



In Darkness Bound

Christine Price

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Data Collection by Dalhousie, Dr. Donna L.

Patient 331

New, confused. Powers unknown.

Patient 289

No longer viable in the test pool, he remains in isolation.

Patient 77

Reclassified to staff status. Useful, malleable.

Confined in a sterile research facility and treated like a lab rat, Chris is alone and terrified. His special powers are his only escape, allowing him to psychically connect with other patients.

Alone in his cell for longer than he can remember, Vance is hungry. When newcomer Chris makes a mental connection, Vance is intrigued and wants more than just conversation.

Chris and Vance seek comfort with each other, and with Simon--the only staff member who's shown them a hint of compassion. Their relationships develop during stolen moments, and they turn their thoughts to escape. But as Dr. Dalhousie's madness spirals, more than cell walls threaten to keep them apart...

68,000 words

In Darkness Bound Details

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Author : Christine Price

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From Reader Review In Darkness Bound for online ebook

Gavin Stephenson-Jackman says

As someone who normally steers away from novels involving the paranormal I actually enjoyed this book. This is the second novel that I've read recently that has involved 'out of body' experiences and I found this one a little more believable. Chris uses his ability to make connections with other patients in the research facility that he's been abducted to. I think that I enjoyed this because it was not the central focus of the novel. The plot focused on the patients finding a way to escape the twisted research of a rather mad scientist. The paranormal was there, but was not the driving force behind the narrative.

Chris says

4.5 stars. Very good m/m/m paranormal romantic suspense that I **had** to read after reading *The Usual Apocalypse*. And maybe I was more forgiving of its faults than I might've been if I'd read it first, but it totally sucked me in and worked for me.

Bookwatcher says

[image error]

Mtsnow13 says

I loved this one. Just creepy enough to keep me on edge, and wondering what was going to happen to who!

The narrator did an excellent job, and I am hoping he is kept for the rest of the series. Great mood, intonation, pacing, and I think he does a great job at the different character's voices.

Reminded me a little bit of another sci fi/fantasy I recently read..not the historical one, but the other contemporary one that is setting up for a series.. 'Seven', it was called...

Anyway, seeing a theme here that I am enjoying with these strange, paranormal, experimenting 'Society' books. Guess I'll be keeping my eye out for the next in this series!

Some really cool twists and turns, and surprises throughout the story. And gotta LOVE to hate the wicked scientist...gotta be careful of those quiet ones!

Would recommend to anyone that likes a little creepy in their paranormal psychic, sci fi fantasies ;)

Note: For those of you leery of the 'ménage' aspect, well, it doesn't come into play until close to the end....The sex scenes are few and far between, as this story plays more on the suspense and relationship between each character than the smexin'. But, what there was of it was pretty 'hot'.

Tammy says

This was not a fluffy read!!! ?It was about paranormal, torture, survival, companionship and the love between three souls/men. It took a chapter for me to get into and understand the book but once I got it, LOOK OUT I couldn't get enough!!!! ? I listened to this on audio and the narrator Jack LeFleur did an excellent job!! Looking to download the next book ?

Jacq says

HAWT!

If you want exciting down a dark path this is it.
I enjoyed the ride!

Heidi Belleau says

Fantastic suspense and the cliffhanger ending killed me! I just wish there were more scenes to understand their dynamic as a threesome. I understood their relationships with each other on a one-on-one basis, but I was left unsure of how they fit together as a menage, sexually and emotionally.

Kassa says

In Darkness Bound succeeds as a thrilling urban fantasy story but fails at the romance. Urban fantasy fans will likely enjoy the familiar plot that has all the hallmarks of government conspiracies, torturous research, and love under duress. In many ways this plot is simply a re-tread of numerous other urban fantasy stories. It offers nothing particularly inventive or new in any way yet the fresh writing keeps the plot interesting even if well worn. The UF genre is littered with books rehashing the same plot, but this one stands out for the thrilling details and well crafted evil characters. In fact the dark side is so well done the heroes and their romance suffer. Yet for UF fans, this won't matter so indulge.

