

Nexus Point: Time Ranger Series

K. Pimpinella

Randy Surles, Editor

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In the intriguing time travel novel Nexus Point, a lone traveler fights to protect his future.

In K. Pimpinella's character-driven science fiction novel *Nexus Point*, a soldier attempts to prevent a rogue agent from changing the past.

The discovery of a star-like construct with a space station near it prompted the creation of the Time Ranger Unit, which responds to alerts from the station whenever a time traveler threatens to alter the past. One of the unit's most promising soldiers is Kai, a modified human being with a heavy burden on his shoulders. He was created with an artificial egg and human sperm, and was modified to be stronger, faster, and more capable of surviving in extreme environments. His father, the rear admiral and founder of the unit, raised him in a cold manner; every one of Kai's interactions was designed to direct his development, with the idea of him becoming the perfect military officer.

Despite claims of nepotism and favoritism, Kai is made the youngest commander in the unit's history. A threat in seventeenth-century France sends Kai into the past, where he's tasked with preventing a massive shift in human history; it could lead to the early development of modern medicine. A crash-landing strands Kai in the past, though. Cut off from his team and the future, his psyche fractures and his loyalties fray. He turns inward, becoming obsessed with his own survival. The book details his breakdown well, becoming less of a time travel adventure than it is a powerful character study as it progresses.

After it sets up the rogue time traveler story line in tantalizing terms, the book shifts to detail Kai's rise to a commanding position. Across a handful of missions, the disparity between his thought processes and the expectations of the Time Rangers is made clear, foreshadowing the book's later events. Thrilling action scenes combine with characters' struggles well.

Kai's isolation is a driving force in the narrative; he tries to keep his mission on track, despite being forced into combat while dealing with starvation and mental anguish. In France in the 1600s, his team works to find the rogue traveler, operating at a hurried pace. The truth behind their mission is hinted at and is fascinating, helping to set up later series developments.

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JOHN M. MURRAY (February 18, 2021)

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