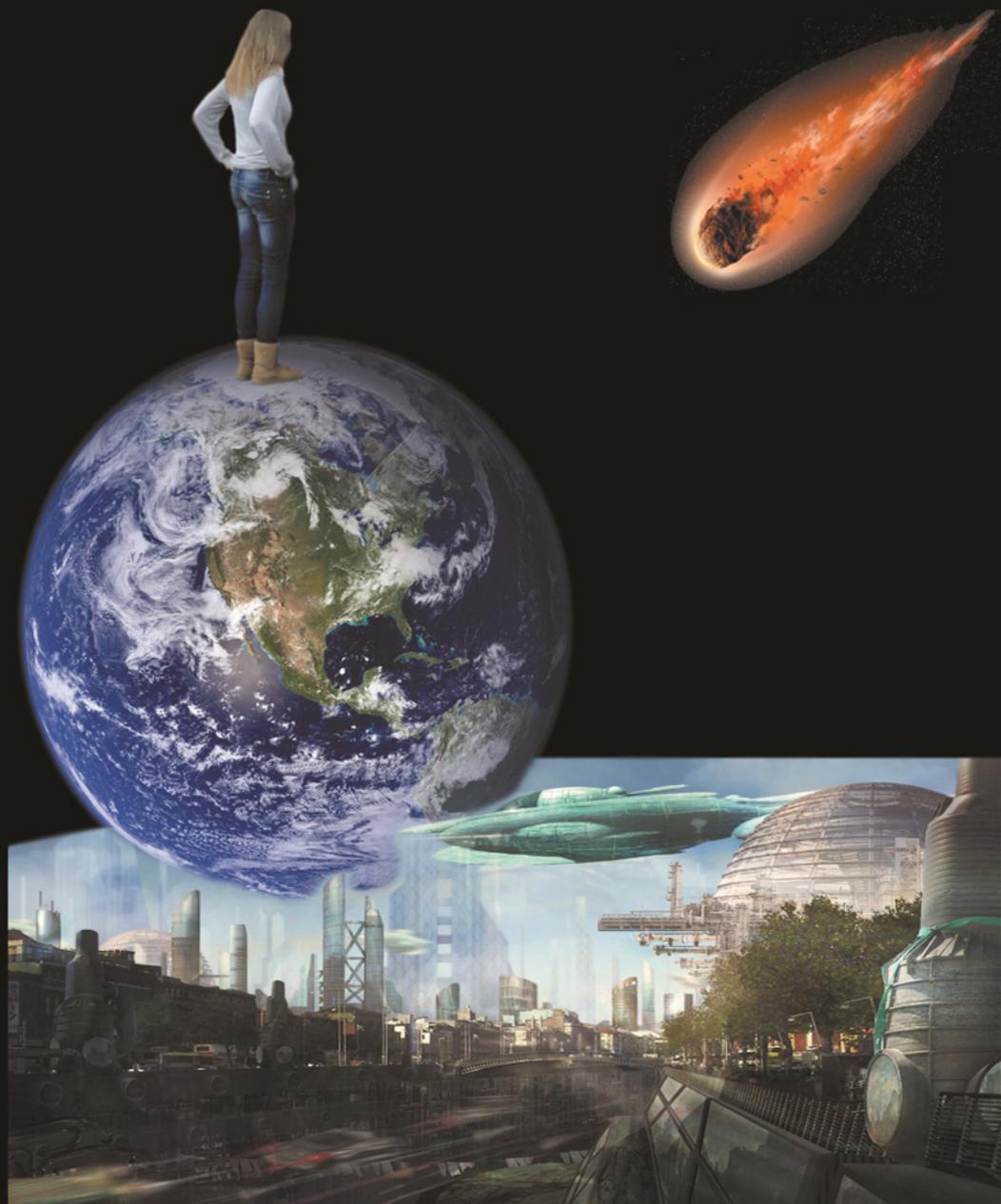


Sara's New Realm



Reba Rymers

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Chapter One

Hawaii was the perfect place for a honeymoon—an exotic paradise in a secluded resort. The crystal blue ocean and the blue sky met on the horizon and blended into one, just like the newlyweds, Sara and Matt Sames. Their bungalow accommodations were ideal for two people in love, and the privacy of the surrounding high vegetation allowed them the privilege of being isolated from other guests. As they headed down the beach toward their very own man-made lagoon, with the golden sand glistening at their bare feet, Sara and Matt couldn't keep their eyes off of each other. Hand in hand they walked, immersed in their newfound passions, while the beauty around them went unnoticed. The air crackled between them. Matt wasn't used to this intensity, and, actually, neither was Sara.

Suddenly the imp in Matt came to life as he blurted out, "I'll race you to the water."

