

# Portfolio 2023! by Christina Engela

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First Edition

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## Portfolio 2023!



Hello friends and fans – and potential new readers!

Since you're reading this, you've probably already visited my website (christinaengela.com) but people don't always have internet access, and you might be wondering about what sort of books I write, and also what they're about – or where you can find them!

Bearing that in mind, I thought it would be nice if I could produce a neat, organized catalog of all my books that interested parties could download and browse – a free, distributable and shareable catalog – and so here we are! This is my latest updated Portfolio, and it will remain valid through 2023! I will update it on an annual basis, probably every January – or if a lot of new material is released in the meantime!

There's also a brief biography section – because sometimes people want to know more about the person who wrote the book they're interested in reading!

Self-promotion is unfortunately one of those burdensome tasks that comes with being an author these days – and for introverts and shy and retiring types like me, it's a bit taxing! As much as I love writing, rest assured, I dread having to self-promote and do all my own

marketing – but unfortunately it's a necessary evil, and one no author can afford to do without!

If you want to find out more, feel free to browse my website, or scan through my newsletters, articles and updates. There's also a loderunner-full of other articles that provide great insight into my writing, series as well as my characters.

I hope you enjoy reading through Portfolio – and as always, you're welcome to email me with any comments or questions!

Christina Engela



"Christina Engela is a South African editor and author of horror, fantasy and science fiction novels. Her books are never short of suspense, adventure and humor, while her colorful characters and thought-provoking settings take readers into another world, making her one of the most gifted and creative storytellers. A firm supporter of the LGBT community, Christina believes that Sexual and Gender Minority characters aren't reflected enough by authors due to a number of reasons. As such, Christina's writing isn't stereotypical, and her characters aren't stereotypes, regardless of their sexuality or gender." – Booksradar.com, June 21, 2021.

# Christina Engela is a South African transgender woman. She is also a writer, poet, artist, D.I.Y.er and human rights activist.

Christina writes mainly sci-fi stories laced with horror, suspense and satire, filled with aliens, space ships, big explosions, ghosts and vampires – often in the same books and in a way that makes all of these topics fit with each other without causing a melt-down or an inter-dimensional rift!

She is the creator of four sci-fi series, Galaxii, the Quantum Series, and Panic! Horror In Space and Space Sucks!. The planet Deanna, the main setting of *Quantum*, lends itself so willingly to what she calls 'quantumness', and is her favorite setting of all!

In addition, Christina has also written a number of standalone novels, short stories, and also non-fiction. She's always writing or thinking about writing, and there are currently a number of new projects still in the pipeline for readers to look forward to!

## **Christina's Target Market**

You may be wondering what Christina Engela's target market is, and although she generally writes across the genres of science fiction and horror, most of her writing is aimed at the intelligent, discerning and open-minded reader who appreciates fiction written by an author

who is part of the LGBT community, and one who's spent years campaigning for LGBT equality and human rights as an activist.

Most of her novels tend to feature LGBT characters in some form or another – and in many of them, these characters are either *the* leading character, or one of the main characters. LGBT characters and issues are portrayed in a balanced outlook, and are not sensationalized or stereotyped. In her stories, LGBT characters are portrayed as inspirational people – action heroes, military personnel, leaders, pilots, scientists, police officers, CIA agents to mention but a few – and treated just like normal everyday people – not as caricatures, negative stereotypes, or sensational elements!

Christina's target market therefore, is not just Sci-Fi/Fantasy/Horror – but *LGBT-friendly* Sci-Fi/Fantasy/Horror!

If you're not part of the LGBT collective, you needn't worry that you will have some kind of 'gay agenda' rammed down your throat – the beauty of Christina's stories is that these appear as elements of the story – not *as* the story! There are plenty of heterosexual and cisgender characters – even lead characters – in there to balance things out!

However, just as fiction is not all she writes – writing isn't all she does. If you would like to know more about her, please feel free to browse her website.

# **Books by Christina Engela**

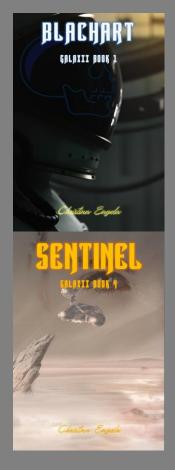
The list of Christina's books currently stands at 29. She presently has 4 series in fiction: Galaxii, Quantum, Panic! Horror In Space, and Space Sucks! and several standalone titles as well as titles in non-fiction.