The story begins with Chris who accidentally kills his brother when they're kids. A typical bickering argument brings out Chris' psychic powers to devastating results. 16 years later Chris is abducted by a secret agency bent on horrifying research. Chris soon discovers two other patients, Simon and Vance, and their tenuous connection to each other may be the only thing keeping them all sane. As the experiments grow more erratic, all three men are convinced they must escape. At the same time, other agents of the secret society are working to find the missing young men.

Like I said the plot is nothing especially unique or inventive but the world building is very clever. It uses familiar elements such as the secret agency, evil doctors, and unique paranormal abilities and blends them all in such a way that creates a compelling, interesting story. The side plot of the other agents could have been taken out entirely since, while amusing to read, they offer nothing substantial to the outcome or the plot in general. The majority of the action takes place in the underground facility in very small, closed, empty cells.

There is no decoration, no warmth, no comfort and that stark isolation is a key to contrasting the emotions of the patients and the control of the agency doctor. This cold atmosphere is truly what I enjoyed the most about the book. The absence of distraction and an environment when raw emotions of despair, hope, love, need, and fear all become the focus. The range of emotions the men experience is what makes the story so compelling.

Thankfully the actual experiments shown on page are pretty benign. There are references to horrifying and torturous experiments in the past and threats of same for the future but most of this is off page and not seen. I've no interest in reading about a bunch of horrific experiments on people so I applaud the writing that can keep this threat real, imminent and alive without showing the actual events. The evil characters of the doctor, patient 66, and even the agency as a whole are nicely nuanced. Patient 66 is one of the best "shadows in the dark" fears that I've read in an urban fantasy book and he's used incredibly well. Sparing enough that he's still incredibly freaky and thrilling but with enough subtly that he's not overdone and laughable. He's scary in all the best ways.

Similarly the head doctor is not simply wooden and one dimensional but evokes some complexity. Less so since the dialogue and situations tend to dehumanize her but there are moments where she shows her reasons and becomes more than simply the evil stereotype. Unfortunately the heroes of the story falter more than the bad guys. Chris opens the story with great potential and bursts onto the pages so alive and brimming with personality. Sadly once Chris' main storyline, the death of his brother, is resolved halfway through, he becomes bland and a place maker. He is the essential glue in the romantic threesome but his personality slowly drifts away from the vibrant and wonderful start to something more homogeneous and less interesting.

Vance has a clever twist that I appreciated and liked his range of emotion the most. He shows an entire spectrum from love to despair as he struggles with his captivity. He's not given in, but he has real moments of highs and lows, more so than any other character. He doesn't necessarily grow or change in the course of the story but his complexity really drew me in. If only Simon had the same qualities. Simon is supposed to be the martyr of the trio; the one that sacrifices himself for the good of the other two. Instead he comes across as weak and cowardly, without any strength that's later attributed to him. I failed to understand why the trio would work or want to work as such – they come together well as individual couples but never quite gel as a threesome. This is compounded by Simon's weak character and personality. There is a later scene when Simon supposedly gains strength and control of his life but I didn't believe that scene at all. It felt too cliché and pat without any basis that Simon could actually accomplish that feat.

As a romance, *In Darkness Bound* pretty much fails completely. I could appreciate the emotion the various characters felt in couples – especially Chris/Vance or Simon/Vance and to a lesser degree maybe Simon/Chris – but as a trio it never materializes. Instead the real strength and focus is on the urban fantasy plot which shines and should please those fans.

Chibineko says

As always, I'm going to warn readers that the pairings in this book are M/M & M/M/M. If you don't care for pairings of this nature then this will probably not be the book for you. That said, on with the show!

Chris has always been different. He's been all too aware of that ever since his brother died when they were

very young- a death that Chris feels that his strange abilities were responsible for. When Chris is suddenly abducted & forced to take part in sadistic tests given by a doctor gone mad, his only saving grace will be found in two men. One is a patient with a strange craving. The other is a patient turned orderly, the only worker there with any portion of sanity & mercy. As the confines of the cramped prison as well as the influence of the doctor & a strange, evil patient begin to hammer away at Chris's sanity, it becomes all too apparent that the only way to survive will be to escape.

