



Connected

Kat Stiles

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High school is hard enough, Em knows. Her freshman year introduced her to all the cliques, annoying teachers, and tough homework assignments. But discovering you have super powers and not knowing how to control them is a whole new level of complicated.

Thankfully, Em isn't alone. Her best friend Roz starts having unusual dreams that come true, and Tommy, Em's secret crush, can hear the softest whispers in class.

A romance blossoms with Tommy. But just as things are looking up, people start dropping like flies. A telepathic serial killer is on the loose and only Em and her friends have a hope of stopping him.

Or do they? If they don't figure out the killer's identity soon, one of them could be next.?

Connected Details

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From Reader Review Connected for online ebook

Gloria Antypowich says

I don't read a lot of YA—or paranormal, but this book came up in an online reading group that I belong to and the cover caught my eye—I love the cover! Then I read the book summary and was intrigued. I don't read a lot of paranormal either, but the powers described to these three teenagers caught my attention because I have a fascination with healing powers. As well, I have personally known a couple of people who claim to have dreams that come true or just have a “knowing” about people. One time I commented that it must be cool to have that ability, and the man said he wished he didn't have it, because it was very difficult knowing something was going to happen (usually a death) and not being able to do anything about it.

So, I was attracted to this book and once I started reading, I got lost in the story, forgetting that it was YA or considered paranormal.

The opening paragraph grabbed my attention immediately; “Somehow I thought I would know when my life was in mortal danger. I'm not talking spidey sense or anything, just some kind of clue something bad is about to happen. I guess I got the idea from the movies. Real life, I found, is very different.....” When I read that I was hooked.

The book is YA, and author totally got the teenage thing—and since I have been around teenagers throughout the years, I appreciated the teenage insecurities, the alienation that Em felt at school, the very spiteful nasty girl named Angel, that bullied Em. I appreciated Tommy, the new boy at school who liked her, (rather than Roz) and was there for her, protective but encouraging her to stand up for herself. And I could imagine what it was like to have a best friend that the guys just fell all over, while they ignored Em even though the two girls were together. Yet Roz was special and a loyal friend. The two girls shared a strong bond and Roz's father was the “dad” Em didn't have. His love reached out and included Em. And I am certain that Em's strange sister, Lauren could have a book of her own because we only saw an unflattering side of her and it was hard to decide if she was jealous, overprotective, mentally unbalanced or if she also had a deep dark secret from the past. Em's mother had her own problems; in fact her entire family was dysfunctional in so many ways.

The author portrays the characters well. Some I really liked, others I couldn't stand, but the plots turns and twists kept me engaged, and several times when I was certain that I knew who the murderer was, in the next minute I wasn't so certain.

The author ended the story with a great hook. A frightening phone call: the voice of a person she thought was dead, that she believed was dead, that she wanted to be dead, saying “I'm coming home.”

—and I knew I will want to read the next book, even though this isn't my usual genre.

A job well done Kat Stiles and I highly recommend this book to anyone who likes YA and paranormal—or people like me who will step out of the norm and just give it a try. Enjoy a great read!

Rose says

I really enjoyed this book. It was a fun, quick read. Em's character was super relatable and I loved her personality, she was funny and insecure and spunky. I really loved her relationship with Tommy too. I'll never forget when he said, "You have boobies!" I literally LOL'd. The book ended on a cliffhanger and I'm dying to read the sequel, I hope it happens!!

Christina says

Oh my gosh - I had a GREAT time reading this book! Part romance, part mystery, all wrapped in a wonderful paranormal bow, "Connected" is both fun AND funny. I love the build of the story, particularly the evolution of Emily's character and her relationship with Tommy. Their chemistry is fantastic, their banter is really funny, and their voices are authentic. I think in the best YA novels, the writer creates characters the reader can root for and, in some respects, fall in love with, and I think Kat Stiles definitely did that here. By the end I was totally invested in the entire story and the outcome, and now I can't wait to find out what happens next.

John Winston says

Kudos to Kat Stiles for bringing multiculturalism to literature. She truly understands what the concept means. Check out this description of Roz, a major character in the story. "She didn't even have to try to be beautiful. Her skin was a rich honey brown, a shade or two lighter than Dad's mahogany complexion. She inherited her hair from her mother—bouncy, silky curls extended past her shoulders, jet black in color, but with a midnight blue sheen when the sun hit it right." Roz is not only beautiful, but well-spoken, intelligent, and free from stereotypes. I love it.

