

# **Killers of the Dawn Study Guide**

## **Killers of the Dawn by Darren Shan**

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# Plot Summary

*Killers of the Dawn* is one of the novels in the *Cirque de Freak* series by author Darren Shan. The story follows the main character, narrator and author, Darren Shan, the Vampire Prince. Shan and his fellow vampires are on a hunt. The hunt is to find and kill the Lord of the Vampaneze, which is the vampire enemy in the War of Scars.

As Shan and his crew are hunting the Lord of the Vampaneze in the tunnels underground where the Vampets—half- vampires, half-humans—and Vampaneze—a species that is the enemy of the Vampires—live, they run into several obstacles. First, Steve Leopold, whom the crew calls Steve Leopard, is Shan's former best friend. After an accident at the *Cirque de Freak*, Steve holds a grudge against Shan because Steve thinks that Shan tried to kill him.

When Shan and his group enter the tunnels where the Vampaneze live, the Vampaneze take Debbie, Shan's ex-girlfriend, hostage. They hold her hostage until Shan and his crew are able to return and fight. In return, Shan and his group take Steve Leonard hostage.

Shan's group takes to higher ground to wait for nightfall to reenter the tunnels of the Vampaneze. While aboveground, however, the humans mistake the Vampire group for the killers of some humans in a previous attack, so the police and the army are hunting Shan and his group. Shan and some of his group are taken to prison, along with Steve Leonard. Steve kills some guards and nurses at the prison to escape. Shan, Crepsely and Harkat—fellow Vampires and a Little Person—also escape from prison, but are blamed for the deaths at the prison.

An angry mob of humans acting as vigilantes try to recapture Shan and his fellow escapees, but they manage to get back underground first. While underground, the crew battles the Vampets and Vampaneze to try to kill the Lord of the Vampaneze and win the War of Scars. Ultimately, Crepsley kills the one they think is the Lord of the Vampaneze. Steve Leonard, however, reveals that they killed a decoy and that Steve is the real Lord of the Vampaneze. Steve, however, escapes before anyone can kill him.



# Prologue and Chapter 1

## Prologue and Chapter 1 Summary

Prologue. It is the War of the Scars—where the vampires are fighting against the vampaneze. The narrator of the novel, Darran Shan and his two companions, Lartan Crepsley and Vancha March have been sent by Desmond Tiny to hunt down the Lord of the Vampaneze. During the hunt, other Vampires are not allowed to help the three Vampaneze hunters, so the only other people they pick up along the way are a witch by the name of Lady Evanna and a little person named Harkat Mulds.

When the group stops in the city where Crepsley was born, they add Shan's ex-girlfriend, Debbie Hemlock, and Shan's former best friend, Steve Leopold. What the group doesn't know is that Leopold is a traitor and is working with the Vampaneze to lead the group into danger. Leopold is working in cahoots with RV, another former associate of Shan's. Shan tries to overcome Leopold, but RV takes Debbie hostage, so the rest of the group flees from the Vampaneze.

Chapter 1. The group is down in the tunnels where the Vampaneze have been hiding and waiting to attack them. At a fork in the tunnels the group decides to split up. If they all try to get out from underground, they think the Vampaneze will simply attack them. If they head in different directions, they might find an alternate route. Shan believes it is daylight, so if they get out of the tunnel, this will slow the Vampaneze from coming after them. Shan hears the Vampaneze and the Vampets narrowing in on them and they are finally spotted by one Vampet—a half vampire, half human. Vancha instantly steps out of the shadows and kills the Vampet. As another surge of Vampets narrows in on the group, Mancha throws the equivalent of a Chinese star at them. The Vampets open fire as the group nears the light at the end of the tunnel.

Shan is the first to climb out of the manhole and find himself standing on a small street. Leopold and Harkat follow. Finally, the Vampet they kidnapped climbs out too. There is a slight delay when Crepsley and Vancha burst out of the manhole and then Shan puts the cover back in place.

They wait around the covered manhole to see if anyone else comes out. Crepsley suggests they leave, but Shan says they must get Debbie back. Vancha says they have to get the Lord of the Vampaneze.

The group decides to return to the apartments where they have been living to rest and eat. They decide to return when it's dark to free Debbie and kill the Lord of the Vampaneze.



## Prologue and Chapter 1 Analysis

When the group is down in the tunnels, the Vampaneze allow them time to get out of the tunnels and save themselves. This is ironic since these two groups are at war. If the Vampaneze are able to kill the group that has been sent to capture their Lord, they will have an advantage in the war. It foreshadows that there is another reason as to why the Vampaneze have allowed the group a head start.



