

Ellysian Press

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***Progenie*, An Epic Horror Novel that Fills the Diversity Gap**

We are proud to introduce Mack Little's *Progenie*. Featuring a woman of color as the main character, Little brings a new voice to horror, one infused with the richness of her poetic prose and the sweeping canvas of her locations

"Progenie" features a beautiful doctor who tries to discover not only who she is, but what she is. Her only clue? She's not quite human. *Progenie* provides a rich tapestry of characters set in present-day Texas and Louisiana, as well as in the ancient world of kings and prophets.

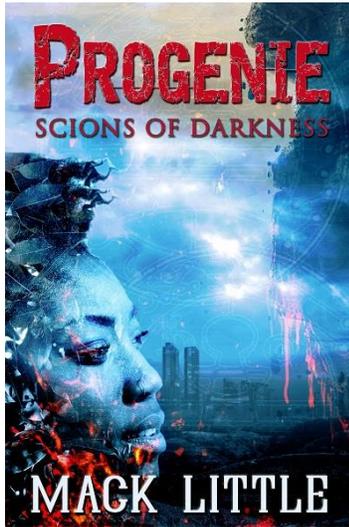
Readers' Favorite gives - Fantasy - Urban book "Progenie" by Mack Little 5 stars.

Reviewed By Christian Sia for Readers' Favorite

Progenie is a powerful opening in the Scions of Darkness series by Mack Little, a compelling urban fantasy with an unforgettable protagonist. Zen knows nothing about what happened to her mother. From childhood, she's been taught to defend herself. She is aware of her incredible powers and she uses them to heal, focusing on staying normal. But she suffers from visions inspired by an ancient book and they set her on the path to discover the truth of who she is. And this means getting into contact with her enemies: djinn, dhampyrs, and vampires. Now Zenobia Grant knows what attacks her family and loved ones. The only problem is that she does not know how to fight them. Is she going to stay low and suffer more loss from vicious enemies? She has to take the battle to them if she hopes to survive, but does she have enough fight for such vicious enemies?

This urban fantasy melds an ancient world with the present, creating a protagonist that is as mysterious as she is real. Mack Little leads readers into the psyche of an extraordinary character and the progression in character development is so steady and skillfully crafted that it leaves readers feeling as though they had grown up with the protagonist. The pacing is just right — neither too fast nor too slow — but what sustains the reader's interest is the depth of character and the deft plotting. The prose is beautiful. It is punctuated with powerful streams of consciousness, exciting dialogues, and descriptions that give life to strong moments in the narrative. *Progenie* offers a lot of entertainment, especially to fans of urban fantasy and readers looking for supernatural narratives with intriguing twists."

“Progenie” is currently available at <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B07N5GHB9H>.



About Progenie

Zenobia Grant – Doctor, daughter, lover, warrior. And not quite human.

Zen has been trained from birth to defend herself against a terrible threat. And to be careful to not injure the fragile humans that surround her. She uses her skills to heal, not harm, and to keep the questions that haunt her at bay.

Zen doesn't know what she really is or what happened to her mother. But the answers will put her in the crosshairs of some of the most powerful and malevolent beings in existence. Djinn, dhampyrs, and vampires all stalk Zen for their own reasons.

Visions inspired by an ancient book lead her to discoveries. Not only of who and what she is, but it identifies the creatures who attack her and her family. What it doesn't tell her is how to defeat them before any more loved ones are destroyed.

Set against the rich tapestries of the ancient world and present day, *Progenie* is an epic journey of self-discovery, love, and betrayal.

Progenie ebook and paperback versions will be available at online retailers on 2/26/2019.

You can pre-order *Progenie* here:

Amazon Kindle -

<https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B07N5GHB9H>

About Mack Little



Mack Little is a Houston author and world traveler. And what better way to find inspiration than visiting as many locations in her series as she can.

Born in Conyers, GA, Mack lived in Seville, Spain while a student. As a soldier, she was stationed in Wurzburg, Germany. Her studies and career have taken her all over the United States, and she has taken jaunts across the pond.

Mack is currently on the board of directors of the Houston Writer's Guild. *Progenie* is her first novel, and she co-authored *Disaster Planning: A How-to-Do-It Manual*, published by Neal Schuman. She has also authored several articles for professional library journals.

Mack holds an undergraduate degree in English Literature as well as a Masters of Information Science.

She now resides in Houston, Texas with her husband and a playful papillon.

You can find more information about Mack Little at the links below:

Website: www.Mack-Little.com.

Facebook Author page: <https://www.facebook.com/authormacklittle/>

Twitter: @ZenBabie – <https://twitter.com/authMackLittle>

Mack Little Q&A

Why this genre is important to you, personally?

The very first stories I ever heard were horror stories, and they came with such vivid and terrifying images. They were thrilling. Women and children fleeing the inexorable rising of flood waters. A father and mother fleeing the slaughter of innocents to keep their unborn child safe. A man possessed by a legion of demons . . . Holy Cow! These were the Bible stories my mom read to my brother and me at bedtime. It was a big family Bible with vivid illustrations of God's wrath.

I read my first horror novel in third or fourth grade. *The House of Dies Drear*. It was so scary, and the main characters were black. It was rather novel reading something with blacks as the main characters, yet was not about civil rights or blacks struggling with oppression. Sure, the underground railroad provided framing for the story, but it was about something more – something universal and it was entertaining. I gave it to my grandmom and after that whenever there was book fair at school – always exciting – I'd find similar books and share them with her. By that time, I realized how unique *Dies Drear* was. I could find no other books with blacks as the central characters. Eventually, I got used to not seeing myself in the stories that entertained me.