Oh, back to the novel, haha! "Connected" is a slick YA fantasy novel, a kind of literary X-Men with a healthy helping of beautiful teen love. Mmmm ... I remember those days. "Connected" is well-written with well-developed characters. Stiles does a fantastic job with the first-person narrative here, giving the reader a strong, yet flawed heroine in Emily who knows what she wants and how to go about getting it. First narratives often fall prey, even in mega novels, to the wimpy, whiny wishy washy characterizations that make even the best stories tedious, not "Connected".

Connected is an easy read, a must read, a page turner and highly recommended. It's also completely unpredictable, something rare in contemporary literature. I'm definitely looking forward to book two. The descriptions are vivid, well-crafted, and set the scenes and moods well. Check it out. "She inherited my mother's hair color, though she wore it even shorter—the style was a cross between a pixie and the result of sticking your finger in a wall socket that I liked to call, "The Angry Pixie." Today, it looked flat and lifeless, boyish even. She wore a scowl, which I'd come to believe was her natural expression," and "The sky was a mixture of muted purple and pink hues, as the sun set and reflected against the increasingly large storm clouds."

Stiles gets it right as the dialogue is super-authentic especially between Roz, Emily, and Tommy, but I think it's the masterful inner-dialogue we experience through Emily that defines her and makes her character come through solid. Stiles also does a good job of showing instead telling which brings the reading closer in.

Finally I like how the powers are introduced soon, but subtly especially Tommy's, no spoilers. Did you hear me?

One more diversity check: nurse Judy "Her long black hair was tied back, and from her warm complexion and slight accent, I guessed she was Hispanic," and "One black haired boy who appeared Italian gazed wistfully at Roz and then looked away, his hands balling into fists." Love this!

Five stars plus for connected.

Amy says

4/5 Stars

In this YA paranormal mystery, three friends discover they each have super-powers, which would be cool except for the psychic serial killer on the loose. Yeah, you had me at serial killer.

The story is told through Emily's point of view and Stiles captures her voice very well. The high school scenes seem fairly authentic and the Texas setting is great. The budding relationship between Em and Tommy is sweet, yet intense, with all the yearning and emotions of first love. Tommy makes a great book boyfriend. The characters throughout the book are interesting and diverse. The mystery is well developed and Stiles keeps up the suspense right to the end.

I would have liked more back-story, both for the super-powers and what was going on with Em's mom and sister. It would add a nice depth to the story.

I hope the sequel is in the works. I definitely recommend you grab a copy of Connected.

(I received a copy in exchange for a fair and honest review)

Moa (The Reading Faery) says

Check out the original Review at <http://www.confessionsofabookfreak.bl...>

I was provided with an ARC from Xpresso Book Tours in exchange for an honest review. This did not affect my rating or my review in the slightest. All thoughts expressed in this review is unbiased and my own.

SPOILER ALERT: Review may contain spoilers to some of the incidents in the book. Do not read if you haven't read Connected and are planning on reading it.

Ugh!

That one word sums up my feelings about this book. Don't get me wrong, the writing was okay, but that was about it. I hated the characters, the plot, and its predictability. Now, I know a lot of people have given this

book great reviews, and I'm not judging anyone for liking it, it just wasn't my cup of tea. I don't mean to offend anyone.

Why did I hate the characters so much, you may ask.

For multiple reasons. The first reason is that they are just so incredibly immature. It doesn't feel like they're in high school, more like middle grade, except for all the making out between Tommy and Emily, which has to be about a third of the book, no kidding. There is a murderer on the loose, and what do they do? They spent most of their time going on dates and completely ignoring the fact that they are the only ones who can save people from getting murdered.

Tommy is basically just a sex-crazed teenager.

Seriously. If Em is wearing a t-shirt her own size, he doesn't do anything but stare at her boobs. And not very discreetly, either. He's just being downright rude, and the worst part? Emily actually gets flattered! I have a few quotes to prove my point.

"His eyes focused on my chest. 'You have boobies.'

My face flushed in embarrassment. Roz burst out laughing.

'And they're huge.' He continued to stare."

