

The Continuum

Wendy Nickel

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The Continuum packs a staggering amount of well drawn world-building into a short space, making for enough time travel adventure to launch a series.

A seasoned time travel agent finds herself embroiled in an intense rescue assignment to the far future in Wendy Nickel's engaging science fiction adventure, *The Continuum*.

The story starts off with a bang and thunders along at a steady, taut pace. The Place in Time Travel Agency whisks wealthy clients into the past on time travel vacations. Elise Morley works for it as a retriever, journeying into the past to bring back lost clients. Despite the seeming glamour of her work, it's a straightforward job, but one that Elise excels at. That is, until one retrieval goes awry.

A client has gone native and refuses to return, instead boarding ship for the maiden voyage of the *Titanic*. Things go from bad to worse when two men in black suits kidnap Elise and set her on a dangerous assignment.

The Continuum packs a staggering amount of world-building into its novella's length—practically enough to set up a series. From the mechanics of the time travel device to the characters themselves, everything is well drawn. Elise's backstory is no exception.

Most of the retrieval agents have certain traits or experiences that make them ideal for their jobs; Elise is hired at a science fiction convention without even an interview. This may seem strange initially, but it's explained in a neat, satisfying conclusion that brings all elements together.

Narrative focus jumps between Elise and two other key characters. One is a man from the past who stumbles upon the time travel technology and manages to expand upon it. The other is the reason behind Elise's kidnapping—an agent who refuses to return to the present. Their three separate plotlines weave into each other in surprising ways.

The Continuum is full of heart, humor, and thrilling action and adventure scenes that make for a fun, fast read.

JOHN M. MURRAY (January/February 2018)

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