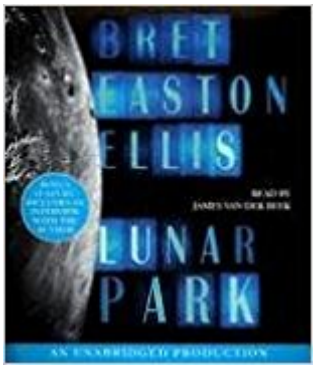
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Lunar Park



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Synopsis

Imagine becoming a best-selling novelist, and almost immediately famous and wealthy, while still in college, and before long seeing your insufferable father reduced to a bag of ashes in a safety-deposit box, while after American Psycho your celebrity drowns in a sea of vilification, booze, and drugs.Then imagine having a second chance ten years later, as the Bret Easton Ellis of this remarkable novel is given, with a wife, children, and suburban sobrietyÃ¢â ¬â •only to watch this new life shatter beyond recognition in a matter of days. At a fateful Halloween party he glimpses a disturbing (fictional) character driving a car identical to his late fatherÃ¢â ¬â„¢s, his stepdaughterÃ¢â ¬â„¢s doll violently Ã¢â ¬Å“malfunctions,Ã¢â ¬Â• and their house undergoes bizarre transformations both within and without.Ã Â Connecting these aberrations to graver eventsÃ¢â ¬â •a series of grotesque murders that no longer seem random and the epidemic disappearance of boys his sonÃ¢â ¬â„¢s ageÃ¢â ¬â •Ellis struggles to defend his family against this escalating menace even as his wife, their therapists, and the police insist that his apprehensions are rooted instead in substance abuse and egomania.Lunar Park confounds one expectation after another, passing through comedy and mounting horror, both psychological and supernatural, toward an astonishing resolutionÃ¢â ¬â •about love and loss, fathers and sonsÃ¢â ¬â •in what is surely the most powerfully original and deeply moving novel of an extraordinary career.

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Customer Reviews

Book Description: Imagine becoming a bestselling novelist, and almost immediately famous and

wealthy, while still in college, and before long seeing your insufferable father reduced to a bag of ashes in a safety-deposit box, while after American Psycho your celebrity drowns in a sea of vilification, booze, and drugs. Then imagine having a second chance ten years later, as the Bret Easton Ellis of this remarkable novel is given, with a wife, children, and suburban sobriety--only to watch this new life shatter beyond recognition in a matter of days. At a fateful Halloween party he glimpses a disturbing (fictional) character driving a car identical to his late father's, his stepdaughter's doll violently "malfunctions," and their house undergoes bizarre transformations both within and without. Connecting these aberrations to graver events--a series of grotesque murders that no longer seem random and the epidemic disappearance of boys his son’s age--Ellis struggles to defend his family against this escalating menace even as his wife, their therapists, and the police insist that his apprehensions are rooted instead in substance abuse and egomania. Lunar Park confounds one expectation after another, passing through comedy and mounting horror, both psychological and supernatural, toward an astonishing resolution--about love and loss, fathers and sons--in what is surely the most powerfully original and deeply moving novel of an extraordinary career. A Tale of Two Brets: An .com Interview with Bret Easton Ellis In his novel Lunar Park, Bret Easton Ellis takes first-person narrative to an extreme, inserting himself (and a host of real characters from the publishing world) into the haunting story of a drugged-out famous writer living in the suburbs trying to reconnect with his wife and son and reconcile his damaged past. Ellis is at the top of his game in Lunar Park, his first novel since 1999's Glamorama, delivering a disturbing and delirious novel about celebrity, writers, and fathers and sons (not to mention a cameo from notorious Ellis creation, Patrick Bateman). .com senior editor Brad Thomas Parsons spoke with Ellis in a Seattle to Los Angeles phone call to talk about the fact and fiction behind Lunar Park, New York versus LA, '80s music, and the whole "American Psycho thing." Read the .com interview with Bret Easton Ellis Less Than Zero (1985) Published when Ellis was a junior at Bennington, Less Than Zero is the mesmerizing first-person chronicle of Clay, our laconic, zoned-out guide to a subculture of over-privileged nihilism in early '80s Los Angeles. He travels back home from Camden College (a thinly veiled Bennington) for Christmas break and re-enters his circle of jaded friends--including his ex-girlfriend Blair, and his best friend Julian, who's now hustling to support his drug habit--and a parade of Porches, late-night parties, cocaine, and casual destruction. Ellis on Ellis: "I don't think it's a perfect book by any means, but it's valid. I get where it comes from. I get what it is. There's a lot of it that I wish was slightly more elegantly written. Overall, I was pretty shocked. It was pretty good writing for someone who was 19." The Rules of Attraction (1987) A line-up of Camden College students share the narrating duties in The Rules of Attraction, Ellis' sex-fueled, drug-baked

