Permanence by Karl Schroeder

A new epic of far-future hard SF from the author of Ventus. Karl Schroeder was launched as a major SF writer with Ventus: in the company of recent work by Poul Anderson, Greg Bear, Gregory Benford, Greg Egan, Paul J. McAuley, and especially, Vernor Vinge, said Locus. Now Schroeder returns with another epic adventure of the far future, Permanence. Young Rue Cassels of the Cycler Compacta civilization based around remote brown dwarf stars is running for her life from her bullying brother, Jentry. Fleeing in a single-person spacecraft, she spots a distant, approaching object, and stakes a legal claim to it. It is not the valuable comet she had hoped for but something even more wonderful, a billion year old alien starship. Permanence is the story of Rues quest to visit and claim this ship and its treasures, set against a background of interstellar intrigue and warring empires.

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