## Chapter 2

### Chapter 2 Summary

The group returns to the three apartments they have been occupying during their journey. Vancha takes the Vampet to the middle apartment to torture him to try to get information out of him about the Lord of the Vampaneze. Shan, Harkat and Crepsley take Leopold into another apartment, where they eat, drink and clean their wounds. Shan tries to get information out of Leopold, but Leopold refuses to provide any information. All Leonard divulges is that the Vampaneze have been plotting to capture this group for years and that they have created special tunnels and caverns to do so. Leonard says he's been plotting against Shan because Shan had caused Leopold to be turned into a Vampaneze.

Vancha comes into the apartment after torturing and killing the Vampet. He tells the rest of the group that Mr. Tiny has required that the Lord of the Vampaneze kill his three hunters himself, which is why none of the underlings pursuing them fought with all their might. As they confront Leonard as to what the backup plan is if they are able to escape, which they do, they realize that the building is surrounded with cops and soldiers pointing guns at them.

### Chapter 2 Analysis

Leonard telling Shan and the rest of the group about the special tunnels and caverns the Vampaneze built to capture and kill them foreshadows the group getting caught up in these tunnels when they return to try to capture the Lord of the Vampaneze. It seems as if the backup plan for the group escaping the Vampaneze tunnels is to send the cops and army after them.



## Chapter 3

### Chapter 3 Summary

The army and cops have surrounded the building. The officer in charge is a woman, Alice Burgess. Leonard tells the group that they think they are responsible for killing all of the humans. Burgess tells them to release Leonard and then come out behind him. The group decides to jump out the window and run away instead.

### Chapter 3 Analysis

The group jumping out the window foreshadows a gun fight between the cops, soldiers and the vampires. It foreshadows that some of the vampires might be wounded before they can get away, which will decrease the number of hunters that can track down the Lord of the Vampaneze.





# Chapter 4

## Chapter 4 Summary

When Shan lands from his jump out the window, he almost impales himself on his sword. Crepsley hurts his ankle when he jumps. The soldiers and cops are taken by surprise and scramble over each other to react to the jumpers. Harkat takes one of the soldiers or cops as a hostage while Vancha goes after Burgess. The Vampires decide Crepsley's ankle is too bad to flit, which is to run away very quickly, so they decide to leave Crepsley behind. Vancha decides to escape with Burgess as his hostage. The rest agree to surrender to the police and escape from prison, or die trying, and meet up with Vancha later to kill the Lord Vampaneze.

## Chapter 4 Analysis

Vancha might have to kill the Lord Vampaneze himself. Since the other hunters surrender, it foreshadows them being imprisoned and unable to escape. If the police hold the Vampires in cells that expose them to the sun, the Vampires will burn up and die. If the Vampires are able to escape, it might be too late to help Vancha hunt down and kill the Lord of the Vampaneze.



# Chapter 5

## Chapter 5 Summary

Two officers have Shan in a holding cell. The officers are questioning Shan, but he is staying silent. The officers say they are taking blood samples from Crepsley and Harkut to see what they are—Vampires or something else. The police officers allow Walter Blaws to enter the cell. Mr. Blaws is the inspector of a school in which Shan had enrolled as Darren Horston. Blaws identifies Shan as Horton and asks Shan how he could have killed all those people.

## Chapter 5 Analysis

Ironically, the police and Shan's group are on the same side, but the police arrest Shan and the two others anyway. Apparently, a huge amount of humans have been murdered. The police believe Shan and his group are the killers from an anonymous tip called in by Leonard or one of his group.



# Chapter 6

## Chapter 6 Summary

A new officer steps in the cell and begins questioning Shan. He asks Shan if Harkat will die without his mask from breathing normal air. When Shan confirms this, Dave, the new officer, blackmails Shan—telling him if he admits his true identity and what his two friends are that they will give Harkat his mask back. Dave also divulges to Shan that they have Leonard in treatment in the medical wing, which tells Shan that they have to recapture Steve as a hostage prior to escaping. As the officers continue to question Shan, there is a rush of officers in the hall outside the cell. One of the female officers tells Dave that Leonard has escaped. When Dave leaves Shan alone with the officer whose name is Morgan, Morgan tells Shan he has to escape through the ceiling because the walls are too thick. Morgan attacks Shan as part of the plan for the cameras. Shan fights back. When he bends down to check Morgan's pulse, Shan notices a V tattoo in Morgan's scalp, which indicates Morgan is a Vampet working undercover as a human. Shan breaks the surveillance cameras, breaks the chains on his hands and feet and escapes through the ceiling of the cell.

## Chapter 6 Analysis

Shan is assessing the situation and formulating an escape plan the entire time the officers are pressuring him for answers. Morgan telling Shan how to escape the prison foreshadows Morgan assisting Shan in his escape from the prison. Morgan helps Shan escape so that Shan goes after the Lord of the Vampaneze and the Lord has an opportunity to kill Shan and the other hunters. Ultimately, this is what will allow the Lord of the Vampaneze to win the War of Scars.



