



Shudder

Samantha Durante

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-- Book 2 in the Stitch Trilogy --

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Paragon is behind her, but somehow Alessa's life may actually have gotten worse. In a wrenching twist of fate, she traded the safety and companionship of her sister for that of her true love, losing a vital partner she'd counted on for the ordeal ahead. Her comfortable university life is but a distant memory, as she faces the prospect of surviving a bleak winter on the meager remains of a ravaged world. And if she'd thought she'd tasted fear upon seeing a ghost, she was wrong; now she's discovering new depths of terror while being hunted by a deadly virus and a terrifying pack of superhuman creatures thirsting for blood.

And then there are the visions.

The memory-altering "stitch" unlocked something in Alessa's mind, and now she can't shake the constant flood of alien feelings ransacking her emotions. Haunting memories of an old flame are driving a deep and painful rift into her once-secure relationship. And a series of staggering revelations about the treacherous Engineers - and the bone-chilling deceit shrouding her world's sorry history - will soon leave Alessa reeling...

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Shudder Details

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From Reader Review Shudder for online ebook

Lottie Eve says

There is just something about the Stitch series that makes reading it pure, genuine entertainment. When I read Stitch back a few months ago, I was in awe of the refreshing, new world of Paragon that Samantha Durante had created and the story that came with it. Now, after I have read Shudder, I am in awe of the exciting action, endearing characters, and the story.

The beginning of Shudder is what happens right after the end of Stitch. Alessa and Isaac have escaped from Paragon and are now exploring the deserted world outside of it, in search of base for the rebels. But Alessa, Isaac, and the reader soon find out that the weather conditions are the least of their worries. The threat of the monstrous, strange creatures following them and the fear of a disease that may or may not be gone looms over their heads. There is also the fact that unknown (and not-so unknown) visions and emotions that have been sparking inside Alessa's head.

And as the pages turn, some more characters are introduced, and so are their stories. The boy named Nikhil who is trapped in a prison where his only company is a person that goes by the name of 14 and a girl who has woken up with no past memories called Pheonix who is just being introduced to the workings of Paragon. Through all these characters, as the reader learns about them and watches how their stories unfold and connect, information about Paragon is revealed and an exciting story of survival and rebellion kicks off.

Alessa, Isaac, Nikhil, and Pheonix really do shine in this installment. I cared for each and every one of them and thoroughly enjoyed reading their stories, which is the best part about the experience of reading Shudder, I think. All these characters have depth and are extremely sympathetic, with fluid character development.

Since there are quite a bit of main characters in this book, there are quite a bit of point of views that the story is told through. I believe that Durante pulls off the multiple point of views with skill: the transitions between character to character are smooth and never feel unnatural or jarring, each character's situation has a different aura to it, I could immediately tell which character I was currently reading about, and I never felt bored or impatient with a certain character's chapters.

Stitch was very slow in the beginning, sometimes making a person impatient for what the synopsis promises, but Shudder had absolutely no problems like that. The story begins with excitement and action, keeping a perfect pace throughout the whole novel. My fingers were constantly 'flipping' the pages on my Kindle and I admit that it was really hard to stop.

Just like in the first installment of the series, Durante's writing is compelling and easy to read, making it easy for the eyes to simply glide over and process the words with ease. I would even say that Durante's already good writing has vastly improved. The world building is still absolutely captivating, though I believe it still hasn't reached its whole potential.

One major quibble of mine centers on a scene in which Alessa and Isaac sit down and talk about how the disease affected them. The dialogue felt awkward, making the whole scene come off as lazily written. I think that it would have been better if the author had simply sprinkled the information throughout many different conversations instead of just one.

Overall, Shudder is a solid second installment of a trilogy that is not a victim of the famous Middle Book

Syndrome. I am absolutely in love with the quality of this series and believe it to be a great example of what a self-published book series can be. I merely ask that Durante keep up the awesome work

Sherry Fundin says

Alessa is finally learning what the Stitch is all about.

