



# CRISANTA KNIGHT

Eternity's End

GEANNA CULBERTSON

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## Eternity's End

Book Nine in The Crisanta Knight Series

**GEANNA CULBERTSON**



North Carolina

*Crisanta Knight: Eternity's End*

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Book Nine in The Crisanta Knight Series

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Published in the United States by BQB Publishing  
(an imprint of Boutique of Quality Books Publishing Company, Inc.)  
[www.bqbpublishing.com](http://www.bqbpublishing.com)

978-1-952782-83-1 (p)

978-1-952782-84-8 (e)

Library of Congress Control Number: 2022946064

Book design by Robin Krauss, [www.bookformatters.com](http://www.bookformatters.com)

Cover concept by Geanna Culbertson

Cover design by Ellis Dixon, [www.ellisdixon.com](http://www.ellisdixon.com)

First editor: Pearlie Tan

Second editor: Olivia Swenson

# Books in The Crisanta Knight Series

*Crisanta Knight: Protagonist Bound*  
Book One (2016)

*Crisanta Knight: The Severance Game*  
Book Two (2016)

*Crisanta Knight: Inherent Fate*  
Book Three (2017)

*Crisanta Knight: The Liar, The Witch, & The Wormhole*  
Book Four (2018)

*Crisanta Knight: To Death & Back*  
Book Five (2019)

*Crisanta Knight: The Lost King*  
Book Six (2019)

*Crisanta Knight: Into The Gray*  
Book Seven (2020)

*Crisanta Knight: Midnight Law*  
Book Eight (2021)

*Crisanta Knight: Eternity's End*  
Book Nine (2022)

*"I believe that it's a duty—even though one knows that one can't get through the world without making mistakes, without remorse or sorrows—to try to do right. I once read somewhere, 'Some good must come by clinging to the right.' What do I know of whether I'll attain this or that goal—how can I know in advance whether or not the difficulties will be insuperable? One must work on in silence and await the outcome accordingly.*

*If one prospect vanishes another will perhaps open up—there must be a prospect and a future too, even though its geography is unknown. The conscience is a man's [and woman's] compass, and although the needle deviates sometimes, although above all one detects inaccuracies in one's orientation, one must nevertheless do one's best to set one's course by it."*

*- Vincent van Gogh*

To: Theo van Gogh  
The Hague  
Letter #294  
December 1882

# Prologue

*Finale.* A word that carries with it as much promise as it does reluctance. An idea that inspires both fear and faith in the future. And at its core, a reflection of what it means to be human and a chance to show our own individual talent for handling that gift of humanity.

I have been on this journey a long time. Yet it seems like only yesterday that the autumnal leaves were warping with their usual costume change and I was completely unaware of the inciting incident about to alter my YA life.

In the magical world of Book, one of fourteen realms in our enchanted dimension known as the Wonderlands, we lived for generations believing that an all-seeing Author decided our fates. She chose the main characters in our society—the pivotal few with the power and potential to shape the future.

The Author's collected visions of a main character were compiled in a "protagonist book" that bore the name of each selected person on the cover. That branding alerted our realm's higher-ups of the main characters' identities. In turn, those young protagonists were sent off to appropriate schools, either Lady Agnue's School for Princesses & Other Female Protagonists or Lord Channing's School for Princes & Other Young Heroes.

While theoretically anyone could be chosen as a main character, traditionally all royals were protagonist material. As the daughter of Cinderella, I was shipped off to my preppy protagonist prison at the ripe age of ten. However, my protagonist journey didn't truly start until my prologue prophecy appeared during my sixth term in the depths of teenagerdom.

The prologue prophecy was the most impactful entry that the Author ever made in a protagonist book. This collection of vague, rhyming lines outlined the gist of a person's inevitable importance, and mine was a "whopper." That's the word my magical mentor and frenemy Merlin of Camelot used to describe it anyway.

*He says that's also the name of a fairly decent sandwich on Earth, but I digress. That guy is both brilliant and crazy, whereas I'm . . . You know what, we'll let history be the judge.*

Anyway, my whopper indicated that I would either be the key to stopping our realm's antagonists from overthrowing our society or the principal force that helped them succeed.

See, Book has many kingdoms—twenty-six on land and one beneath the sea where the Mer people live. But there is also one additional kingdom that we don't typically count called Alderon where our society imprisons its malevolent beings—villains, monsters, magic hunters. These baddies are kept separate from the rest of Book by a magical barrier known as an In and Out Spell. Such spells can work at different capacities. Alderon's lets living beings pass in, but not out, allowing our government to shove antagonistic forces into a big prison without worrying about them escaping. Until now.

Lately some antagonists—immune to In and Out Spells thanks to a parasitic relationship with dark energy creatures called Shadows—have been breaking out of Alderon under the direction of their queen, Nadia, and her master plan to overtake our realm. That's caused near disaster for Book on several occasions. For me personally, it has also made life a lot dicier.