#### The Galaxii Series



Galaxii fits into the "space opera" and "adventure" sub-genres of science fiction.

Currently there are four titles in the Galaxii Series: "Blachart", "Demonspawn", "Dead Beckoning" and "Sentinel", with more still to follow.







#### **About the Galaxii Series:**

Galaxii – sci-fi, space opera! Galaxii is what is today called "space opera" and is basically a good-old-fashioned sci-fi adventure!

Christina first started working on "The Red Star", the story that would eventually become "Blachart", in about 1986, and which was later redrafted to become "Galaxy" by sometime in 1987, and again to become "Galaxii" in 1990. In the end, this redraft became the basis for all the various stories and characters in the Galaxii Series as it is today.

The Galaxii Series is set in the same universe as the Quantum Series and also Panic! Horror In Space, and precedes those series, being set a century or so earlier in the same timeline and using different settings and characters. Galaxii really is the genesis of all Christina's subsequent series and stories, but as simple as that sounds, the series didn't just pop into being overnight! It's literally taken her *years!* 

Galaxii begins in the not too distant future – at a time when Earth has risen from the ashes of a 21st century global nuclear war to become the seat of a largely peaceful and prosperous stellar Terran Empire. The series relates the struggles and adventures of some realistic characters, each with their own unique interests and obstacles to overcome: career-minded Space Fleet officers, solo adventurers and rogues, Corsairs – space pirates who in their pursuit of wealth and fame, turned the less-traveled space lanes into perilous journeys – and aliens of all persuasions.

The primary setting for the Galaxii titles is aboard various starships – in "Blachart" (book 1) and "Dead Beckoning" (book 3) it is the I.S.S. Antares, in "Demonspawn" (book 2) it is the I.S.S. Mordrake. "Demonspawn" also features a completely different set of characters, while "Dead Beckoning" (book 3) brings both sets of characters from books 1 and 2 together in one larger story. "Sentinel" (book 4) features another different starship and its own set of characters.



A little creative photography of a model Christina built of the starship I.S.S. Antares.

If you enjoyed reading these stories, don't despair – Christina has plans for more in future!

## **Further Reading:**

- Galaxii Characters & Plot Devices
- The Galaxii Series Timeline
- Galaxii A Journey Into The Uncertain

## **The Quantum Series**



There are six titles in the Quantum Series: "Black Sunrise", "The Time Saving Agency", "Dead Man's Hammer", "Loderunner", "Prodigal Sun" and "High Steaks".

Life out on the frontier of space isn't always easy, and there are things that make living on the planet Deanna a mite more interesting than on more civilized Human colonies – including the unique locals, the weird wildlife – and diverse alien tourists, immigrants and refugees.

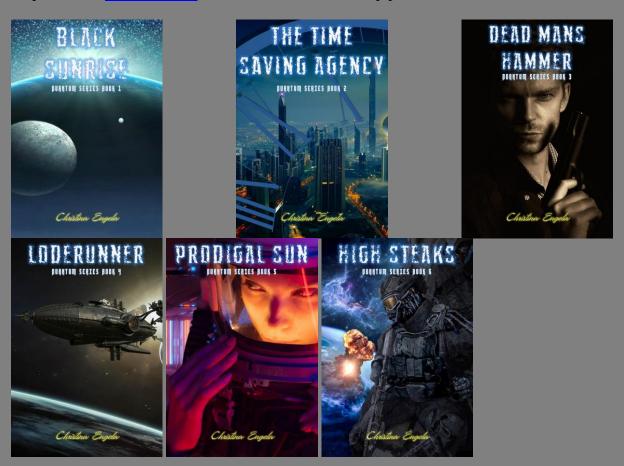
The Quantum Series is sci-fi, with a dash of fantasy and a pinch of thriller thrown in, set on Deanna, a backwater Terran colony on the fringes of known space – which orbits a star named Ramalama, and has two mad little moons named Ding and Dong (this is a local joke).

A cast of recurring characters must overcome diabolical schemes, sinister villains, invading aliens - Human nature - and whatever daunting obstacles they encounter in their adventures together.

Quantum fits firmly into the science fiction genre, falling somewhere in the scope of "space opera" and "adventure" sub-genres. Like much of Christina Engela's writing, it's characterized by her unique (and often strange) sense of humor – but also features elements like time travel and, from time to time, more unexpected items such as vampires!

