

*Inter-dimensional beings are monitoring humanity. Quantum is an outcast from their race who is stuck in near human form alongside the humans, including a superhero who is driven by the passage of time and an anti-heroic woman whose powers have gotten the attention of covert agencies. Meanwhile a genius has to protect the world from his knowledge.*

## **RISE OF THE MOMENTS EFFECTS**

by Carl L. Gabriel, Jr.

**Order the complete book from the publisher  
[Booklocker.com](https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/10572.html?s=pdf)**

**<https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/10572.html?s=pdf>  
or from your favorite neighborhood  
or online bookstore.**

# RISE OF THE MOMENTS EFFECTS



A Novel By Carl L. Gabriel, Jr.

Copyright © 2019 Carl L Gabriel, Jr.

ISBN: 978-1-64438-109-0

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.

Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., Bradenton, Florida, U.S.A.

Printed on acid-free paper.

All characters and events of this book are fictitious, although certain characters are loosely based on real persons and endearingly presented with the highest level of respect. For other characters, any similarity to real persons, living or dead, is coincidental and not intended by the author.

BookLocker.com, Inc.  
2019

First Edition

## CHAPTER ONE

### *The Slap*

---

SMACK!

Never before in the history of mankind's existence, or many existences, had this smack been heard or felt. Indeed, it was powerful enough that it cemented the course of this man toward such a level of maturity and an appreciation for life that it would only resound in exactly the same way for seventeen full life cycles, never once veering eschew. Eight witnessed it.

Even so, never once did it come as a true surprise to anyone who was within proximity or to even the most aloof in awareness. Daniel earned it in his youthful vigor. He earned it the hard way: by deceit and the immaturity that could be considered trademark for young men who are discovering the power of self and charisma.

Confidence had never been a problem for him, thanks to his specialized training and to his stern lineage. It was like a spigot that had been turned on, and then had the handle removed to eliminate the possibility of someone turning it off. He embraced it, if only for a moment, and that set the latest chapter in his life into high gear.

Eight remained emotionless, although the natural curiosity of his kind caused him to watch every nuance of this youthful human's blossoming. Silent and unseen, he recorded. Formless and untouched by time, he absorbed the scene as a fly on a completely mirrored room, from all angles and perspectives.

Daniel had met Sheila nineteen or so months earlier during a party held at Schroedinger Hall, the university's entertainment mecca during the fall session. He was almost twenty years old and heading into the final year of his walk-up to a Master's degree, earlier in life than most of his peers because of his propensity toward overachievement. She was two years older, and was already set to finish her degree, as well.

Needless to say, they were a good fit, intellectually. It was an added bonus that they had grown up across town from one another, and subtle irony that they would become so close so quickly even farther from their hometown. They sometimes surprised themselves with the people and local favorites that they had in common, even in ignorance.

Socially, however, they were as awkward as pre-teenagers at a school dance. While both of them were adept at making friends, she was given to a more exciting crowd of people, which often went against the grain of his disciplined outlook on associations. This led to several arguments that opened the door to strong opinions on either side of the issues it

presented over the course of that first nineteen months.

Even during winter and spring breaks in sessions, they made it a point to keep in close touch and even join each other for visits to either of their family and friends back home. It was during their last break that they decided to go separate ways to enjoy family gatherings for the Memorial Day holiday. It was partly because they had been distant as they focused on finishing up finals for the year, but it was also because they had chosen not to go into the summer with negative energy bouncing back and forth between them. The bottom line was that they felt the need for space.

Patterns emerged before celestial eyes as Eight observed him and as other Eight observed her. No judgment was offered, in either case, as the purpose of this interaction was simply one of observation, at this point. The next cycle would provide more of an opportunity for tracing and reconciling for similarities and differences. After all, every Moment is given to the task of intended purposefulness towards that end.

This slap began long before as the two found discord in this journey of so-called love and self-inflicted angst. Sheila longed for the intimacy of their relationship, but was often tugged in the direction of outward vindication of her feelings in the eyes of her peers. Daniel hoped for the right way to please her in order to keep her appreciating his place in her life.

Time apart could not have come at a better or worse time for the people they would soon become.

