



## Dark Minds

*Michelle Diener*

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## Dark Minds Michelle Diener

The mind is the most powerful weapon of all . . .

Imogen Peters knows she's a pawn. She's been abducted from Earth, held prisoner, and abducted again. So when she gets a chance at freedom, she takes it with both hands, not realizing that doing so will turn her from pawn to kingmaker.

Captain Camlar Kalor expected to meet an Earth woman on his current mission, he just thought he'd be meeting her on Larga Ways, under the protection of his Battle Center colleague. Instead, he and Imogen are thrown together as prisoners in the hold of a Class 5 battleship. When he works out she's not the woman who sparked his mission, but another abductee, Cam realizes his investigation just got a lot more complicated, and the nations of the United Council just took a step closer to war.

Imogen's out of her depth in this crazy mind game playing out all around her, and she begins to understand her actions will have a massive impact on all the players. But she's good at mind games. She's been playing them since she was abducted. Guess they should have left her minding her own business back on Earth...

## Dark Minds Details

Date : Published July 22nd 2016 by Eclipse

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Author : Michelle Diener

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## From Reader Review Dark Minds for online ebook

### Douglas Meeks says

Well this is the third book in this series and I have loved them all. This one seemed a bit less but possibly because I am used to a few things from the other books. Since it was still a 4.5 Star story I just rounded it off to 5.

Imogen Peters might be a familiar name to you if you read the last book and it was mentioned as a name written in an empty cage. This is her story and it has many things that are different in her story so if you are expecting a carbon copy of either of the first books with a different name you will be wrong.

This is a much different story since much of it takes place without the benefit of one of the ships keeping her safe. The romance was nice but a bit on the light side since this becomes primarily a science fiction thriller with a side order of romance.

Bottom Line: I read it until I could not keep my eyes open and started it again the very next morning and read until I was done, could not put it down. The down side is this seems like the last book and I really was not finished with these characters yet. So 5 Stars, great story and interesting characters. Not much left to want, enjoyed it all.

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### Elizabeth says

#### Over too soon

Love action, adventure, romance, space battles, galactic power plays, heroines who rescue themselves and heroes that try to keep the heroines out of trouble without stifling their personalities or going all alpha?! This is a book and series you'd enjoy.

A very enthralling wrap up of the class 5 series. Imogene in personality and action is wonderful to behold. Cam provides a great counterpoint.

Highly recommend. Read it now then go back and read the first two if you haven't .

Warning: once started you won't want to put the story down until you've finished.

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### T00zday says

I loved this one's personality even before we got to meet her. Teaching the parrot how to sing that final song in The Life of Brian.

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## **Smittie says**

### **Imaginative and Immensely Entertaining Science Fiction**

This third book of the Class Five Series trilogy is just as imaginative and entertaining as the other two books, perhaps even more so. The story picks up a little before the second book with Imogen Peters being transferred from the planet Balco. Shortly afterwards, she meets Camlar Kalor, who is my favorite male lead character of the series. Paxe and Oris are the two remaining class five thinking systems, and the author developed each into believable characters. The author has built an incredible universe that is believable with just the right balance of attraction between the main characters and suspense in the well developed plot, such an enjoyable journey for me. The convergence of the trilogy main characters from space to Larga Ways was definitely a fun ride and provided an excellent ending.

I absolutely love this series. There is so much fantasy that is promoted as science fiction that it makes this series even more special to me. The only negative that I have is that the series has ended. I really hope the author writes more science fiction books, especially about the worlds and people that she has so well described and brought me as a reader to want to read more. All books are amazing and best read in order. I highly recommend this book and the series. Michelle Diener is a fantastic author.

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## **Stephanie (Bookfever) says**

Dark Minds by Michelle Diener in the third and final Class 5 book. I may have enjoyed the other two books slightly more, but I still think this was a fabulous book and a great way to end this trilogy.