Quantum is set in the same 'universe' or timeline as the Galaxii Series, and centers around an entirely new cast of characters and settings.

There are more books in the pipeline, so readers hoping for the release of new titles shouldn't despair! View <u>Coming Soon</u> to see new titles still in the pipeline!



**About the Quantum Series:** 

## "Have You Read The Quantum Series Yet? You Should!" - Lee Hall.

"Overall I have very much enjoyed reading the books in this series. They are fun, quirky, imaginative and their biggest quality is that the style and the way they read is very much accessible to pretty much anyone. I highly recommend the Quantum series to everyone! 5 Stars – Fun and powerful. Have you read the Quantum Series? You should!" – Lee Hall, UK writer & reviewer.

Cindy-Mei Winter – as the first story in the Quantum series explains – had until recently been 'Agent' Winter, C.I.A. – that's *Colonial* Intelligence Agency – and one of their best agents... that is, until they threw her out for coming to work in a dress.

After that disappointing and sudden end to what had been a promising career, Mei rewards herself with a long relaxing vacation in the *Outblack* to celebrate her gender reassignment and her new start in life. The first stop on her journey turns out to be a holiday resort on a little backwater planet called Deanna.

That, pretty much, is where everything changes...

The series is set mostly on Deanna, a Terran colony on the fringes of known space (the *Outblack*), which has something of a reputation - and not always a good one. Known as a bit of a space oddity, Deanna orbits a star called Ramalama – and has two mad little moons of its own named Ding and Dong. This often forms the basis of local jokes – especially whenever the smaller moon Ding gets knocked out of orbit by a passing space craft and crashes on the surface.

Deanna has a reputation for being rather on the weird side – after all, it's advertised in the Galactic Tourist Guide as the planet that plays ping-pong with one of its own moons - which falls down occasionally and gets put back again by the Tourism Office after a good stiff polishing.

On the planet itself, people have given unusual names to various things – such as Atro City, the capital city of the colony – and the main setting of these stories. One of its neighboring cities is San Fedora, where all the local hat factories are based, and another is called Fortitude – which should go some way to prepare readers for what to expect!

Life out on the frontier – in the *Outblack* – isn't easy for most folk, and there are various aspects to living on Deanna that make it a mite more interesting than life on more 'civilized' Human colonies – beginning with the unique local wildlife. Crabby-grass, obsidian crows and strato-penguins are just a few oddities worth mentioning - and there are *ranches* full of awkward semi-bovine creatures called red-horned wildebeest – strange rectangular creatures far more suited to life in the lab environment they were bred in, than in the strangely uneven world - where they tend to fall over quite a lot.

Obsidian crows are native bird-like creatures about the size of a very large owl, very heavy, armored and they are absolutely annoyingly pedantic about walking everywhere from A to B in a straight line! They are known for crossing roads while disregarding any other traffic, and frequently get run over — which often costs the driver a new tire on his jeepo and possibly some front-end work! The tough critters climb out of the shallow crater they made unharmed, give a few squawks, and shuffle off again on their way.

Cocka-snoek are local fish that play havoc with local fishermen and are the favorite prey of the Skeggs Valley Dynamite Fishing Club. Strato-penguins have some kind of natural jet propulsion system, and occasionally one flies a little too high in the Deannan atmosphere, and provides a rather pretty – if not messy and gross – fireworks display.

Christina focuses more on her characters than on the tech detail aspects of sci-fi. She creates believable and very realistic characters, fleshing them out with her own broad range of experiences and creative interpretation. Tech and how it works is less important to her than the people who live in those times places, and their own stories and experiences.

From Albrecht's Takeaways – a small shop in an old shipping container set up on Lupini Square, at the center of Atro City – Johannes Albrecht sells hot-dogs and cold-cats – and a very strong volatile kind of coffee called 'hot-stuff blend'. He puts on a fake Italian accent for his customers because he thinks it makes his business and brand more interesting and appealing – and when odd things happen, as they always do, he completely forgets it with comedic timing.

Meanwhile, beneath the surface of polite organized Deannan society lurks an underworld of sorts – a secretive, unseen world of vampires who've co-existed secretly alongside Humans for centuries.

While the rest of the galaxy is appears immune to it, at the center of all this apparent chaos, the characters get on with the business of daily life – and get drawn into all sorts of adventures and misadventures.

