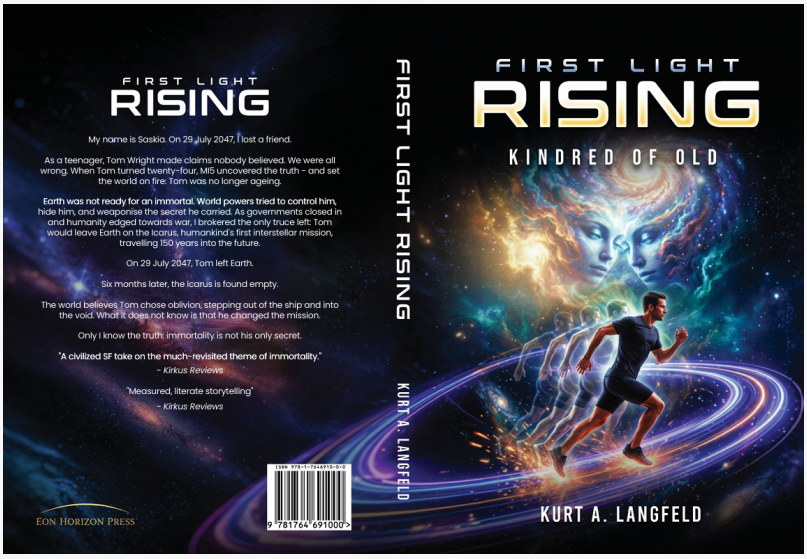
First Light Rising Imagines Immortality as Humanity's Bridge to the Stars

SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA, September 10, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Theoretical physicist Kurt A. Langfeld's debut follows a young man who can alter the flow of time, stops ageing, and becomes humanity's first link to an ancient civilisation among the stars.

"A civilized SF take on the much-revisited theme of immortality."
— Kirkus Reviews





What if the secret of roaming between stars is not technology but longevity, and the ability to endure the hostile environment of space? First Light Rising, the debut novel by theoretical physicist Kurt A. Langfeld and the opening volume of the Kindred of Old trilogy, brings that question into a world of intelligence services, medical laboratories, and international rivalry.

At the centre of the novel is Tom Wright, a young man who stopped ageing at twenty-four. Tom can enter an altered state he calls the Dive, changing the flow of time with his mind and enabling feats that ordinary physiology cannot explain. When medical evidence of his condition leaks, governments and intelligence agencies begin competing to understand and control – the implications of a human life that may have no natural endpoint.

But what if manipulating time leaves a trace in the gravitational fabric of the cosmos, a trace that can be detected across interstellar distances? The most extraordinary response comes from beyond the solar system, and it is not the one anyone at Thames House was prepared for.

Somewhere out there, something ancient has noticed Tom Wright.

The greater danger, however, may not come from the stars at all. To military planners, Tom is a strategic advantage. To intelligence services, he is a secret that must be contained. To activists, he becomes a symbol. What each of them is willing to do to claim him drives First Light Rising toward a question larger than any one nation's interest: whether humanity is ready for what comes next.

Langfeld's science fiction keeps the speed limit imposed by relativity. There are no warp drives, wormholes, or faster-than-light escape routes. In this universe, journeys between stars can outlast civilisations. Longevity, rather than propulsion, becomes the essential technology of interstellar travel, and Tom becomes a young man whose choices may decide what that means for everyone else.

Kirkus Reviews Praises A Fresh Approach To Immortality.
In its review of First Light Rising, Kirkus Reviews praises Langfeld's “measured, literate storytelling” and “fresh approach” to a science-fiction tradition extending back to Mary Shelley. The review particularly credits the novel's convincing depiction of the international turmoil that could follow the discovery of a physiological and philosophical miracle such as Tom.

The review also recognises the range of the novel's political, personal, and technological threads, concluding that they converge satisfyingly in an open-ended finale. Together, those observations position the book as both a grounded international thriller and a thoughtful exploration of immortality, belonging, and humanity's place in the universe.

“Most first-contact stories begin with the fear of the unknown,” says Langfeld. “I wanted to follow a different path. Once faster-than-light travel is removed, journeys between stars can outlast civilisations. Longevity, not a warp drive, becomes the bridge between worlds. Whether Tom ever gets to cross that bridge is another matter. First he has to survive what humanity decides to do about what he has become.”
First Light Rising stands as a complete novel while opening the Kindred of Old trilogy, which expands from a political crisis on Earth into an evolutionary mystery spanning the stars.
About The Author.

Kurt A. Langfeld is a professor of theoretical physics whose work spans quantum physics, field theory and high-performance computing. He has held senior academic roles in Germany, the United Kingdom and Australia and writes fiction that treats the laws of physics as a source of story rather than an obstacle to it. Based in New South Wales, Australia, he is the author of First Light Rising, his debut novel and the first volume of the Kindred of Old trilogy.

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Advance review copies, high-resolution jacket art, author photographs, and short Kirkus review excerpts are available for press, booksellers, and podcasters. Kurt A. Langfeld is available for interviews about the science of time and interstellar travel, writing scientifically grounded fiction, and the themes of immortality and first contact. Interview enquiries may be directed to Eon Horizon Press through kalangfeld.com

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