# Chapter 7

## Chapter 7 Summary

Shan is crawling through the ceiling, checking in the cells below to find the rest of his group. He rescues the Little Person and Harkat. Together, the three of them rescue Crepsley from his own interrogation cell. All of them continue to crawl out of the ceiling to escape the prison.

## Chapter 7 Analysis

Shan, Crepsley, Harkat and the Little Person will now continue to the tunnels to meet the other hunter. When they all meet up before midnight, they will all continue to hunt for the Lord of Vampaneze so they can kill him and ensure they win the war.



# Chapter 8

## Chapter 8 Summary

Shan, Crepsley and Harkat escape the prison building. They start to look for a manhole cover so they can get underground and get Crepsley, the Vampire, out of the sun. As Shan is about to put his leg down from the ladder he is climbing down into the tunnel, someone fires a gun. Shan sees it is a Vampet. The Vampet tells Shan that the Lord of the Vampaneze has them covering the manhole covers to keep Shan and his crew aboveground to suffer. Shan, Crepsely and Harkat decide to move on and the cops start following them a few minutes after they reappear aboveground. Crepsley decides that they have to get on top of the building to make better timing, so Shan goes into a store to steal a bottle of suntan lotion to protect Crepsley. As Shan is leaving the store, he sees the TV news showing his picture and saying he looks like a harmless teenager but he consorts with killers. Then, the news flashes the rest of their photos. Someone in the store recognizes Shan and all of the customers form a mob to go after Shan. Shan catches up with Crepsley and Harkat and tells Crepsley to rub the suntan lotion on. The mob appears and starts shooting and gathering weapons as they go after the "Vampire gang."

## Chapter 8 Analysis

The sun will weaken the Vampires, such as Crepsely. This will make them less effective in hunting and fighting off the attack of the Lord of the Vampaneze. Now that the TV news is flashing pictures of Shan and the others with whom he is traveling, it will be harder for the group to make their way through the streets without being recognized by someone.



# Chapter 9

## Chapter 9 Summary

Shan, Crepsley and Harkat start to run from the mob, but Crepsley's hurt ankle is holding them back. Crepsley says for them to leave him behind but Shan says they all have to stay together. As the mob closes in on them, the three scramble up a ladder that leads to a fire escape. While on top of the building, a police helicopter closes in and starts shooting at them. They decide to enter the building, and get the residents to evacuate. As the residents of the building are trying to get out, the mob and the police are trying to get in, which causes enough of a delay for the Vampires to escape to another building and hide. They sneak out of the building and into the deserted alley. Shan realizes that his friend Richard's house is close by so they decide to seek refuge there. When Shan enters Richard's room through the window, Richard starts screaming 'Vampires', so Crepsley puts Richard to sleep and then they leave Richard's house.

## Chapter 9 Analysis

Crepsley yells that they have to escape because Vampires are in the building so that the Vampires can blend into the crowd and escape during the evacuation of the building. It's ironic that Shan once saved Richard's life, but that Richard is afraid of Shan when he sees him.



# Chapter 10

## Chapter 10 Summary

The three take to the rooftops to escape until they reach a silo. They take refuge in the silo. Crepsley's leg is bruised now all the way up to his knee and his skin is a dark pink color from the sun. Shan works at picking the locks of his handcuffs and Crepsley helps him. Shan finds some canned beans in the silo office that he and Crepsley eat. Harkat isn't hungry. They have a discussion on whether evil is something you are born with or that you choose to be. Crepsley tells Shan that he has to forget about freeing Debbie and focus on killing the Lord when they are in the tunnels. Shan says he doesn't know if he can do that.

## Chapter 10 Analysis

There is foreshadowing that the Vampaneze will use Debbie as a way to lure Shan into a trap. His feelings for Debbie could not only endanger him, but endanger his clan as a whole. If they lose the War of Scars, then it affects an entire population and species.



# Chapter 11

## Chapter 11 Summary

When it's time to leave the silo to meet Vancha in the tunnels, Crepsley's ankle is better and he can walk without assistance. When they get to the cavern of the tunnel, they realize they don't have any weapons to fight. Then, Vancha appears. Vancha leads them to a pile of weapons the Vampaneze left behind when they were clearing away their dead. Vancha still has the Chief Inspector, Alice Burgess, tied up as his hostage. He frees her so she can help them fight. They set off to find the lair of the Vampaneze.

## Chapter 11 Analysis

Ironically, Shan, Crepsley and Harkat show up for the battle of their lives without weapons. In another twist of irony, Alice Burgess believes Vancha and his conspirators are her enemy. In reality, they are on her side but she doesn't realize this.





# Chapter 12

## Chapter 12 Summary

The first obstacle the group comes to is a bank-like safe door with a combination lock. Shan thinks like Steve to decipher the number code and the door opens. The first person they run into is RV, who is the same person who has Debbie. RV says he'll trade Debbie's life for Shan's life, but Shan refuses.