Daniel arrived home prepared to answer the questions about why Sheila was not to be joining them, but no one seemed too intent upon finding out, to his mild surprise. The relief was apparent as Eight observed, and Johanson, Daniel's father, with a quizzical look on his face, noted it to himself. Daniel sheepishly pretended to ignore when his father glanced behind him to see the vacant space where his girlfriend usually appeared. Instead, they embraced and after simple pleasantries, they moved out of the foyer into the kitchen where his mother awaited them with apron and oven mitts on. He rushed around the kitchen island and hugged her, pecking on each the other's cheek.

"Honey, where is Sheila? Is she going to make it?" she asked as she looked around him, then into his eyes.

She saw the answer, but chose not to pry.

"Nah. Her family is having some special visitors, so she went home, this time," he responded.

She nodded, and then she let it dissipate and dismissed herself back to her food preparation.

"I am really glad you made it safely, honey," she said as she turned away with a smile in her eyes.

"Would not have missed it, Mom," Daniel replied.

Johanson pat his shoulder and led him into the den. After what seemed a long few minutes of inertia

moving past the issue of Sheila's absence, they started discussing Daniel's martial arts instructor, Master Ming Young, who had recently taken ill.

"Well, Son, since his wife passed on, he has been a little broken down and those of us he considers family have been doing what we can to keep his spirits up. Still, I think he is at a point where he is just a little tired," his father explained.

"That's really too bad. I could tell that he was not quite himself the last few times we spoke, even though he made a few jokes. I will drive on over to visit with him, tomorrow," said Daniel.

"Good. That should lift him up a bit. You know that Master Young has always been pretty proud of all of your accomplishments; almost as proud as me and your mother," said Johanson with a smile.

Again, he pat his son on the shoulder, this time more heartily. They sat down in front of the television, although neither Daniel nor his father was a devout sports fan. It just seemed the thing to do as they settled into his return home for this visit. The smells of the cooking food floated on air conjuring holidays celebrated and long since past. Eight seemed to have every one of them as key factors in Daniel's family interactions.

The next day, Daniel took the drive to visit his old friend and mentor, a distinction held by Master Young by both father and son. When he arrived, he was greeted by Janice, who was one of his former classmates. She had stayed local to complete her



college education and further her training under their Sifu's tutelage.

"Hey, Stranger!" she gushed, reaching to wrap her arms around his neck, fully catching him off-guard.

He embraced back, and then adjusting her clothing, she turned to lead Daniel to the door to their master's apartment door. The two of them had always been fond of each other, but protocol and life never permitted them to engage as budding teenagers, despite the obvious attraction. Now did not seem an appropriate time to consider the possibility, so neither of them broached the subject.

There had been a restaurant at the front of the building, but when Master Young's wife took ill, he decided it was time to lease the space to other commercial tenants. It worked out that the arrangement covered all of their living expenses, so he focused most of his time and energy toward her care.

Janice, still beaming, opened the door after a light knock to alert the master of their entry. As the door opened, Daniel could see Master Young's smile bursting forth as he started to stand. He rushed over to hug his master, pouring his sympathy and his adoration into the old man's wilting frame, both their eyes welling with tears. Unsaid condolences rendered, they indulged in conversation about how either was faring.

After an hour of repartee, Daniel prepared to depart and Janice came back from preparing a meal for her elderly teacher in the adjacent kitchen. She served him

a plate and offered Daniel a helping for a second time, which he denied as earlier.

As he left, she walked him to the outer doors to see him off. They hugged, and out of seemingly nowhere, they kissed. While it was not a torrid, earth-shaking kiss, it was enough to stun them both. Still, it was not truly a surprise. It was more like an overdue trial connection that they had never dared initiate. Maybe it was the circumstances, or perhaps it was the pent up emotionalism of the day that made them strive to encapsulate the deep connection they shared by way of this journey. As they separated faces, they regained composure and said their goodbyes, promising to keep in touch.

In his observation, Eight saw it play out, instance after instance. He could have predicted it. This mechanism of “time” would do its part, and Daniel would be the actor who exercised his improvisational muscle toward the ends that the universe would accept and allow him.

The summer saw plenty of Daniel and Sheila missing each the other’s telephone calls and letters. They managed to connect for a meal or two during the weeks spent in the same town, and seemed to be doing just enough to keep calling themselves a couple.