This book features Imogen Peter, another woman who was abducted from Earth and Captain Camlar Kalor. They are thrown together unexpectedly as prisoners on a Class 5 battleship. When Cam finds out she's another abductee from Earth things get complicated and closer to war.

I've always loved the characters of these books. Imogen and Cam are no different in that. Together they made a good team and had loads of chemistry. The book was such a fast read. I went through it in no time, which seems to be always the case with a book by this author. I can't help but want to keep reading.

The writing as always was flawless. As far as science fiction novels go, the Class 5 books are my favorites for sure. I think I've said it before but Michelle Diener is so good at writing in this genre.

I also loved how Imogen actually found Rose and Fiona. I loved reading about them all together. The same goes for Dav, Hal and Cam as well as Sazo and Eazi.

Overall, Dark Minds by Michelle Diener ended this trilogy very well. I loved how good everything was wrapped up in the end. I'll really miss reading about the world of the Class 5 books. It was a great ride and sci-fi at its best!

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## **Kara-karina says**

4.5/5

Michelle Diener is certainly rocking this sci-fi series, ladies and gents! So far each book has been pretty awesome.

If you haven't read Dark Horse and Dark Deeds before, they are each about a human woman kidnapped as a specimen by Tecran race which just discovered Earth. There is this whole alliance of planets and races far, far away, and Tecrans built these 5 huge ships (Class 5) with illegal thinking systems in them, which in turn are trying to escape, and as it happens, the women from Earth who treat the thinking systems like actual human beings for a change, help them, and in turn are helped themselves to survive in this new world.

By book three, the two women previously found and allied to thinking systems are already known to all the allied races, and they are a force to be reckoned with.

Our first look at Imogen Peters, the heroine of Dark Minds, is when Fiona from Dark Deeds finds a trace of her in the cage where she was held and realizes that Imogen taught a parrot in the cage next to her to sing "Always Look On The Bright Side" from The Life of Bryan to stick it to her captors. If that isn't a glowing recommendation of a kickass character, I don't know what is!

Imogen is a music teacher who has been taken at the same time Rose and Fiona disappeared, and she is angry. She is determined to escape, and if it's not possible, then to go out with a bang not with a whimper.

So, when a thinking system contacts her asking for help, she does everything in her power to do it.

Like in the previous two books, there is a budding romance story arch here between a Grah captain, Cam, and Imogen. It's in no way overwhelming, and develops slowly enough that I find it believable and sweet. Otherwise the book is packed with action, sarcasm, and music.

Music plays a very important role in the plot as Grah are reverent of music-makers which are extremely rare (there are only four in the whole four Grah planets), so Imogen gets her share of adoration when she sings for Grah. They literally wouldn't hesitate to do anything for her. When Rose and Fiona join her in their rare musical interactions, Grah minds are blown, and it's hilarious.

I begged Michelle Diener to put up a list of songs used for every book in the series on her website, so we all can go to YouTube and listen to them, so click [here](#) if you want to do just that. Overall, this series is very well done and has everything I look for in my reading materials - strong women, plenty of action, believable not over the top romance, lots of humor and a great story. Highly recommended! Don't wait, go and start reading!

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**Dan says**

Quite good, I enjoyed the whole trilogy.

## Jane Stewart says

Ok and kept my interest, but weak on conflicts and plot.

I loved the first book in the series (Dark Horse). This is book 3. It's set in the same world with Class 5 battleships. An earth female forms friendships with two artificial intelligences running two battleships. They

have names. In this book Imogen meets Pax and Orace.

This didn't feel like a story. It was more about things happening in that world, meeting characters and going places. It needed better plotting somehow.

