

DreaganDance Synopsis

The third book of the DreaganStar saga opens with Doctor Samantha Augustine under a psychologist care due to her experiencing paranoia, nightmares, and hypervigilance. She is at times unable to function due to her recent emotional and physical traumas. Now a patient of AshenGrey Rudy Rodrigues, Sammie continues to work as the official troubleshooter of the GreyTrade. Her psy-clinic still houses hundreds of homeless people displaced by the terrorist attack, as does Jon Dreagan's mansion. This disrupts their burgeoning romance. Their times together are limited to meeting during afterhours business meals or at Sam's apartment in the psy-clinic, late in the evening after their hectic 18-hour days.

Her body still healing from Abe Pardo's brutalities, Sammie's life spirals down as she encounters more TradeGrey undertakings. First, the DreaganStar's computer insists that she and Dreagan assist in burying the recently destroyed "lunar scooter". Sammie must find peace in the revelation that Dan'l Girdner is her biological father while monitoring the ongoing Genni Colony's negotiations. After arguing with Dreagan, She disguises herself again as iceminer Mia Samuels, and accompanies Patric on a transport full of homeless Lunans transferring to the safety of the Genni colony. This ship is stopped and boarded by Japanese Security Forces, who specifically seek out Samantha. They escort her to a cargo ship. Once there she becomes the prisoner of amoral drug dealer and mercenary, Tadao Morita, whose task is to delay Samantha's arrival in Genni.

After Morita doses her with a tainted street drug, Samantha endures the bad *trip*, and is helped by senior crewmember, Miyoshi Takashima who is later tortured for trying to contact Jon Dreagan for her. Later, when The *DreaganStar* arrives, Sam, Miyoshi, and a few loyal crewmembers escape to the lunar surface and onto Star, only to discover it is empty. Star takes them to Genni, where Samantha hurries to the Genni colonialization talks. Once there, Samantha accuses the leader of the Japan's delegation of kidnapping her. The conference adjourns for the day, and she retires to Dreagan's hotel room where he tends to her abused body.

The next morning, while Dreagan completes negotiations at the conference, Samantha goes clothes shopping with local JourneyGrey, Nikatta. Alone in a changing room, Samantha crumbles into a sobbing mess, struggling to breathe, while reliving the terror of Abe Pardo's murderous silver knife as it sliced her chest and severed the veins of her wrist. When she returns to Dreagan's hotel room, Sammie enjoys an in-room massage, and some wine. Before Dreagan shuttles her to Tranquility Colony for some R&R, he presents Samantha with a personal comm to wear, which she is reluctant to put on.

For the next several days, Samantha enjoys many museums, gambling houses, elaborate stage shows, and other entertainment of Tranquility Colony, as well as conversations with other vacationers. She also begins talks with Media Master Lloyd Mitchell to arrange a public service announcement for Earth to bring more women to the moon. Sam makes arrangements to travel to a Montana hunting lodge for week of solitude, and then she visits Mannie Oliver and begins psychological consultations to alleviate her PTSD with him. Sammie knows she must heal herself soon before her new assignment comes into play.

Meanwhile, Samantha's mother, Dana arrives in Proteus and moves in with Dan'l, giving Sammie's mixed emotions.

Dreagan and his starship return to Tranquility Colony to pick up Samantha, and Mannie Oliver accompanies her into the ship. During introductions Mannie Oliver slugs Dreagan, and then tells Jon that Samantha is his "Pearl of Great Price" and that Dreagan must be worthy of her love. Then Mannie quickly departs, leaving Dreagan to explain his long history with the saloon owner while he takes the starship out of the spaceport.

Once in route to Montana in Star, Jon asks Samantha to change her plans and accompany him again into space to investigate the strange activity they had seen during their previous flight. She insists that she needs to go to Montana. While they make love, Star takes control and maneuvers them into deep space. Dreagan soon admits that he has lost control of his starship.

During that 12-hour voyage, Samantha reads Sherlock Holmes stories, while Jon works on various on-board projects.

