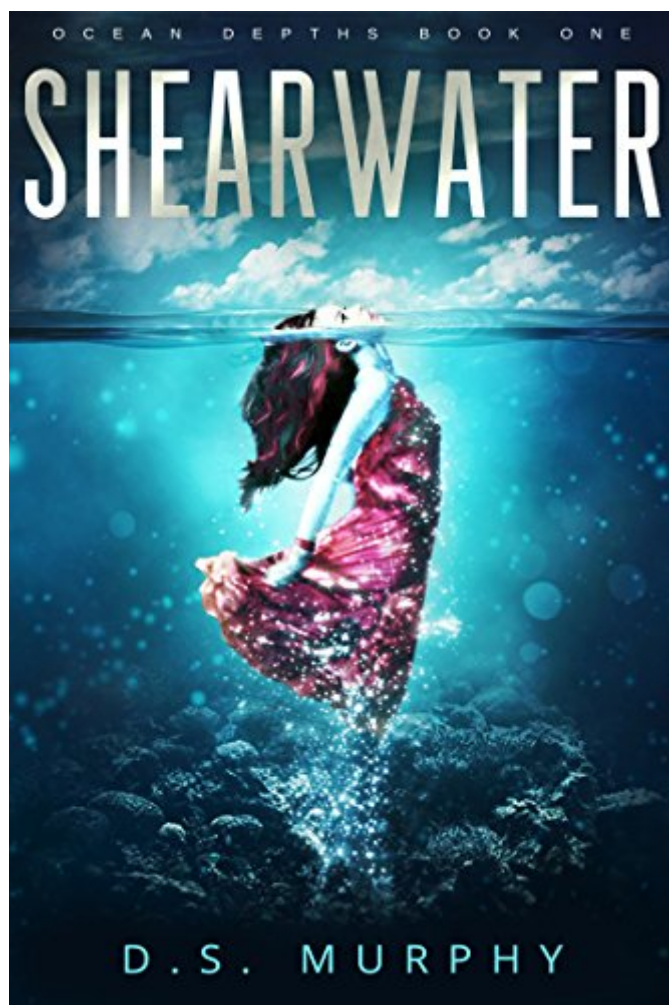


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Shearwater: A Mermaid Romance (part One)



Synopsis

“It’s like The Little Mermaid for adults. I couldn’t stop reading.”

When my parents died in an accident, they left me like a piece of furniture to a grandfather I never knew existed. In Ireland. As if moving halfway around the world wasn’t bad enough, I soon learned my mother had left behind some unresolved drama - dark secrets that were screaming to be uncovered. And then there are the things I can’t explain. Strange things keep happening around me. Happening to me. Is it because of Sebastian, the golden-haired stranger who showed up in town at the same time as I did? Or Ethan, the kid locals whisper plays with dark magic? Maybe both. Maybe neither. But someone is definitely out to get me, and I need to figure out why, and fast... because I’m discovering powers of my own. Powers that I can’t contain. And no matter what I do or who is to blame, if I don’t discover the real reason my mother fled Ireland, more people are going to die. MERMAIDS ARE REAL. And they’re going to kill us all.

“Not just another Twilight” even though we do have sparkly mermaids instead of sparkly vampires. But the story itself is well told and the characters act and respond like real people instead of cardboard cutouts. The mystic premise of the mer-people is even almost believable in the context of the Irish coastal culture, and the interactions between the characters are more encompassing than just the make-believe of the story. Although it’s written for young adults, as a mainstream adult I found the story entertaining and readable, and even subscribed to the author’s site to get the next installment as well as his other books.

“The author’s writing and editing is impeccable, and his research is substantial. I feel like I’m at the exotic locales described. His backstory and science behind the mermaid phenomenon is solidly explained and more than adequate to suspend my disbelief. The author also presents a lot of this backstory as not an info-dump, so kudos for that.”

This is "Part One" of the full book - you can get the full book for free on my website.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Fifteen year-old Clara Clark seemed to be having a normal, happy life, though she could be a little self-centered, nevertheless she enjoys the things she loves especially singing. Then on the night of the school recital with her big solo tragedy strikes and her whole world is shattered when her parents are killed in a car accident on their way to the school. In a flash life as she knows it is turned upside down as she finds out her mom had lied about her past and Clara has a grandfather in Ireland. With him being her only living relative she is sent to live with a stranger in a little town called Portballintrae. Determined to find out the truth and why her mother left Ireland Clara begins to peel back the layers, finding out more than she could have ever imagined. Murphy has not only an amazing way with words, but also a great attention to detail. The storyline is so descriptive its as though we can feel every heartbeat, every tear becoming a part of Clara. We can't help falling in love with the little town in Ireland wanting to fly away there. Yes, clearly this is a YA fantasy about mermaids however, with such an unusual twist this novel is not just for young adults.