Eight noted that as the distance grew between them, Daniel’s attention expanded to enjoy the company of his old friends, mostly females. Although the least platonic thing that occurred was that one kiss, it was the impetus that prompted Sheila’s ire.

Other Eight would likely argue the same in Sheila's case, and they would both agree that the young people were reaching another level of their appreciation for relationships.

As it would happen, one of Sheila's old classmates noticed Daniel during one of his outings. She heard about it and confronted Daniel. One of Daniel's associates saw Sheila at a party, and that came to his attention.

"You know what," she said to Daniel during an argument, "See who you want to see. It isn't like we are married or anything."

Daniel took offense, although he dared not mention the kiss, especially in the wake of that argument. After calming down, he began to realize that there were choices they would soon have to make regarding their mutual comfort as a couple. There would have to be certain compromises, if they were to remain in this relationship for the long haul.

Also, he considered that there might be fewer battles to be won or lost if he opted to be more flexible, letting her have the lion's share of social terrain between them. After all, it seemed a bigger deal to her to be able to orchestrate that part of their interactions.

"Choose your battles wisely," he often heard during the incessant replay of conversations in his mind with both his father and his Kung Fu teacher.

Here was the opportunity to make use of that wisdom, although he could scarcely figure the next

step, most times. Life would still have its own way of working things out, and he learned to give in to that eventuality, after he had completed his missteps.

This seemed like an easy one, because as soon as he did back down, she seemed happier with him. By all appearances, it seemed to be working. Yet, it began to grate against his sense of self, over time. It got to the point where anything she did would annoy him, even if only slightly.

It came to a peak one night during a double date with Sheila and a couple of her friends from one of her study groups. As they sat at their regular table at the local two-star restaurant, appetizers arrived. They had discussed pet peeves early during their courting phase, and it seemed that tonight found them mildly pushing each one the other's buttons.

Daniel thrummed fingertips on the glossy red oak veneer tabletop to the rhythm of the ambient Latin Jazz music piped in over the well-tuned sound system. Sheila ignored it, at first, but in the middle of a sentence found her hand resting on top of his, stilling the percussive accompaniment. She shot him a harsh head tilt and a glare, first into his eyes, then toward his stilled hand. He sheepishly grinned and took his hand from the tabletop.

Sheila, on more than one occasion, interrupted the conversation when he was expressing an opinion, even going so far as gesturing that he was boring them to death. He had been trying to fit in, for her sake and

for his own, and it seemed she was trying to belittle him despite the obvious effort.

Back and forth, they went, as her friends noted the growing discord, and as Eights separately tracked. By the time the entrees were tabled, they were speaking in monotone, sparse sentences to each other, if at all. As they ate, they avoided eye contact, and they could have made it through had it not been for the sound.

“Smeck!”

It was seldom, but it was definitely there.

“Smeck!”

It instantly brought to mind the many times when one of her brothers would eat so audibly at the dinner table that she would invariable yell for her mother to make him stop it, often comparing them to a herd of cattle on a grassy pasture mowing through grain.

“Jesus, Daniel! Would you please stop that? You sound like a friggin’ farm animal,” she said with an exasperated look on her face, slapping the table.

Her friends froze in place, eyes darting toward the heated duo, then at each other. Daniel slumped back and looked aghast at Sheila.

The recorded moments finished with them outside at Sheila’s friend’s car. It was there that they found themselves in a heated discussion about their both being truly unhappy with the other’s possible indiscretions over the summer, both real and imagined.

It was at this point that Daniel went errant beyond repair. He mentioned that while he did have the opportunity to find himself happy with someone he knew wanted him as he was, and proceeded to suggest that maybe she should appreciate that he chose her. Sheila called him on it.

“I would not be surprised if you two made out, if she is she is all that right for you!” she yelled.

His face went blank, just for a second, and before he could gather his composure, she read him. He felt her eyes read every paragraph of his guilt, and even though she had embellished the scene, the pages had been firmly laid to print. She was in sync with momentous flow as Eights recorded this first harmonious track towards humanity's history.

“SMACK!”

## CHAPTER TWO

### *Her First Time*

---

As Julia walked from the house with her brother in tow, she looked back to see their mother looking out thru the screen door.

“Come straight back. And Joe, mind your sister,” she yelled as the kids skipped along, turning back to acknowledge her.