Arriving at the location where Dreagan has calculated they had seen an object in space make an 'unnatural' course change, he announces that the time had come to look for her aliens. They don p-suits for a brief spacewalk out into an area almost completely devoid of light – the space between galaxies. Once back inside, Dreagan tells Star to activate all passive sensors and keep all active sensors on standby, hoping to avoid potentially damaging any extraterrestrial life they may encounter. And then they wait, teaching each other astronavigation and Grey secrets, interspersed with exercise periods of martial arts practice and dancing.

Sometime later, Star reports sensing an object at the same location where Samantha had seen an object in space make an 'unnatural' course change during their previous trip. While they monitor it, this new object executes an eighteen-degree change in trajectory near the same coordinates, exactly as they had seen during the previous voyage..

And then they wait. Many hours later, Star's sensors detect a third object which executes the exact same eighteen-degree trajectory change in the same maneuver as the other two spacecraft and all three occurred at the exact same coordinates. They postulate the area has a navigation beacon or junction.

Ordering Star to full stop, Dreagan orders Sammie into her p-suit, and then does the same. The alien craft parallels the DreaganStar, which Jon orders to a full stop. The alien craft begins broadcasting the square root of Pi, so Dreagan tells Star to broadcast the formula to calculate the circumference of a circle.

The alien begins paralleling the DreaganStar. Dreagan orders Star to turn on all of her external lights slowly. As the other spaceship pulls alongside, Sammie struggles to squelch another panic attack.

Star reports that the craft is transmitting what sounds like music, and is ordered not to play it. Then Dreagan has Star transmit a song called *The Jersey Bounce* from his Big Band music library at low volume.

When Dreagan asks his ship her thoughts on the scanner data on the other vessel, the DreaganStar announces that it thinks it would rather be called *Stanley*, and wants her vocal register reset to a more masculine tone.

When both starships slow to a stop, the alien vessel deploys a lasso-like appendage and positions it above Jon's ship. The unfamiliar vessel's lasso descend, sliding leisurely down Star's transparent body, while Sammie struggles to contained her emotions, using her mantra to hold back the screams of fear driven by her PTSD.

The alien ship lingers during the next very tense hour, during which time, Samantha and Dreagan remained as quiet as sailors on a hunted submarine, only using Trade finger spelling to communicate. Star/Stanley reports that two more similarly-shaped vessels have performed that same turning maneuver at the same coordinates with in the previous 23 minutes. The original vessel remains stationary and within sensor range.

Sammie suffers another panic attack in the 'fresher and when she immerges, Dreagan reports the alien craft has left the area. He pilots his spaceship in a 3-D drunken man's dance that will triple their return travel time, but reduces the possibility of leading a hostile space-going race back to Earth. They begin the journey back to Proteus.

Jon and Samantha become active members of the "*Zero-G Club*".

Samantha wonders if "kidnapped" is the right word to describe her current situation.

During the journey home Sammie spends many hours reading the works of Author Conan Doyle, while Jon works on various projects. They dance together for exercise

and tutor each other in Psychology and Astronavigation. Once within communications range, they both receive situational updates from their staff, including word of Taylor Roberts' murder and Thomas Penock's failing health. Samantha knows that the HazeGrey's death will trigger her next assignment.

During the next rest period, Samantha suffers another nightmare, but in it she fights back harder and manages to take the silver knife from Abe Pardo. She tosses it down that stinking alley. She wakes feeling vindicated and much less vulnerable.

Dreagan lands the *DreaganStar* in Proteus' busy spaceport, as he did a previous time, making a media spectacle of their arrival. AshenGrey Norton informs Sammie of a mandatory meeting at her psy-clinic in just two hours. Once locked safely into her clinic office, she forces herself to sob and wail to empty herself of the emotions still churning inside her, knowing the days ahead will be even more demanding.

At Norton's meeting, she has Dreagan report the details of their recent spaceflight to several top ranking AshenGreys present, while Samantha washes the feet of the three most elderly Greys - a TradeGrey ritual. That evening she remotely connects into Dreagan's staff meeting, after concluding her own.

A few days later Samantha meets Jon Dreagan in the Mallory Arboretum, Proteus's only public park, where he displays his new holograph projection of the 360-degree view Star captured while they were at her Montana ranch childhood home. Jon Dreagan proposes marriage.