

MEDIA KIT

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About *Paternus*

Dyrk Ashton

Author of *Paternus*

Contemporary Mythic Fantasy / Mythic Fiction

"Wow! Great ideas vividly realised. Ashton's story is a crucible in which myths are melted and remade to thrilling effect." M. R. CAREY, bestselling author of *The Girl With All The Gifts* and *Fellside*.

"Dyrk Ashton has written a wonderful book, forged in the deepest recesses of the human imagination." MICHAEL EASTON, critically acclaimed author of *The Green Woman* (w/ Peter Straub), *Credence*, and *Soul Stealer*.

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Paternus on Amazon: https://www.amazon.com/Paternus-Dyrk-Ashton/dp/099717370X?ie=UTF8&keywords=paternus&qid=1464364814&ref_=sr_1_1&s=books&sr=1-1

BIOS

Is: Author of *Paternus* contemporary mythic fantasy, film professor, uncle, knucklehead.
Was: Actor, print model (with that mug), filmmaker, world traveler, spelunker, knucklehead.

Dyrk Ashton is a Midwestern boy who spent some time in Hollywood. He currently resides in NW OH, teaches online film classes, geeks out on movies and books, and writes fantasy novels about regular folks and their trouble with monsters.

Dyrk was born in Athens (Ohio, not Greece), on a chilly Halloween morning in 1962. He was soon thereafter carted to Hampton, Virginia, which he doesn't remember in the least, where his father had a job working as an electrical engineer in the Navy yards. Then it was to the idyllic ravines, apple orchards and blackberry patches of Chagrin Falls, OH, where he actually got a pony when he was five years old -- an ornery Shetland named Jasper who had a penchant for beer and stepping on feet. Jasper was also five. Damned thing lived to be 36.

After first grade, it was off to the farm country of NW Ohio, south of Toledo, where his parents still reside today. There Dyrk whiled away his adolescent years and teens in cornfields, woods, rivers, ditches and haymows, climbing trees, running along barn beams, riding, wrestling, soccering, fighting BB gun wars, reading *Stuart Little*, *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, everything Verne, London, Kipling, White, Lewis, Doyle, Burroughs, Poe, Howard, Fleming, Lovecraft, Tolkein, Zelazny, and generally ignoring school -- though he somehow managed excellent grades (except in Algebra, of course).

At the age of 16 he traded a horse for his first car (really), a Volkswagen Beetle, which he proceeded to wrap around a telephone pole on the way to a high school soccer game within the year. All survived, and it was time for college. A year at Ohio University and a year at The University of Toledo, begrudgingly studying business until his father said, "Just go study what you want." So five more years it was, at The Ohio State University for a BFA and masters in filmmaking (woo hoo!).

College gave way to working in film production in Columbus, OH (professionally, mind you), crawling his way up from production assistant to grip then production manager and producer for commercials, industrial films and low budget features. He then headed west to Los Angeles where he wrote and pitched scripts but fed and clothed himself as a "jack-of-all-trades": editor, assistant editor, location sound recordist, cinematographer, assistant director, production manager, producer, you name it.

Mostly, however, he made his living as a SAG/AFTRA actor, appearing in nothing you have ever seen. And if you have seen it, he was probably in it so briefly you missed him. It can be done, acting professionally, even if you have no talent but are good at auditioning and have a look that very few actors and no regular folks can pull off. He didn't earn a lot of money and whatever he did make is long gone (L.A. is expensive), but he did get to travel quite a bit, including an eight week stint in Kandy, Sri Lanka (and it was awesome).

After nearly six years of scraping by in L.A., he realized he probably wouldn't, in all actuality, die if he never got to make a big Hollywood film, so he moved back to the Midwest and went to Bowling Green State University for a PhD in Film Studies. He wrote a dissertation on The Lord of the Rings movies. And they gave him a diploma. Shocking. Then he got hired as a professor. Even more shocking. Apparently PhDs are tossed out like parade candy these days and just about anyone is allowed to warp the minds of our precious youth.

Seven years teaching full time and he'd had enough of that. Too much like real work. Besides, online education was on the rise and opportunities were presenting themselves. No more committees. No more 60 or 70 hour weeks. No more not really having summers off.

