



# Intellivore

*Diane Duane*

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## **Intellivore** Diane Duane

The Great Rift lies between the Sagitarius and Orion arms of the galaxy. Stars are scarce there, beyond the authority of the Federation, and legends abound of lost civilizations and of ancient monsters that prey on those who dare to venture into the vast darkness between the stars. When several ships and colonies mysteriously disappear into the Rift, the U.S.S. Enterprise leads an expedition to investigate various disturbing reports. Accompanied by two other Federation starships, Picard and his fellow captains discover a bizarre menace of unimaginable power. And the only way to trap this destructive entity is to use the Enterprise as bait.

## **Intellivore Details**

Date : Published April 1st 1997 by Pocket Books

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Author : Diane Duane

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## From Reader Review Intellivore for online ebook

### Angela says

Something is responisble for killing lots of people, and 3 starships are sent to find out how to stop it. A decent story that does seem a bit slow, its all about the build up to the confrontation and character bits that unusually for me, didn't appeal. An ok read.

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### Emily says

What in the actual hell? A ST:TNG book with some *substance* to it?!?! Sorry, the sound you hear is my brain short circuiting. Please contact your service provider for the estimated time until its reboot.

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### Craig says

Well I don't know if this is a spoiler but this one was not about the Borg which it looks like the cover suggests - even the title sounds "borg-ish" which I guess is the whole idea after this book came out so soon after First Contact. Anyway, if you look past the cheap trickery of that it's a pretty awesome book. I liked the camaraderie between the three captains in the book and thought the villain, battles and solution were all creative which is just up Diane Duane's alley. Duane's Picard always feels a little too jolly for what I am used to but that's a minor issue. Overall, I liked it and it was a breeze to get though!

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### Dan says

Diane Duane novels are always a treat to read, and in that respect, Intellivore did not disappoint. In some ways, it is a "smaller" story than her other novels, such as the Rihannsu series or Spock's World. However, the stakes are high, and Intellivore comes replete with the numerous character moments that I love. There is real emotion in this novel, and while it is most probably Diane Duane's least-known Trek work, it holds to the high standard of writing I've come to love from her.

Full review: <http://treklit.blogspot.com/2014/12/i...>

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### Randy Mcdonald says

When I stopped off at the huge BMV used bookstore on Bloor Street in downtown Toronto after work one night in February of 2011, I was surprised and pleased to find a near-mint copy of Diane Duane's 1997 TNG novel *Intellivore* for just \$C2.99. I like Duane, I like her Trek novels, I like that one my copy is packed in my parents' basement on Prince Edward Island), I'd an evening free, so the logic for picking the book up seemed unimpeachable. My conclusion? *Intellivore* stands up well, a mystery/horror-leaning novel that reflects a lot of Duane's interests and fits in pretty well with many of the themes that modern Trek is exploring.

The novel begins with the Enterprise-D being sent, along with the Galaxy-class *Oraidhe* captained by the Trill Gohod Clif, to join the long-range explorer *Marignano* (captained by Ileen Maisel, a former subordinate of Picard) in policing the pirate- and disappearance-prone fringes of the Orion Arm by the eerie ruins of Kepler's Supernova. It's not long at all before the three ships discover that something much worse is hiding in the dark, something that has a taste for souls. Something Must Be Done.

*Intellivore* fits into the Duaneverse as influenced by TNG and DS9, the blue-green colour of Trill's atmosphere popping here and references made to the sort of generation-starship travels made by the proto-Romulans/Rihannsu and the unusual mathematics of the Hamalki (akin to that of the Trill, it seems) being mentioned in passing. An annoying thing is the discrepancy in the depiction of her mobile trading culture the Lalairu, in the *Dark Mirror* where they were introduced being a multispecies trading civilization with an impenetrable language, here in *Intellivore* the Lalairu are shown as a culture drawn from a single species capable of regenerating indefinitely so long as a DNA coil remains *Intellivore*. Minor discrepancies--let's say they ran into two different Lalairu subcultures--and I can't help but wonder whether Pocket Books in its pre-continuity days forced this shift in the description of the Lalairu.