second novel. There's Lauren (who's in the midst of losing her virginity as the book opens), who longs for her boyfriend Victor, currently traveling through Europe; Lauren's ex, Paul, a bisexual party boy who hooks up with hard-drinking closet-case Sean (surname Bateman--that's right, younger brother of Patrick), who also has the hots for Lauren. Less than Zero's Clay makes a cameo appearance as well as a passing glimpse of Ellis' Bennington classmate Donna Tartt's murderous Classics majors from The Secret History. Ellis on Ellis: "It might be my favorite book of mine. I was writing that book while I was at college. Sort of like the best of times, the worst of times. There was a lot of elation, there was a lot of despair. It was just a really fun book to write. I loved mimicking all the different voices. The stream of conscious does get a little out of hand. I kind of like that about the book. It's kind of all over the place. It's casual. It's scruffy. That's the one book of mine that I have a very, very soft spot for." American Psycho (1991) Shopaholic sociopath Patrick Bateman's killer grip drags readers into a bloody, brand-name, urban nightmare as the 26-year-old Wall Street yuppie executes his grooming habits and eviscerates strangers with equal ÃƒÂ©lan. Simon & Schuster dropped the too-hot-to-handle American Psycho which was then published as a paperback original by Vintage Books. Ellis received death threats while the book was boycotted, sliced up by reviewers, and went on to become a bestseller. Mary Harron's 2000 film version starred then little-known British actor Christian Bale, who would later suit up as the Dark Knight in 2005's Batman Begins. Ellis on Ellis: "It was good. It was fun. It was not nearly as pretentious as I remember I wanted it to be when I was writing it. I found it really fast-moving. I found it really funny. And I liked it a lot. The violence was... it made my toes curl. I really freaked out. I couldn't believe how violent it was. It was truly upsetting. I had to steel myself to re-read those passages." The Informers (1994) Ellis returns to early '80s Los Angeles ennui with The Informers, a loosely connected collection of stories of the bored, rich, and morally depraved, written around the same time as Less than Zero. Sex, drugs, and gratuitous violence take center stage, with characters including an aging, predatory anchorwoman, a debauched rock star tearing through Japan, and a pick-up artist vampire. While some of the vignettes echo better Ellis works, ultimately the stories don't add to much as a whole. Book critics are less than receptive to Ellis' post-American Psycho offering. Ellis on Ellis: "Those were written while I was at Bennington. I wrote a lot of short stories between 1981 or 1982 or so... The Informers more or less kind of represented probably the best of those stories. I wrote a lot of really bad ones, but those are the ones that worked the best together." Glamorama (1999) Actor-model Victor Ward (who first made an appearance in the Ellis oeuvre in The Rules of Attraction) is the narrator of Glamorama, Ellis longest novel yet. Ellis offers bold-faced names and celebrity skewering in the first half of the book as Victor tries to open a Manhattan club

while cheating on his supermodel girlfriend and double-crossing his partner, but the second half takes a violent, paranoid turn as Victor is sent to England and unwittingly lured into a sadistic ring of international terrorists (posing as supermodels) leaving a bloody trail across the globe. Ellis on Ellis: "[T]he book wasn't necessarily about terrorism to me. It was about a whole bunch of other stuff. It's definitely the book that I can tell--I don't know if other people can tell but I can tell as a writer--is probably the most divisive that I've written. It has an equal number of detractors as it does fans. It doesn't really hold true with the other books. It was the one that took the longest to write, and the one that seemed the most important at the time. It's an unwieldy book... I like it." Ellis on DVD Less Than Zero American Psycho The Rules of Attraction Will the Real Bret Easton Ellis Please Stand Up? Visit the author's Web site at www.2brets.com. --This text refers to the Paperback edition. Read more

