and turnings unfolding in time. And their interminable bickering could now be identified with moments of wakefulness, which in turn could be understood as taking place between periods of sleep. I refused to think how much time I had wasted. In fact, we had all slept in a kind of pleasant amnesia, a swoon, an infinite senselessness.

In various ways, had we not luxuriated in the unstructured Void, unaccountable for our actions? Yes, unaccountable. Because without time, there could be no reactions to actions, no consequences. Without time, decisions need not be considered for their implications and effects. We had all been drifting in a comfortable

Void without responsibilities.See, my aunt complained when it became apparent that we were now conscious of time. I told you that you would mess things up. She shot Uncle a look of disapproval, as if he had encouraged me to act as I had, and then she began an unhappy summary of the various things that she had done and not done during the immediate past, then during the past before that, and so on, back and back through the now visible chasms of time, until Uncle begged her to stop. You should never have created the past and the future, she said. We were happy here. See, now I must say were, when before . . . Oh! There it is again. It was nicer when everything happened at once. I cant stand to think about the future. But dont you think that we have some responsibility to the future? I suggested. To all the things and beings I might create?

Non- sense, shrieked Aunt Penelope. What a foolish argument. You have no responsibility to things that dont yet exist and wont ever exist if you could just keep your big thoughts to yourself. But its too late now, she went on. I can feel time. I can feel the future. She had gotten herself into one of her states, and the Void twisted and throbbled with her displeasure.Gently, Uncle caressed her. For the first time ever, she responded to his touch. Her ranting diminished. Soon after, she realized that her hair needed combing, and that was the

beginning of something and probably all for the best. From the Hardcover edition. *Revue de presse* Aglow with wonder. . . . A far more subtle divine comedy. . . . Its a scientific vision laced with the mirthful aura of divinity. The Washington Post Book World A soulful riff on the birth and eventual demise of our universe. The New York Times Book Lightman writes exquisitely, so this fable on the origin of space, time, matter and life is a wordfest that is securely pinned to the rational making him a magic realist of a refreshingly different stripe. Nature Entertaining. . . . Clever and witty. The Boston Globe A scientists creation myth. . . . Lightman hints that in the face of the universes wondrous complexity and tremendous capacity for chaos, even an all-powerful creator may be humbled. The Daily Beast A fluent description of the cosmos based on the principles of quantum physics a stunning, symmetrical light show of subatomic particles. The Wall Street

Journal Lightman is fundamentally serious, not satirical, and his awed amazement at the universe is contagious. The Columbus Dispatch The beautiful writing throughout this little gem of a book is an Alan Lightman trademark. The Washington Times [Lightman] has, in Mr g, created not just a fascinating and oddly moving novel, but an entire genre: call it cosmological scientism. Or scientific cosmology. . . . There's nothing else like it. The Vancouver Sun A cosmic wink at the infinite loop of creativity and mystery. The Miami Herald With wit and a good sense of humor, Lightman is able to approach this very divisive topic in a manner that is sure to please Creationists and Darwinists alike. He deftly combines theology, complex scientific principles and more dilemmas into a lovely tale. The Charleston Post Courier A beautiful and philosophical fable that weaves the laws of quantum physics into a modern Genesis myth that will stick with a reader long after the book is put away. New York Journal of Books With iridescent precision, fairy-tale wonder, and brainy humor, Lightman crafts an enthralling and provocative cosmic parable that offers a startlingly fresh perspective on the mysteries of the universe and the paradoxical human condition. Booklist (starred review) A delightful, sensual mixture of the mundane and divine and sometimes it's not clear which is which. . . . It deals powerfully with some of the deepest issues of existence, ethics, and the human condition.

I think I've never read a more compelling description of the beauty of the universe. Its irreverent awe is powerful. I loved it! Kip Thorne, author of *Black Holes and Time Warps* This delightful novel takes the reader on a light hearted romp through the development of the universe from the Big Bang to its cold dark end, addressing along the way some of the big questions that inevitably arise from the development of intelligent life. Jerome Friedman, Nobel Prize-winning physicist Just as he did with his incomparable *Einsteins Dreams*, Alan Lightman again surprises us with a work that is utterly original in both form and content. Mr g is a philosophical fable which is at turns hilarious and moving, rendered with a literary hand so deft that the weightiest metaphysical topics levitate into pure delight. Rebecca Newberger Goldstein, author of *36 Arguments for the Existence of God* It would not seem possible for Alan Lightman to match his earlier tour de force, *Einsteins Dreams*, but in Mr g he has done so with wit, imagination, and transcendent beauty. Anita Desai Here is the creation of the Universe and the young Creator who grapples with what he has made and ultimately with responsibility and loss. A gem of a novel that is strange, witty, erudite, and alive with Lightman's playful genius. Junot Diaz, author of *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*