This novel isn't as immediately engaging as *Dark Mirror*, though I suspect that may be because *Intellivore* lacks the Mirror Universe hooks that made *Dark Mirror* so fantastic (fun-loving Security Officer Deanna Troi, say). It's a quieter sort of story, the initial investigations into piracy and disappearances becoming more complicated when it turns out that there are worse things out there than the quotidian pirate. Some entities don't want your property, or your life even; some entities might want *you*, the life force that makes anyone a person.

Picard featured prominently, a man trying to lead a coherent response to an unexpected horror, as did Data (our hero) and the Dr. Crusher who outlined the mechanics of what was going on, while her new characters of Captains Clif and Maisel--one mature, the other impetuous, both engagingly inquisitive--got me.

One major element of *Intellivore* that I appreciated at the time and still do now is the extent to which it's rooted in a wider universe. It's part of the Duaneverse, as I mentioned, and the sentient planet Iruh that sucked the minds of shiploads of proto-Rihannsu makes an appearance here. The action takes place in a three-ship task force, letting the TNG characters interact with their peers in a more socially complex Starfleet environment that we're used to in the novels. There are distinctive cultures, like the hapless life-hating Third Submission colonists on their mission, or the Lalairu. Most interestingly, *Intellivore* refers to the sciences, not only to the hard(ish) sciences but to the social sciences, to the indexed folklore of a galactic civilization. I encountered this sort of thing much later in Christopher's *The Buried Age* and liked it even more then. Trek's good as a rule, but Trek that's explicitly embedded in an actual universe is even better.

*Intellivore* is a fun book, with interesting characters featuring in a compelling plot with plenty of action and cool natural and social background.

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## Gwyn says

I was hesitant to give this three stars both because it is written by Diane Duane, whom I adore, and because it's not actually *bad*. But neither is it *good*, precisely--it falls square in the realm of mediocrity. Now, mediocrity is still better than average for licensed novels, so if you're a Star Trek fan looking for a TNG book to read this is a good choice. But if you're just looking for a book in general, you can pass this one by.

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## Adam says

"Intellivore" has languished on my shelf unread for almost 15 years, so I finally decided to rip through it at pace. The premise is somewhat far-fetched but never the less entertaining: the Enterprise is exploring the barren reaches of the beta quadrant as part of a 3-ship task force to investigate the mysterious disappearances of several colony ships. After initially suspecting piracy, Picard soon realises the stakes are much higher as a "sentient planet" appears to be leaching the minds of its victims and leaving them in a catatonic state.

I feel that the concept of a life form which feeds on the life force of others has already been covered aplenty in Star Trek ("Time's Arrow" springs to mind), yet Diane Duane raises the stakes here with the sheer size and ability of her "Intellivore". Unfortunately, that also brings with it a number of believability issues. Star Trek has done its fair share of weird and wacky aliens, but a planet with a warp drive?! This one stretched credulity just a tad too much for me. Issues of realism aside, I did enjoy Duane's style of writing when she describes the effect of the Intellivore on its victims. The imagery is chilling: hundreds of men, women and children left catatonic after having their "emotional associations", their minds as it were, removed from them by force to satisfy the creature's hunger. Definitely nightmare fodder!

I found much of Duane's characterisation to be off. Her writing of Picard often misses the mark (I can never, try as I might, imagine Picard calling another captain an "insolent pup"), and that makes many of the scenes where he interacts with Captains Maisel and Clif feel foreign and strained. On the flipside, she has a good handle on writing for Data, right down to his panache for overcomplicating what should be simple statements.

Perhaps one of my biggest issues with "Intellivore" was that so much of the plot felt like such a *fait accompli* in the hands of the characters. With thousands of victims still technically alive, barely a whisper was given to the chance of saving them or somehow restoring their minds. It's clear that this isn't where Duane wants to take the novel, but for an episode of TNG, it doesn't ring true. Similarly, Picard's (very) late suggestion that they try and make contact with the Intellivore. This is shoehorned into the novel but done so in a way which felt like an afterthought. Again, if this was an episode of TNG, you can bet your last photon torpedo that Picard would have tried his utmost to communicate and reason with the aliens.

