

The Vampire Diaries: The Awakening and the Struggle Study Guide

**The Vampire Diaries: The Awakening and the Struggle
by L. J. Smith**

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Plot Summary

The first two books (The Awakening & The Struggle) are collected into the first volume of The Vampire Diaries by L.J. Smith, and form the first part of an ongoing series of vampire romance. Set in the fictional town of Fells Church, somewhere in modern North America, we find our protagonist Elena Gilbert, a teenage girl just about to attend her last year at Robert E Lee High School when she becomes entranced by the mysterious newcomer Stefan Salvatore. What ensues is a dark romance between the two protagonists as Elena Gilbert discovers that Stefan is in fact a centuries old vampire, who is locked into a terrifying feud with his older brother Damon.

During the first book, The Awakening, Elena first decides to 'catch' Stefan for herself, not knowing the danger in which she is about to place herself. Stefan tries to resist her advances but is himself drawn to the strange similarities between this young woman and his only other lover, Katherine, who turned him into a vampire. As Stefan gives in and admits his feelings for Elena, a series of vicious attacks rocks the town and the finger of blame points towards Stefan as the source of these crimes. It is only when Elena tries to protect him and accidentally finds out that he is in fact a vampire, alive since the Renaissance era, that she truly begins to understand the nature of the horror surrounding her.

In the second novella of the first volume (The Struggle), what follows is a fight for Elena's affections and indeed her soul as Stefan's older brother is unmasked as the real culprit behind the horrible attacks and tries to win Elena for himself by charm or by force. As the danger solidifies around her, her life is further complicated by a rival known as Caroline who steals her diary and attempts to use it to humiliate Elena and drive Stefan out of town. As Stefan's and Elena's love grows, Elena realizes that she is facing more than physical or social danger as she starts to be seduced by the dangerous allure of the evil vampire Damon.

Accompanying Elena on her journey is her trio of mortal human friends Bonnie, Meredith and Matt who are unwitting pawns in this game that Damon is playing, and who try to protect their friend without really understanding what is happening around her.



The Awakening, Chapters 1-2

The Awakening, Chapters 1-2 Summary

The Vampire Diaries by L.J. Smith is the coming of age tale of a young high school student (Elena Gilbert) who has to negotiate her growing feelings for a mysterious newcomer to town, Stefan Salvatore. Through the course of the two books, The Awakening and The Struggle, we accompany Elena as she finds out that she is caught in a centuries-old feud between the vampires Stefan and his brother Damon, both fighting for her affections. It is through facing these challenges that she comes to understand her own feelings and learn more about what true love and sacrifice really is.

At the start of The Awakening in Chapter One, we find the main protagonist Elena Gilbert returning home to the fictional North American town of Fells Church, accompanied by her Aunt Judith and her younger sister Margaret. We learn that they have been holidaying in the South of France with her family, during the summer break before her final year at school.

The story starts with an entry in Elena's diary in which Elena reveals that she is feeling anxious and has a sense of foreboding about the coming year. When she arrives home she misses her parents and is fancifully expecting them to be awaiting her arrival. We later learn that both of her parents are deceased and herself and her sister Margaret are being cared for by her Aunt and Uncle. This fact, coupled by her new and final year ahead of her fills her with a sense of loneliness and unease.

Her first morning before school paints the picture of Elena as a bright and breezy character, forgoing breakfast and bustling quickly out the door, eager to get to grips with her new challenge. On the way there however, her feelings of foreboding come back when she spies a large black crow eyeing her curiously, and so she scares it away by chucking a rock at it.

The chapter ends by introducing the other main protagonist of the book, a boy named Stefan who is out in the woods surrounding Fells Church the morning before school, and has apparently just hunted and killed a rabbit. Stefan himself is experiencing similar feelings to Elena as he admits to himself that he is nervous over whether he can settle quietly in Fells Church. A large black crow disturbs him and the author reveals to the reader some of the nature of Stefan's powers, because his senses are sharper and keener than normal folk.

In Chapter Two of the Awakening, Elena arrives at Robert E Lee High School and is instantly surrounded by her circle of friends Meredith, Bonnie and Caroline. We find out that Elena herself is at the top of the social ladder at school and her friends are the 'top set' in their social peer group. With the arrival of the mysterious Stefan Salvatore in his dark shades, black clothing and handsome good looks he instantly causes a stir and Elena decides that she must 'have' him as a trophy. Throughout the rest of the day she



tries to make him notice her stunning good looks but Stefan appears to just walk past without even being aware of her existence, a fact that infuriates Elena. Elena Gilbert watches as Stefan manages to strangely convince the School Secretary that there is no problem with his enrollment, and overhears him when he corrects their European History Teacher, a Mr. Tanner, telling him he is wrong over the schooling of children in the Early Renaissance. Elena become even more determined to have an impact on the strange newcomer to the school when she has an argument with her friend Caroline and finds out that Caroline is also vying for his attentions.

Chapter Two ends with the perspective of Stefan, who has indeed noticed Elena and is desperately trying to not be aware of her since he is able to sense her mind almost telepathically. She reminds him of a woman in his past known as Katherine.

The Awakening, Chapters 1-2 Analysis

The first two chapters of *The Awakening* (*The Vampire Diaries*) introduce the reader to the two main protagonists, Elena and Stefan, and emphasize Elena's character the most heavily.

We are shown a young girl who is at the center of her social group, and can be considered quite self-centered in her single minded determination to hunt the attractive newcomer Stefan Salvatore, and her expectation of a response from him when she tries to put herself in his way. She is not a wholly selfish character, nor ignorant of others' feelings as we look a little deeper into her emotions through the medium of her diary entries and discover that she actually feels quite intensely alone and lonely; a result of having lost her parents and the isolation she feels from being at the very top of her social peer group. The author is painting for us a picture of a successful girl in High School who is still capable of much more; we can see as readers, as she matures through the course of the novel and encounters new dangers, that she will probably change and these feelings that she usually reserves for her diaries she will be able to express more frankly with her friends. In short, she will become a more emotionally responsible person.

Elena Gilbert's character is also contrasted in a similar fashion to Stefan's; they are both painted as outsiders in some sense; Elena has lost her parents and feels alone in the world even though she has friends while Stefan is obviously alone in the world, keeping his thoughts to himself and wandering in the woods to hunt with no friends.

We have an intimation of the nature of Stefan's powers as we are shown that he has keener senses, that he can 'sense' minds and seemingly convince people (the school secretary) to help him. He also has a deep understanding of the Renaissance that he exhibits to Mr Tanner at school, almost as if he had been there.