So much for romance, thought Sara, amused at his abrupt change of attitude. She knew why he had done it, though. Their emotions were climbing skyward, and he thought of something to change their direction and to keep from giving in to them. After all, didn't they have to take advantage of their vacation time? *Then again, got to hand it to him,* she thought. *I couldn't think of a thing other than . . .* Sara shook her head, as it dawned on her: *He just challenged me to a race.*

“Um, there’s something I have to tell you.” Sara smiled at Matt, lighting up her big, light brown eyes. Matt, at six feet, two inches, had long legs and a medium build and could easily beat a five-foot-six-inch person, but not Sara. Of course, he didn’t know that . . . yet!

“Oh, don’t tell me you have an excuse not to race me?” he asked playfully.

“No, it’s not that. It’s . . . well . . . you know I’m a little different from most people, right?”

“Yeah, so . . . you can’t run?” he joked.

Sara looked at him, pretending to be stunned. “What? Who? Me?” She gently poked her chest with her index finger then switched it to his chest. “Tell you what—you stand right here.” She bent down and made an *X* on the sand. “And I’ll stand right here.” She indicated a spot next to him. “Okay, now I’ll bet you that before you take a third step I will have gone to the water and back.”

“Impossible. That’s a good thirty . . . thirty-five feet away, at least.” He slowly pointed to the water as if measuring the distance from where they were standing.

“I’ll prove it. Are you ready?”

“Yeah,” he replied unbelievably, as they both took a running posture.

Sara called out, “Ready . . . set . . . go.”

She ran all the way to the water and returned as Matt was about to put his foot down to take a third step. She stopped in front of him, not even panting from the run.

Matt, with the help of Sara’s strong hands on his biceps to keep him balanced, stopped. “How?” Blown away by Sara’s running ability, he questioned what he saw. “Wait a minute, you couldn’t have been to the water and back that fast. Did you just turn around while you were next to me and stand to face me?”

“Look at my feet,” Sara simply said.

Matt looked down at Sara's wet feet, his blue eyes widening at the sight. Not only did she get her feet wet but also her legs and blue bikini. Even her hair, sparkling with droplets of water, looked more windblown than before she ran to the beach and back.

“Okay, I'm convinced.” His quizzical mind started working. “When did you first realize you could do this?” He took her hand, led her back to their cushioned lounge chairs, and handed her a towel.

Standing next to her chair, Sara dried herself off. “Thank you, you're so thoughtful. I knew there was a good reason I should marry you.” She tilted her head, smiled brightly at him, and then continued. “When I was in school and we had to run laps, I could run a lot more laps than the rest of the students without getting tired. I'd pass them without anyone knowing, and I'd finish at the same time they did so as not to raise suspicion. Somehow, I didn't think it was something anyone should know.”

“Does your mother have an explanation for the things you can do?”

“Yes, she tells me I'm one of the chosen ones from a long line of powerful ancestors. There have been others, but according to family records—which I've never seen—none were as powerful as I'm getting. I say 'getting' because I'm young and have a lot to learn. I inherit different abilities each day. I don't know what's going to happen next, which reminds me: There's something I'd like to ask of you, Matt.”

“What's that, my love?” He lovingly held her hands in his.

“You're more mature than I am. I've been sheltered most of my life and don't know the ways of the world—not that I want to be like everyone else, but since I am different I may not fit properly in certain areas. I need you to guide, teach, and advise me. Be my life partner.”

“When you ask so nicely, how can I refuse? There’s nothing I’d like better than to be by your side for always.” He embraced her and kissed her gently. *Oh, how I love this woman.*

Matt’s kisses made her dizzy and her knees buckled. Her arms around his neck were all that kept her upright. She recovered in a couple of minutes, ready to go swimming. “Good, now let’s get in that beautiful water.” Sara took his hand and they continued walking.

“Sara,” a voice called out.

Sara recognized the voice that had been with her since childhood. She stopped walking.

Matt, wearing a wide grin, stopped too. “What’s the matter? Change your mind? Want to go back to our room?” He wiggled his eyebrows.

“No. Rowena is here,” Sara said softly.

Matt didn’t say a word.

“Good afternoon, Rowena.”

Before they married, Sara had told Matt her secret about having unusual powers. She warned him about times like these when suddenly strange things might happen. She also told him about Rowena and how she was her main spirit guide.

“Sara, your assistance is needed,” Rowena said.

“But I’m on my honeymoon. Can’t it wait?” Sara implored.

“I’m sorry, little one. Your assistance is needed immediately. The Earth may be in imminent danger. We need you to find Dardo.”