A few random things that bugged me:

- \* The insertion of the Lalairu into the story was dropped rather unceremoniously. How have they managed to avoid the Intellivore all this time? Their inclusion seemed somewhat gratuitous.
- \* Similarly, the Alpheccan pirate mystery wasn't solved. What happened to the rest of the crew in the abandoned ship? Were they lured to the Intellivore planet? Why did one Alpheccan have a huge disrupter blast to his chest?
- \* Duane's nomenclature for planets is all well and good, but doesn't ring true for the TNG universe we know.

A short, fun read, but one that suffered from poor characterisation of Picard and a rather deterministic plot.

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## Abigailann (Abigail) says

I'm always worried about admitting that I like Star Trek books, because some can be stilted with rather predictable plots. This is not one of those! What I love about this casual read is that when the characters speak it feels so natural that I'm actually able to imagine the voices that watchers of the show are so used to. None of the actions seem out of character and it's easy to enjoy their adventures. Whilst it's true that this is not a great literary work, it is an enjoyable piece of fiction with some thoughtful moral questions. Enjoy as a break from the more complex stuff.

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### **Mikael Kuoppala says**

Diane Duane can write prose with emotional depth and beautiful language, and her thorough familiarity with the characters of the Star Trek universe makes her one of the most reliable authors in that franchise.

"Intellivore" is so far the weakest book by her I've read. The reason for this is easy to point out as the plot of the novel is completely substandard. Starfleet chases a malevolent life form that causes severe brain damage to people who encounter it. That's the premise and that's the whole story.

Fortunately, everything else in "Intellivore" (excluding the awful title) is a perfect manifestation of Duane's talent. There are many illuminating, compelling character scenes and philosophical discussions to make this an interesting, even captivating book. It's beautiful and contemplative, and if the focus of the novel would have been taken a bit more off the hideous plot we might have a true winner here. However when looked at as a whole "Intellivore" has to settle with being an exceptionally well written piece of mediocrity.

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### **Daniel Kukwa says**

Things to like about this novel: (1) Ms. Duane's ability to take a scientific puzzle and transform it into a life-or-death situation; (2) the ability to take the exploration theme at the heart of ship-based "Star Trek" as inspiration, instead of simply a framework for some other type of story; (3) it takes a near-mythological snippet of Romulan history from her novel "The Romulan Way" and expands it into a unique form of sequel.

Things that keep this novel at a three star rating: (1) Like "Dark Mirror" before it, "Intellivore" is an example of Ms. Duane becoming too enamored with the technobabble inherent in science; (2) Ms. Duane doesn't have quite the same rapport with the TNG crew as she does with the TOS crew -- they occasionally feel off to me; (3) What IS it with her ship names? They are epic, bordering on outrageous...

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### **Jeremiah says**

I don't read much fiction anymore because of my studies. But I've found that I have to escape into another world every now and again to keep my sanity. Since holodecks have not yet been invented I have to dive into works of fiction.

That being said, I'm a reemerging Star Trek fan and I found this novel to be very classic Trek. Aside from

very minute details I found the characters and stories to be very relatable, though the presence of some main bridge crew (Counselor Troi) seemed lacking.

Overall, a good, fast and entertaining read.

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### **rivka says**

In *The Romulan Way*, the Iruh, a species of intellivores -- with the habit of moving their planet around -- is mentioned almost in passing.

Far too intriguing an idea not to turn into a story of its own! And this novel is that story. Interesting and entertaining, a good but not spectacular ST novel.

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### **Luke Sims-Jenkins says**

Intellivore is the third book by Diane Duane that I've read and one that I found surprisingly slow considering it's pretty short at 239 pages. The last 50 or so are exciting and interesting, but don't make up for the rest of it being just so slow!

There are some interesting concepts such as galactic urban myths, nightmares, the vanishing of civilisations and the Intellivore itself, but as I have already said this book has serious pacing issues.

Picard and Crusher feel the most like their on screen characters, but the rest not so much and that's a shame since *Dark Mirror* showed that Duane does have a great grasp on what makes them tick. Sadly this one gets two stars.

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### **Arlomisty says**

A fun read... I've always loved to read Star Trek books. I've had this one for years on the shelf and decided to pick it up and read it... just like watching one of the shows!

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### **Roz Milner says**

Quick and light. The enterprise, and mostly data, fight an intelligent planet. There's some fun holodeck stuff where Picard lives out his Master and Commander fantasies, but overall it's pretty uneventful, although it's fun

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