“Okay, Mommy,” hollered the boy, already intent on having a fun trip to and from the local corner market.

Julia rolled her eyes as she cinched his little hand just enough to reel him in closer to her. Along the way, they would happen to pass by her classmate’s house, by Julia’s design, of course. She walked into the front yard and ran up the steps to the front porch.

The screen door was closed, but the door was cracked and she could hear the sounds of girls inside at play as she reached for the doorbell. Joe stood at the bottom of the steps looking about as a squirrel for some fanciful notion to catch him.

“Who is it?” came the first response, as two girls appeared.

“It’s Julia, Mama!” yelled back Carolyn, beaming as she saw her best friend.

Under Carolyn's armpit, another little face came forth, grinning fully despite snagged-teeth.

"Oh, hey, Antoinette," said Julia.

Antoinette broke through Carolyn's barrier, already espying the small boy waiting at the bottom of the stairs, and already eager to trade childish barbs.

"We're going to the store for my mother. Wanna come with us?" asked Julia.

Carolyn ran away from the door to ask for permission, and was promptly back to the door, unlocking the screen door.

"My Mama said I can go, but I gotta take my little cousin with me. Okay?" Carolyn said, halfheartedly.

Julia gleefully accepted the terms in favor of spending a little time with her friend.

"Okay! Let me get my coat and stuff," said Carolyn, losing her faux frown.

Antoinette had already jumbled herself into her coat, looking every bit in the haste she was in for adventure. Every other button was either missed or misaligned to the wrong buttonhole, so Carolyn stopped to help her correct them, stooping to get to the lowest ones.

Just then, Joe ran to the chain link fence, pounced and held on to it like one of his favorite superheroes.

"Oooo," exclaimed Antoinette with widened eyes over her cousin's shoulder, "He's just like GeckoMan."



“Joe, get down!” yelled Julia to the boy.

Carolyn snickered as the deflated boy dismounted, and Julia, once again, rolled her eyes and shook her head.

As soon as her coat was set right, Antoinette darted to the bottom of the stairs, jumping herself onto the fence. Joe, observing the new party to his private foray of superhero fantasy, paused. Then, Antoinette looked at him from her hap-hazardous perch. Done analyzing her, he unfroze.

“You gotta hold your foot like this,” he said as he jumped back into the fence, taking care to exaggerate his foothold for her benefit.

The new hero-in-training took heed, fixing her foot into a more stable position.

“Like this?” she asked.

Joe sighed. Then, he dismounted and used his hand to move her foot. Julia and Carolyn had made their way to the gate and beckoned for them to come along.

As they walked down the street, little heroes tethered by hands to their elder caretakers, they buzzed about with games of mimicry and cartoonish banter. The pavement became stratosphere, and the sign posts the skyscrapers that pierced the clouds. Every fallen branch became a potential laser pulse collider beam thrower or a sword, depending on the heroes’ needs, in the moment.

The journey completed, the two girls entered into the front gate of their home. The cat and mouse

escapades of the little heroes ended without much fanfare, but with such appreciation for the interplay that they parted with grins. It was obvious for them both that the adventures would probably continue for years to come, cliffhanger after cliffhanger.

Julia and Carolyn tittered about, saying fare-theewells that would last them until the next school day found them joined at the hips, again. Fortunately, it would be the next morning, but any observer would never have guessed based on the dramatic, yet humorous scene.

Eights recorded them all. Moments of several designations all about prepared for eventualities that would possibly present themselves. The universe, with its palette prepared, sat ready as its blank section of canvas beckoned.

The next morning arrived and Julia awakened to her mother and father at her bedroom door speaking in hushed tones. She thought it was a little weird, but attributed it to another morning of parental concerns that they, as children, might never be enlightened about. It was not until her mother walked into the dim room to her bedside that she thought otherwise. Her silhouette was framed by their father's solemn stature as he stood outside the door in the light of the hallway, his head hanging low.

Eight recorded as the mother talked slowly and emphatically to the little girl, whose eyes opened very

widely before welling with tears. She had been sitting up with her mother sitting on the side of the bed facing her. Her mother's hands, which had been softly perched on either of her shoulders, encircled her as she toppled forward into her arms sobbing deeply.