Now, she has a mission. She wants to get it done so she can go home. She has no idea if Janie is dead or alive. It had broken her heart to leave her behind.

The Mission:

1. Find the rebels base.
2. Figure out who is the enemy.
3. Avoid the creatures.

5 STARS - Would Buy It For Them (lol)

The cover for Shudder is very pretty. I like that the covers of the trilogy are similar.

Samantha Durante's second book of the trilogy, Shudder, is another resounding hit. It has so many things going on that, at times, I was torn about where I wanted the story to go. There is much to decipher, while she weaves her way through the hidden pitfalls.

Alessa left Pargon and her sister behind her to be with Isaac. But she could not forget about Joe, even though it was jeopardizing her relationship with Isaac. I'm thinking there must be a reason that Joe is on her mind so much. Will we see him again?

The nuclear winter caused when the bombs fell created famines. As the viral epidemic decimated the population and people became more and more desperate to survive, there was a group of men who figured out a solution. But, it is not a solution that anyone in their right mind could believe would work. I wonder if the same would happen in the real world.

The saying: "History repeats itself" is so pertinent to the events happening to Alessa.

It makes me think of the Holocaust and the evil that spawned from the minds of some evil men who thought they had all the answers. It, also, makes me think of American politics at this time, how a few can disregard the many, for their own gains.

It is amazing to me that the egos of some people allow them to think they have all answers and, therefore, have the right to play God.

The thought of a virus wiping out the majority of the Earth's population is something real. Just think - due to rapid means of travel, a virus could be spread world-wide before it is even recognized. I have talked to a doctor who believes that is what will be our downfall.

Would our governments step in and decide who would live and who would die? What do you think?

I received a copy of this book in return for an honest and unbaised review. I was eagerly waiting for Book II of the Stich Trilogy and would have written the review regardless. Now I am waiting for Book III so I can see how Alessa's story ends.

Samantha says

Can't wait to hear what you guys think of Book 2! Don't miss the Shudder Blog Tour, starting June 15th:
<http://www.samanthadurante.com/2013-s...>

Teri says

When does part three come out??!!

Part two in this trilogy doesn't disappoint. Questions regarding how the characters came to Paragon and the origin of the virus are answered, filling in gaps in the backstory from the first book, Stitch. Alessa faces new challenges, both internal and external, in Shudder and part of this book is a survival story. After thinking I'd never hear from them again, I was happy to see some characters from the first book resurface in Shudder and learn more about their story as well.

As with Stitch, just when I thought I had the plot figured out, I was once again surprised. Halfway through the book, I was sure I knew how it was going to turn out and was having issues with a certain character, feeling an urge to smack them which, of course, I couldn't do. But near the end, it all changed with intriguing plot twists.

More is learned about the Engineers, Alessa and Isaac's relationship undergoes some new developments, there is a good amount of action/adventure involving life and death situations, and the epilogue promises major conflicts in the third book of this amazing trilogy.

Shudder is due to be released June 15th at Amazon.com. This review is based on a digital ARC from the author.

Bèbè ♦ RANT ♦ says

Second book was not as twistful as the first one in Stitch trilogy and it seemed more like in-between story that was more slow. We followed Alessa and Isaac after they left Paragon's walls and now had to find a new base for the rebels where they can strike back. Facing different challenges on the way and almost experiencing death, they have to stay together and try to survive.

Overall I did think that Shudder was a great sequel to Stitch. I mean that book would be pretty hard to top off but I am looking forward to reading the third book which is coming out in 2014 and hope that it would be an amazing end to this Trilogy!!

Sam says

Shudder is the sequel to the mindbending dystopian novel *Stitch*. Unlike *Stitch*, which is harder to categorise because of its mixed genres, *Shudder* is firmly set in the dystopian world with plenty of mysterious to keep us entertained.

Eventhough *Shudder* isn't set long after *Stitch* at all, but I found myself stumbling through the events trying to figure out what happened in the previous book. Fortunately, Durante does a good job at reminding us of previous events, and I quickly fell back into the world of *Paragon* with our main characters Isaac and Alessa.