The Awakening, Chapters 3-4

The Awakening, Chapters 3-4 Summary

In Chapter Three of *The Awakening*, the chapter starts with Stefan in his boarding house thinking over the day's events. He is worried that he gave too much away that day with himself correcting the European History Teacher, Mr Tanner, and consoles himself that he should not be surprised that attending school is bringing back his own memories of his previous schooling.

Stefan reminisces about his father, brother and Katherine. In the following flashback scene Stefan is seeing the arrival of his brother Damon from University. They are living in Renaissance-era Italy. His brother has just quit university in Florence, Italy and their father Giuseppe is furious with him, shouting that Damon will become a layabout and a rogue. Stefan tries to mollify the two, but really sides with his father as he is as different from his selfish brother Damon as light is from dark. At that point they are interrupted by their house guest, the lady Katherine who is a pale beauty who never seems to come out during the sun. Stefan is totally in love with her, and we understand that Giuseppe hopes that Stefan will marry the noblewoman Katherine. However, his heart suddenly changes when he sees Katherine giving Damon one of her secret smiles as if she were attracted to him. Stefan's enmity with his brother intensifies. As the flashback vanishes Stefan is distraught from these memories and wonders if an abomination like himself could ever know peace even here in the quiet little town of Fells Church.

The narrative jumps to Elena the next morning as she wakes up early and steals out of the house to meet Matt, her once boyfriend and football star of the previous year. Matt is an 'all-American' kind of hero; a football star, good looking and clean cut who is unsurprised when Elena informs him that she is breaking up with him but that she wants to remain friends. Matt obviously cares about her but seems to be expecting the news, and is good natured about the breakup, even when he guesses correctly that it is because of Stefan Salvatore.

Later that day at school Stefan is confronted by the school bullies, Tyler Smallwood and Dick, who try to block his way but the arrival of Matt scares them off. During class, Matt asks whether Stefan would like to try out for football with him, a proposition Stefan turns down. When Elena initiates her plan to encounter Stefan by pretending to be a part of the Welcoming Committee, Stefan backs away and snubs her, hurriedly changing his mind and saying that he must go try out for football practice. Elena is humiliated and ashamed.

In Chapter Four, we find Elena upset that she has had next to no impact on Stefan and she is at home alone. She feels badly about being ignored, humiliated and alone. She decides to leave to visit her parents' gravesite at Fells Church Cemetery. There we discover that this is one of the places that Elena likes to go to think, and to talk to her parents at their gravesite. There her friends Meredith and Bonnie find her and comfort



her, Bonnie revealing that she is descended from Druids and 'knew' where Elena was going to be. Together they make a blood pact by pricking their thumbs together and mingling their blood, agreeing to keep silent and to help Elena get Stefan Salvatore in any way that she can.

The Awakening, Chapters 3-4 Analysis

During these two chapters the relationship between the two characters is deepened and we can see a sense of inevitability about their eventual partnership in the way that the characters are privately enamored of each other. Elena keeps on thinking about Stefan, and is fairly smitten at first with attraction, and then by the feeling that she cannot control him. Most other boys and indeed her friends in her social circle revolve around her desires and wants; she is the center of attention, and it is only Stefan who appears to be able to make her feel unsure of herself and nervous.

In the case of Stefan he is entranced by Elena's strength of character and her likeness to his former lover, Katherine. Elena is the only person in the school who holds this fascination and through showing the reader their innermost thoughts and feelings, the author is foreshadowing for the reader that they will eventually, fatalistically, be partners of some kind or another. They appear to be two trains on a collision course, unable to change their direction.

The author switches between the two main protagonists in third and second person narrative, telling us what they do and what they feel inside their heads; and this further highlights the tension between them as we (the reader) can see their relationship from both angles. We can see how they are both trying to understand what they feel and not really allowing themselves to confront it directly. Elena is still being somewhat immature in her blood oath with her friends, thinking that she can 'have' Stefan as if he were a normal boy, not as yet understanding Stefan's true nature.

We are also presented with intimations of the future horror, as we see from Stefan's perspective the fact that he was alive during the renaissance, that he hunts animals apparently with his bare hands and that he is active during the hours of night.

Their characters can be contrasted as polar opposites but with similar cores that set them apart from the surrounding crowd. Elena is a girl who is surrounded by her social support group and for whom the world of appearances, make-up and mutual respect has been very important, whereas Stefan is almost the complete opposite, a loner who has no peer group to turn to and is thus intensely alone. What sets them apart from their crowd is the fact that they feel so deeply and that they are both alone in the world in one sense or another (Elena losing her parents, and Stefan losing everyone he ever knew, and especially Katherine).



The Awakening, Chapters 5-6

The Awakening, Chapters 5-6 Summary

Chapter 5 begins from Stefan's point of view the same night that Meredith and Bonnie find Elena at her parents graveside in Fells Church Cemetery. Stefan had been watching the girls and is fighting his need for the hunt. As the girls get frightened and flee the Cemetery, Stefan gives in finding an old tramp under Wickery Bridge, and proceeds to bite him and drink his blood.

Back at the boarding house Stefan where is staying, he reminisces over finding out Katherine's vampire nature. She had first explained to him that, as a child, she had been very sick and it was only when a strange nobleman named Klaus had wooed her and swapped blood with her had she felt better. Katherine, Stefan's former lover in the Renaissance period, had been turned into a vampire. She had had a magical ring made, one which allowed her to walk in daylight and not get burned by the sun.

The next day finds Elena and her friends at school, ready to start fulfilling their blood oath and their next plan to capture Stefan for Elena. Elena pretends to have met a French boy while on holiday and appears uninterested in Stefan to the rest of the school. Afterwards, the trio go back to Bonnie's house. There they meet Mary, Bonnie's sister, who is a staff nurse at the local clinic. She informs them that they should be more careful, that an old tramp had been found barely alive under Wickery Bridge, his throat torn out. Elena and the girls are frightened, because it is the very night that they had been at the Cemetery and, coupled with Bonnie's strange premonition, sends chills up Elena's spine.

Chapter Six starts with another extract from Elena's diary, one in which she reveals just how scared she has become after the old man was attacked, and that her feelings for Stefan have deepened. Luckily, that next day she is to become the Homecoming Queen of the Ball, with Matt as her King, and she has a plan. She again meets Matt before school and tells him that she is sorry about the rumor about her French boyfriend, and that she made it up to cover her real feelings for Stefan. Matt is not surprised, and tells her that she wants everything to revolve around her, but still agrees to help her attract Stefan at the Homecoming Ball.