Joe had awakened, and from his bedroom door, he could see his father standing there as he heard Julia's muffled crying. He could hear his mother in very sorrowful voice consoling his sister. He did not understand why he found himself suddenly so saddened, but he knew there was happening something very painful for his sister, so he did. His father noticed him peeking through the doorway and they glanced at each other, but did not encroach. Instead, Joe ran out to his father and they just hung onto one another.

In the adjacent room, the television was on, although the volume was low. The news broadcaster made her report into the camera:

*"Repeating this tragic breaking news: This morning, the fire department responded to a residential fire alarm at Thirty Five Forty Seven South Wabash, where they found the house fully engulfed in flames. They found the residents, two women, ages thirty-two and twenty-eight, along with two young girls, ages eight and five, all unconscious. Paramedics were unable to revive them, pronouncing them all dead at the scene.*

*The apparent cause was a space heater, which somehow sparked a fire and quickly burned thru the*

*house, the heavy smoke asphyxiating them all as they slept. Very sad news on this autumn morning, indeed."*

Joe's father drove Joe to school on his way to work, but Julia stayed home, as did her mother. Julia and her mother occupied themselves that day discussing anything that Julia wanted to talk about, and finding ways to help the little girl deal with the loss of her dearest friend, up to this point of her life.

They decided that a personal memorial of some kind would be a good way to do that, and Julia went to work writing a poem and creating a collage dedicated to her friend. By early afternoon, she and her mother laid down together for a nap, although only Julia slept.

A swell in the Universal Fabric pulsed. At the scene of the tragedy, a mysterious figure appeared, and Eight observed with vibrant curiosity.

*Why was I called to this place?* She thought, as she observed and recorded.

The figure was a woman wearing a shining white gown, flowing in the air as if on wind. She descended into the rubble of the burned-out house carcass and knelt to grab a long, slender shining cylinder with holes in it.

As she touched it, it sparked and disappeared, the woman along with it.

## CHAPTER THREE

### *Fluxation*

---

It was during the twelfth iteration of Earth's journey from nothingness to elegance that Quantum found his errant manner. Eight, Once Errant had begun to make handy work of his transition to deeper understanding of humanity, which was his charge and purpose.

As he struggled with the lower senses, all tactile in nature, Quantum could hardly help but feel heavy laden. For his people, the same amount of effect could be caused in a state that was far too ethereal for a human or other physically tethered creature to observe or experience, naturally.

Here he was, however, wrapped in a fleshly casing that hindered his every inclination to be who he had been, natively. Here he was, indeed, living their limitations if only they could elevate themselves beyond their petty mechanisms and their many mental obstructions, laid out like obstacle courses since before they were even infants. It was, to put it mildly, a handicap that bore down to the very soul of him.

As he took his first steps, he flew. His first breath taught him all about the world he had been observing for the millions of years he had looked on and recorded. It was not unlike the process of diving into a

swimming pool for the very first time, and he found it strangely invigorating and perplexing as he adapted.

Furthermore, this baptism into yet another level of comprehension, albeit lower in form, raised Quantum's appreciation for things such as the physical sciences which governed so much of humanity's thinking. Although he was not prone to the fullness of their effects, at this point, he had seen the cycle of the human's body of information propel forward with wanton disregard for their earlier understanding for almost twelve cycles, counting this one. It was like watching a tree expand ring after ring over time, only it normally occurred without the concern for time in the consciousness of beings like Moments.

There was an inherent beauty in its elegance. When he recalled the previous iterations, including memories interlaced by his interactions with Eight, once Errant, now Eight, again, it rang deep within his mind that this temporal prison was akin to more of a training camp.

The truer challenge for him would be in the finding that purpose which would occupy the years he was calculated to be engrossed as such he was. He had pronounced himself 'Quantum', and was now living with the burden of a name. That, itself, seemed to lighten the weight of the bewilderment that haunted his new person.

Still, he could not easily walk in the shoes he had made for himself. Because this was new territory for

Momentkind, he found himself pioneering every step of the way. The idea that a self-monitoring, relatively autonomous being could even exist in the order of grander themes was foreign to him, that especially because of the somewhat fractal design that sometimes made the universe seem chaotic.

What did hold true was the maxim that all that suits the Universal Fabric is made allowance for. If a thing or concept has a purpose, that is to say, it will be provided the opportunity to show and prove or disprove. Here was a clear instance of that happening, in effect.