## Chapter 12 Analysis

The combination lock door is just the first of the many obstacles the group faces on their journey to find and kill the Lord of the Vampaneze. Shan's being a former friend of Steve Leopard will continue to come in handy because Shan will be able to think like Steve as the group makes their trek through the tunnels.



# Chapter 13

## Chapter 13 Summary

At the end of the tunnel, the group finds themselves in a cavern with a platform crossing over a pit of stakes. The walls have holes big enough for shooting bullets, so the group knows they have to cross the platform and pit to get to the rest of the tunnel. They plan to cross one at a time in case there is a trap. At the end of the tunnel on the other side of the platform stands Steve. Vancha is crossing the platform, so Steve lights a match and throws it into the petrol filled pit. The flames explode up and take Vancha with them.

## Chapter 13 Analysis

The Vampaneze have designed several obstacles for the Vampires to get through and over to find their Lord. While the ultimate goal of the Vampaneze is to kill the Vampires, they have created the obstacles to toy with them first. The group of five Lord of the Vampaneze hunters has been reduced to four.



# Chapter 14

## Chapter 14 Summary

As Steve dances around in glee for killing Vancha, Vancha emerges from the fire pit swinging from a rope and stamping out fire on his hair and animal hides. Vancha tries to hit Steve with one his shurikens but the angle is wrong, so Vancha returns to the side of the platform where the rest of the Vampires are. Twenty to thirty Vampaneze descend from ropes in the ceiling. One of them is the cop who helped Shan escape. When the inspector sees this, she is infuriated and wants to fight him herself. Then two men, one being the Lord of the Vampaneze, emerge. Again, Vancha tries to throw shurikens at him but the angle is still wrong. They lower Debbie with her hands tied from a rope from the ceiling. Gannen Harst, who is the other man standing on the platform with Steve and the Lord, proposes giving them Debbie for Shan's life. Shan refuses. He then offers a duel between Shan, the Lord and Steve in exchange for all of their lives. The Vampaneze set Debbie free and Shan tells her he doesn't want her to watch the fight. The officer who is a Vampet comes to escort Burgess, Debbie and Harkat out of the tunnels. Burgess bends down pretending to tie her shoelace and whispers something to Vancha. Burgess attacks the officer and wrestles his rifle away from him, shooting half his face off in the process. She continues firing at the Vampaneze and is able to aim directly at the platform where Steve, the Lord and Harst are standing.

## Chapter 14 Analysis

Burgess is plotting a diversion so Vancha can jump up on the platform to kill the Lord, Steve and Harst. Burgess might win the War of Scars for the Vampires by killing the Lord of the Vampaneze herself.



# Chapter 15

## Chapter 15 Summary

One of the bullets hits Lord Vampaneze in the right shoulder. The Vampaneze and Vampets rush in a wave to get to Burgess. This leaves the rope unguarded so Crepsley heads toward it to get to the platform. The trio decides it must be Crepsley because Steve is Shan's former best friend and Harst is Vancha's brother. When Harst sees Crepsley on the rope, he points the attention of the Vampets and Vampaneze to attack Crepsley to save their Lord. Shan and Vancha start to fight the vampets and vampaneze. Harst severs the rope that Crepsley is on so he swings wildly into the flames of the fire, but Crepsley manages to climb higher on the rope so that he emerges from the flames and gets closer to the platform.

## Chapter 15 Analysis

Crepsley is going to reach the platform where Lord Vampaneze is. When Crepsley reaches the platform, he'll be able to kill the Lord. When the Lord is dead, the clan wins the War of Scars.



# Chapter 16

## Chapter 16 Summary

The Lord steps forward on the platform, saying that Mr. Tiny's prophecy is that he would have to fight Larten Crepsley, which is why they tried to lure Shan instead. Crepsley begins to fight the Lord, Steve and Harst. After taking down Steve by breaking his nose, Crepsley swings, picks up the Lord and ropes the Lord of the Vampaneze into the stakes of the fire pit below. The Lord is impaled on one of the stakes and dies. They've won the war.

## Chapter 16 Analysis

Now that the clan has won, they have to be able to get out of the tunnels alive. This also foreshadows a change of the world as the Vampires, Vampets and Vampaneze know it because the war is now over.



# Chapters 17 and 18

## Chapters 17 and 18 Summary

Chapter 17. Crepsley is standing on the edge of the platform. The light is shining in his eyes as he realizes he has killed the Lord of the Vampaneze. Suddenly, Steve pushes Crepsley and he falls into the fire pit below.

Chapter 18. As Steve lets go of the chain in his hand, Crepsley grabs on to it—saving himself from completely falling into the pit. Crepsley reaches up and yanks the chain to kill Steve as well. Harst reaches out his hands to save Steve bearing the weight of both men on his arm. Crepsley says his goodbyes to Vancha and Shan. Then he lets go and falls into the pit.