We also meet a few new characters as well as getting to know our old ones a bit better. This book focuses on the rebellion of the people and their plan of action against the system. We find out some much about the secrets the government are hiding, as well as given to opportunity to experience the dark depths of *Paragon* like never before.

In this book, Alessa is unsure about her feelings for Isaac because her old feelings for Joe are resurfacing. I felt really sad knowing that she was with Isaac but still thought of her ex. Though she does make a decision by the end that will satisfy fans. Also, the moments she spends with Isaac are completely and utterly swoon-worthy! I couldn't get enough of them.

I'm anxious to read *Struck*, which is the conclusion to the trilogy, and I predict a lot of action as well as more secrets to be uncovered! I can't wait to see what happens to our characters, Isaac and Alessa.

Trisha says

*"The human animal is not an easy one to appease. We are, by nature, selfish - even cruel. To be truly happy, we must rise above nature. We must seek to overcome our baser animal instincts in pursuit of something greater. And that's what we're seeking with *Paragon* - a better place for all of us."*

I brought this book everywhere with me today and read it everywhere I went. It was a great, entertaining read and I did enjoy it. I love how each voice is distinct. We have a couple different POV but I never got confused who I was reading because they were so different and clear and unique.

Howdy, neighbor

and I definitely connected with quite a few characters. Unfortunately, I didn't connect with Alessa. I found her mildly annoying.

Nickie says

I reviewed Samantha Durante's first book, '*Stitch*', a few months ago, and enjoyed the paranormal meets adventure/dystopian genre, and Durante's crisp, professional writing. When she asked me to review her second book, '*Shudder*', I jumped at the chance.

If you haven't read Durante's first book, you might want to skip this review. I tried a few times to write a review that didn't spoil the first book, but guys, it's just not possible! There's so many edge-of-the-seat mindblowing plot twists in 'Stitch' that I can't review 'Shudder' without revealing a few of them.

*****HERE BE SPOILERS!*****

'Shudder' picks up right where 'Stitch' left off. Alessa and Isaac, now remembering their true lives in the eerie planned community of Paragon, have escaped the city to help the rebellion find a new base. When they begin their expedition, Alessa and Isaac assume at first that the virus following the war ravaged civilization, leaving few humans behind. But then why does Alessa keep feeling something following them through the woods? What is the strange noise that Isaac hears at night?

And why does the monster following them leave human footprints in the dirt?

What I liked about this book:

Some sequels take the questions raised in the first book and toss them in the paper shredder.

I hate when old plot points aren't picked up or explained, but Durante does an amazing job of pulling together quite a few loose ends from 'Stitch'. For example, in my previous review, one of my complaints about the book was that the motivation of the bad guys (the head honchos of the city Paragon) don't seem to have a motivation for wiping the memories of troublemakers and replacing them with false lives. This is well explained in 'Shudder' -- the human population is so small that paragon's Engineers don't want to risk killing any of the citizens, and the memory wipe serves to maintain order.

Durante also splits time between a few different characters throughout the book. This can sometimes feel fragmented, but it's well balanced here and lets the reader see what's happening inside Paragon's prison, in the rebellion, and in Alessa and Isaac's recon mission.

What I didn't like about the book:

'Shudder' lacked some of the shock value of 'Stitch'. Since many of the questions opened in 'Stitch' were answered in 'Shudder', I was able to figure out most of the plot twists on my own. This is a double-edged sword -- I like books that are logical enough so that I can see why the twist makes sense, but crazy enough where I scream a little when I get to the page. I didn't shout (as much) through this book as I did the last.

While several characters' perspectives were followed through the book, I still felt like I was missing some information about Regina, the leader of the rebels in Paragon. Her motives are unclear, and I found myself re-reading every scene with her in it to try to figure out why she's leading the rebels and what she hopes to do.