“Who? Why? Wait a minute! Why don’t you know where he is?” Believing the spirit world knew everything, Sara was surprised they didn’t know his whereabouts, whoever *he* was. “More importantly, why is the Earth in imminent danger?”

Matt, suddenly alert, tightened his grip on Sara’s hand.

At that moment, a fine mist started to gather in a small whirlwind formation—widening and picking up speed in colorful hues. In an instant the form of a lady appeared to Sara. Up until now, she had never physically seen Rowena and had only communicated mentally. She was more beautiful than Sara imagined.

Rowena wore a long white gown with a V-neckline embellished in rainbow colors. The gown had billowy princess sleeves that, together with her long, wavy, platinum hair, flowed gently in the breeze. A crown of multi-colored flowers adorned her head. Her youthful valentine-shaped face had a straight nose, high cheekbones, a high forehead, and large green eyes, and her slender body of medium height was maybe an inch or two shorter than Sara's.

"Oh!" Sara exclaimed in awe. "Could you please let Matt see you too? After all, he is my partner for life."

Matt, who stood frozen next to Sara, came alive at that proclamation. For an instant, he looked away from the misty kaleidoscope and smiled at Sara. The vision unfolded slowly. As Matt became aware of her presence, he dropped down, and Sara pushed the image up with her index finger.

"Thank you, Rowena," said Sara.

Matt smiled sheepishly. Rowena liked Matt and smiled at him. "Ah, yes, the story of Dardo Durnford," she said.

Sara and Matt were grateful that Rowena floated down to be at eye level with them, while she still hovered in the air.

"Dardo is the son of a human mother, Rachel, and an extraterrestrial father, Ramedon, both now deceased. Ramedon was a great hero who saved his people by bringing them to Earth when their planet was about to collide with another planet. Dardo is extremely intelligent so he was not sent to school among the humans. He was taught by the Sians, his alien species, and

homeschooled by his mother in the ways of humans. About two years ago, he made a request of world leaders—those who knew about aliens residing on Earth—to state publicly that aliens live among earthlings. He wished to have all nations of the world accept alien species as cohabitants of this planet, to allow them to live openly as neighbors rather than hiding, as they have for so long. He claimed earthlings were ready since the aliens had been here for centuries already, and more people were becoming aware of their existence. The world leaders promised to present his request to the rest of the leaders and convince them he was right.

“This gave Dardo much hope, but instead of presenting the request, the leaders talked among themselves and decided it was still too risky for humans to discover a secret that had been so well guarded. They figured it would cause a major panic, which was not acceptable. Needless to say, Dardo was very disappointed. That, we suspect, may have triggered his evacuation plan. We don’t know. It’s been two years since we heard from him. It’s as if he vanished from the face of the Earth. We need you to find out what he’s up to and report back to us or take care of the problem when you meet him. You’ll know what to do. From what we’ve heard, he intends to convince alien species that there is another planet more suited for them on the other side of Jupiter, but the atmosphere there is not good for all the species and some could die.”

Rowena paused for a short minute, then added, “I know Dardo, and this doesn’t sound like him at all. We don’t believe the rumor is true, but if it is, we need to know why he needs to remove all aliens from Earth. If it’s not true, we need to know who is really behind this and why.”

“But how am I supposed to find him?”

“Go to your bungalow and there you will find your instructions. There isn’t very much time in which to find him. If

the rumor is true, we're guessing it'll take at least a month for a mass exodus, but we could be wrong; it could be sooner. Once the evacuation of all aliens is complete, we fear the Earth will be destroyed. If the rumor is not true, we need to know who is spreading this terrible report before panic strikes. Sara, if he intends to destroy Earth, you must find a way to save it. You may have to search all the alien colonies."

"Uh . . . how many colonies are there?" Sara asked, not really wanting to know since she knew there were several. As much as she didn't want to admit it, the whole thing was scary.

"I don't know exactly, but perhaps you won't have to go to all of them. I mean, they may spread the word for you."

Matt was taking it all in as questions kept popping into his head. *Do aliens really live here with us? I've always known about spirits, but aliens . . . and different species of them . . . oh, man!*

Rowena continued. "Your instructions will show you where to start and help will come to you in different forms wherever you are." Rowena started fading away. "Oh, I just remembered, he has a twin brother who took permanent residence among humans. His name is Quinton. Good-bye for now."

Rowena disappeared, leaving a trail of sparkling mist. Sara and Matt stared at the voided space, not knowing if they should stand, sit, or go. Finally Sara sighed and said, "Here we go, my love." She turned to face him and put her arms around his neck.

"What do you mean?" Matt asked, putting his arms around her waist, even though he had a good inkling she meant another adventure. At least this one he could share with her so she wouldn't have to face danger by herself like the last time.

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