At the Homecoming Ball, Elena approaches Stefan and asks him to dance thinking that as Queen she cannot be refused, but Stefan merely says nothing and her once friend Caroline whisks him away to spite her. Elena is again humiliated and proceeds to flirt with every boy in the room, ending up with the rough Tyler Smallwood and his friends Vickie and Dick. Wanting to make a show of herself, Elena parties with the boisterous crowd and, at the end of the night, when Tyler suggests they all go to Fells Church Cemetery, Elena agrees.



The Awakening, Chapters 5-6 Analysis

In these two Chapters Stefan's vampire nature is finally revealed although, as readers, we have long suspected what the truth about the mysterious Stefan Salvatore actually is. The Chapter splits itself into the familiar Light and Dark format of two narratives; one taking place in the daylight and comprising mainly Elena's life from Elena's viewpoint while the other takes place in the dark of night and is generally narrated from Stefan's viewpoint. The use of this style helps to contrast the two main protagonists against each other, highlighting Stefan's strange and vampire nature being at odds with the daylight world of Elena Gilbert. It also allows the narrative of the entire story to flow continuously, giving the sense that the story doesn't break when the characters go to sleep or do mundane things, but continues on through the night from another viewpoint.

Even though the danger and horror is mounting around Elena since hearing about the old man attacked underneath Wickery Bridge, we see that she is caught up in her own frustrated emotions for Stefan, which is why she makes up the rumour about her French boyfriend. At this point in the story, readers can see that Matt is right when he says that Elena is not being nasty, but is definitely being selfish by expecting all of her friends to help her get Stefan for herself. As the author allows us to see inside Elena's mind from the point of view of her diaries, we can see that she really has no choice, but she is not allowed to express her feelings for Stefan because she keeps getting thwarted by Caroline and Stefan himself.

The sense of fear and abandon is increased at the end of Chapter Six as we see Elena, annoyed and angry, agree to go back to Fells Church cemetery with Tyler Smallwood. We can see that she is heading into danger after the attack, and Bonnie's premonition the few nights before. We can see that Elena is being stupid in her choice of friends, but we can sympathize with her as she feels more hurt and alone the further we get into the story. Elena is lashing out at the world in general when she decides to party with Tyler Smallwood. She also lashes out at Stefan and Caroline, because she as yet does not understand the depths of feelings that Stefan has for her, and cannot understand why he is snubbing her.



The Awakening, Chapters 7-8

The Awakening, Chapters 7-8 Summary

In Chapter Seven of The Awakening, The Vampire Diaries, we pick up on escalating events as Elena's friends Meredith and Bonnie see her leaving with Tyler Smallwood. Meredith enlists Bonnie and Matt to go after her knowing just what a creep Tyler Smallwood can be.

Elsewhere, Elena arrives at Fells Church and they proceed to break into the church. Elena is trying to be more and more outrageous, laughing at every joke but there is a small part of her that is horrified at the turn of events. Inside she feels glacial and cold. Tyler leads them to the main crypt of the Church, where the quartet of people start joking around. Elena swears that she sees the main crypt move all of a sudden, but no one else does. When the partying gets even more boisterous, Elena decides that enough is enough, and that she wants Tyler to take her home. Tyler agrees reluctantly, but instead guides her towards Wickery Bridge where he tries to kiss her. That attempt fails, but instead Tyler grabs her and starts to grope her. When she bites him hard, he looks ready to explode into anger and beat her into submission.

Just as Tyler is about to beat Elena, he is suddenly heaved off of her and thrown against a gravestone. Standing over them both is Stefan Salvatore. Stefan very calmly announces that Tyler is not being gentlemanly, and as Tyler starts to fight back very precisely beats him to a pulp. Elena is grateful but scared of the cold precision found in Stefan, and begs him to stop. Stefan comes to in a daze and, seeing the torn dress and the state that she is in, offers to take her home. They agree to go back to Stefan's boarding house, which is closer, so Elena can get cleaned up.

Chapter Eight begins in Stefan's boarding room, where Elena is calming down from her attack. She notices that all around her are strange artifacts including an archaic dagger and a Florentine coin. Stefan tries to be stiff and formal, not engaging with her emotionally, and Elena gets angry accusing him of snubbing her and humiliating her when he must know how she feels for him. Stefan still tries to resist her, but his resolve seems to be shattering. Reluctantly, he tells her that he too has feelings for her, but that he cannot because Elena reminds him of a lover that he once had and lost (Katherine). Swept up by the drama and the anguish found in Stefan, Elena approaches him and tries to comfort him. Her gentleness overcomes his high defenses and he crumbles, bending to kiss her.

The narrative jumps to the trio Matt, Meredith and Bonnie as they are out searching for Elena. They arrive at Fells Church to find a scratched and hysterical Vickie emerging from the grounds. Vickie is half mad, screaming about 'eyes' and a darkness which came to her and Dick in the Church after Elena and Tyler left, that the darkness held her and all she could see were two glowing eyes. Vickie has been attacked.



Stefan escorts Elena home, to arrive back at her house where she finds her Aunt and Uncle, Matt, Meredith, Bonnie and a police officer waiting for her return. They all tell her what has happened to Vickie, and that everyone is out searching for her. The group start to get suspicious of Stefan, but the Chapter ends with Elena telling the group that it had been Tyler Smallwood who attacked her.

The Awakening, Chapters 7-8 Analysis

Chapters Seven and Eight represent the midway point in the first book, *The Awakening*, of the Vampire diaries. The story reaches a crescendo where we see, in part, some of the deadly power that Stefan has in comparison to normal humans. We also see just how strange he is compared to them when he is fighting Tyler Smallwood, removed and detached. This midway point also moves the story along by introducing a second element of danger, that of the mysterious force that exists around Fells Church and attacks Vickie Bennett.

All of the characters are caught up in this drama, and as yet, Elena is still really quite passive in her reactions, not realizing that it is partly her fault for putting herself into that situation and being saved by Stefan.

In these two chapters we can compare the different types of threat and horror implicit in the narrative. One is the horror of Stefan and his capacity for killing; another is the brute and unthinking Tyler Smallwood, while the final horror is the thing that attacked Vickie Bennett. Stefan's character as a vampire is compared with these other types of dangers and comes off favorably, as he fights to protect Elena's honour, while Tyler is unthinking, cruel and dangerous. The third type of horror, the thing that attacks Vickie Bennett, is the most scary as no one can guess what it is or what its motivations are.