## Chapters 17 and 18 Analysis

Crepsley dying foreshadows Shan and Vancha seeking revenge on the remaining Vampaneze for his death. This means that the war might end but the personal battles between certain people will not end with the war.



# Chapters 19 and 20

## Chapters 19 and 20 Summary

Chapter 19. As Crepsley falls, Mika Ver Leth, one of Shan's fellow Princes, rescues Crepsley. Vampires drop out of the ceiling to attack the Vampaneze. As Harst advances on Crepsley, Crepsley cuts Harst's head off with his sword. Mika throws a sword at Steve as he tries to escape out of the tunnel. When Shan asks Vancha where the Vampires came from, Vancha says he flitted to Vampire Mountain to get them, but told them to wait to attack until they had killed the Lord of the Vampaneze.

Chapter 20. Shan admits that isn't how the story ends. Shan had been simply wishing that some of the other Vampires would come to their rescue as Crepsley was falling. Instead, Crepsley falls and is impaled on the stakes below. Shan vows to stay until the fire burns out so they can retrieve Crepsley's body for a proper burial. Burgess escorts Debbie out of the tunnel to wait for them. Steve asks to tell Shan a secret before they leave, so Shan steps to the side with Steve and Harst. Steve whispers into Shan's ear and when Shan tries to yell the news to Vancha, Harst knocks Shan out with the Vampire sleeping gas.

## Chapters 19 and 20 Analysis

Steve's secret foreshadows the Vampets and Vampaneze attacking the remaining Vampires. It might also be another bloody attack on humans.



# Chapter 21

## Chapter 21 Summary

Shan wakes up from being unconscious and doesn't know what's going on. He remembers when he sees the charred bodies of Crepsley and Steve Leopard. He asks his companions how long he had been out. Vancha tells Shan he had been out for about three hours. Vancha and Harkat start to make plans to recover Crepsley's body so they can bury him, but Shan tells them it doesn't matter. He tells them Steve's secret is that they used a decoy to act as the Lord of Vampaneze, so the person they killed hadn't been the real Lord. Shan says Steve has revealed who the real Lord of the Vampaneze is—and it's Steve.

## Chapter 21 Analysis

Since the Vampires didn't kill the real Lord of the Vampaneze, it foreshadows that the War of Scars will rage on. The "To be continued..." at the end of the novel reveals that there is a follow-up novel to this one where the war between Shan's group and Steve's group does, in fact, continue.





# Characters

## Darren Shan

Darren Shan is the Vampire Prince. He is a teenager and is half-human and half-vampire. He is also the leader of the group in the novel that is on the hunt to find and kill the Lord of the Vampaneze in order to win the War of Scars.

When Darren enrolls in school, he does so under the name of Darren Horston. At the Cirque de Freak, which is not fully defined in the novel, Darren is best friends with Steve Leonard. Now Steve is Darren's enemy. Darren's ex-girlfriend, Debbie, is taken hostage and is one of the people Darren tries to save while also hunting down and killing the Lord of the Vampaneze.

## Tiny Desmond

Tiny Desmond is the person responsible for sending Darren and the other Vampires to hunt down and kill the Lord of the Vampaneze, which are the purple-skinned cousins of the Vampires. Tiny Desmond sets the rules on how the battles of the War of Scars take place.

For example, he institutes a rule that says that only a Vampire can hunt and kill the Lord of the Vampaneze, in order for the War of Scars to be won by the Vampires. The only Vampires allowed on the hunt include Darren, Vancha March and Larten Crepsley. The rest of Darren's group has to be non-Vampires.

On the Vampaneze side, Tiny Desmond sets the rule that only a Vampaneze and not the Vampets that live with the Vampaneze can kill Vampires in the battle.

## Vancha March

Vancha March is another one of the Vampires. He is working with Darren, Crepsley and the Little Person to hunt and kill the Lord of the Vampaneze. Vancha is also a Vampire Prince. Because he has more experience in battle than Darren, Vancha often takes the lead in plotting, planning and leading the group into the tunnels of the Vampaneze.

Vancha's brother, Gannen Harts, is the Lord of the Vampaneze's protector, which puts Vancha and his estranged brother on opposite sides of the war. Vancha takes a Vampet hostage when the group first escapes the Vampaneze tunnels. Vancha tortures and eventually kills the Vampet to obtain information from him.

Vancha's weapon of choice is shurikens. Shurikens are small metal stars that he throws—similar to Chinese stars.



## Larten Crepsley

Larten Crepsley is also a Vampire who is on Darren's team to hunt down and kill the Lord of the Vampaneze. Crepsley is an older Vampire and is responsible for teaching Darren lessons throughout Darren's life and the novel.