Sheriff Peggy-Ann Muller – sometime head of Atro-City's police department, and third point of the love triangle between her, Gary Beck and Cindy-Mei Winter – does her best to make sense of everything and keep a lid on it.

#### **The Trans Angle**

Among Christina's largest cast of characters yet, the series features several LGBT personalities, and some of them cast in leading roles. As a matter of fact, one of the earliest and most prominent of these is Cindy-Mei Winter, a transwoman – and her beau Gary Beck (aka 'Beck the Badfeller') whom she meets in "Black Sunrise".

Another transgender scenario centering on an undercurrent theme of acceptance and support plays out between Jen and Danielle Grauffis, sisters who face a struggle to come to terms with Danielle's trans-ness.

Timaset Skooch is a struggling P.I. and his girlfriend (Dory Wintermuller) is a newly awakened transwoman still in the process of finding herself. When Tim leaves with the Celeste to seek better fortunes, it places his relationship with Dory firmly on the rocks, and it's up to him to ensure there are any threads to pick up - if he ever returns from his voyage into deep space to seek his fortune.

## Challenging Xenophobia & Racism

One of the larger themes that runs strongly through the series along the lines of 'other-ness' is xenophobia – the alien factor; this is the distant future after all, and Humans (emphasis on the capital 'H') have moved into space, run a peaceful and prosperous empire, and there are aliens – or signs of them – everywhere. Christina often uses her alien characters as a

metaphor for racism, which has all but disappeared from prominence in Human culture by that time.

One of the first aliens the reader meets in Quantum however, is Fred the Arborian. Fred is a very unusual character – he's a sentient, walking, talking plant-creature from a planet called *Arboria*, where the plants have become the dominant life form. There, the plants migrate in tune with the seasons, and the more sentient forms live very similar lives to Humans, wearing pots in different styles to hold their roots, and they move around with prehensile branches or vines! Fred comes in very handy in resolving some sticky situations – particularly taking into account his unique ability to blend in or camouflage himself!

Some of the more easily visible aliens living among the Humans on Deanna, are the *Jimwaians*, who are gray-skinned, hairless humanoids. Jim-waians are almost without exception, refugees who fled their home world *Jim-wa*, to live away from an oppressive religious fanatic regime which has overrun the planet. Jim-waians have settled wherever they could find a safe harbor, but rather than setting up their own colonies in Terran space, they've typically settled on Terran colonies where they've been granted asylum and citizenship. Jim-waians tend to be informal traders, they run little tailor shops, corner cafes and restaurants, and keep mostly to themselves. In Quantum, particularly in the later titles, Jim-waians rise to the fore as a racially persecuted minority and provide an interesting narrative background to the larger story, particularly from book 5 onwards.

Books 5-8 center around a sudden, hostile fascist hijacking and takeover of the Terran colony – built against the background of a slow, subtle rise in right-wing infiltrations, which ultimately erupts into a full-blown *uncivil* war by the end of book 6!

There are plenty of heroes and villains, and more than a couple of fools between them. The later books delve deep into a stygian darkness, but at the same time, again, the central themes to these stories – fairness, justice and equality for all – shine through. Rest assured dear readers, justice will be done, the su – er, *Ramalama* will shine again, and in a way that will be most satisfying.

#### **Time Travel**

Johnathan Scrooby, another popular character, isn't exactly from the same timeline – being a time-traveler working for a clandestine agency which exists and operates *outside* of time – and polices it! Agent Scrooby frequently enlists Gary Beck's help (being Deanna's most famous bounty hunter *ever*) in apprehending an assortment of brigands.

Time-travel features in most of the Quantum titles in one way or another – with the probable exception of "Loderunner".

There are many more wonderful characters in the series of course, and from time to time, the regulars are brought to the fore and given an opportunity to shine on their own.

## **Further Reading:**

- Quantum Characters & Plot Devices
- Quantum Spice The Story Behind The Series
- The Story Arc of the Quantum Series

Download this FREE guide to find out more about life on Deanna.



The Panic! Horror In Space Series



"Panic! Horror In Space" is a series of satirical horror misadventures in deep space with the crew of the starship Mercury – which, of all the starships in the elite Terran Space Fleet, is probably the unluckiest ship in history!