The Awakening, Chapters 9-10

The Awakening, Chapters 9-10 Summary

Chapter Nine begins with Stefan thinking about his feelings for Elena, and how much she reminds him of Katherine. He decides that no, Elena is not the reincarnation of Katherine, but realizes that if he allows himself to get closer to her he might end up hurting her. Stefan is confused over Vickie Bennett's attack, thinking that he must have been the one to do it and to almost kill the old man, although he remembers leaving the old man hurt, but not maimed. His thoughts drift back to Katherine and how he had implored her to turn him into a vampire so many years ago.

Katherine, however, had been torn between Damon and Stefan, as Damon had approached and demanded that Katherine choose him over his brother. Katherine had been distraught over this battle between the brothers and had been unable to choose, fleeing them both and saying that she would return the next twilight with her choice of which brother to take as her lover.

The next morning Elena wakes up feeling tired but joyful at her new romance with Stefan. Her friends Meredith and Bonnie arrive and quiz her over the details. Bonnie then suggests that they go see whether Vickie is all right, and when they arrive they find that Vickie is in bed, as pale as a sheet. The Doctors have given her tranquilizers to calm her down, and when she comes to she is terrified of 'the eyes' and ends up screaming at Elena for her to leave them and that 'she is a part of the evil'.

Disturbed, Elena and her friends leave, instead going to visit Stefan's boarding house where they meet the owner, the elderly Mrs. Flowers, while Elena goes up to Stefan's room. There they embrace and Elena finds the apricot ribbon she dropped in the graveyard so many days ago.

Chapter 10 continues the next day with an extract from Elena's diary as she ponders how many walls there are between herself and Stefan, since he tries to block her out but obviously has feelings for her. After school, Elena and her friends decide to come back to the gymnasium to plan the Halloween Ball, which is Elena's duty as chair of the Decorating Committee. Bonnie decides that she wants to dress up as a Druid because her family is from Scotland and is supposedly descended from the Druids. She suggests that they could make a fake altar as one of the attractions and pretend to 'sacrifice' Coach Lyman. While they are there the lights start to flicker and go out, and Meredith and Bonnie decide to leave to check it out, leaving Elena in the closed gymnasium. Suddenly, a handsome stranger emerges from the shadows and advances on Elena, who suddenly feels forgetful and confused. He gets closer, saying that Elena is looking for something, but Elena manages to resist his advances and flees.



The Awakening, Chapters 9-10 Analysis

Chapters Nine and Ten of The Awakening, first book of The Vampire Diaries, is constructed in much the same way as previously set out - with the ongoing narrative switching between the night time using Stefan's narrative point of view and the daytime from Elena's point of view. This allows us to see the relationship between the two main protagonists from both angles, from Elena's complete joy at having found love in Stefan, and Stefan still trying to understand his feelings. Stefan himself obviously feels a lot for Elena but is yet to say 'I Love You' as we see that he is scared that he might hurt her and scared of revealing his true self to her.

The relationship that they have is further contrasted with a previous important relationship in Stefan's life, the menage a trois among himself, Katherine and Damon. Through the course of these two chapters, and the emergence of this mysterious stranger who is vying for Elena's affections, we can see a horrible synchronicity in these two situations: Stefan and his brother both struggling for the woman to whom they feel drawn.

The emergence of the third character in the modern day, the mysterious stranger we meet in the gymnasium, adds tension and suspense to the narrative, and the reader is allowed to guess whom this character might be in the overall story. In this way, the author is allowing the reader to see 'behind the scenes' and to guess, ahead of the narrative, what might be about to happen.



The Awakening, Chapters 11-12

The Awakening, Chapters 11-12 Summary

Chapter 11 of *The Awakening* begins right after Elena meets her stranger in the gymnasium, bursts out of the room and finds her friends. She is obviously scared but doesn't want to talk about it. The next week passes by quickly, as the trio try to organize the Halloween Ball and Elena sees more of Stefan, all carefully in public and chaperoned by her Aunt.

At the end of the week Elena goes over to her friend Bonnie's house with Meredith to try and finish arranging the Halloween Ball. There her friends again ask her how it is going with Stefan since they are worried about her, and Elena replies that she doesn't really know. Stefan seems to be keeping her at arm's distance and seems to be hiding something. Nearing the stroke of midnight, Bonnie reveals that she knows a spell which will reveal to Elena whom her future lover will be, and says that Elena must perform a simple ceremony on her own at the stroke of midnight.

Elena does this, but as the clock strikes midnight suddenly she turns around to see her mysterious, threatening stranger whom she saw in the gymnasium. Elena believes that he has crept into the house as he flirts with her, trying to get her to kiss him. Again the schoolgirl starts to feel faint and almost swoons before remembering Stefan and pushing the stranger away, telling him to leave the house. When Elena gets back into the house she finds Bonnie upset that her dog Yangtze has mysteriously died, and that her diary is missing.

Elsewhere, further on into the night, we find Stefan feeding off of a doe in the woods surrounding Fells Church and thinking about vampirism. He swears that he will not turn Elena into a vampire, and remembers how, so many years ago, on the night before Katherine was to choose which brother to take as her lover, Katherine came to him and sucked his blood, allowing him to drink hers and turn into a vampire.

Chapter Twelve begins the night of the Halloween Ball, when the trio of friends are too busy to be upset as they usher people into the now decorated gymnasium. Mr. Tanner, the European History teacher, doesn't want to be a sacrifice but Stefan argues with him, using his vampiric powers of persuasion to get him to agree to do it. During the course of the evening there suddenly is a scream and everyone rushes to the Druid attraction, where Bonnie is aghast that the supposedly play-acting Mr. Tanner is, in fact, really dead with his throat slit. Everyone is scared and starts to panic. Suddenly, Tyler Smallwood emerges and loudly shouts that the only one who could have done this is the same person who only recently arrived in Fells Church and who obviously is violent, since he beat Tyler up: Stefan Salvatore. Before the mob gets to him, Matt races to where Stefan is stationed with the refreshments and gets him to leave the gymnasium and the school before the police get there or the mob beats him up.



The Awakening, Chapters 11-12 Analysis

In Chapters 11 and 12, the first book of The Vampire Diaries picks up pace as Elena is threatened again by the mysterious stranger, and numerous things happen which increase the tension: the black crow almost attacking them, the death of Yangtze the dog and the ultimate horrible death of Mr. Tanner.

This is the first part of the book in which anyone has actually died, and the author is quite clearly revealing to us just what is at stake for the people for Fells Church and most particularly for Elena.