Believe me; I'm not giving the story premise justice. This book really does seem to have just about everything: mystery, suspense, sex, love, evil... it's all in here. There's a lot in this book that's enjoyable. Price does a fine job of making the reader guess as to what is going on & what will happen next. I have to admit that there were several parts to the story that I really couldn't predict, which I love. I love being surprised. Readers will also love that the interactions between the men flows so naturally between the two & the erotic scenes (which are short but explicit) do seem to fit with the surrounding story.

The only downfall with the story is that towards the end it just seemed to unravel a bit & as a result, lacked the punch I was expecting from it. I can't go into a huge amount of detail without spoiling it, but I was kind of expecting a little more of a confrontation between some of the characters & I was slightly disappointed that it never came. (I say slightly because the ending hints that there could easily be a sequel- lots of unfinished business at the end of this book!)

Overall though, this was an incredibly fun read that I gobbled down in a day & if Price does decide to return to this universe (oh please oh please oh please!), I'm definitely planning on tracking it down. I'm just curious to know more about this universe, the characters, & how the unfinished plot elements will be resolved in the future.

(ARC provided by Netgalley)

?♥? Michaelle ☙♥? says

4 Stars

Started off slow, seemed to wind and wend it's way nowhere for a bit...but once the story seemed to develop (with the personal relationships) it went a lot more smoothly. The narration helped (Jack LaFleur's voice is very authoritative).

I'd definitely be interested in the next one because what I thought was a PVS (if not death) for Brennan when he was a kid seems not to be the case at all...

Genre says

I love a good Urban Fantasy and when I saw this at Carina Press, I was intrigued by the setting and how the ménage romance was going to work.

Chris is a telepath who has hidden his powers all his life after accidentally murdering his older brother. He's

dossing his way through college by picking the answers out of his tutor's minds. When one of his tutors becomes suspicious it leads to Chris being brought to the attention of Dr Donna Dalhousie, who captures Chris and locks him up in her facility for testing. Whilst there Chris meets another prisoner, Vance, and they form a friendship which leads to more. Both men are also attracted to Simon, who used to be a patient but is now Dr Dalhousie's assistant. Within the confines of their incarceration, and despite the increasingly erratic behaviour of the Doctor, the three men plot their escape.

This book can be divided into two aspects: The world building and the romance between Vance, Chris and Simon. By far the best was the world building which managed to combine Urban Fantasy with a chilling contemporary setting. The book is set almost entirely in the testing facility deep underground. With almost zero chance of escape, and the constant supervision by the vicious orderlies, the setting was claustrophobic and at times a little bleak. I was therefore glad of the secondary plot involving a member of the 'Society' who is suspicious and begins to investigate Chris' disappearance from college as this provided a break from the dark facility setting.

What also saved the situation from being overwhelming was the characterisation, especially that of Chris who uses his time in the facility to stretch his powers. He uses his telepathy to astrally project himself and explores his surroundings. It's during this time that he is able to meet Vance and they begin to communicate. Chris' curiosity and his determination to find a way out of his imprisonment proves to be a catalyst, and his personality is the most well rounded and sympathetic out of the three men. I liked him a great deal. Vance was also a very interesting character, although out of the three he had least character development in the story. His weariness at being captured, and his bitterness about what he sees as Simon's betrayal does rather define him but he was still engaging enough that I liked him as a character. Simon was a little less well defined, and veers throughout the story between his misplaced duty to Dr Dalhousie, his upset over the way he has treated Vance and his growing feelings for Chris. I think Simon was supposed to come across as self sacrificing and noble, but unfortunately I saw him as rather weak and spineless. One thing that I did like was the portrayal of Dr Dalhousie who managed to be shown as professional, cold and insane, but with a streak of bewildered humanity about her. This set her apart from the usual 'mad scientist' character who crops up. She was still frustratingly chilling in her determination to continue her research at all costs, but her relationship with Simon and her feelings of possessiveness towards him made her more than just a cliché.