When the antagonists first learned of my prophecy they decided to take me out before I could live up to the *heroic* version of my fate, which they initially believed was more likely. It was a fair assumption; I was a princess who'd been raised by heroes and royals, and who'd grown up surrounded by valiant, compassionate characters. I was meant to be a "good guy." Past that, the harder the antagonists pushed me, the more I showed my knack for fighting back and fighting for others.

That being said, my prophecy wouldn't have cited wickedness as a possibility for me if it did not see something darker brewing beneath my potential. Eventually the antagonists saw it too. And when Plan A of killing me didn't pan out after many attempts, our enemies decided to force out my darker nature to turn me into an asset for their cause, inciting the other half of my fate. The main means they'd been taking advantage of to do that: Pure Magic.

Most magic can be given and taken from people easily, but for some, the magic mutates and becomes permanently bonded to its



host in a condition called Pure Magic Disease. Those afflicted gain both a unique, powerful ability and the capacity to see the future through dreams. The downside? They are slowly corrupted by the magnitude of flourishing magic burning inside.

That last one is the reason my story got, shall we say, complicated.

I have Pure Magic. Everyone knows it and everyone is a little wary of me because of it. They have every right to be. The only known Pure Magic wielders who have escaped the dark effects of the disease are Merlin and the Author. The latter of whom turned out to be a former Fairy Godmother named Liza who was locked away to use her foresight to create protagonist books that her sister the Godmother Supreme and our realm's higher-ups could control Book with.

Though it is not entirely certain why Merlin and Liza have been able to evade enchanted corruption their entire lives, both have been trying to help me avoid it too. A lot of that has to do with learning to control my magic and emotions while balancing on the tightrope of morality.

Unfortunately, my magical ability of *life*—being able to give and take it—causes more ethical conflict than most powers do. The antagonists have been taking full advantage of that by engineering situations that pull me toward morally gray areas, trying to trap me in the shadier side of my nature.

For a while I thought I was fending them off. Regrettably, villains are like acid reflux after spicy tacos—just when you think you got them down, they turn up again with bitter, crippling vengeance.

*Sigh.*

Maybe I should've been more cautious of how easy it would be to fall. Being a hero is hard. Dissecting the true meaning of justice while making calls between mercy and what people deserve is not a pastime for the fainthearted. When you mix anger, hatred, heartbreak, and desire into that . . . things can get dangerous for a main character real quick. I'd been swimming in that pool of moral ambiguity on my own for a while; having the antagonists drive me in deeper each month had made drowning in it an increasing possibility. Then came the summer when my enemies made *a lot* of headway with the endeavor by tricking me into taking on a Shadow.

I mentioned earlier that absorbing a Shadow allowed certain



antagonists to slip out of Alderon. That was a positive side effect. The price they paid for becoming “Shadow Guardians” was these dark creatures feeding on their souls, dragging their hearts further into darkness as they got eaten away. Ergo, my already-questionable morality grew weaker while the creature I hosted clawed at the light inside me, replacing it with darkness.

The cherry on top of my corruption cake was that our enemies captured me after I absorbed my Shadow and took me to a dimension called Earth. Wonderlands magic isn't supposed to work on Earth because that world has its own version of magic. However, the antagonists tortured and tested me until I became strong enough to overcome the land's crippling effects on outsider magic. As a result, now that I'm back in Book—and Shadow-less thanks to my friends—I have turned into arguably one of the most powerful people alive.

Having that much inside of me can definitely be a good thing. The downside: being that unprecedentedly powerful has made me unpredictable. No one knows what I'm capable of now. Myself included. But I do have a suspicion. As I enter the finale of this saga between good versus evil, protagonists versus antagonists, Crisa and company versus Queen Nadia of Alderon and her cronies, I am as scared as I am anxious that the answer comes down to five simple words: *I am capable of anything*.

Which means that anything can happen in the finale of this journey.

That's a beautiful and terrifying notion laden with untold possibilities, as it should be. Because “finale” is both an ending and a beginning. Finales require us to deal with change and test our ability to adapt and push onward after it occurs.

Whether that's change you see coming or change that hits you by surprise. Change that excites you or change that scares you. Change that challenges you to evolve into something better or change that hurts you so much it takes every ounce of will you never knew you had to keep from shattering as you dare to make a different life for yourself.

That is why I said earlier that “finale” mirrors what it means to be human.

A finale *is* change. The greatest gift of humanity is the ability to

change. And the greatest *responsibility* of humanity is wielding that power with a moral compass that helps us do the right thing even in the face of the cruelest adversity.

This is what I intend to do. This is what I have always intended to do.

Let's hope I do this finale justice.