The author also uses dramatic tension to give the story more impact. Elena's altercation with the mysterious stranger is split up over two chapters as she encounters him in one, and finally flees from him into the safety of her friends at the start of another.

In these two chapters we see the contrasting goodness of Stefan's character and the terrible horror of his vampirism. Stefan is still undecided about what to do about Elena as he tries to keep their relationship in public, scared that if he were alone with her he would hurt her. Stefan's curse of vampirism can be seen as an analogy of how he is feeling. He feels that he hates himself because he is a vampire and that he cannot be open and honest about himself, or reveal his true personality to the girl he loves. This results in him denying himself and Elena a real and meaningful relationship.



The Awakening, Chapters 13-14

The Awakening, Chapters 13-14 Summary

Chapter Thirteen continues after the Halloween Ball and after the subsequent police questioning of the crowd over Mr. Tanner's death. Tyler accuses the now missing Stefan Salvatore and, as soon as she can, Elena escapes to Stefan's boarding house to see if he is okay.

There she lets herself in but does not find him. Instead she finds his room destroyed, cabinets burst open and their contents thrown about since Stefan had flown into a rage. She hears a noise and creeps up to the roof where she sees Stefan feasting upon a dove. Terrified, she tries to run away from the snarling Stefan in his vampire form but slips and falls from the roof. Before hitting the ground, however, she is caught and held, only to discover that it is Stefan himself who has saved her from death and, now subdued, she follows him back into the boarding house.

Then he explains to Elena that he is a vampire, that he is stronger, quicker and more violent than a normal human and that he must feast on blood, although it doesn't have to be human. He tells her that he was born in Italy during the Renaissance, and that this is why he doesn't want to get close to Elena, for fear of hurting her. He proceeds to tell her of the night that he was made a vampire, and how the next day he had gone joyously to see Katherine, sure that she had chosen him to be her lover. Instead he had found Damon there and discovered that Katherine had also turned him into a vampire. She had given them both magical rings that allow them to exist in the sunshine, and had said that she had chosen both of them to be her companions. Stefan and Damon had been outraged, both saying that neither could stand to be with Katherine while the other is alive, and Katherine had fled, distressed. Back in the present day Stefan is choked with grief as he explains that his first love, Katherine, was killed by himself and his brother.

In Chapter Fourteen the story continues in Stefan's boarding room as Stefan falls into a reverie, remembering those awful times when, during the few days following his transformation, he tried to wait for Katherine's final decision but could not. He had gone to her room to find Damon already there, and Katherine's maid telling them both that Katherine had left to walk in the gardens.

What had then followed is the cause of much of the enmity between Stefan and his brother Damon, as they both had gone searching for Katherine. Stefan had found that she had willingly gone out into the sunlight and taken off her magic ring, burning herself to death. Stefan and Damon had fought, both dealing fatal blows to each other as their father Giuseppe had tried to stop them. They had both woken up in the family crypt where they had fled from each other, Damon going on to become a mercenary in the Italian armies and drinking the blood of humans wherever he could, and Stefan hiding in the shadows and trying to just drink the blood of animals.



Breaking out of his reverie, Stefan tries to scare Elena by showing how quick and strong he is, but she calms him down and tells him that she stills loves him. They kiss and Elena allows him to feed on her. The Chapter ends as Stefan nicks his own throat and allows Elena to feed on him, making them joined together.

The Awakening, Chapters 13-14 Analysis

Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen from the denouement of the first book of The Vampire Diaries, The Awakening. Here, Stefan reveals to Elena the story of how he became a vampire and just why he had been holding her at bay for so long. These two chapters have been foreshadowed by the previous parts of the narrative in the book as we have been listening to Stefan's history through his series of flashbacks.

These two chapters also set up the final showdown of the first book as Elena is able to put all of the pieces together and tells Stefan that he is not the one who has been attacking and killing people, but instead it must be the mysterious stranger who keeps on approaching her, his very own brother Damon.

In Chapter Fourteen, Stefan finally feels able to reveal his inner self and his emotions to the girl whom he loves, and this allows an emotional reconciliation and completeness between the two main protagonists, answering the problems that they have been facing up until this point. In this way, the author is leading us further into the story of the novel since the two main protagonists are now a 'true' partnership and able, together, to face their joint nemesis — the vampire who is threatening the entire town of Fells Church — Damon Salvatore.



The Awakening, Chapters 15-16

The Awakening, Chapters 15-16 Summary

Chapter Fifteen of *The Awakening*, the penultimate chapter of this first book, sees Stefan after he has driven Elena home. He is furious as he drives out to the woods around Fells Church and casts around for his brother Damon.

Damon surprises him, fresh with the blood of the European History Teacher, Mr. Tanner, on him. Damon teases his brother, stating, just as he had so many years ago, that Elena is not for Stefan and that Elena is too strong and fiery for him. Stefan tries to fight his brother but Damon easily overpowers him, telling him that because Stefan has been feeding very little and rarely on humans that he is weak and does not have the advanced powers that he himself has. Damon demonstrates this by uprooting a tree then disappearing in a blur and appearing many yards away before even the super-quick Stefan can turn around. They fight and Damon overpowers him, tearing his throat in the ultimate humiliation. Stefan is still alive, however, and defiantly turns to walk away; but Damon jumps on him and attacks him again, causing him to fall unconscious.

Chapter Sixteen, the final one in this first book, starts with the very next day at school and Elena realizing that everyone in class is avoiding her and wary of her. It seems that Caroline and Tyler have been spreading their accusations about Stefan. When Elena realizes that Stefan is not in class, she asks her friends Meredith and Bonnie if anyone has seen him. They tell her that it is far worse. Stefan's abandoned car had been found that morning by the woods around Fells Church and the police have been looking for him. He is not at his boarding house and everyone thinks he has skipped town because he is guilty of killing Mr. Tanner.

Elena immediately stands up and leaves the class, heading for the woods around the Fells Church Cemetery. There she strides out into the Cemetery and angrily calls for Damon to reveal himself.

The Awakening, Chapters 15-16 Analysis

In these last two Chapters of the first book, we see all of the events of the previous chapters coming to a head. Stefan confronts his brother Damon who had been hiding in the woods and the cemetery around Fells Church and calls him out of hiding. Damon is the same mysterious stranger who has been stalking Elena, and is a darker version of Stefan himself. We can contrast the two vampiric characters against each other. Damon has given in to his vampirism and has become powerful, cruel and evil, while Stefan still tries to deny it and is weaker but thoughtful. We feel that Stefan hates his vampirism while Damon enjoys his, and that Stefan is still 'playing' at being a human. In a sense, Stefan has never accepted his vampiric nature compared to his brother who has completely given in to it.