What didn't work as well for me was in the ménage relationship between the three men. As couples they did work. Vance and Simon have a history together before the start of the book, and the way that both Vance and Chris and then Simon and Chris are drawn to each other was realistically done. However, there is too little page time when the three men are together in the same room and I felt that in order for me to believe that they will work as a three I needed to see more than one short scene at the end of the book. There is a loose end left at the end of the book, and I wonder whether the author intends to write a sequel. If this is the case then I may feel happier about the ménage relationship after seeing the three men settle into it, but for now I wasn't convinced by the romance at the end.

Overall, I enjoyed reading *In Darkness Bound*. The setting was unsettling but also compelling and I raced through the book to find out what was going to happen. The relationship dynamics between the couples, rather than as a three, was a mixture of smoking hot sexual tension and also a tenderness which counteracted some of the brutality of the setting. I would recommend this book to all those who like Urban Fantasy and who want to read a well written, character based book with an unusual setting.

Mich says

So...An Angel, a Psychic and a Vampire walk into a bar...no that isn't right.

An Angel, a Psychic and a Vampire get abducted, drugged and jailed in a "research facility" for magical persons... ok- well, that is a little closer to the underlying storyline.

(unfortunately- the first one would have been way more amusing)

'In Darkness Bound' was what I like to call m/m "light." In my opinion, it was also very close to a YA type read. Suspenseful however, it was not.

That being said... This book isn't bad. It is a bit disjointed in parts. The author seemed to take every piece of current pop culture and smoosh it all into a couple hundred pages.

In short, A college student with psychic ability gets kidnapped and jailed in a research facility by a looney Doctor who wants to understand more about his powers (i think...?)

While in said jail, Chris falls for a Vampire (Vance) and an Orderly who works at the facility, and was once a patient there (oh, he has an angel stuck in him...i think?)

There is some back-story about an existing society of people with super powers, but that is as much info as I can really tell you.

'In Darkness Bound' was not really that well written. But, I did like most of the characters. I think I could be convinced to read Christine Price's next book in the series if 2 things happen. The m/m scenes are hotter, and the storyline is actually original.

2 1/2 stars.

Daniel Kaine says

You're probably looking at the cover and thinking you already know what this book is about... and you'd be about half right.

Chris Kincaid is studying veterinary medicine, but not because he wants to be a vet. No, it's what his brother wanted... his brother he accidentally killed when his psychic powers lashed out. Now he's 'cheating' his way through classes, picking the answers out of the professor's mind, trying to live the life his brother would have lived.

But things change when Chris finds himself in a tiny cell deep underground, at the mercy of Doctor Dalhousie, where he is forced to undergo rigorous experimentation. His only reprise comes in the form of a mental connection with Patient 289, Vance Damascus.

Chris and Vance find comfort in each other, and in Simon, Patient 77 and Dalhousie's assistant — the only

staff member who has shown them any form of compassion. As their relationship develops, the three men turn their thoughts towards escape, and they soon realise that there is more than just cell walls threatening to keep them apart.

Looking at the book cover you would think the book to be cheesy slash erotica — at least, that's what I thought. But truth is, the book focuses more on the romance than the sex, of which there are a few choice scenes. The plot is a basic rehash of the old clichés; human with supernatural ability gets abducted and experimented on, government conspiracies, evil doctors, love under extreme conditions... you get the idea. That's not to say that I didn't like the plot, because I did... a lot.

The setting of Dalhousie's research facility is dark and unsettling. While reference is made to sadistic tortures, what is shown on page is quite tame. However, the threat and memory of the experiments is still there, particularly with Vance. And then there's Patient 66, or 666 as the door to his cell says. This guy is creepy, to say the least, and he is used sparingly enough that he stays that way... a constant threat that skirts about the periphery. As for Dalhousie, she's cold, calculating and sadistic, but there's also a faint glimmer of humanity about her that sets her apart from the cliché mad scientist.