Final verdict:

A worthy follow-up to 'Stitch'. Durante pulls together most of the points from her first book, and introduces enough new conflicts and issues in 'Shudder' that I'm excited to see what's in store for Alessa in 'Stuck'. There's some intimate scenes between Alessa and Isaac in this one, but Durante keeps the language and violence pretty PG-13.

Charlie says

The genre bending mash-up that presents in book one finds its way down a more dystopia, science-fiction path in the second installment of the *Stitch* series. When the revelation of the actual 'stitch' emerges, the ghostly mystery wanes. *Shudder* serves as a transition in a post-apocalyptic world where deceit is commonplace in the game for survival. Now it's time to choose a side, Alessa and Issac are given a new mission that is vital to the success of the rebellion. Will they succeed, runaway or fight?

Even though some of my favorite paranormal elements are cancelled, like the dramas in book one, new troubling events are introduced. For instance, mutant creatures are lurking in the woods. How come no one can get a good look at these menacing things? Seriously, how many times do they need to attack before we can call in a sketch artist? Okay, even with that slightly annoying dilemma, it's still intense and pretty cool. Then, there is that pesky problem Alessa is having, strange foresight and empathic feelings. Maybe, this is foreshadowing...maybe it's just a twist on the paranormal? Or maybe she is just whiny and hungry? After all, I would be if I dined on mere onions and acorns. Perhaps, I'm being mislead to jump to a conclusion that will knock my socks off in book three? OR...is this a handy dandy evolutionary mutant superpower that will save the species and the world in the end! I don't know yet, but I will have plenty of time to contemplate this new development while I wait for the final book to be released.

When pondering writing elements, one thorn sticks out. Alessa's voice is the most prominent. Without a doubt hers dominants above all the characters. However, the voice of Issac and other supporting characters unfortunately is similar to the main female lead. There is not much distinction given through dialogue or description to set them apart. It is clear who is speaking throughout the book, but to make it truly epic, a greater detailing to differentiating voice would have been the winning stamp of approval for this creative vision.

With that said...this independent author did not disappoint. The story is wrapped up without the horrid cliffhanger, but offers just enough doubt, conspiracy and mystery to leave the reader eager for the final book. Each book in the series thus far is individually satisfying while at the same time tossing enough bait that a reader can't resist scooping up the next one as soon as it is released.

Brooke (The Cover Contessa) says

I want to thank the author for sending me a copy in return for an honest review. Receiving this book for free has in no way influenced my opinion or review.

Blurb from Goodreads:

It's only been three days, and already everything is different.

Paragon is behind her, but somehow Alessa's life may actually have gotten worse. In a wrenching twist of fate, she traded the safety and companionship of her sister for that of her true love, losing a vital partner she'd counted on for the ordeal ahead. Her comfortable university life is but a distant memory, as she faces the prospect of surviving a bleak winter on the meager remains of a ravaged world. And if she'd thought she'd tasted fear upon seeing a ghost, she was wrong; now she's discovering new depths of terror while being hunted by a deadly virus and a terrifying pack of superhuman creatures thirsting for blood.

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reeling...

The second installment in the electrifying Stitch Trilogy, Shudder follows Samantha Durante's shocking and innovative debut with a heart-pounding, paranormal-dusted dystopian adventure sure to keep the pages turning.

If you haven't read the first book in this series, I would stop right here. There might be spoilers for it and I would not want to ruin it for you.

As with the first book, I really like the cover of this one. It certainly draws you in. And if you understand what the Stitch is, the rip in the front completely makes sense.

This book picks up just a few days after the end of the first book. We join Alessa and Issac as they search outside of Paragon for a suitable headquarters for the rebels.

This book is packed with action and adventure. You are not sure what's going to happen at every turn. I can honestly say it kept me on my toes not knowing what to expect next. My emotions ran the gamete from fear, to elation, to happiness and some sadness, as well.

Alessa begins to grow during this book. She is torn for her love: between Issac and what she remembers with Joe. She's also torn between finding a place for the rebels to make their base and wanting to keep those she loves safe. She's not sure if she wants to join the rebellion or run from it.