And a quote from a little later, referring to his staring at her boobs unashamedly.

"I finally understood what he meant when he said he was flattered. It felt good to be that desired."

Any normal girl would be offended by a guy staring at their boobs. It's happened to my friend, and let me tell you, she was not happy. It is not realistic. How on earth can you consider it flattering, unless you're extremely desperate?

Another quote to prove Tommy doesn't think about anything other than sex, and Em's boobs. This is from when they go to his room, all alone, because Em is going to heal him.

"Go lie down, will you?"

'Wanna start already? Guess that shouldn't be a surprise.'"

And this is only two of very many moments like this. After about half the book, it feels like the conversations start repeating themselves.

I have another quote that I got really hung up on. It has got to be one of the stupidest sentences I've ever read (including the two chapters I read of *Fifty Shades of Grey*).

"He wore a guilty expression I found entirely adorable."

What the actual Hell?

So, this is the case; he did something that hurt her, and he feels guilty. Em doesn't want him to be guilty,

since she doesn't blame him. And then she finds his guilt adorable? Although, I guess it shouldn't be a surprise. According to Em, there is nothing wrong with Tommy.

The characters lacked depth.

A lot of things that could potentially be really deep and important stuff were thrown out the window. Tommy has a past. And Em doesn't even care. At all. It's like whatever he did can't have been that bad, since he's Tommy, and Tommy can't do anything wrong.

To prove this, I have another quote. Tommy has just been in a pretty bad fight, and he's apologizing to Em. After witnessing something like that, the normal response would be something along the lines of running as fast and as far as possible. This is Em's reaction;

"No, it's alright. It was... You were incredible."

Let's talk about... Tommy's obsession with Em's scent.

And yes, I've seen it before in a book, and no, I didn't mind it then, but that's because the author made it a funny thing (if you were wondering, yes, I was talking about Mia's obsession over Michael's scent from *The Princess Diaries*. If you have not read it, I suggest you do, because it's awesome), but in *Connected*, it just made Tommy look even more like a creep (as if his staring at Em's boobs weren't enough).

"In the time it took to blink, he slid next to me, sniffing my neck. 'And your scent...' he inhaled."

He does that every time they see each other. Another thing is that, although he keeps going on and on about how hot she is, not once does he mention that she is really nice, or thoughtful, or anything about her personality. It's like he only cares about her looks.

Enough about the characters. Let's talk about the plot.

The plot. What to say about the plot? It's boring, for one thing. I mean, it has the potential of being something great, which is why I picked it up in the first place, but it ends up being utterly boring. There's more focus on the relationship between Em and Tommy, which is also boring, that I just couldn't keep up with the plot. And Em, Roz and Tommy were just being stubborn and blind, ignoring what was right in front of their noses. I figured out the mystery in the first fourth of the book, while it took them ages to figure it out. They were so certain, although they had lacking evidence, and Em's "super-power", that they didn't even consider any other options. Mostly, this was Tommy and Roz who refused to listen to Em, who had an advantage, what with her being able to sense other people's emotions.

At page 214, I was still waiting for something interesting to happen.

And then, finally, it does! A plot twist that could have changed my rating from one hearts to two hearts, or at least 1.5 hearts, would Kat have played her cards better. Instead, everyone just panicked and got anxious and desperate and just started to annoy me even more than before.

So, yeah, there you have it. I won't read the sequel, because apparently, it's not a standalone, but go ahead and read it if you like. You have been warned.

PS: Sorry about the long, rant-like review, but I really needed to say that.

Courtney Whittamore- The Moral of our Stories says

Three teens, left to their own devices when two things occur that could easily shatter their world. First, they discover that they have other-worldly powers, which would have been enough to change everything on its own. But then they are met with the reality that there is someone out there with less than desirable intentions, and the object of those intentions could very well become one of them if they aren't careful. Connected explores the ties between friends, lovers, senses and danger within its plot which is the highlight of the work. Em has always felt that she was different. Compared to her best friend Roz, she feels downright unappealing. Couple that with the fact that she is bullied day in and day out at school she doesn't really have any reason not to believe these thoughts about herself. When things begin to change however, and it becomes more apparent just how different she really is, Em suddenly is able to find where she belongs. With this distinct brand of originality and power brought on by her new abilities, Em is able to find the confidence that she always deserved. It doesn't hurt that the heart throb that is Tommy in into her. As the plot progresses and we discover that these three characters, Em, Roz, and Tommy all have abilities, it is heartening to see that they do not have to brave this new world alone. However, chaos ensues when we discover that there is a killer on the loose, and that he is coming for them.

