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Super, Natural Storytelling

Local author finds her spooky niche.



Liz Schulte, a self-published author of 11 paranormal/urban fantasy novels, signed copies of her work for fans at Columbia's Village Books April 5, 2014. Photo by Mikala Compton.

Story by Marcus Wilkins

Cover images courtesy of Liz Schulte

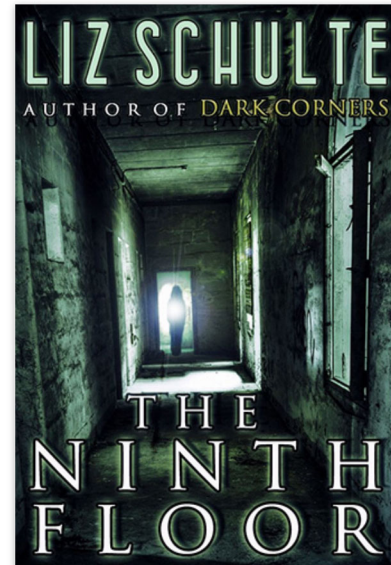
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“**N**o one is allowed up there. If you cross the threshold, evil seeps under your skin and rots your guts from the inside out,” rasps a deranged patient at St. Michael’s Hospital, the creepy setting for Liz Schulte’s *The Ninth Floor* (Amazon Digital Services Inc., 2013). “Not quick neither — a slow painful death.”

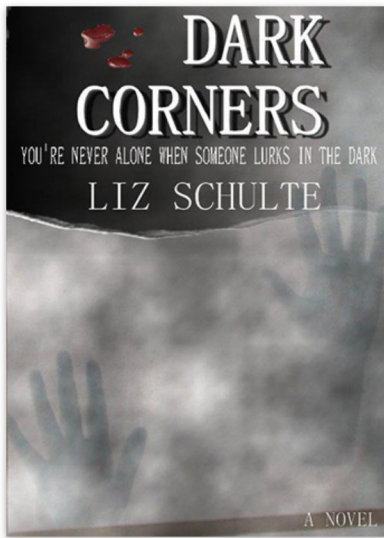
Schulte, a paranormal/urban fantasy novelist, recently got the idea for her ninth book (of 11) when she toured a “real” haunted hospital in Arkansas — just a light vacation for the author who lists Michael Myers and Hannibal Lecter among her fictional favorites.

“I started watching horror movies at a young age, around 5,” says Schulte, BA ’01, of Columbia. “I really like the suspense in the movie *Halloween* because really not a lot of people die. You don’t need it. You need the suspense where you know [the villain] is there and you know something is *about* to happen.”

Schulte might be self-published, but she credits family and friends for leading her to the profession. Her father talked her out of a legal career, and her mother talked her into writing. Her best friend encouraged her to seek a publisher for her first book, *Dark Corners* (CreateSpace, 2011). After striking out with about 10 agents, Schulte went into business for herself



The Ninth Floor, coincidentally Schulte’s ninth book, is the story of a haunted hospital.



Schulte worked on her first book, *Dark Corners*, which is based partially on her own experiences, for three years before publishing it.

full time and hasn't looked back.

“I wanted control and I wanted my own timeline,” says Schulte, who also thanks Kindle millionaire author H.P. Mallory for an inspiring email correspondence. “I make enough self-publishing that I can write what I want, I can write what my readers want, and nobody’s going to tell me this genre is out of style.”

Schulte’s secret is that she writes stories she would want to read: fast-paced and clear. She also tends to write “strong-willed and snarky” female characters, who are powerful but imperfect.

“I want them to be real and as human as possible, and I think my psychology degree comes in handy with that,” she says.

Schulte’s most recent book, *Tiddly Jinx* (Leaping Lizards LLC, 2014), is the latest in her *Easy Bake Coven* series, a paranormal universe of protagonist witches, elves and necromancers.

With such wild and imaginative worlds in which to dwell, it’s no surprise Schulte is having the time of



Tiddly Jinx is the latest in Schulte’s *Easy Bake Coven* series of books about modern, hip and sometimes snarky witches.

her life.

“I don’t ever want to write the damsel in distress waiting for someone to come save her,” Schulte says with a wry smile. “But I don’t want them to become too ridiculous — sometimes female characters can become too strong or unstoppable. I want them to make real women laugh.”

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