When Darren's group escapes from the prison, Crepsley injures his ankle. When the group is running from the angry mob, police and soldiers, Crepsley has to be helped along because of his injury.

It's Crepsley who goes up on the platform in the Vampaneze tunnels to try to kill the Lord of the Vampaneze. Crepsley sacrifices his own life for the cause.

## Harkat Mulds

Harkat Mulds is a Little Person. He is traveling with Darren and his group on their quest to find and kill the Lord of the Vampaneze. He has trouble breathing the normal air, so he has to wear a breathing mask to keep him alive.

When the group is taken prisoner by the police, the police don't really know what Harkat is. They take his blood to try to figure out if he is a Vampire. When Harkat tells them that the handcuffs are hurting his wrists and ankles, they remove them, which makes it easier for Harkat to get away when they escape the prison.

When they return to the tunnels of the Vampaneze, the Vampaneze allow Harkat to go with the women. Harkat does help to fight off the Vampaneze when Burgess gets hold of the rifle from one of her own police officers, who also happens to be a Vampet.

## Debbie Hemlock

Debbie Hemlock is Darren's ex-girlfriend. Debbie is taken hostage by the Vampaneze. Darren plans to free Debbie from the Vampaneze when the group returns to the tunnels to kill the Lord of the Vampaneze. Debbie is set free before Darren is supposed to fight with the Lord, but she ends up helping Burgess fend off Vampaneze while Crepsley tries to kill the Lord.

## Steve Leopard

Steve Leopard's real name is Steve Leonard. The Vampires call him Steve Leopard because Steve is now their enemy and is always trying to attack them. Steve is Darren's former best friend. Steve has a grudge against Darren because he thinks Darren tried to kill him when they had been at the Cirque de Freak.



Steve is taken hostage when the group leaves the tunnels. He confesses to Darren and his group that he had been involved in creating the obstacles and the mazes to fool the group as they maneuver the tunnels to try to find the Lord of the Vampaneze.

When Steve breaks out of the prison, he kills a couple of nurses and injures some guards to make his escape. When Darren and his group arrive in the tunnels, Steve is already there waiting for them. Steve is with the Lord of the Vampaneze and Vancha's brother. At the end of the novel, Steve reveals that he is actually the Lord of the Vampaneze.

## **RV**

RV's real name is Reggie Veggie, but RV claims it stands for Righteous Vampaneze. He is an insane Vampaneze who has hooks for hands. His real hands were bitten off by the Wolf-Man at the Cirque de Freak. RV blames Darren for the accident. It's RV whom Darren and his group trick into leading them to the Lord of the Vampaneze.

RV, however, is working with Steve so he helps Steve to lure Darren and his group into the tunnels to fight with them and win the War of Scars. RV is the one who takes Debbie Hemlock hostage.

## **Gannen Harst**

Gannen Harst is Vancha March's estranged brother. Gannen is responsible for protecting the Lord of the Vampaneze from being attacked and killed by the Vampires.

## **Chief Inspector Burgess**

Chief Inspector Burgess is a woman in charge of the police who are hunting for the Vampires. She thinks Darren and his crew are human killers. Vancha takes her hostage as they escape the apartment building in which the police have Darren and his crew surrounded.

When Darren, Crepsley and Harkat meet Vancha back in the tunnels, Vancha still has Burgess. Burgess doesn't believe that the Vampires are the good guys and the Vampets are the bad guys. She changes her mind when she sees her first Vampet.

Burgess ends up fighting off the Vampets and Vampaneze to help the Vampires. She even overtakes one of her own officers, who is a Vampaneze who has been posing as a police officer.



# Objects/Places

## Shurikens

Shurikens are small metal throwing stars. They are the weapon of choice for Vancha March. He uses the throwing stars to try to kill Steve Leonard and the Lord of the Vampaneze.

## Apartments

The apartments are in an abandoned building the Vampires are using as their home base. The apartments do not have any electricity. When the group escapes from the tunnels, they return to the apartments to rest, eat, clean their wounds and wait for night to fall so they can return to the tunnels. While the Vampires are in the apartments, the police and the army surround the building.

## Underground Tunnels

The underground tunnels are where the Vampaneze live. These tunnels are where Steve Leonard leads Darren and the rest of the Vampires so the Vampaneze can try to kill them. It's also the tunnels where the Vampaneze keep Debbie hostage. Additionally, the Vampaneze set up traps and mazes for Darren and his group to go through in order to lure the vampires to the fire pit with stakes.

## Police Station

The police station is where the police take Darren and the rest of the Vampires when they capture them. The police officers question the group to try to get them to confess to killing the humans. While this is taking place in the station, Steve manages to kill some nurses and injure some guards to escape. Eventually, Darren and his group are also able to escape the prison to continue to carry out their mission to kill the Lord of the Vampaneze.