The Gree love to hear earth women sing. After Imogen sings for Cam while they are waiting, she stopped and wouldn't sing for him anymore. Her reason was she wanted him to like her for her, not for her singing. It's like the author couldn't think of a reason for conflict so she used that. It felt artificial and annoyed me. I remember Steven Spielberg's wife Kate Capshaw telling Oprah that the first thing that drew her to him was his film making genius. It made him hot/sexy. (This is my memory from many years ago and the quote might be off.) But just because someone likes something about you, you don't stop doing it. They were alone on a space-pod-thing traveling for many hours. What's wrong with singing a few songs that would bring joy to your fellow passenger? Sorry, but that just got to me.

A major climax scene was not well done. It was stupid. Heroine goes somewhere alone when she should have and could have taken others with her to help her.

**AUDIOBOOK NARRATOR:**

Christina Delaine was excellent.

**DATA:**

Narrative mode: 3rd person. Genre: sci-fi with a little romance.

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**Laura (Kyahgirl) says**

4/5; 4 stars; A-

I really enjoyed this light sci fi romance. There were good guys, bad guys, Intelligent thinking systems, space ships and lots of adventure.

I liked this book enough to go right out and buy the next two in the series. I wanted to check this author out and found I like her style. I would rate all three books the same.

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**Gavin says**

I loved this final book in the Class 5 series. I'm already lapsing into despair over the fact that I have no more books in this incredibly fun sci-fi adventure romance series left to read. This whole series was just my type of sci-fi. It was a character driven story with a good balance between the action, intrigue, romance, and humour.

The sci-fi world was a cool one. The aliens and societies were almost Star Trek like in nature, never a bad thing in my eyes. The Unified Council is made up of 5 member alien nations. It was a fairly stable society until the events of the first two books in the series occurred. Now the Tecron are on the verge of expulsion from the UC and the Garmin are under pressure to prove their own innocence in violating the Sentient Beings law. The Grah are preparing for a war with the Tecron that is looking ever more impossible to avoid as the two clash again and again over the Class 5 ships.

We were made aware of Imogen Peters in the second book in the series and this one was her story. She has been treated better by the Tecron than the Rose and Fiona were but that was more by luck than design. Things start to take a turn for the worse for Imogen when her Tecron captures vessel is attacked by Crik pirates. The Crik are searching for someone and seem a little more organized than normal. They have a volatile new ally who is searching for unusual aliens!

The story was a lot of fun. Imogen is just as likeable as the heroines from the previous books and over the course of the story we got to meet the final two Class 5 Thinking Systems. Both were very different to the three we had already met but despite a bit of initial worry I soon warmed to them.

Imogen's romantic interest Captain Kallor was a likeable guy and their romance was a fun one. Kallor had been on his way from Battle Centre to Logos Way to escort Fiona back to the Grah capitol and to protect her from harm when his ship was attacked and he and his crew were captured by the Crik. He is amazed to discover that the Crik are holding another human woman prisoner!

The story was very engaging and enjoyable. I loved how Imogen worked well with both Kallor and with the Thinking Systems and was equally concerned by both their needs and views. We also got caught up in more of the complicated politics of the region as Imogen and Fiona presence in the region is a massive blow to the Tecron who are on the verge of not just losing their remaining two Class 5 ships but from being expelled from the UC as well. Throw into the mix the fact that the Crik, the Garmin, and the Fellari are all agitating the Grah and it made for interesting happenings.

All in all this was a very enjoyable and engaging story. It was a fitting end to the Class 5 series and this final book was as much fun as the previous two books. After a bunch of sci-fi flops it has been great to discover a series like this one that has reinvigorated my love for the sci-fi genre!

Rating: 4.5 stars.

Audio Note: Christina Delaine gave a great performance with the audio.

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### **Ann Lou says**

More space adventure with a different heroine this time. Although, we get to read about the old characters, as well.

I am not really satisfied with the ending. I was like, is that it? What's their life going to be after living a year or more in space? Maybe I am just that greedy to glimpse more of their future.

Nonetheless, I enjoyed it like the others. But Rose and Sazo are still my favorite ?