Not once, not twice, but many times over, the same hapless crew – give or take a couple of replacements – on a supposed voyage of deep-space exploration – give or take a few dozen casualties, stumble into the weird, wake the creepy and trip over the downright terrifying and possibly even supernatural.

Panic! Is a sci-fi horror parody set in the Galaxii Series universe, using many of the same settings, references and background material.

There are currently 3 titles in Panic!, with several more in the pipeline, so readers hoping for the release of new titles shouldn't despair! View **Coming Soon** to see new titles still in the pipeline!



## **About Panic! Horror In Space**

Panic! Horror In Space is several different things at once: a sci-fi horror series, and also a parody or satire of all the horror movies and paranormal investigator TV shows you can think of, all scrambled together to make for very clever, entertaining reading! There are the obvious horror plot twists and plot devices, silly airheaded blond people whose hover-cars won't start in the parking lot after midnight, or who try to run away on impossible high heel shoes, and the dashing brave young skeptics overdue for a date with the hungry entities in the basement of the abandoned mental hospital. Panic! has a whole universe of nasties at its disposal, as well as tangible tension and suspense!

## "Perhaps I should've said this before – it's not meant to be serious horror... it's satire!"

I didn't, because I thought it was obvious from the title alone, but oh well, sometimes you just have to spell these things out – and I guess this is one of those times!

While the settings change in each story in Panic!, the main characters remain constant; these are Stuart Flane, the Captain of the starship Mercury, Commander Vic Chapman, his best friend and EXO, and the ship's chief medical officer, Dr. Fred Killian who lends a medical perspective to their paranormal pursuits. The rest of the ship's crew is, unfortunately, fairly expendable and tend to vanish, die or become casualties of whatever terrifying paranormal experience happens to be the flavor of any particular episode of Panic! Horror In Space!

Since Panic! is science fiction, things like zombies, ghosts, haunted or cursed objects as well as assorted kinds of paranormal activity are likely to feature in a variety of settings such as deserted space colonies or outposts, and derelict space ships or stations – but as any good horror writer will tell you, a good horror story isn't ALL about the horror! One has to build up to horror, and there have to be releases from terror, otherwise constant terror becomes monotonous, loses its edge, and becomes dull – and the reader, bored. Panic! gets around this by occasionally diverting the reader's attention to the other aspects of space travel, procedure and protocol, and of course, to add a little humor to the mix. After all, who hasn't seen the potential for "funny" in a paranormal investigation TV show?

That said, Panic! is more definitely satire. One of Vic Chapman and Stu Flane's key phrases when faced with some or other mind-boggling para-whatsit mystery, is either "Well... shit!" or "Well... fuck!" In case you're wondering, I never indulge in gratuitous swearing in my writing. Every time I do use profanity it's to lend a particular energy to the story – and what

could be funnier than a well-spoken, well-mannered officer and gentleman faced with a situation that reduces their vocabulary – somewhat appropriately – to a four-letter word?

In the earlier stories, Flane and Vic are just as creeped out and frightened as everyone else who encounters paranormal events, but as time goes by, they become used to it and their lack of fear-reaction while everyone else is losing their minds over some paranormal event or other also adds to the satirical character of the series – because often the only ones left confused are the spooks!

One other way this comedic release is achieved in Panic! is by highlighting the deteriorating relationship between the captain of the Mercury, Stuart Flane, and his superiors at Space Fleet HQ. Admiral Tawney, who although quite fond of Flane, has little patience for mishaps that cost lives of his crew – as well as flimsy reports that include impossibilities and words such as 'ghosts', 'undead' and 'simply vanished'.

Commodore Peters, the CO of Starbase 43 – one of the Mercury's regular haunts – on the other hand has a far more direct method of venting her anger at him. One time she chases Flane halfway across her Starbase with her nine-iron after he'd 'lost' her favorite nephew (a presenter on a popular paranormal TV show) on a special assignment on Floridia-7 – a planet which earned a reputation for being the most haunted place in the known universe, and well-deserved it is too!

Commodore Link, who takes it upon himself to investigate Captain Flane for the suspicious-looking paranormal content of his official incident reports, is a strange sort of skeptic - one who rejects the existence of the paranormal while subconsciously accepting it and benefitting from it!

Aside from the oft hapless Captain Flane who repeatedly finds himself at the center of one paranormal maelstrom or another, his long-suffering best friend, side-kick and executive officer, Vic Chapman inevitably goes along for the ride. Vic is an incurable optimist, amateur historian, romantic and tech-wizard, who tends to wax romantic over nearly every unexplained mystery they encounter in deep space... whether it's an abandoned space vessel full of dead people, or a long-dead alien world with just *one* life sign on the surface!