Connected is a cute, light story written by Kat Stiles that I think young teens will enjoy. The vocabulary and writing style is very geared toward the pre-teen early teenager crowd. I am not sure whether this was done on purpose or if it was just how the story unfolded for Stiles, but either way this is how I would market the book in order to land in the right audience. I am an avid reader of YA, however I normally enjoy the YA variety that can translate over into adult themes as well. This is not a book that I could relate to much, as Connected seemed to connect more with a specific time period in one's life as opposed to an ideal that everyone could relate to. As I read it, I felt that I was too old to really appreciate it, and I found that unfortunate. I think books should be able to transcend age and speak to everyone. However, I do have younger siblings in my life, and I would be very interested to hear their take on the book. This is something that I think my pre-teen sister would enjoy, so if you are looking for a good, clean tween read, I think that this would be a great pick. The characters are well thought out and the story is very cute and captivating.

Overall, I would give Connected 3 out of 5 stars. I think that had the book been stated as more of a tween novel, I would have known more of what to expect. The vocabulary was not thought provoking nor was I really enthralled by any one aspect of the book. I will however be passing along this book to my sister, as I believe that she would really enjoy it. I am interested to see what she has to think and I would be interested in writing a separate review in her words pending her completion of the book. I received this book in exchange for an honest review.

Cassandra Ulrich says

Enjoyable! I received an advance copy of Y.A. novel "Connected" by Kat Stiles for an honest review. It's an enjoyable tale about Emily Milford, a high school sophomore with a newly discovered power to heal. She just happens to have a best friend, Roz, with an ability to see into the future, and a new boyfriend, Tommy, who could hear and see from great distances. With a tight friendship among this trio and a school nurse, Judy, with healing powers of her own, the teens embark on a local mystery to solve a murder and prevent anyone else from getting hurt.

The main characters are believable and their interactive banter fun to read. The villain, Dr. Keith Hayes, is a bit one dimensional, but the depth of the three main characters seems to overshadow that deficiency. Some of the scenes between Emily and Tommy seemed to end abruptly, not allowing the reader to completely enjoy the few moments they spent alone together. However, the overall cadence of the story kept me interested from beginning to end. I enjoyed the little twists as I learned about the extent of their abilities. And what's up with Emily's memories about her father? I can hardly wait to get the scoop on that thread and learn more about how much Tommy is truly capable of. I must admit Tommy's my favorite character.

I absolutely recommend this novel and look forward to part two of this enjoyable story.

Tywanda Brown-Johnson says

Great Read

This was my first time reading Kat Stiles work and it won't be my last. This story captured my attention from page one and held it until the very end.

Britt says

I really, really liked this book. I loved Em and Tommy (their characters as well as their relationship) and I really like Roz too, though I feel like her change in characterization was too forced.

One of my favorite things about this book was the fact that there wasn't just one character singled out with a special power—it was actually a LOT of characters and I liked the backstory that *anyone* could activate a power if they experienced a tragic event. However, even though I liked the mystery aspects of this book, I thought it was weakly portrayed—I feel like I was solving the mystery WAY before any of the characters and the answers were so obvious that it was ridiculous how long it took the characters (especially Em) to catch on. The ideas behind the mystery were cool, I just think it could be portrayed better.

Claire - The Coffeeholic Bookworm says

Imagine yourself getting hit by the car, almost ran over and your bones broke and pain radiated throughout your body. Then give yourself a couple of minutes, or maybe ten, then this pulsating purple heat envelopes your body and soon you'll realized, you were completely healed, not scratch, no wounds, no bruises, no scabs whatsoever, no nothing! And you're able to walk away from the scene unscathed. Wouldn't that freak you out? Well, that's exactly what happened to Emily, and this is her story.

Connected is about Emily, the so-called Sweaty Em, who got really sweaty hands that could heal wounds and eliminate pains. There's also her best friend Roz who could see the future, and Tommy,, her love interest who had super hearing and super vision. Added to the mix was Nurse Judy who also had a power on her own. Exciting characters, ins't it?

