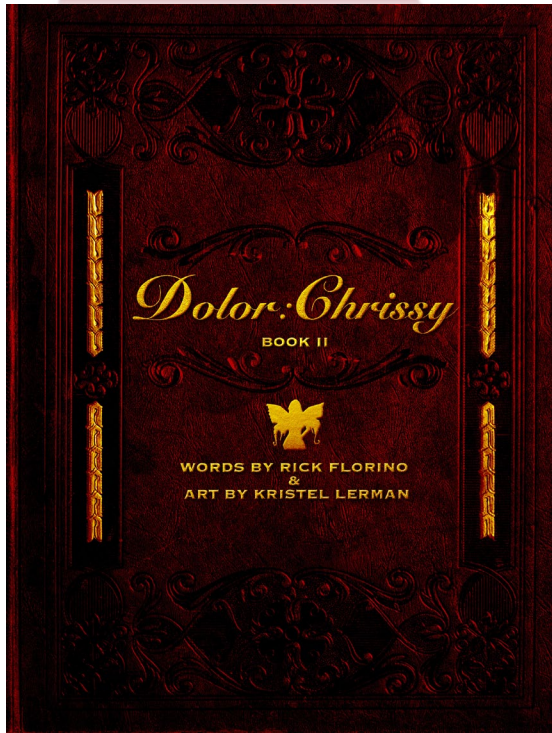


Rick Florino Brings Us Back To The Deep Dark Mysteries In The Town Of Dolor With The Latest In His Series

Dolor: Chrissy Book II



By: Yvette M. Kelley

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** All Artwork by Kristel Lerman

In our last issue of *Shallow Graves Magazine*, I had the pleasure of interviewing Rick Florino for the first book in his *Dolor* Series titled *Lila*. Not only did I absolutely love *Lila* but also I was left in anticipation for *Chrissy*, the second book in his series to come out.

My wait was not a disappointing one.

Chrissy literally gave me goose bumps at times I enjoyed it that much. I like the introduction of new characters as well as old characters like Caleb. Of course now I have to wait for the third book in the series *Arielle* to see what happens next. Yeah, patience is not my strong suit. Well, thankfully Rick gave us a little exclusive insight to *Arielle* during our interview with him for *Chrissy*. You'll love what he has to say!

Yvette: Let me start off by saying how much I love *Chrissy*. I liked how it had a different vibe than *Lila* I felt it was less raw.

Rick: Thank you. *Chrissy* was definitely more of

a straight up horror. It is a tragedy story, a descent into ones madness. It is definitely less raw than *Lila* and there's a reason for that every story in the series are told by a different person. It gives each story its own color, vibrancy, personality, and identity because you are taking a ride with that narrator. *Chrissy* is definitely more of a point A to point B story where there aren't many flashbacks. Chrissy herself triggers the one big flashback with the trailer park scene, which is my favorite scenes in the whole series, and I wrote *Chrissy* for that scene. I just thought it was so scary, so jarring, and so memorable in so many ways. We experience the story through Rob's voice and he's not losing his mind like Caleb was, he's just lonely and you see that at the beginning. That's what's heartbreaking is when he is stuck in this restaurant waiting for this girl he is excited to go out on a date with and he can't get a hold of her and he's there waiting. There's this little glimmer that the waitress likes him but she's just using him. So it's a really analytic look at dating.

Yvette: We've all been there too. Now Chrissy I found her, how should I say, it's warped.

Rick: We all have and it's painful. That's why when Chrissy comes along and kidnaps him he really doesn't mind because he's got this beautiful woman who is finally paying attention to him.

She may love him but she is evil but it is the wrong love and she has no moral compass. That's the thing when you totally drop societal standards, that veil that society gives us then you work to your own whim. You see it all the time these days. They don't have any moral code to live by and they just do what they want.

Yvette: I believe that's what we call a sociopath. I am very familiar with that.

Rick: Exactly. Which

makes it wrong. He loves her and she may love him back but he shouldn't because she is evil and by evil I mean she will do anything that strikes her and we find that out in the Trailer Park scene in the end.

Yvette: What got me though was that you could tell he knew and he would rather be with someone like that than to be alone. So he ignores that gut instinct.

Rick: No exactly. He is willing to let it go on because he is that lonely and empty. He feels like he needs someone to make him feel whole and really you don't need that. He's got this gorgeous girl who will do anything to be with him and he lets it cloud his judgment and he stops questioning it. I think when you stop questioning things in your life that seem detrimental or dangerous then you put yourself in harms way. That's his downfall. That's what all these books explore, that on somebody's last days there's a loss of control and that freaks me out personally. I think that freaks everyone out. When you lose control on your destiny and your life is completely subject to forces that are outside of yourself then what do you do, what do you say? You just have to go with it and hope for the best. Anyone can identify with that.

Yvette: So how would you describe *Dolor*?

Rick: *Dolor* exists in the space between how sick people are in real life and how scary the supernatural is. That for me is this place. That is *Dolor*. It's got these terrible things we see and read about everyday whether or not we gloss over them or delve into them or even truly understand them. It also has the sphere of the Satanic, the Supernatural, and the unknown. What's out there and beyond me? Where do we go when we die? That's what fascinates me the most is that space, those few days before someone passes away.