Even in the previous eleven iterations, none of which allowed for him to be birthed as he now was, the span of time's very limitations had remained intact. Quantum knew that purpose had to be the underlying vein that allowed the lifeblood of this adaptation. Likewise, he knew that all would have to be set right for the continuation of his duties.

Over the millennia of his purposeful existence dealing with humankind, he had occupied the life and times of several hundred people. As he catalogued and recorded their momentous occasions and events, he had been largely immune to the clutter that was emotions and physical limits. Now, however, he found new impetus in the challenge of having to deal with such frivolities.

On this day, as he walked about, he could feel the vibrations of life on the street around him with each footfall. It felt to him as it might to a human stepping

onto a metropolitan train platform, feeling the growing rigor of an incoming subway train. He could feel the thrum of pregnant motion giving birth to disturbance in the atmosphere around him, the air itself trembling as the wind around a leaf on a limb would.

The lights that trailed and trimmed his frame as a Moment dimmed and became more embossed along the surfaces of his outer skin. They appeared as an indelible variation of architectural relief, only softened to a whisper like some time-worn plates along the walls of an archaeological site. For the first time, he could see through eyes that were limited to the lenses that adjusted to interact with light rather than the cosmic view that had always experienced the worlds through.

All of these experiences bolted into his pronounced body, creating layer upon layer of tension and fluids, each coming about to facilitate his successful adaptation to life among these living beings and their environment. He felt something as they completed their cycles of creation. It was an even heavier feeling than before, only it was accompanied by a resolute sensation within the anchored extremities of this body. He was tired. He closed the lensed portals, and his central eye opened as he observed himself alight. Then he quieted.

The morning sun began to rise, and he felt a warmth on the top of his shoulders that began to trail down to the small of his back as he stood there. He



felt a gust of external coolness funneled in through his face and rush down into the central column of his body, filling it. He opened his ocular lids and saw a reflection in the window that he stood facing. The sun created a silhouette that was laced in fiery golden light, barely capturing the subtle edges of his embossed skin.

Although his skin appeared somewhat an indigo color, it remained almost invisible to the surrounding world, as their eyes could not see his frequency. At best, the rats that happened nearby could detect his presence, but did not care since he did not appear to be food. As a Moment, this would never have been possible, but something in his new makeup allowed incursion into the realm of animal sensation, although not with humans. He pondered this for a short time, and then he moved on to more present matters.

As his first experience of sunrise came about, he catalogued a sensation of subtle warmth at the outermost layer of his new skin. Through the membranes that covered his physical eyes, he could detect the change of hues from orange tones to blue tints. He took a deep breath, infusing himself with warm air and particulates from the surrounding area. He observed a metallic taste on his pallet, and as he processed it, he correlated it to facets of his vast knowledge of chemistry and biology.

The streets were not yet abuzz with the noises of humanity's daily rush, but Quantum could already feel the thrum of infrastructure in preparation for their

onslaught. He moved along as their sparse numbers became the few, then they became several. By the time the sun crested the horizon, the silhouette of the skyscrapers on the horizon had betrayed its brilliance with gilding along their many edges. He paused to appreciate the subtle burn into his memory.

Somewhere between the façade that was his outer projection of skin and his ethereal core, he could feel a sense of euphoria. It caused him to search himself, further, this time in hopes of placing it in perspective from an experiential position.

As he stood there, transfixed, the world about him polarized its aspects of life. The shadows became more pronounced, and those who resided in those nether regions of this society began to post themselves in places that guaranteed a steady flow of potential contributors to their various causes.

Quantum had been barely visible until this time, but as he watched the hustle and bustle of people on their ways to the daily excursions into duty, he quickly figured that he should prepare to eliminate the chance of unwanted discovery. Noting the apparent invisibility of the vagrant humans still piddling away in the nearby alleys, he decided that should be his core presence, as far as they were concerned.

Over his time interacting with humanity, particularly in the modern ages of his recorded memories of mankind's class disparity from the experiences of the low-bred, he had learned the best ways to purport himself in this current situation. Any

Eight in his situation would have no problem assimilating, in fact. And so it was that his outward shell showed them what they were comfortable with ignoring. This would do, nicely, and would enable him to do whatever he needed to do under their very eyes.