Why do we need another vampire novel?

Reading *The Historian* was a revelation. It was a literary novel with vampires. It was intelligent and subtle. And then came Octavia Butler's *Fledgling*. My mind exploded because there was so much thematically to take in.

Hopefully, I've brought something dark and sensual, intelligent, and thought-provoking to the table.

Also, as a person of color, I enjoy reading about people like me who are not just dealing with social ills and an unjust society – those types of books are great, but I like to see myself in a great adventure, as a hero – something fun. That is something I associate with stories about vampires and djinn.

Writing this series, also gave me a fun and exciting way to examine the things I've read in the Bible and compare them with the other Abrahamic religions and with archeological, historical evidence. And when we go to the kingdom of Seba (pronounce Sheba, as in the Queen of Sheba) which encompassed modern day Yemen and Ethiopia, I learned about an entire civilization that was rich and important on the world stage and ruled by people of color...This was very exciting to me and I think readers would be fascinated by these historical elements in Progenie.

Basically, though, a lot of people just love a good vampire story – like me.

Which is more fun for you: creating a villain, or creating a hero?

For me, the hero and villain are interchangeable. All of my characters are either the villain or the hero from another character's viewpoint. What is fun for me – a challenge, really – is creating characters that the readers like but they sometimes do terrible things. How do we decide who is good or bad? Do we weigh the sum of the character's actions, or do we look at intentions and outcomes? I don't try to answer these questions, but I do enjoy examining them. It leads to me to all sorts of interesting headspaces.

An interesting element of some novels is that the villain, the monster, is not always who you expect it to be. How would you classify your monsters?

In my novel there are demons and vampires, but I would wager that the humans do more damage to each other than the so-called monsters do. The main character, Zenobia believes herself to be a monster because of her strength and the consequences of giving in to her powers. However, she always tries to do the right thing. The vampires have a code they call the Covenant which they adhere to. They try to do right and sometimes fail, but the humans tend to give in to

their baser natures and mitigate the sin with rationalizations. The vampires and dhampyrs don't rationalize their bad acts. They own up to them. Maybe they are more self-aware or they are less ego-centric. Their view of the universe is much more far reaching than humans and, ironically, this make them more humane.

If you could live as one of your characters for a day, which one would it be?

That would be Baby, definitely. She is a mischievous djinn who meddles with humans by poking their soft spots. The more freaked out humans are by her antics, the more amusing it is to her. To be her for a day would mean giving free reign to my dark sense of humor.

What books, articles, or authors influenced you the most or made you think differently?

The Bible, of course, would be one of the books that has been influential to me. Growing up it was this infallible documentation of God's word. The thing is, I have been a member of a number of denominations – including Catholic – starting with Pentecostal, then Southern Baptist and Presbyterian. And each denomination had different rules based on the Bible which was infallible but in conflict. I was told frequently I was going to hell if I did not believe one interpretation over the other. Thank goodness, I attended a Presbyterian college where many of my friends were in the Seminary and I learned from them about the many translations of the Bible and the apocryphal texts. Being able to intellectualize the Bible helped me to relax and it also just made me more curious about it.

As a kid, I enjoyed Sidney Sheldon novels and romance novels until I was about eleven years old. It was then that my dentist, a black female, asked me if I like to read and followed up asking what I like to read. When I told her, she said, "Oh no, honey. You need to be reading Maya Angelou." She wrote down the book I should start with. When I read *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* I was amazed, inspired. It blew my mind because here was a woman who grew up under very similar circumstances and dealt with similar hardships. She performed on Broadway, travelled the world, and was respected. These were the things I wanted to do, but I never knew of anyone like me, with my background, ever doing it. I read every book Maya Angelou wrote after that. My dentist kept giving me reading assignments: Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, Nikki Giovanni . . . Up until that time, I wanted to be an actress, but these ladies made fall in love with the written word. They gave me hope and the expectation that I would travel and I would write.

Have you traveled to research writing projects? Where to?

Yes, oh Lord, yes! In fact, I use research for my writing projects as an excuse to go to Paris every year. A portion of my novel is set there. So, when Chaz and Lori are walking down Rue Amelie, they are seeing what I saw. In upcoming novels, I write about the Human Zoo and places in Montmartre, among other locations in and around Paris I have visited and researched.

I subscribe to a blog called Atlas Obscura. It has been a source of inspiration to me. One edition spotlighted an abandoned castle called Mothe Chandeniers. I feel in love, became obsessed, really. I researched it, and I believed writing about it would satisfy my obsession. It was in France but in the middle of nowhere. It was not easy to get to directly, so I thought I'd never get to see it. I kept thinking about it and exploring how to get there until I decided I could do it. I took a train from Paris to Tours, France, then rented a car and drove a couple of hours into the French countryside. Seeing the castle was like meeting a celebrity. It really is beautiful and haunting. After that trip, I found out there was a campaign to restore the castle and for \$60 I could buy one share and become part owner. I'm not gonna say how many shares I got, but I am part owner of that castle now.

Atlas Obscura also turned me on to an abandon medieval village in Italy. I thought it would be a perfect location for a Scion enclave. In an upcoming novel, one of my character makes his home there and some of the scenes are set in the surrounding forests. So, my next trip to Paris, I bought a ticket to Rome. Hired a car to drive me two hours to Mazzano Romano, another medieval village about two miles from Calcata. I rented an apartment and hiked from my village

to Calcata, which is not really deserted. Artists have taken up there and there a few restaurants and tourists abound on the weekend but it was still inspiring.

I would really like to go to Ethiopia next. So, I'm working on how to make that happen.