Patrick Bateman, the sociopath of American Psycho, is back, or at least Bret Easton Ellis thinks so. That's Bret Easton Ellis the character, not Bret Easton Ellis the author, except the character is also the author of American Psycho. The truth is, it's hard to sort truth from fiction in Ellis' latest novel. Van Der Beek (who starred as Sean Bateman, Patrick's younger brother in the film adaptation of Ellis's Rules of Attraction) does a fabulous job of playing a nihilistic, bored, paranoid and endlessly irresponsible writer. Though the character is drug-addled for a large portion of the book, Van Der Beek does not portray the stupor in his voice; instead he recounts Ellis's keen observations with the perfect sense of removal and lack of ownership. This distance serves well the horror genre that Ellis flirts with: the listener experiences everything through the main character's eyes, though that character has a reputation for being less than reliable. The Ellis character is done so smoothly that one may think that we are hearing Van Der Beek's natural tone. It is not until hearing him read the smaller roles of the other characters that the listener realizes the range of his capabilities. Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Bret Easton Ellis is probably my favorite contemporary writer. His style of writing is exactly what my thoughts sound like in my head when I'm not taking anxiety medication. I think he's a pretty interesting person so I like the fact that this book includes him as a character in the story. From various articles and interviews with him that I've read he prefers to remain fairly ambiguous about himself. He's always referred to as a misogynist and a narcissist by reviewers so I'm sure there is some truth about himself laced in with the character he creates in Lunar Park. As a matter of fact he would probably be content with the reader sorting out fact from fiction on their own. He remains true

to his style and focus that are found in other works like AP intertwining characters and themes, which if you enjoy him as a writer is a plus. I found myself smirking and laughing a lot as I read this book. He really has such a wonderful sense of humor. I've read in other reviews that readers didn't care for the part of the book when it deviated into a haunting/ fantasy horror story. Honestly this didn't bother me. It was the funniest part of the book and kept it interesting. the novel starts by following his early years in writing that starts in the late 80's and early 90's and shows his decline as he struggles with drugs and alcoholism. At his low point he marries his fictional wife Jayne the mother of his (also fictional) child Robby and attempts to start over as an affluent suburban father. His new found life proves a challenge to his sobriety as domesticity comes with its own set of challenges. He wrestles with establishing a relationship with his son and his wife's daughter after not being involved in Robby's life for many years. This coupled with substance abuse issues put a significant strain on his marriage that neither he or his wife seem to be able to navigate in an adequate fashion. The novel then begins its shift into the supernatural when he begins noticing unexplainable things happening to his home and around him. Also in the storyline the disappearance of boys in the area casts a shadow over his family and neighbors. BEE does a fine job with this device. He builds the anticipation and you know you'll be rewarded. Ultimately these strange occurrences are linked to his troubled past with his father and he realizes there is a message in all of this for him. True to form Ellis leaves the reader wondering if any of this actually happened or if it is a byproduct of drug use. The last few pages are my favorite as they are written so beautifully that it reminds you that there is more to the writer than gore and satire, there is also a man that can make beautiful pictures with words.

Lunar Park might tie for Ellis's best novel with Glamorama and American Psycho if it doesn't beat out both of them. It's a great book, reminds me a lot of White Noise in terms of the story's setting and some of the characters. It's a little restrained compared to his other work, a bit more subtle and low-key I think, but still very atmospheric and creepy. It's also in past tense, his only book in past tense. If you haven't read Ellis, this might actually be a good place to start. It gives you a lot of background on him and his career, yet this novel (unlike his others) doesn't necessarily fit into the continuity of the world he writes in. This story unfolds in another place I think, somewhere meant to be more realistic and credible and less of a satirical portrayal of a location (like NYC or LA in his other work). The protagonists are a little different too, more family oriented, less morally ambiguous or focused on snorting another line of cocaine.

This book provides a few accessibility challenges in that it is semi-autobiographical and expects the reader to know the broad outline of Ellis's career. He wrote his first novel, Less Than Zero, very quickly when he was at college in the 80s and it became an international sensation propelling him to literary super-stardom. What happened afterwards is a matter of record - he continued to publish successful novels and led a very public and dissolute lifestyle in his 20s and 30s.The protagonist of the book is a fictional character called Brett Easton Ellis, who seems to have a awful lot in common with the real Brett Easton Ellis including the presence of one of his close friend, Jay Mcinnery, who came up in the literary scene at the same time he did. It's a complex novel describing a man's struggle to retain a grip on reality and his connection to the people around him. as his life spirals out of control. It is too simple to say that this novel is just about his penchant for drugs (and he *does* like drugs) because that would almost ensure this was yet another boring druggie confessional which it is not.As the novel progresses the reader realizes the true horror in this story is being inside Ellis's head as the world around him literally de-coheres. Paint drops off walls, furniture re-arranges itself, a darn Furby (Terby) becomes the embodiment of all evil and none of this seems to have a rational explanation because it's really not rational at all. Yet it is happening.This novel is without doubt Ellis's tour de force - far more complex and entertaining than anything he wrote in the past. It is a disturbing read, and all the better for it. It is funny, raw, horrifying, and ultimately surprising.

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