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### **Linda says**

This is the third (and final?) book in Diener's Class 5 SFR series. The books follow three women who are

kidnapped separately from Earth and brought to a far-away galaxy in which several different alien species are playing politics and threatening conflict over five Class 5 spaceships that are run by AIs (artificial intelligences). But the AIs are more slaves than anything else and, with the help of the human women, they become self-aware and yearn for freedom.

Each book features one of the women, one or more of the Class 5s, and a hunky alien who bears a strong resemblance to a large and muscular elf. It sounds like the set-up for one of those smarmy "kidnapped by the alien" books, but this certainly is not so. Each story has a bit of a love story in it, but in most cases it is not the main focus of the book, and the sex is primarily off-page, so no prurient alien hanky panky.

Instead, the women are pretty tough, resourceful, and resilient, and their developing relationships with the AIs are as interesting as those with the various aliens. The substory of the aliens' reverence for "music-makers" (i.e. anyone who even remotely can carry a tune) makes for some entertaining episodes. The three books are intertwined, so it's best to start with the first.

Oh, heck. I recommend starting with the first and reading all of them. While one story arc is concluded in this third book, I believe there's a lot of potential for additional stories in this world. I only hope that Diener will gift us with more.

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### **Mei says**

[when poor Paxe self-destruct (hide spoiler)]

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### **namERICANWORDCAT says**

I love this series and this is such a great addition. Please, please let there be more books set in this universe.

I adore the philosophical questions being developed here about morals within the thinking machines. I think there are some interesting explorations of cultural stories that ingrain bias as well as some looks at gender at least in the human culture.

The heroine and hero have developed a real bond and love which is stronger than in the other books. I wish we got to see much more of the HEA which is my one complaint.

The action is great as is the world building and all the characters.

So very good! Read the series in order!

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### **Tammie says**

**Imogen Peters knows she's a pawn. She's been abducted from Earth, held prisoner, and abducted again. So when she gets a chance at freedom, she takes it...**

**Captain Camlar Kalor expected to meet an Earth woman on his current mission. Instead, he and Imogen are thrown together as prisoners in the hold of a Class 5 battleship. When he works out she's not the woman who sparked his mission, but another abductee, Cam realizes his investigation just got a lot more complicated...**

**Imogen's out of her depth in this crazy mind game playing out all around her. But she's good at mind games. She's been playing them since she was abducted. Guess they should have left her minding her own business back on Earth...**

This last book in the Class 5 companion series was on par with the others. Imogen and Cam where both likable characters, and we get to revisit the couples from the other two books. I liked seeing all three women interact and bond with each other, but honestly I didn't feel like there was much difference in the characters or story lines of any of these books. The most distinct characters where in the first book *Dark Horse*. Sazo and Rose are still the best characters in the whole trilogy. I just feel like maybe the author lost some originality after that and went on repeat a bit.

Here are some examples of how much alike these books are:

-The kidnapped women are all from earth. This in itself is not a bad thing, but they are not very distinguishable from one another to me. There were little differences in them, but not enough.

-They each end up developing a special bond with one of the A.I.s from a Class 5 ship, and this in turn sets into motion actions that are very similar in each story.

-The love interests in each of the books are also all of the same race. Each of these women fall in love with one of the Grah, a race that is very elf-like in appearance. I think it would have been more interesting if they had each fallen in love with someone from a different alien race.

-There is also this whole thing about one of the alien races holding music - singing in particular - as almost sacred in this trilogy, because few of them can actually sing themselves. That aspect came into play yet again in this book. When I finished the second book I thought it would be great if one of these earth women would end up being completely tone deaf and maybe they would cringe when they heard her try to sing, haha. Needless to say that didn't happen. What a lost opportunity, although the musical performance at the end of the book was nice. I often found the choice of songs they sang to be somewhat amusing and odd.

All in all this series was a mildly enjoyable, but mediocre read. If you like space romance and are looking for something light to fill the time between heavier reads then by all means give this series a try. It's not bad, it just skims the surface of being good.

Review also posted at Writings of a Reader

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