Damon's motives, as well, are vastly different to Stefan's and Elena's. The latter are motivated out of love and a need to be understood, while Damon just seems to want to possess what he cannot have. Damon in this sense has no real love for Elena or his brother, but is merely indulging in a childlike act of greed and violence.



The Struggle, Chapters 1-2

The Struggle, Chapters 1-2 Summary

The second book of The Vampire Diaries, *The Struggle*, begins in the crescendo of Elena's confrontation with Damon, Stefan's vampire brother. Having called to him at the old Fells Church, Damon arrives surrounded by storm and an unnatural snow.

Damon laughs at the human girl who is demanding that he release Stefan. He tells her that Stefan is not the one she should choose; instead, he tries to entrance her. As he uses his magical powers on her, Elena begins to forget her love for Stefan, but as Damon draws in to bite her she touches the two wounds on her neck where Stefan shared blood with her. She repels at Damon and tells him that he can never have her, a fact that Damon finds annoying but also amusing. He retreats and as he does so, he calls forth a storm of snow and ice to engulf the girl.

In the next chapter we find Elena almost freezing to death by the side of the road when her friends Meredith and Bonnie find her. They bundle her into Meredith's car and take her back home, where her Aunt Judith is terribly worried. When Aunt Judith finds out where she was found she forbids her from going out again, and enlists Bonnie and Meredith to watch over her as she recovers from her beginning fever.

That night Bonnie and Meredith are still at Elena's house looking after her, but Elena is annoyed as if she is being held prisoner when she wants to find Stefan, now knowing that he fought the powerful Damon the night before and could be dead. Elena asks Bonnie to use her psychic powers to help find Stefan, but Bonnie is reluctant, saying that the power can end up controlling oneself rather than the other way around. Elena's friends Meredith and Bonnie are both worried about their friend and ask her why she is so concerned about Stefan even when it looks like he might be a murderer. Elena reveals to her friends that she knows that Stefan isn't the murderer, because she knows who Mr. Tanner's murderer actually is, and that this murderer whom she doesn't name has probably attacked Stefan. In the end, however, because of their blood oath, Bonnie agrees to use her powers and goes into a trance during which she predicts that Stefan feels cold, wet and there are rocks all around him. Before she snaps out of it a second premonition comes to her: Elena shouldn't go to Wickery Bridge because there she will find her death. Bonnie snaps out of her trance and the trio decide to try to find Stefan.

The Struggle, Chapters 1-2 Analysis

The Struggle begins by defining, right from the start, the meaning of the name of the second book. This book is all about the protagonists struggling for their love, struggling against their nemesis Damon and struggling to keep their secrets whereas the first book is all about the awakening of passion, love, maturity and responsibility.



The character of Damon is presented metaphorically as the enemy of all things alive. Although Stefan is also a vampire, his scenes are often about passion, feeling, and blood — the passion and stuff of life itself. Damon, on the other hand, is depicted as dark and cold. When he uses his powers in the 'snow attack' against Elena, this can be read as a metaphor for one of the many ways in which Damon's character is so very different from the rest of all the characters in the book. We can guess that the author is telling us metaphorically that while Stefan is obsessed with blood (passion), Damon is concerned with cold (death) and Elena would not find any passion or 'life' if she chose to go with him.

In this chapter, we see the roles reversed from what they are in the previous book. In *The Awakening*, Elena is more of a subdued 'princess' who has to be saved and is isolated from her friends. In *The Struggle*, Elena decides to confront Damon and turns to her friends to help her find Stefan. She now needs her friends and is not the self-serving and selfish girl who is in the first book.



The Struggle, Chapters 3-4

The Struggle, Chapters 3-4 Summary

Chapter Three of *The Struggle* begins with Elena and her friends Meredith and Bonnie setting out to search Fells Church for Stefan. They escape Elena's room through the window and make their way to Drowning Creek and Wickery Bridge, where they think Bonnie's vision is pointing them. There Elena scrambles under the bridge to search for Stefan, but cannot find him. Bonnie feels that the Wickery Bridge is not right and that they will not find Stefan here, an echo of her morbid premonition that there is 'Death' waiting at Wickery Bridge. When, suddenly, they hear the sound of an approaching car, all three are terrified and scramble to hide under the bridge.

Footsteps are heard passing over the bridge, and when the person stops and lowers themselves down the bank they see that it is Matt, not a murderer. He helps them out and tells them that he has been watching Elena's house because he is worried about her. When they reveal to him that Bonnie had a vision of where Stefan might be Matt appears skeptical, but agrees to help them since they are out alone in the wild. Matt suggests that the facts in Bonnie's vision also point to an old abandoned Well at the abandoned Francher's place.

There they find Stefan, who is freezing to death, starving and has obviously been attacked around his throat. Elena persuades them to take Stefan back to the boarding house and look after him there rather than go straight to the clinic hospital.

In Chapter Four we find Elena, Matt, Stefan, Meredith and Bonnie back at the boarding house, where Elena convinces them to go fetch Mary, Bonnie's sister the nurse, rather than take Stefan to the clinic. In her few minutes alone, Elena forces Stefan to drink some of her blood to try and make him stronger even though he doesn't want to do so. Stefan just manages to pull away before he takes too much and the others come into the room with Mary the nurse. Mary cannot convince them to go to the clinic, but also notices how pale Elena is, who feigns tiredness. Mary inspects Stefan's wounds, which are much healed thanks to Elena's blood, and announces that although he is quite wounded, it is not a serious maiming, and she leaves with Matt. Elena eventually leaves Stefan to his rest, promising to be back the next day to check on him.

The Struggle, Chapters 3-4 Analysis

Chapter Three and Four of *The Struggle* further continue the themes and develop the plot of the previous two chapters, as Elena again has to put her trust in her old friends to help her find Stefan. While Elena is motivated by her love of Stefan, each of her friends has a different motivation which can be summarized as Loyalty. Meredith and Bonnie, although scared, agree to help Elena out of their loyalty to their friend, and Matt helps them all because of his loyalty to them. This can be seen as another theme that runs

through the course of the book and the author forces us to ask how far the characters would go in the name of their loyalty or love for each other.

A part of the unfolding drama between the two main protagonists can be examined in the way that a relationship is not just about attraction, or lust or physical beauty, but is also about sacrifice, loyalty and honesty. In these two chapters the author shows us these other elements, further developing the essential romance at the heart of the story.