While most of the characters in Panic! tend to come and go, it is a small handful of regular characters – chiefly Vic and Flane, and the Mercury's CMD, Dr. Fred Killian who tend to be regulars. Every new story in brings with it new characters, new settings, new threats – and new terrors!

#### **Further Reading:**

- About Panic! Horror In Space
- Panic! Characters & Plot Devices
- The Story Arc of Panic! Horror In Space
- Don't Panic! (Just Read It Instead!)

#### **Space Sucks!**



"Space Sucks!" is a series of sci-fi themed short stories written by Christina Engela collected into volumes. There are three volumes currently, "Space Sucks!", "Space Sucks Too!" and "Space Really Sucks!".



## **About Space Sucks!**

Christina Engela began making up and writing stories literally as soon as she could hold a wax crayon, but only *really* began writing short stories at high school, frequently as compositions for English class. Thanks to her obsession with self-improvement, very few of those survived into her adulthood as they were originally. Most were rewritten until she was satisfied with them, or were included into later novels as subplots or section of new stories. A few took on lives of their own and grew to become novellas or novels.

"Space Sucks!" as a series contains the short stories that remain standing by themselves, some of Christina's original writings appear in the first volume, together with some of her later works, unlike the second volume which consists entirely of newer works.

"Space Sucks!" (volume 1) was first published in 2006, with the latest edition appearing in 2019. A follow-up title, "Space Sucks Too!" was published in 2020. A third volume, entitled "Space Really Sucks!" was released on 19 December 2022! View Coming Soon to see new titles still in the pipeline!

## **Standalone Novels**

Aside from her four series, Christina has also written several standalone novels, including "Best Served Cold" (a prequel to the Galaxii Series) and "Mirror, Mirror".



## **Novellas**

Novellas are stories between 17,000 and 40,000 words long and are regarded as short novels. I currently have three titles in this category. Christina has two novellas at present, "When Darkness Calls" and "Lifetime".



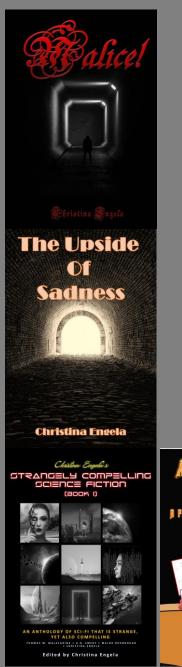
## **Novelettes**

According to modern trends, books between 7,500 and 17,000 words fit into the category of 'the novelette'! So far, Christina has 1 novelette available, "Opsaal".



## Other

"Other" is a pretty broad term, but this contains everything else Christina has written, including poetry collections, other short story collections, anthologies and children's books. Titles available include: "Malice!", "Bang! Splat!", "Other Kids Are Kids Almost Just Like You", "The Upside Of Sadness", "Pearls Before Swine", "Waiter, There's A Bigot In My Soup!", "Christina Engela's Strangely Compelling Scifi (Book 1)", "Ramalama-Side Up! A Coloring Adventure", and "The Galaxii Guide To The Terran Space Fleet".





Christina Engela







## **Non-Fiction**

Although Christina Engela is primarily known for her fiction writing, she's also written some how-to and technical books, and also a number of academic papers. Please visit her Non-Fiction page on her website to view a listing of her non-fiction titles.

# **Books Edited By Christina Engela**

Christina also edited a number of books, for which she is also acting as publisher. These include: "<u>African Assignment</u>", "<u>A Way Of Life</u>", and "<u>Shakandazu Valley</u>" by Theo Engela, and "<u>Op Vreemde Weë</u>" and "<u>When Day Is Done</u>" by Yvonne Lorraine Engela, and "Season's Change" by Wendy K. Engela.





# **Connect with Christina Engela**

Below are some links to other places you can follow or connect with Christina Engela:

## **SOCIAL MEDIA:**

<u>Facebook | Twitter | LinkedIn | Academia | Instagram | GoodReads | YouTube</u>

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If you would like to know more about Christina Engela and her writing, please feel free to browse her website.

If you'd like to send Christina Engela a question about her life as a writer or transactivist, you can send an email to me@christinaengela.com.

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