Once he resigned from his tenure track position and began teaching independently and entirely online, Dyrk found he had time to read books again -- fiction, sci-fi, fantasy -- not just academic journals and textbooks. Then he realized he actually had time to *write*. And so he did, bringing to bear his lifelong fascination with mythology and storytelling and gathering together (some clearly ridiculous) ideas he'd had for years.

The result is *Paternus*, the first in a trilogy of contemporary fantasy adventures for grown ups. Writing novels is something he'd always wanted to do but never had the time, gumption, or the maturity, more likely, to actually *do*. He's found he loves the writing process, actually *needs* it, and will continue to write even if nobody buys the stuff.

Still, he's been heard to paraphrase the immortal line of Billy Mack (played by the ever fantastic Bill Nighy), from *Love Actually*: "If you believe in Father Christmas, children, like your Uncle Dyrky does, buy my festering turd of a novel."

Dyrk likes to be outdoors as much as possible, adores the beach (not much of that near Toledo, though) -- and has it been mentioned he loves movies? He's a fan of all things fantasy, sci-fi and comic book inspired, but his tastes range dramatically. Some of his favorites, in no particular order: *The Burmese Harp*, *Once Upon a Time in the West*, *Network*, *Stalker*, *Woman in the Dunes*, *The Seven Samurai*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *Koyaanisqatsi*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *Children of Men*... the list goes on and on.

And yes, Dyrk Ashton is his real name. He's been told many times it sounds like the screen name of a Soap actor or porn star. Cool. Truth is, his father is of (mixed) English decent, and his mother (mixed) Scottish, (a Campbell, no less, though her father always emphasized that they were *highland* Campbells, not lowland. The highland Scots fought against the English, the lowlands sided with them, you see). Anyway, Dyrk's mom liked the way the name looked when spelled with a "y" instead of the more common "i". So there.

Abbreviated Actor's Filmography:

- *The Tonight Show w/Jay Leno* (two skit appearances, NBC), 1997.
- *Rudyard Kipling's The Second Jungle Book: Mowgli and Baloo* (co-star, Columbia/TriStar, dir. Duncan McLachlan), 1996.
- *Days of Our Lives* (recurring U/5, ABC), 1996.
- *The Osiris Chronicles* (principal, Paramount, dir. Joe Dante), 1996.
- *Mojave Moon* (principal, dir. Kevin Dowling), 1996.
- *Men in Black* (extra, S.P.E., dir. Barry Sonnenfeld), 1996.
- *Savage* (principal, dir. Avi Nesher), 1995.
- *The Fantasticks* (principal, MGM/UA, dir. Michael Ritchie), 1995.
- Commercials including principal roles for Levi's, Dunlop Tires, Lion Candy Bars, and Bud Lite, 1995-1997.
- Music videos including Don Henley (dir. Jake Scott), and Jeff Foxworthy (dir. Al Yankovic), 1995-1997.
- *Night of the Living Dead, 1990* (Truck Zombie, dir. Tom Savini), 1990.

ABOUT *PATERNUS*

Paternus is the first in a trilogy of contemporary mythic fantasy adventure / mythic fiction novels. The story takes place today, in this world, and revolves around two young people who find themselves caught up in the latest (and possibly final) battle in a war between ancient earthly beings that has gone on for millennia.

Publishing: Self-published, Paternus Books Media, DBA. Release date: May 1, 2016. Projected release dates for books two and three, June 2017 & 2018

Genre: Contemporary Mythic Fantasy / Mythic Fiction

Market: New Adult, which aims generally at the 18 to 30 year old crowd - but savvy 16 and 17 year olds are reading it without sustaining permanent damage and older readers are enjoying it just as well.

Back Cover Text:

Gods, monsters, angels, devils. Call them what you like. They exist. The epic battles between titans, giants, and gods, heaven and hell, the forces of light and darkness. They happened. And the war isn't over.

17 year old Fi Patterson lives with her stuffy English uncle and has an internship at a local hospital for the aged. She doesn't know what she wants to do with her life, misses her dead mother, wonders about the father she never knew.

One bright spot is caring for Peter, a dementia-ridden old man whose occasional faraway smile can make her whole day. And there's her conflicted attraction to Zeke -- awkward, brilliant, talented -- who plays guitar for the old folks. Then a group of very strange and frightening men show up for a "visit"...