I somehow missed that this is only part one of the FIRST book, even though it clearly states it in a few places on here. I wouldn't have started it if I had known that, as it was pretty disappointing to have the story cut off right in the middle when things were getting good. However, the author promises to send a free copy of the finished version to those who sign up for his newsletter. I've got to hand it to him--it's a pretty risky move! But I like that he is requesting feedback on this much of

the story. In that spirit, let's continue....

Dislikes:-Not enough description of actions. This is probably my biggest problem with the book. I kept wanting to say, "show, don't tell!" For most of the book, the MC just tells us what she's doing or feeling, instead of letting her actions show us. For example: "I crossed my arms and stood in a way that suggested they would have to crate me up and ship me there against my will." While this is a nice sentence, it is one example of many instances where the reader is force-fed conclusions about what is taking place, instead of letting us come to our own conclusions. This alone almost caused me to stop reading, but after re-reading a few positive reviews, I forged ahead.

-The insta-love. I don't think I have ever found an instance where it has worked convincingly, and the same holds true in this story. Attraction and infatuation are feelings that can happen instantly, but what I saw in the book suggested it was more than these that developed. Attraction to the point of stalking a stranger, even for their "safety," is not healthy.

-The Bella effect: when a new girl moves to a town and picks up loyal friends, enemies, and multiple suitors in the course of a few days.

-The digs on Christianity, and religion in general.

Likes:-The mystery aspect. This is what kept me reading, as I had to know who was to blame for what, and whose hand would get stuck in the cookie jar. I feel this is a great blending of two genres.

-The fresh take on mermaids. I was really excited to discover the new take on mermaids--both physically and historically. I like the meshing of history that went into this tale. I also like the different elements the author brings to mermaids (or marrow, as they call them) that gives them interesting anatomy and abilities.

-A somewhat level-headed main character. While I did question her decision-making abilities a few times, I found the main character to be compelling. I feel she still has a ways to grow, but I like her spunk and courage, even in the face of tragic loss. She seems very realistic.

Overall, the book was interesting, and the murder mystery combined with the mermaid aspect is what will drive me to seek out the complete book when finished.

I wasn't sure what to expect from a YA novel about mermaids, and to be honest, it is formulaic, but I enjoyed it so much I read it nearly straight through. It's not perfect; there were a few typos here and there, but then there are in print books from major publishers as well. What matters is that I got caught up in the story and wanted to know more about the world of the merrow. The conflicts are real, in the sense that people are getting killed, and the mysteries are intriguing. The only frustration is that this is only Part 1, and I'm not sure how long I will have to wait for the next installment or whether there will be only a Part 2 or more segments.

SHEARWATER by D. S. Murphy is an unusual e-book offering in that at the end of this Part One the

author provides a Note to the Reader wherein he describes *“this is basically just part of the whole story”*. There follows an explanatory expansion on this statement and an offer to *“Sign up here to get the full book when it is ready.”* Additional offers follow. The book itself begins with a Prologue set in Ireland 32 years ago where a young woman, dying from a knife thrust, in an unearthly voice accuses a man of *“destroying the human race”* as she kills him with supernatural power and speed and drags him with her over the cliff into the crashing sea below. The first chapter then opens in America in the present day. Fifteen-year-old Clara Clark is warming up backstage in a high school auditorium. As only a sophomore she is the star performer with a solo expected to be delivered with sufficient competence to interest numerous critics. She is disgusted that her parents have not yet arrived to witness her singing performance *“unusual for her always prompt mother.”* Even worse, her anxiety gradually is rising as she still manifested symptoms of a childhood separation anxiety which earlier had been considered possibly severe enough to need therapy. Thus her mother’s punctuality served as her security blanket. (She is unaware that they have been killed as their Acura smashes through the guardrail on highway 99 into the ravine killing them both.) She begins the performance, equates totally with the audience and finishes the song beautifully even though before finishing two police arrive at the back of the audience and she suspects the worst has happened. The family of her friend Beth, her friend since early childhood, takes her home and she remains with them until the AZ state children’s department decides that, with no living relatives here, she must go and live with her grandfather, Aedan Daly in Ireland. From this point the reader is introduced to a most intriguing tale because Clara knew nothing of such a person, her mother always having used the name Branna Bishop. She arrives in Ireland, meets her helpful and understanding grandfather, is enrolled in high school, begins making friends and enemies and an engrossing tale of very ancient history and mysticism begins slowly to evolve. Discussion: This is a tale that develops gradually in a captivately told manner by a storyteller who informs the reader that *“All of the historical research, mythology and geographical locations in this book are real.”* The author finishes his presentation most charmingly with a note that he is working on a dozen novels that, if you like mermaids, vampires, etc. and unusual settings, he will *“make every book available for free to my followers.”* Followed by: *“Sign up here.”* The author also provides a list of books dealing with the subject of this one for interested readers because the subject *“has a lot to offer.”* Conclusion: A fascinating look at

a paranormal romance situated in a land where leprechauns and mystical happenings lurk in every corner and ancient history is part of life.

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