## Store

While running from the angry mob, Darren goes into a store to buy some suntan lotion for Crepsley. Since Crepsely's skin is sensitive to the sun, the lotion allows Crepsely to protect himself long enough for them to find a hiding place until night comes. It's while Darren is in the store that he sees a newscast about himself and his group. When the people in the store see the picture on the news is Darren, they start to chase him and the other Vampires.



## **Silo**

Darren, Crepsley and Harkat take refuge in an abandoned silo. They rest and eat in the silo until the sun goes down and the night comes. When it's time to meet Vancha in the tunnels, they leave the silo.

## **Richard's Room**

Darren climbs into Richard's bedroom of his house. Richard is a former schoolmate of Darren's. When Richard sees Darren, however, he screams to his parents that there are Vampires in his room. Crepsley puts Richard in a sleeping state and they escape his room before Richard's parents hear the commotion.

## **Fire Pit**

The Vampaneze lead Darren and his group in the tunnels to a cavern. The cavern contains a big pit with stakes sticking up all through it. When Steve emerges on the platform standing over the pit, he throws a match into the pit, which sets it on fire.

## **Platform**

The platform is a foundation that juts out over the fire pit. Steve, the Lord of the Vanpaneze, and Gannen Harst stand on the platform. Crepsley climbs up onto the platform to try to kill the Lord of the Vampaneze, which Crepsley ultimately accomplishes.

## **Weapons**

When Darren and his group enter the tunnels of the Vampaneze again, they realize they forgot to bring weapons with them. Vancha points out a pile of abandoned weapons that the Vampaneze left when they came to clear away the dead bodies in the tunnels. Darren and his group arm themselves with these weapons to find and kill the Lord of the Vampaneze.



# Themes

## Good versus Evil

The primary plot throughout the entire novel is that of good versus evil. Biblical symbolism can be found throughout the book. Darren has an inner struggle with good versus evil and so do each of the characters that are involved in the story.

Darren and Crepsley have a discussion in the middle of the novel, where they contemplate whether someone is born evil or chooses to be that way. Crepsley warns Darren not to let the evilness of others get to him and affect his life as the Vampire Prince.

Right before Crepsley dies, he tells Darren not to allow evil to affect Darren's future. Crepsley tells Darren that he sacrificed his life for the War of Scars. He goes on to say that Darren should not avenge his death because Crepsley believes he has stopped the evilness by killing the Lord of the Vampaneze.

In the end, it seems as if evil has won out over good. Steve has fooled the Vampires into killing a decoy acting as the Lord of the Vampaneze. This trap allows Steve, who is really the Lord of the Vampaneze, to escape and the war to continue to rage.

## Coming of Age

One of the primary themes that runs throughout the novel is growing up and coming of age, even against adversity, such as having to fight battles in a war. Darren struggles with the fact that his coming of age requires him to act as the Vampire Prince. In his role as the Vampire Prince, Darren must lead the other Vampires into a battle that allows them to kill the Lord of the Vampaneze and win the War of Scars.

During his coming of age, Darren looks to his elders for advice. Crepsley and Vancha are both older Vampires who have more experience than Darren. While Darren's word is the ultimate word, Darren often turns to his elders for advice and guidance on how they should handle certain situations as they arise in the novel.

In the process, Darren also has to deal with choosing between the girl he loves, Debbie, and winning the war for his people. He struggles in making the choice between saving Debbie and saving an entire race—the Vampires.

## Friendship/Relationships

Friendships and relationships are a third major theme that runs throughout the novel. First, there is the line that separates the classes of the Vampaneze from the Vampires.



Second, it is even the class of relationships that exist among the Vampires, Vampets and Vampaneze.

Darren seems to have a demeanor where he gets along with most of the Vampires. Some of the people whom Darren once considered his friends, Steve and RV, however, turn against him because they blame him for their own fates. In the midst of fighting off his enemies, Darren also has to contend with his romantic feelings for his former girlfriend, Debbie.

While they have been in a romantic situation in the past, after Darren saves Debbie from the Vampaneze, it seems as if they might get back together. By the end of the novel, Darren realizes who his true friends are and who his true love is.

# Style

## Point of View

The novel is written in the first person point of view, from the perspective of Darren Shan, who is also the author and narrator of the novel. The novel swings back and forth between the present and the past. The present represents the time when the characters are hunting down and trying to kill the Lord of the Vampaneze. The past represents the time in history that led the characters in the novel to choose the sides of the war they are currently fighting and reveals why some of the characters hold grudges against other characters.

The point of view of this novel is intimate, allowing a reader to connect closely with the main character, Darren Shan. The book written in this manner allows the reader to get inside Darren's head, thoughts and inner struggles. The reader cares what happens to the narrator even though he has struggles between good and evil. The point of view also allows the author to inject his own opinions into the narration and to expand on the events taking place around the other characters.