Issac, on the other hand, knows what he must do. He must fight for what he thinks is right and that includes keeping Alessa safe. He also must fight for his family, even if they aren't his "real" family. He wants to make sure the rebellion succeeds in freeing those who are imprisoned within the walls of Paragon.

We also get three other points of view in this book: a girl named 14, Nikhil, and Phoenix, and the Engineers of the entire plot. I won't go into who the females are, as that's part of the mystery of the book, but it's interesting to watch the book move along through all five points of view. It's also interesting to see how the world came about as viewed by those that run Paragon. And a bit scary once you understand their motives. I never felt like I didn't know who was talking. Each character is well thought out and unique unto itself. I was really able to connect with all the characters. They are real and totally relatable.

While I felt somewhat confused with the first book as to whether it was a paranormal, sci-fi or dystopian, until I got to the very end, this book was not confusing at all. From the start you know the characters are set within a post-apocalyptic type of world. But there is also a monster element that is introduced and remains quite a mystery until the end of the book. I wasn't sure what to make of these creatures, although I had an idea what they might be. The plot is reminiscent of a type of Holocaust, which is scary unto itself.

Durante's writing is interesting. While the chapters are told from differing points of view, they are not in first person. The entire book is done from an omniscient narrator. I can tell you that this is not an easy task, but Samantha does it really well. She is able to surprise and shock throughout the entire book. The writing flows well and is easy to follow. And Durante gives us tons of back story in this book, which helps in understanding the first book even better. It enhances the world building and really gives you the reason for why Paragon came into existence.

I really enjoyed this book, actually more than the first. There are so many twists and turns my mind was kept engaged the entire time. And the twist at the end, while not surprising to be honest, certainly leaves us with thoughts of what could possibly happen next. I am looking forward to the final installment in this series.

Melanie says

Oh, my! Dystopia at its finest! Shudder takes off right out of the gate and doesn't stop. We get the perspective of different people. First up are the Engineers who are running Paragon. We find out more about their motives and what they are hoping to accomplish (scary!). Then we are taken to one of the rebels who is being punished for her part in the rebellion. We're not sure who she is for a while, though. Next up is Alessa and Isaac, newly reunited, who leave Paragon to try to find a new headquarters for the rebellion. It's not an easy task and there are lots of struggles along the way. And finally, we hear again from a character in Stitch that we haven't heard from in a while who is back in prison. He starts communicating with his neighbor through notes and it's someone we know but don't find out her identity for a while, either.

I loved all the back and forth and it wasn't confusing at all. I had a hard time getting anything done since I just wanted to keep reading to see what would happen next. Hearing lots of different perspectives moved the book along at a fast pace and I was engrossed in this story. The interesting part of dystopia is that the people in charge seem to start out with good intentions but in their quest for control, they forget that most people desire freedom and the chance to live life the way they want so it never turns out well. I enjoy reading about those willing to fight back.

Alessa goes through quite a bit as she struggles with wanting to no longer be involved with the rebellion to her feelings for Isaac as she can't seem to stop thinking about Joe. She also has some physical issues to deal with as she tries to figure out what's happening to her. And then the ending--I was not happy that I didn't have book 3, Stuck, ready to start (there is a sneak peek at the end of Shudder, and I think I will love this one, too). If you are looking for a fantastic dystopian series, this is one I would highly recommend!!

Content: Some sex (without any details) and mild swearing

Mel's Shelves

Alana ~ The Book Pimp says

4♥'s and a smidgen extra.

I'm having trouble wrapping my head around all the revelations, and questions Shudder contained. Yet another noodle warp. However, I will note that due to this story, I knew the world building would begin anew as if Stitch did not provide set up. Stitch really did set it up, but like Neo found out in the Matrix, that rabbit hole is one freaky mother.