The Struggle, Chapters 5-6

The Struggle, Chapters 5-6 Summary

Chapter's Five and Six of *The Struggle* take the conflict between the two groups of characters to a new level, bringing it out into the open. It starts with an extract from Elena's new diary, since the previous one had been stolen, which explains that Stefan's name is, on the face of things, cleared as the police could not find any fault with him, especially since he was attacked himself and left to die in a similar fashion to the other victims.

During the next day at school, there is a new teacher replacing Mr. Tanner. Alaric K Saltzman, instead of teaching, begins by asking the class to talk about what happened in the previous couple of nights and whether they could share their feelings with the class.

The second person to share is Tyler Smallwood, who announces that he feels worried for his community because a dangerous psychopath is already at large and obviously has an axe to grind with certain people in the school. He is, of course, referring to the supposed argument between Stefan and Mr Tanner. Bonnie then speaks about finding the body and breaks down in tears. Their new teacher, Alaric, tries to console them all, announcing that he is having a get-to-know-you party at his house that evening and that they are all welcome to attend, to help share their feelings and heal the hurt that has been done to them.

Later that day, Caroline reveals to Elena that she has been telling the whole school that Stefan is probably the murderer, and that is why everyone is keeping away from Elena.

That evening, at Alaric's party she finds about half of her peer group there, all of whom are trying to ignore Elena and Stefan. Elena goes to get some food where she suddenly bumps into Damon, who is masquerading as a friend of one of the students. Damon teases and tries to once again seduce Elena. Damon is using his powers to paralyze Elena as he comes in for a kiss in front of the party. She manages to resist him as Stefan realizes what he is trying to do and approaches his brother, ready to fight to the death. Elena sees that Damon is instead trying to provoke Stefan to violence so all of the rumors that Stefan is a violent person would seem true and he would be hounded out of town. Elena manages to force Stefan to calm down and gets him to leave, noticing as they do that there is a note slipped into her purse.

The Struggle, Chapters 5-6 Analysis

In these two chapters, we can see the dramatic tension solidifying as the author starts to present two different camps in the book — the protagonists and the antagonists who are struggling against each other. On one side of *The Struggle* is Elena, her friends and Stefan, while on the other side is Damon and, although not allied to him, Caroline and



Tyler Smallwood. These two groups will have to struggle with each other to see who will win by the end of the story - whether through Damon being victorious or being defeated, or Caroline's plan working and Stefan and Elena having been hounded out of the school and Fells Church.

The tension is increased as we see Damon being so bold as to come out into the public society of Alaric's party and challenge his brother there. Instead of the violence being physical as in the first book, there is, instead, an undercurrent of emotional violence that exists emanating from the antagonists towards the protagonists.



The Struggle, Chapters 7-8

The Struggle, Chapters 7-8 Summary

Chapter Seven of *The Struggle*, the second book in *The Vampire Diaries*, begins right after Elena and Stefan leave Alaric Saltzman's party and their confrontation with Damon there. Elena is trying to calm down Stefan from facing his brother, and she asks him about the weakness of vampires and what powers they might have. Stefan proceeds to tell her of all the powers that Damon probably has and the things which might deter him.

The next day at school, Stefan is not there but has phoned Bonnie and Meredith to chaperone Elena as much as they can to protect her from Damon. While at school, Elena finds a note tacked to the school notice board, which is a passage from her stolen diary. Upset, Elena flees to the girls bathroom where Bonnie and Meredith corner her and make her admit what the notes are, and here Elena tells them that Damon is in fact the killer who is stalking the town. Although disbelieving, they agree to be careful. Later that day they encounter Vickie Bennett in the cafeteria who slowly, slyly, starts to get undressed before the whole school. She seems in a daze and her character is hysterical. As soon as Elena touches her to try and wrap some more clothes around her, Vickie wakes out of her reverie and screams that Elena is a part of the evil.

Chapter Eight begins after school with the trio of friends talking about the day's events, and Elena suspects that it is because of her vampiric attack by Damon. Concerned that Bonnie has unintentionally invited Damon into her home, Elena decides to stay the night at Bonnie's to keep an eye on her, where she experiences a strange dream. In her dream, Stefan is angry at her over her diary and walks away, but Damon arrives and, amidst a masked ball, begins to dance with her. When she wakes up, she finds that the window is open and a large black crow is attacking her. Upset, Elena flees to the bathroom where she discovers that the crow is Damon and that he has bitten her.

The Struggle, Chapters 7-8 Analysis

In Chapters Seven and Eight there is a sense of inevitable doom surrounding the three mortal girls, as the scary events continue to escalate and Elena cannot stop them. Events take a sickening turn as we see Vickie Bennett's display and what becoming a servant of Damon could actually mean as well as the unintended pleasure she finds in the dream.

In these chapters, through the use of quick paced events, the author heightens the tension and makes Damon into an implacable, unstoppable figure. This serves to make the narrative scarier and more threatening. Coupled with this is the theft and the abuse of Elena's diary, which allows the reader to relate to Elena's predicament and sense how emotionally painful this situation is.



The Struggle, Chapters 9-10

The Struggle, Chapters 9-10 Summary

The next day in Chapter Nine Elena and her friends are wondering about the events the previous night. Bonnie relates to Elena that she had had a dream, imagining that Elena had been standing under an oak tree when she catches a crow unbelievably quickly and then wrings its neck and looks up cruelly.

Stefan later appears with Matt. They had both quickly gone on a road trip at Stefan's insistence to find a plant named vervain. The plant is said to give the wearer the ability to resist the influence of vampires and their ability to seduce, befuddle and enchant. Elena does not have the heart to tell him that it is already too late - Damon has bitten her and she has feasted on his blood. Later that day, there is another note extracted from Elena's diary in the school newspaper and Elena realizes that it must be Caroline. She follows Caroline to find her in the photographic darkroom, where she is telling Tyler about her plans: that the next week is the celebration of Fells Church Founders Day and there she will use Elena's diary to expose Elena and Stefan, driving Salvatore out of town.

In Chapter Ten, Elena realizes that she will not be able to tell Stefan of her predicament for fear that he will be angry. Elena then decides to enlist the help of her friends to steal her diary back and, despite their protestations, she convinces them to break into Caroline's house. They creep in and go through Caroline's room carefully finding only Caroline's own diary in which there is nothing but a few nasty comments about Elena, Bonnie and Meredith. The others escape as the Forbes come home and, not seeing any way out, Elena climbs out of the bathroom window, only to start to fall when someone rescues her.