## Setting

The novel is set primarily in the underground tunnels where the Vampaneze live. The setting also includes the city that lies directly above the tunnels. The novel seems to be set in the future. The main characters are involved in the War of Scars, which is a battle for control between the Vampires and the Vampaneze, which are the purple-blood cousins of the Vampires.

The setting of this novel works well with the plot. At first, the reader is not aware that the character that seems one of the most innocent characters, Shan, is possibly one of the most powerful as the Vampire Prince. However, as events unfold, Shan's role is a constant part of the plot, the lives of the characters and even the outcome of the novel.

## Language and Meaning

The language of this novel is relatively simple and easy to read. The author, however, interjects many foreign words to fit into the setting of the novel. The language is from the 21st century but also includes words that are made up to fit the world of Vampires and Vampaneze. The language is descriptive enough that it helps to explain the situations, but is not always detailed enough for the reader to truly understand.



## Structure

The novel is divided into a prologue and 21 chapters. The length of each chapter ranges from two pages to 12 pages long. The chapters tell the story primarily in exposition and some dialogue. The narrator injects his own voice and thoughts throughout the book, providing his opinions and feelings of the events unfolding in the novel.

The novel contains one main plot and several subplots. The main plot is the struggle of human beings in choosing between good and evil. One subplot is the coming of age of each of the characters. Another subplot is the relationships that the characters form amongst each other.



## Quotes

"It was weird, the way they let us leave. I know Gannen said it was to spare the lives of his companions, but if they'd killed us, they were guaranteed victory in the War of the Scars. I think there's more to it than he was letting on."  
Chap. 1, p. 13

"Mr. Tiny said he had to kiss himself to ensure victory."  
Chap. 2, p. 25

"It is not the end of the world if we are captured."  
Chap.3, p. 36

"I'll give you until midnight. If you aren't there by then, I'll go after him alone."  
Chap. 4, p. 43

"Yes, he's Darren Horston. He enrolled with Mahler's on the..."  
Chap. 5, p. 56

"Yes, and proud to serve the rightful rulers of the night."  
Chap. 6, p. 70

"I was not expecting you so soon."  
Chap.7, p. 79

"That's them—the Vampires!"  
Chap. 8, p. 95

"Vuh-vuh-vampire!"  
Chap. 9, p. 109

"The Vampaneze might taunt you with her."  
Chap. 10, p. 119

"If we run into these Vampaneze, and they're all that you say, I'll throw my lot in with



you. If we don't..."  
Chap. 11, p. 129

"Was that one of those Vampaneze you've been talking about?"  
Chap. 12, p. 138

"Great. So I have a one in five chance of making it across alive."  
Chap. 13, p. 142

"If I can create a bit of space, and provide firing cover, d'you reckon you or Crepsley could get up there?"  
Chap. 14, p. 160

"My hands! My hands!"  
Chap. 15, p. 169

"Hush boy. Larten knows what he's doing."  
Chap. 16, p. 176

"Even in death, may I be triumphant!"  
Chap. 18, p.188

"You did not get rid of me that easily!"  
Chap. 19, p. 192

"I want to tell him."  
Chap. 20, p. 198

"Steve Leopard is the Lord of the Vampaneze."  
Chap. 21, p. 206

## Topics for Discussion

Who is the true Darren Shan? Why has he chosen to lead a crew of Vampires to kill the Lord of the Vampaneze? Do you believe Darren is innocent or guilty of the attacks RV and Steve accuse him of? If Darren is innocent, who really attacked RV and Steve at the Cirque de Freak?

Who is the true Steve Leonard? Why has he chosen to stop being best friends with Darren Shan? Did you suspect Steve as the real Lord of the Vampaneze? Do you think Steve is the Lord or is just telling Darren that to continue the war?

Discuss the relationship between Darren and Crepsley. Are they friends, colleagues or do they have a father and son type relationship? Is there true competition in their relationship? How does Darren feel about Crepsley? How does Crepsley feel about Darren? How do Darren's feelings change after Crepsley dies? What does Darren do about it? What happens to Darren and Crepsley?

Who is the Lord of the Vampaneze? Is he a real person or a fake identity? Why do you think Steve refuses to divulge the true identity of the Lord until the end? What role does Steve play in the novel, which you discover at the end?

Why do the Vampaneze hide the identity of the Lord? Do you think Darren suspects the Lord is a decoy? Why do you think Steve reveals his true identity at the end of the novel? What do you think Darren and his crew do when they leave the tunnels?

Discuss the attacks on humans. What impact do the attacks have on the characters of the novel? How does it motivate them and how does it derail their lives? Who ultimately is responsible for the attacks?

Is Steve a Vampaneze? Is he playing both sides of the war? What are his motives for doing what he does?