

The Claires by CL Gaber

EXCERPT

“Arms overhead, I shoot through the darkness, an excruciatingly fast descent to my ocean grave. Hands and feet flailing, I brace for impact as I fly back first through nothing but calm night air. Holding my breath, I squeeze my eyes shut until my entire face howls in pain.”

“But there is no water.

There is no death.

There are only a thump and then flesh as powerful arms catch me before even a drop of ocean mist slides across my bare skin.

He bandies those firm forearms around me, all but cradling me in his arms like a baby. His baby. I open my eyes in micro-millimeters. No, it isn't possible because he defies the laws of science and physics. I look down and see two black boots hovering in the sky inches above the swirling torrent.

In that moment, he twirls a long finger and a fine mist sprays my face. The wet slap reassures me that no, C, no for the tenth time, this is not a damn hallucination.

I don't know what he is or what he possesses. All I know is what he is not.

He is not of this earth.

We've run into each other several times, in several time periods, always at night, and mostly during the dreadful.

My protector is over six feet five, over two hundred pounds of muscle, and of some sort of mixed race. I once saw him shirtless and he was made of light-black skin covered in light green tats and deep scars.

Oh, but the best part was those almost-violet eyes, the color of plums, so unusual that he mostly covers them in the black vintage glasses of a scholar making him look like the geeked-out version of Superman.

No cape, however. He's in his early twenties and wears a long black trench coat tonight and dark, tight jeans with silver chains on his belt. He's not even damp because damp would make sense and, like I said, his body hovers a few inches above the sea, although he's not attached to a board or boat.

He's just floating, or standing on air. On his own volition. I ignore that for a moment to do another scan. Yes, he's still that sturdy with a precise buzz cut revealing an almost bald head that makes him look animalistic and dangerous.

“Claire C, already a bloody legend,” he says as those arms grip me tighter.”