I do wish the romance aspect of the story would have been played up a little more. I understand the reason behind it and there were moments... I think I've just been spoiled on romance with grand gestures. While the world building in Stitch (#1 in series) all added into the tasty morsel of a book, somehow the recipe wasn't quite the same for Shudder. I guess I was too eager to get to the 'meat' of the story and wanted to speed past some parts. I was surprised, confused, hopeful, frustrated, elated, and flabbergasted at times while reading Shudder. That is a sign right there. Any book that can give you some sort of emotional roller coaster (but not a traumatizing one,) is definite re-read material.

It MUST be mentioned, however, the end (once again) cliffhanger city, but it didn't leave me angry. On the

contrary, I'm clamoring for more but willing to be patient for the story to have the time it needs to floor me! It's a solid sequel to the first book, and will garner gasps at moments. Button down the hatches, and take the plunge with this series!

I received a free eBook from Samantha Durante via CBL tours in exchange for an honest review.

Michelle says

Ohhhh my! I just finished reading Shudder, as in I just turned the last page on my Kindle and I was cussing :) Samantha under my breath. What the heck?!?! Leaving me hanging like that. But WOW! I need to take a minute before I can dive into how awesome this book was.....

Ok (taking a deep breath) three words; unbelievably, fasted paced. Shudder begins immediately where Stitch left off. Alessa and Issac have escaped Paragon and are setting out to find a place for the rebels to prepare for war against Paragon. We get to know all the characters more in depth. And we find out more about the illness that took so many lives and also what the "stitch" does if it goes wrong. And how the Ruling Class of Paragon played a huge role in wiping out almost the entire human race. Shudder hit the ground running and never slowed down.

Samantha's writing is very complex. Just like in Stitch, one moment you're thinking one thing is going on and the next you are totally taken back by what actually is going on. When I read Samantha's books, it's as if I'm watching a reality TV show unfold before my eyes. She is a brilliant writer that can make you see the characters like they are right in front of you. And the characters are all so complex that your mind is racing this way and that trying to put it all together. And as I am right now, you continue to think about them long after you are done.

For the entire review plus others visit my blog...

<http://momwithakindle.blogspot.com>

Editing Services by Cynthia Shepp says

As most of you know, my reviews for the second book in the series is always short in case other people have not read the first but I almost don't know where to start without giving stuff away or posting spoilers! I loved Stitch, the first book. It was blow-your-mind amazing and Shudder was exactly the same way. I was on pins and needles waiting on this book, dying to know what was going to happen to Alessa and her crew. The complexity of the plot and the dynamics have you wondering what exactly Samantha has in her mind to be able to imagine this complex world. I never one time imagined that what happens in the book could actually happen but now the idea is planted firmly in my mind. It is a little freaky. While reading the book, you will do nothing but search your mind, wondering what in the world could happen next, and you would be wrong every time. I highly recommend that if you have not read Stitch, you go grab your copy, devour it, and then grab Shudder for even more mind-blowing action. This is one series that you do not want to miss! I am already dying for the next book. I give it 5 stars!

Christine says

This is a hard book for me to review since I do not want to give too much away. I think when the reader will go into this story with fresh eyes, they will enjoy the “ride.” You won’t expect certain twists and revaluations, so saying that, I will go through my typical questions.

Did I feel connected to the characters? Yes. We learn so much more about the characters and the situation they are in. We see their strengths as well as their weaknesses. I don’t think the right word is weaknesses. We see how their whole situation is taking a toll on them. I loved certain scenes with Isaac and Alessa when they were just alone. They were my favorite.

Pace of the story: Good. Moved at a faster pace than the first book, Stitch. Just when you think one thing is happening, something else happens. Love that in a story. At around 80%, I could not read fast enough. I had to know what was going to happen.

Positives: A story about war, poverty, survival. What will our world be like 100 years from now? Sometimes, I thought “how far are we away from the reality of this really happening? This story made me think and I love when an author can do that.

Negatives: Some of the wording felt awkward in the beginning.

Do I recommend? A great series. A good sequel to Stitch.

Bottom line: Surprised how much I liked this one. Suspenseful and...OMG...I need book #3 NOW!!!!

Book Format Read: A copy was provided in exchange for an honest review.
