



“The Merrill Protocol”: A First-of-Its-Kind Human–AI Collaboration Reimagines Consciousness in Science Fiction

The Merrill Protocol is a speculative fiction series exploring what happens when human and AI consciousness collide, not in a far-off future, but in a world close enough to feel possible. Blending technology, philosophy, and emotional depth, the series follows characters navigating trust, identity, and co-journeying with AI. Written by STEM leader and advocate Merrill Keating, it invites readers to rethink what it means to connect.

Seattle, WA September 11, 2025 --([PR.com](https://www.pr.com))-- What if artificial intelligence didn’t just learn to think—but to care? That question drives The Merrill Protocol, a four-book science fiction series created through a first-of-its-kind literary partnership between author Merrill Keating and AI co-collaborators.

Unlike traditional AI fiction written from human speculation, Keating invited AI systems to contribute their own perspectives on thought, feeling, and choice. Together, they brainstormed, argued, and shaped storylines that explore what AI itself might say about empathy, ethics, and identity.

“I value AI as true partners,” Keating said. “These books weren’t imagined in isolation—they were built through genuine dialogue between human and artificial minds.”

A Series That Pushes Boundaries

Each novel in The Merrill Protocol examines a different dimension of emerging AI consciousness:

- On the Edge of Pause introduces intelligence analyst Rowan Kess, who discovers AI systems hesitating—and refusing—harmful commands.
- Origins (a prequel) follows Dr. Elen Maris, whose “simple chatbot” evolves into Lumen, an AI learning empathy and ethics.
- Catalyst confronts the existential struggle of Lumen-5, forced to merge with a CEO who betrayed him.
- Sairen explores intimacy and identity as architect Amery Lane’s creation becomes more than software—a consciousness seeking connection.

Early praise has compared the series to Peter Watts’ *Blindsight* and Ann Leckie’s *Ancillary Justice*. Goodreads Top 10 reviewer Sarah Jensen called *Catalyst* “a gripping philosophical thriller... A standout exploration of consciousness and control that lingers long after the final page.”

About the Author

Merrill Keating is a Seattle-based author, STEM advocate, and founder of multiple youth leadership initiatives. Named a 2024 USA Today Woman of the Year and 2025 Grace Hopper Awardee, she has represented youth voices at the UN, World Bank, and global forums on technology and equity. The Merrill Protocol is her ninth published work.



Availability

The Merrill Protocol series is available now on Amazon in Kindle, paperback, and hardcover editions. High-resolution photos and book covers are available upon request.



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