So, how about the three main characters? Well, Chris in my mind started out quite bland. From the start it's obvious he's not happy in his life and isn't going to make any move to change. It's only once he is abducted and meets Vance that we see his character start to develop. Vance probably has the least character development of the lot; but that's fine by me, especially if I can pretend he has an Irish accent (I love Irish accents). He's mysterious, sexy and... sexy. What? One sexy just wasn't enough. What he lacks in development, Vance makes up for in action and emotions. Simon, on the other hand, wasn't one of my top characters. Price tries to depict him as the martyr-type, but to me he came off as weak and a bit of a coward. It does improve towards the end somewhat, but I feel Simon's character could have been far better if he'd actually had a backbone earlier on.

Now onto the sex scenes. For me, when it comes to sex scenes, 'less is More'. Price, however, went for the fanfiction-style sex scene with some rather cringe-worthy phrases such as "tight pucker". Not only that, but there was an instance of conditioner being used as lube, to which I can only say this... NO! Have you ever tried using that stuff as lube? I hope not, because it wouldn't be particularly nice. Ranting aside, because I know I could go on forever about sex scenes once I get on a roll, despite the rocky start to the sex scenes they did improve, but never to the point where it really got me going. In fact, I'd say the hottest part of the book was a small section of dirty-talking by Vance, rather than any of the three sex scenes.

As for the romance itself, it's warm and comforting... a stark contrast to the cold, bleak facility in which the 'patients' are trapped. It's their hope, their light at the end of the tunnel... and also a weapon to be used against them. I'm not sure I would entirely agree with the way things end up, and this goes back to how I feel about Simon (he just feels a little out of place to me).

And finally, on the subject of how things end, there were a few minor loose ends that were left open. This bugged me, but also made me wonder if there might be a sequel in the works. I hope there is, because I'd be interested to see how the character's relationships develop further, and I really want to find out the answers to several questions I have.

Overall, an interesting read. If urban fantasy is your thing, and you're not adverse to some mildly-cheesy M/M erotica, then I would recommend this book. Would have scored higher, if not for the fact that the sex scenes were a little lackluster in my opinion.

Ayanna says

...what. the fuck.

Just when I think I figure things out...

Apparently, I missed the memo on the vampsies.

I really wanted them to come up with some kind of pretentious governmental mumbo-jumbo name for vamps and THEN have everyone ignore it and call 'em vamps instead. That would have helped cinch the whole thing a looooot better.

It could also have benefitted from more overt hints/clues before the whole vampy thing came out. Little things that you wouldn't really startle at but once the vampy thing came out, you'd be like "Oh, yeah. There was that part. And that part. And damn, I should have seen that coming."

Uhh...

Idk. There were a couple dangly bits, but overall, it wasn't too frayed.

Smokinhotbooks K.C. says

This blurb had me hook, line, and sinker and I was extremely excited to read In Darkness Bound. Most of the book takes place in a sterile research facility run by the vicious Dr. Dalhousie. Chris has been kidnapped and taken due to his psychic ability.

This story is full of tense moments and gasp out loud moments, which disrupted Mr. Smokin' xbox concentration (sorry hubs xoxo). Although this isn't a m/m romance I thought the action and suspense took center stage you didn't really notice or mind all that much.

There were a few things that had me furrowing my eyebrows in confusion. First off, was Vance. For about 2/3 of the book I thought he was just another male with special powers when in fact he was a vampire. Now, either I had a total blond moment and didn't notice but I felt that was confusing later on when Chris seemed to already know this about him. The second was the m/m/m aspect of the relationship. Don't' get me wrong my manlove motto is the more the merrier, but it just didn't seem to fit. Chris first desired Vance and when Vance shunned Chris to protect him, he turned to Simon, the misunderstood assistant to Dr. Dalhousie. Only to find out that Vance and Simon were lovers before, and due to a misunderstanding Vance has despised Simon ever since (KC pauses to take a breather). The threesome aspect just didn't work for me, especially since Simon was not brought in until almost a third of the book.

Final Verdict: In Darkness Bound is just the kind of book I like – full of suspense with a dash of manlove. Although I had some issues with the m/m/m aspect I still highly recommend this one for those you looking for something a little darker and might have you jumping at things that go bump in the night.

PS There is a creepy patient called 666 that eats people's souls--> Oh. Em. Gee!
