

Spotlight on: Jason Parent

February 2017

Biography



Jason Parent has authored many horror, thriller, and science fiction short stories and novellas. He has published two novels, *What Hides Within* and *Seeing Evil*, both of which blend crime fiction with elements of the supernatural. With four more books set for release in 2017 and 2018, Jason's bibliography continues to grow.

When he's not writing, he's working, or eating, or eating while working, or cuddling up with his corgi, Calypso. He calls Southern New England his home.

[Find Jason's work at the Sharon Public Library!](#)

Interview

1. You're currently living in Massachusetts; is this where you grew up as well? What brought you to the area?

I actually just moved to East Providence, but I was born, raised and spent most of my life in Southeastern Massachusetts.

2. New England—and especially Massachusetts—seems to have a proliferation of horror writers. Why do you think that is? Is it something in the landscape, or the history of the place? Or is it all coincidental?

We have seasons and old cemeteries, celebrate Salem witches and Lizzie Borden. We claim rights to Lovecraft and Poe, their lives and their work. We have cold, crisp October nights filled with quiet walks marred by eerie sounds and fleeting shadows. The smell of bonfires, the crackle of dead leaves, the laughter of good kids trick-or-treating and wicked ones playing tricks. With so much rich history and an atmosphere charged by the horror masters that came before us, it's only natural to create fiction and make light of what we fear may be out there in the dark.

3. I couldn't help but notice that some of your work is set in New England; is that a deliberate choice to follow the adage, "Write what you know"? How do you go about translating the real into fiction?

Yes, much of my work is set in New England for exactly that reason. It's so much easier to write a setting when you've lived it, breathed it, experienced it on a daily basis for so many years. You know the sounds, the scents, all the beauty and flaws of a particular setting. I often use very real places, too, down to the floor plan of a building, though I generally change the name of the building or business. I consider public buildings, however, fair game. When my

characters walk into the Fall River Judicial Complex, they are walking into the Fall River Judicial Complex. My description of rooms, hallways, etc. outside the public view—that's where I take creative license.

On the other end of the spectrum, I wrote a novel that takes place in Kansas. That took a lot of research, including calling park rangers and probation officers in the state. I now know more about Kansas foliage than I'd ever wanted to learn.

4. Your biography mentions that you have four books set for release over the next two years. What can you tell us about these new titles?

I like to write dark fiction but have not limited myself to the horror genre. My next release will be a dark science fiction thriller, *People of the Sun*, which is an alien invasion story that plays out like [I Am Number Four](#) crossed with [The Watchmen](#). From there, I will have two more novels that blend crime thrillers and horror and that take place in Fall River, MA. The first will be *A Life Removed*, a serial killer/psychological thriller that pre-dates *Seeing Evil*, though unrelated. The second is a sequel to [Seeing Evil](#), which blends psychological thriller with the paranormal in a manner similar to [The Dead Zone](#). Finally, I will have a traditional horror novel, a creature feature that takes place at a Kansas park that was a lot of fun to write.

Beyond that, I am currently marketing a sci-fi horror novel to prospective publishers and writing a sequel to my first novel, *What Hides Within*, as well as my first crime/legal thriller.

5. Is there any subject that is taboo for you, as an author?

No subject is taboo to me if it helps progress the story I want to tell. Of course, there are always subjects that are difficult to write about, like child abuse, animal abuse, etc.

6. What inspired you to write your first book?

I wasn't liking the real world so much at the time, so I took a much needed vacation.

7. Can you elaborate a little bit on what you mean by that?

Sure. I had moved away from home for the first time, had just ended my first serious relationship, and had retreated into myself. Surprisingly, I found I preferred it there sometimes.

8. You've mentioned a few other books to help describe your own novels—*I Am Number Four*, *The Watchmen*, *The Dead Zone*. Is that a reflection of those works' or authors' influences on you, or just a good way to contextualize? Which books or writers have had an influence on you?

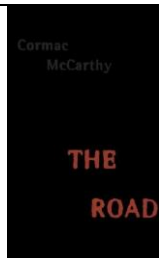
Of the three books named there, I would say neither *I Am Number Four* or *The Watchmen* influenced my work any great deal, though I enjoyed both. *The Dead Zone*, on the other hand, certainly did. It remains one of my favorite King novels despite all he's written

since. *Seeing Evil* is heavily influenced by it and even gives a subtle shout out to King's main character at one point. I grew up with King, so his work and his style have laid the groundwork for my imagination, but my style is more modern, I think—quicker paced with more action than some of his recent titles. Poe has been my greatest influence, and if I get a chance to write in his style (a rare occurrence), I take it, e.g. *Wrathbone*.

9. Would you ever want to adapt your works into a different medium, for example film or television? If you could cast the characters in your books, what would your ideal cast look like?

Yes, I would love to adapt any or all of my stories for TV or film. I'm not sure if I ever really thought of a cast for *Seeing Evil*. My tough female detective—maybe Carrie-Anne Moss (*Jessica Jones*) or Keri Russell ([The Americans](#)). For *Tessa*, I'd consider Millie Bobby Brown (*Stranger Things*) a strong favorite. Michael would be the toughest cast... maybe Mason Cook (*Speechless*). And my villain, I'm thinking someone like Zane Holtz ([From Dusk Till Dawn](#)) or Sam Witwer (*Being Human*).

10 Books Jason Wants You to Read (and Why)



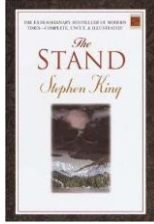
[The Road](#)
by Cormac McCarthy

A better look at what it means to be human when all of humanity is lost than *The Walking Dead*.



[The Picture of Dorian Gray](#)
by Oscar Wilde

I don't believe there's ever been a greater wit than Mr. Wilde, and what a horribly beautiful tale to boot.



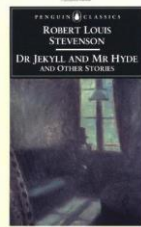
[The Stand](#)
by Stephen King

The epic battle between good and evil told as only the King could.



[The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe](#)

The Master's works... nobody could read just one.



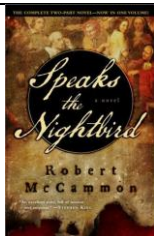
[The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde](#)
by Robert Louis Stevenson

The epic battle between good and evil: two halves of the same coin?



[Odd Thomas](#)
by Dean Koontz

Just good ol' fun horror, from beginning to end.



[Speaks the Nightbird](#)
by Robert McCammon

McCammon's Matthew Corbett series is historical fiction at its finest.



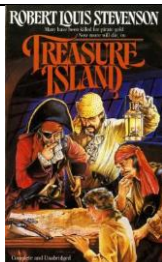
[Interview with the Vampire](#)
by Anne Rice

The movie was good. The book is 1,000 times better.



[Dark Places](#)
by Gillian Flynn

Dark Places hides in *Gone Girl*'s shadow. More than just underrated, it surpasses Flynn's more famous work.



[Treasure Island](#)
by Robert Louis Stevenson

Just good ol' fun adventure, from beginning to end.