**My Last Continent
by Midge Raymond**

**About the Book**

It is only at the end of the world—among the glacial mountains, cleaving icebergs, and frigid waters of Antarctica—where Deb Gardner and Keller Sullivan feel at home. For the few blissful weeks they spend each year studying the habits of emperor and Adélie penguins, Deb and Keller can escape the frustrations and sorrows of their separate lives and find solace in their work and in each other. But Antarctica, like their fleeting romance, is tenuous, imperiled by the world to the north.

A new travel and research season has just begun, and Deb and Keller are ready to play tour guide to the passengers on the small expedition ship that ferries them to their research destination. But this year, Keller fails to appear on board. Then, shortly into the journey, Deb’s ship receives an emergency signal from the Australis, a cruise liner that has hit desperate trouble in the ice-choked waters of the Southern Ocean. Soon Deb’s role will change from researcher to rescuer; among the crew of that sinking ship, Deb learns, is Keller.

As Deb and Keller’s troubled histories collide with this catastrophic present, Midge Raymond’s phenomenal novel takes us on a voyage deep into the wonders of the Antarctic and the mysteries of the human heart. (*Amazon.com book review)*

**About the Author**

Midge Raymond is the author of the short-story collection *Forgetting English*, which received the Spokane Prize for Short Fiction, and the novel *My Last Continent*. She has also published two books for writers, *Everyday Writing* and *Everyday Book Marketing*.

Midge now lives in the Pacific Northwest, where she is co-founder of the boutique publisher Ashland Creek Press, which specializes in literature about the environment and animal protection.

**If you enjoyed *My Last Continent:***

* *Where’d You Go, Bernadette* by Maria Semple
* *Endurance: Shackleton’s Incredible Voyage* by Alred Lansing
* *The Chaperone by* Laura Moriarty
* *This is Where I Leave You* by Jonathan Tropper
* *In Cold Pursuit* by Sarah Andrews

**Discussion Questions**

1. What parallels do you see between Kate and Richard’s relationship and Deb and Keller’s? What traits do Deb and Kate have in common, and what traits, if any, do Keller and Richard share?
2. Deb observes of Keller, “I know that he’s fallen head over heels – not for me but for this continent.” How does she reconcile her feelings for him with her knowledge that the continent may always come before her?
3. What do the nineteenth-century explorers, like Shackleton and Scott, share with contemporary scientists? Other than the obvious technological advances, how are they different?
4. Deb describes herself as a “rogue scientist.” What makes her different from other researchers?
5. Both Deb and Keller are haunted by their respective pasts. In what ways does the continent provide solace for each of them?
6. What moments from Deb’s childhood led most directly to her ending up working at the bottom of the world?
7. After reading this book, would you travel to Antarctica? How have the characters’ challenges with tourism affected your view of travel in this remote environment?
8. What does Deb mean when she says, of victims and rescuers, “we are one and the same”?