Their lives were different from each other, but somehow, their future and their powers are somehow interconnected. Murders soon took place, creating havoc and instilling fear among people of Texas. Emily,

Roz and Tommy needed to use their abilities to find out the mystery plaguing their town before anyone else get hurt.

I found myself caught up in Emily's world. I was hooked by the premise she narrated regarding her accident and as soon I done reading the first chapter, I didn't stop until I finished all of it. The characters were easy to love and adore. Each and every one of them got distinct personalities, strong traits and likeable features.

I think Emily's journey about discovering her powers and learning about her friends' own different abilities was an exhilarating and suspenseful one. Clearly, Em was no ordinary girl but her uniqueness was what set her apart from the stereotypes. The villain was cunning and deceptive, the kind of villain that really gets me irritated and murderous.

Although there are still some plots missing in this book, I am definitely going to watch out for the next story in the series. I believe this is Kat Stiles' debut novel and I must say, this had been a great piece of fiction, fantasy, contemporary romance all rolled into one. She delivered Connected with flare, and the fantasy elements she created are phenomenal and addictive. I'd gladly spend another day reading this! I love it!

M.L. Keller says

Teen Beach Read.

Connected is part romance novel, part mystery. It's a good choice if you are looking for a light beach read.

The book's major flaw is its two plot lines. They felt like two separate books. I kept waiting for the bombshell that tied the two together, but it never materialized. The book spent an unnecessary amount of time on the romance, but because it lacks a strong conflict, this part of the story didn't draw me in.

It also made the mystery, the better story line, arrive too late in the novel to develop to its full potential. Stiles does a great job integrating the powers of the three main characters, and creating high stakes, but the final scene felt rushed, leaving me wanting more details. When the villain's motivations were finally revealed, they fell flat.

Overall, there were some good ideas in the story, I'm defiantly interested to see where the story goes, but the execution fell short in some areas.

Despite these minor flaws, Connected is still a fun, fast-paced adventure that will be a perfect compliment to a lazy summer day.

I received a copy in exchange for an honest review.

Amanda Giasson says

I received this book in exchange for an honest review.

(note: this review contains mild spoilers from the first chapter)

Beyond entering a paranormal world, I honestly didn't know what to expect when I started reading "Connected", but I certainly wasn't expecting the main character, Em, to get hit by a car in the first chapter! I was pretty much hooked three pages in and found the read to be both fast and highly enjoyable.

I instantly found myself on the side of Em. She's a sensitive, sweet, and quirky teen who I just wanted good things for. I thought I hated high school, but my experience paled in comparison to Em's. Saying that she has it rough in high school is an understatement. In addition to all of the torment she receives from her "demon" classmate, Angel, she's got to deal with a superpower that can be flat-out embarrassing at times!

In fact, speaking of superpowers, I really liked how in this book just because a character has an amazing ability, it doesn't automatically make them cool. To me, this made the characters feel more real and relatable.

I liked Em's best friend Roz, and I personally loved that Roz had "minions" LOL. I was also a fan of Tommy, who had a neat superpower of his own. It was fun and exciting to tag along with the three of them to not only discover that the world isn't exactly the normal place they thought it was, but to find out if I was right about who I thought was the psycho killer (I was!).

On the whole, I found that Kat Stiles developed a unique fictional world in Texas, filled with very colourful, interesting and mysterious characters. I'm looking forward to seeing what will happen in book two of her paranormal universe and can't wait to find out the answers to all my questions!

Samantha Britt says

4 Stars for this YA Paranormal Romance

I found the story line in Connected to be original and intriguing! Kat Stiles did a good job foreshadowing enough to help me keep pace with what was to happen next, but also threw some twists my way which caught me by surprise.

Tommy was a wonderful love-interest for Em. I enjoyed reading as she blossomed in confidence and strength with the assurances his feelings gave her. It was really sweet & was definitely my favorite part of this novel.

I'm interested in learning more about the mystery surrounding Em's dad, and I will be on the look out for the continuation next year!

Good job, Kat Stiles!

Kat Stiles says

Well, it is my book, so there's that. :) I had fun writing it, maybe a little less fun editing it, but overall it's been an amazing adventure. I'm really excited to finally be able to share it with the world. I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I did writing it.

