

OUT OF  
THE  
DARKNESS

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downlow

**JACKSON RATHBONE** gets his turn in the spotlight in this month's *The Twilight Saga: Eclipse* before flexing his muscles in M. Night Shyamalan's *The Last Airbender*.

By Sona Charaipotra



Rathbone (second from right) with his co-stars in *The Twilight Saga: Eclipse*

On the off chance that you blinked while watching the first two *Twilight* films, you might have missed JACKSON RATHBONE — he of the impossible cheekbones and the petulant pout. But while the introverted 25-year-old doesn't mind toiling in the shadows cast by his heartthrob co-stars Robert Pattinson and Taylor Lautner, those days are numbered, thanks to a meaty role in the vampire series's third film, *The Twilight Saga: Eclipse*, as well as a strong turn in M. Night Shyamalan's *The Last Airbender*. We spoke to Rathbone about his varied projects.

**It's been seven years since you got to LA. Do you feel like you've finally made it?** This is a dream come true. I mean, I'm just a kid from Texas who drove up here when I was 18, not knowing anything. I ended up busking on the streets of Venice Beach to make money. It was fun, but it was scary.

**Was it naïveté or bravery?** It was definitely naïveté. I don't want to use the word *mob*, per se, but if you play in the wrong spot, you're in trouble. And you have to give cutbacks and stuff, but I could make about \$200 a day if I really worked it and got a good crowd.

**Did that prepare you for the fan mobs inspired by *Twilight*?** I don't know if I'll ever really be prepared for that. About a month into the process of filming [the first film], we were all kind of like, 'Oh, we have people stalking us at our hotel rooms already!' It was intense. And definitely a change from the little indie films I'm used to. But if you're able to make that many people happy, to transport people out of their daily lives for even two hours, it's just the most amazing thing.

**In *Eclipse*, we see a lot more of your character, Jasper. You get a bit of the backstory:** Jasper was a vampire who led an army of vampires. You learn why Jasper is the way he is. I got to do all this kung fu training for *Airbender*, so that really came in handy because in *Eclipse*, I have to train the Cullens, who are a very peaceful family, to fight.

**Sounds like fun.** Yeah! And I got to wear Civil War regalia and ride a horse again. That was really amazing. I got to even use a Civil War-style saddle, which was quite uncomfortable. But it [was their] way of life, which I've always romanticized.

**Is that the Texas in you?** Actually, I learned to ride in Norway. I grew up in Singapore, Norway, London, Connecticut, California and then finally Midland, Texas, though I went to the Interlochen institute in Michigan too. It gave me a love of travel, for sure. I'm also a musician, so I'm on the road right now with my band, 100 Monkeys, doing a 100-city tour through the summer. We don't take ourselves too seriously, but we love playing music, doing a good old rock show.

**Do you get stalked by *Twilight* fans on the road?** Every once in a while, you see a *Twilight* T-shirt. But at the end of the night, that *Twilight* shirt gets replaced with a 100 Monkeys T-shirt. So it's a privilege, as long as they walk out smiling and humming the songs we played. That's an amazing feeling, to hear someone singing along to something you wrote.

**You've sure got a lot going on. How do you manage it all?** Well, that's the one thing I have in common with my *Twilight* character, Jasper: I just never sleep.

**JACKSON RATHBONE**

isn't the only member of the *Twilight* cast with a gift for song. "I always joked that we could have a Cullen family band, because we've got a lot of musical talent on the set," Rathbone says. Here's the scoop on some other members of this harmonious bunch. —S.C.



*The Runaways*

Sound Bites

**KRISTEN STEWART:**

Stewart played Joan Jett in the March biopic *The Runaways*, which also featured *Eclipse* castmate Dakota Fanning. Check out their renditions of 1970s Runaways hits "Queens of Noise" and "Dead End Justice" on the film's feisty soundtrack.

**NIKKI REED:**

"You'd be hard-pressed to get her to play for you, but if you can, you're in for a treat," Rathbone says of Reed, who plays Rosalie Hale in the *Twilight* series. Though she doesn't have any albums currently available or in the works, her reps admit she is "exploring different avenues" in music.

**ROBERT PATTINSON:**

"Rob is an incredible songwriter," Rathbone says. "And he plays piano and guitar." One of Pattinson's rough-hewn ballads appears on the original *Twilight* soundtrack; a second is available as an iTunes bonus track.