Fi and Zeke's worlds are shattered as their typical everyday concerns are suddenly replaced by the immediate need to *stay alive* -- and they try to come to grips with the unimaginable reality of the *Firstborn*.

"Keep an open mind. And forget everything you know..."

Premise:

Paternus asks and answers, "What if the myths were real? Which is like Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson*, but this takes it a *whole lot* further," as one reader puts it. "Think your favorite teen and YA adventures, but for grownups."

Paternus presents a cosmology in which the great myths, legends and fables of the world could have actually happened.

A being, born in the roiling oceans when the earth was new. He matured, entirely alone, until eventually, as life arose and developed, he had children. We know their names.

Heros of legend, gods and beasts of myth, monsters of nightmarish tales told since the beginning of time. Part man, part animal, part *something else*. Most are dead, killed in the great ancient wars. But not all...

What Readers are Saying (Samples):

"In the mythic tradition of Neil Gaiman's *American Gods*, with graphic novel pacing and colorful ensemble reminiscent of Alan Moore's *The Watchmen* and the grand scope and narrative momentum of Grant Morrison's graphic novel *Seven Soldiers of Victory*. Evokes the same sense of wonder as C.S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia*, but for a more sophisticated reader of fantasy (and without the Christian allegory). Fans of the above, as well as those who loved J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* but grew up, will welcome this addition to the ranks of contemporary epic fantasy."

"A deep and believable world with compelling characters. Funny, snarky and exciting. A really fun read."

"Bold epic fantasy that takes myths, science, and legends, and creates an original cosmology that spills into the present day with action and surprises left and right. Fantastic."

"Excellent storytelling. Imaginative and captivating."

"Get ready to have everything you thought about mythological beings and monsters turned on its head. Not only are those tales based on true events but those events have now spilled over into the present day. Plunges its young protagonists headlong into a titanic struggle between good and evil that shatters everything they thought they knew about their families, their world and even themselves. Ashton pulls you in and takes you on a wild ride. The re-interpretation of myths is original in style and approach. The linking of historical tidbits in inventive new ways are evocative of *The DaVinci Code's* Dan Brown's twists on religious cults and secret societies, and references to a wide range of myths and legends give the story a great depth that helps suck the reader in. I read a lot of this kind of thing, and thought *Paternus* was excellent. Ashton does a great job developing the characters, the villains are great, the overall writing style flows easily, and the writing on the action pieces is exceptional. I can't wait to see how the story unfolds in the next book."

Author's Statement on Motivation:

"I wrote *Paternus* because I wanted to read it. I love all sorts of fantasy (and sci fi), but have a particular fondness for the kinds of stories and situations we see in "this world" fantasies like *Percy Jackson*, *The Mortal Instruments*, *The Alchemyst*, even *Beautiful Creatures*, as well as alternate world stories like *The Golden Compass* and *Harry Potter*, and also the dystopian Teen and YA novels (*Hunger Games*, *Divergent*, *The Maze Runner*, etc...) - but there's very little like that for grownups other than paranormal romance. I've read *Game of Thrones*, *The Blade Itself*, *Heros Die*, even the *Iron Druid* novels and *American Gods*, etc., as well as Tolkien, Donaldson, Zelazny and Pratchett (and a whole lot more), but have always found myself going back to Teen and YA for the kinds of stories told there - yet I yearned for more depth, intellectual stimulation, adult situations, even violence and terror - in other words, more reality, complexity and depth than those can afford. *Paternus* was written to fill that gap, and because I just plain wanted to write it. In fact I couldn't stop myself. It works for me. I like it. Maybe others will as well."

Story Time Frame:

The story of the entire first book takes place in one 24 hour period (approximately), beginning today, Autumn (late September), on a night when the moon is full.

Setting(s):

The main story begins in the city of Toledo in NW Ohio. Adjacent stories in Detroit (inside and outside a rock concert hall), the Amazon Jungle (including inside a gleaming purple Obsidian cave), the Mendip Hills of Somerset County in England, and the Kaçkar Mountains of eastern Turkey (a rural outdoor bazaar, the countryside, and an ancient monastery built against and into the mountainsides). In addition, there are short sojourns to alternate earths with a variety of landscapes and civilizations, as well as a short stay in World Memory (milky white sky, landscape and sea with crystal peaks in constant flux).