Yvette: That's where your belief system comes in.

Rick: True. No one can save another person.



Yvette: Trust me I know. I am totally digging Caleb and like he made an appearance.

Rick: Caleb's a good guy. He's a real guy too with flaws but he's understanding of those flaws and looks out for everyone in the town. He ties everything together being the cop. When he's talking to Rob and Chrissy you can tell he's genuinely concerned about them.

Yvette: Like I stated before I like the difference between *Lila* and *Chrissy* not only in the writing but in the artwork as well.

Rick: As we've talked about before everyone plays it so safe, I don't write safe books. I didn't write very linear book. I wrote what came out of me at the time and I wouldn't let anyone change a word. I am very proud of these books. They are the best things I have I done in my whole life. They are very real and passionate. Plus they are all very different. I started my company the way I did because I want to say things the way I want. I want to take a risk.

Yvette: Kudos to you for making a stand. I like that you make a stand on your writing and personally while I like the fact you don't use fifteen adjective to get your point across for one sentence.

Rick: Thank you. That was one of my points with writing was to simplify things.

Yvette: One last question before I get to more juicy stuff. How did you come you come up with the Trailer Park scene? What was the motivation behind it?

Rick: Good question. That as I mentioned previously is one of my favorite scenes in the whole series. That scene shoes a couple of things. You see the trauma that both Rob and Caleb have gone through before Caleb even loses Lila. They enter the trailer park after a call for a domestic disturbance they see a drug addict and a girl screaming that someone is going to kill her. You actually see Caleb get a little violent and freaked out I love that; I love all these levels of haze. Caleb knows that Jimmy who is the drug dealers son and in Lila's class is in danger. Then they find him face down in the pool drowned in the middle of the winter and have to pull his little twisted body out of the pool. The drug dealer with veins ravaged is dead as well and his lover is screaming and covered in blood in this trailer park. To me it says everything about the story because this is the aftermath of these amoral actions. This is where it ends up in complete and utter destruction. Plus Kristel really brought it together with the art.

Yvette: Now you said you would give us a little exclusive on *Arielle* which I am looking forward to hearing about so give me some juicy details. (Laughing)

Rick: *Arielle* follows a much different character whose name is Sam and he's a divorce lawyer in Dolor who makes a lot of money. He's an older man who has been through a lot in life that he does



not want to talk about. He ends up meeting this stripper named Arielle and he saves her in some ways but she decides she doesn't want to be with him. That's where the story kicks off is at the ends of their relationship. Where he lives in Dolor ties into some other things and that's tied into some other things. What is interesting is how his day is tied into the cases he is working on and where he ends up is completely terrifying. The exchanges he goes through with his divorce clients are hilarious but jarring as well. All these stories have been inspired by some kind of personal event.

Yvette: OK, I was going to ask, what in your personal life that you know so much at such a young age?

Rick: (Laughing) I will tell you about *Arielle* because it is such a ways off and you will be the first to know. I go running up in the Cayons in the Hollywood Hills about 4 or 5 times a week. This was about 2 years ago and I slipped a fell down these crevices about 200 feet and thank god I was fine other scrapes. I was looking around and I see this big circle of stone with a smaller circle of stones in the center and a fire pit in the center of that. I'm like what is this? I'm staring it and I go back to the top of the canyon and look down and to me it looks like a big Pentagram and I thought it was pretty cool. I wondered what went on down there and I never found out and I just wanted to write a story. So that sparked a story and as for

the name I met a girl at a Halloween Party two years ago who was dressed like the mermaid Arielle and I liked the name. Sam is an interesting character. He's funny but he's sad. You're going to like him. *Arielle* definitely takes you deeper into *Dolor*.

Yvette: What are you looking to do next?

Rick: My other book *Lullabyes for the Insane and Crooked Fairytales for the Deprived* which is something I am almost done with and there are two previews at the end of *Chrissy* and I may do that before *Arielle*. I am not sure yet. *Lullabyes* is 13 poems that are connected and tell a one story. The poems at the end of *Chrissy* are not in order so you can't really see the story but it does come through when you read it. We'll see.

Another thing I would like to do is come back to the East Coast and do a Blood Reading which I've done a few of in which I come out covered in fake blood and read *Lila* to a crowd. I have gone through and made more fake blood in the last month than any human being should.

Yvette: I love the pics of you on the side of the road covered in fake blood. How do people react out there to that?

Rick: People don't even give it a second look. They think its just another a crazy.

Yvette: That's a big difference between the East and West coast.

Rick: I know out there they would be like are you ok? Out here people are so desensitized and just keep driving.

Yvette: That is so cool. You have so much going on plus you have your day gig as well. My gosh, you are so busy.

Rick: Yes I am. I have a lot going on.

We talked for a bit more and I set up a few interviews with Rick before I thanked him and let him go. As always it was a pleasure and I look forward to *Arielle*.



You'd pick him up.....right?