Although time seemed to pass at an extremely slow pace, from his perspective, he was very aware that for these humans, there never seemed to be enough time. Yet, in this lower class that he inhabited, it was more troublesome because it seemed they were always unable to sate their basic needs. It weighed on him as he walked and stood among their numbers.

Several weeks passed, and the rhythms of the streets became the clock upon which he based his frame of reference relating to the world about him. He did not go out of his way to avoid interactions of any type, but as he watched the destitute begging for alms, it moved him toward greater occupation. He wanted to help, somehow.

This is what spurred him to begin imploring the passers-by for donations. Whatever he received from them, he would secretly seek a worthy recipient and donate his collections to them. They were never aware, which he felt was key to his continued invisibility. He accomplished this by stepping clear of his skin and depositing the goods somewhere in their belongings.

One day, as he loitered around a quiet intersection at the mouth of an alley, he saw one of his neighbors

standing and peering at him. Quantum knew that this human could not really see him for who he was, but the figure continued to stare for a long while. Becoming uneasy, he turned at another angle, leaving his skin in the same position as before. The human tilted her head in a quizzical manner.

Over the time he had spent here observing, Quantum had seen her, and he recognized that this woman was somewhat deranged. It was apparent from her gear and her mannerisms that she was former military who had gone through some traumatic occurrences and could not bring it all together to function with society's norms.

After a few moments, the woman approached him, shuffling in as direct a path as Quantum had ever seen her do. She was not intoxicated, and although the hair on her face belied her pretty features, she was an intellectual of high caliber.

She reached his proximity, and paused, staring and looking him over for a few minutes. Then, she stood upright and dropped her bags into a heap. Quantum turned his façade toward her. Stepping closer to him, she grimaced and squinted. Suddenly, she drew her arm back and swung a right hook to his apparent face.

It had such power that his body twisted around, and fell to the ground at his right. Quantum, in his essence, stood unmoved as this happened. He was so surprised that he grinned as he witnessed his skin separated by this woman's punch, and still toppled down at his feet. He looked at her through the eyes of

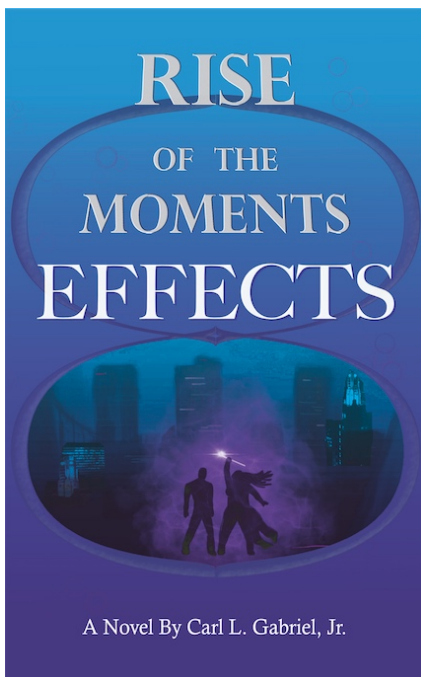
his shell, and she looked at him, grinning back and sternly shaking her finger at him.

He slowed his impulse to make the fleshly countenance stand too quickly, which would confirm her apparent suspicions that something was not as it seemed, here. Then, just as suddenly as she had launched her attack on him, she walked away tittering about as she motioned calculations enacted with her fingertips touching in seemingly random patterns.

Quantum continued to grin as he watched her walk away.

“Hmmm. Very interesting,” he said to himself as she disappeared into the depth of the alley, never once turning her eyes back to observe him.

“Very interesting, indeed.”



*Inter-dimensional beings are monitoring humanity. Quantum is an outcast from their race who is stuck in near human form alongside the humans, including a superhero who is driven by the passage of time and an anti-heroic woman whose powers have gotten the attention of covert agencies. Meanwhile a genius has to protect the world from his knowledge.*

## **RISE OF THE MOMENTS EFFECTS**

by Carl L. Gabriel, Jr.

**Order the complete book from the publisher  
[Booklocker.com](https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/10572.html?s=pdf)**

**<https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/10572.html?s=pdf>  
or from your favorite neighborhood  
or online bookstore.**