The Struggle, Chapters 9-10 Analysis

In Chapters Nine and Ten we see the darkness cast by Damon beginning to surround and envelop Elena since there is nothing that she can do to stop his actions. Adding to this is the mischief caused by Caroline and Tyler, who now appear to be plotting together against both Elena and Stefan. Their danger is just as real and as terrible for Elena as the danger posed by Damon, and one can be contrasted against the other in terms of which is the 'more evil'. Damon's threat is undoubtedly the more spiritually and morally evil of the two forces allayed against Elena and her friends, but in some ways it does not feel the more cruel, since Caroline and Tyler should be able to know better than to discredit and humiliate their classmates.

During this chapter, Elena also starts having to deal with the effects of her actions, dealing with the themes of Loyalty and of Love where she has to decide just how much to tell Stefan about her meetings with Damon. Elena is still in love with Stefan, but there

is now a secret part of her that feels torn between these two handsome vampires; one representing honor and nobility, the other (Damon) danger and excitement.



The Struggle, Chapters 11-12

The Struggle, Chapters 11-12 Summary

In Chapter Eleven of *The Struggle*, the second book in *The Vampire Diaries* series, we find Elena Gilbert being rescued from the roof of Caroline's house by Damon Salvatore, her nemesis and Stefan's vampire brother. He once again makes her the offer to join with him as his Queen of The Darkness, teasing and flirting with her. Elena cannot deny the wildfire attraction that she has for him, but tries to fight it off. Instead of giving into him, she throws herself from the roof but is magically caught and saved by Damon before she hits the ground. He continues to hold her close as, up above, one of Caroline's family members opens a window to see just what is going on. Damon assures her that he will win her over one way or another, and makes her an offer: Damon says that he will get the diary back for Elena if she will let him feed on her. Elena disagrees, stating there is nothing that would disgust her more and fights off his advances, but she also knows deep down that she has been very, very close to saying yes as he dissolves into mist.

The next day she goes to school, confused, and hasn't the heart to tell Stefan or her friends of their danger and her predicament. Elena runs into Vickie Bennett, who approaches Tyler Smallwood and, strangely, starts flirting with him, groping him and forcing him to kiss her. Tyler tries to stop her and she resists, suddenly attacking him and trying to bite his throat. Elena, Stefan and four other students try to restrain Vickie but she is immensely strong as they wait for an ambulance.

Stefan confides in Elena that Vickie is definitely still under vampiric attack and that it must be Damon who is doing it. Vickie is becoming more and more like a vampire, but not allowed to fully turn over, so she is having fits and strange behaviors.

A few days later, in Chapter Twelve, we see Elena shopping for cranberry sauce a part of the preparation for Thanksgiving dinner that her Aunt Judith makes every year. She encounters Matt, who appears to be a little lost, and invites him to come to the dinner with her, since Bonnie is already there as well. When they get back and are sitting down, her almost-Uncle Robert arrives with another house guest, Damon the vampire. Damon has apparently entranced Robert into being invited into the house and claims to be one of his college students as he sits down for the meal. Elena and Bonnie are terrified. Unsure of what to do, Elena presents her sister Margaret's new kitten Snowball to the vampire, both of whom recoil. A few seconds later Bonnie gazes into the candles and suddenly starts to have a vision, claiming that Death is in the house and that it is coming for Elena. This effectively puts an end to the dinner and Elena tells Damon to leave her house.

Later that night Damon arrives in her house and tries to attack Elena, but when he cannot and realizes that her bedroom forms part of the older house to which he does



not have an invitation, Damon suggests that he will make a move on her baby sister unless she invites him in. Elena gives in, inviting Damon into her bedroom.

The Struggle, Chapters 11-12 Analysis

In these two chapters, Damon seems all but unstoppable as he bends all of his powers against Elena in an attempt to win her over. Even though he is the stronger of the vampires and is obviously violent and cruel (he offers that he feast on Margaret rather than Elena when she will not invite him in), we are left to wonder why Damon simply doesn't attack her and take her anyway? The answer is that Damon is obviously motivated by something other than pure malice, but actually wants Elena to be at his side as a vampire like himself.

The author plays off the normal against the supernatural in Chapter Twelve during the Thanksgiving Dinner preparation as she brings Damon right into the household alongside the Gilbert family. This creates tension and makes the horror of Damon all the more perverse as we can see on the surface a charming family meal, but underneath a seething, threatening horror.



The Struggle, Chapters 13-14

The Struggle, Chapters 13-14 Summary

Chapter Thirteen of *The Vampire Diaries* begins with two extracts from Elena's new diary, where she is talking about how confused and scared she is about her inability to stop both Caroline and Damon. She also reveals how she is scared for herself if she gives in to Damon and what it will mean for Stefan. She decides to sneak out of the house early and tell Stefan everything that has been happening, including her meal with Damon and his feeding on her.

At the boarding house, when she meets Stefan she finds him worried and, when he hears that Elena's diary has been stolen and that Caroline is behind it, he is furious. Elena is scared of what he will do if he finds out about Damon and herself sharing blood. She realizes that she simply cannot tell him about that, instead telling him that she is so upset because of the diary and because of Caroline and Tyler's plan to use it during the Founder's Day celebrations. Stefan assures her that everything will be all right, that he will protect them all, and they share blood. Elena realizes then just how much she needs it, and is worried for herself. In a rush of passion, Stefan offers her his lapis lazuli ring given to him by Katherine, and they are engaged..

Later that day she goes to school, still worried and asks her friends Bonnie and Meredith to help her against Caroline. They come up with a plan. Since Elena is announced to be the Queen of the Founders Day celebration, they will have to get dressed in their respective costumes. This is always done by the town Librarian Mrs. Grimsby because she oversees the historical accuracy of the dress, and, during that time Elena will make a grab for her diary and steal it back before Caroline can use it.

Chapter Fourteen describes the events of Founders Day itself, as Bonnie is watching Caroline leave her house and sees that she has a beaded purse big enough to conceal Elena's stolen diary. Bonnie is then picked up en route to Mrs. Grimsby's library and tells Elena where it must be hidden. At the Library, Elena doesn't have a chance to steal back her diary but instead finds another note, saying that 'something awful is going to happen'.

Feeling ruined and fearful, Elena awaits her fate as the Founder's Day celebrations continue and Caroline is taken to the podium in front of the whole town. When she picks a book from her purse, she suddenly realizes that it is not Elena's diary at all, but her own. Rather than read her own thoughts out loud and knowing that she has been thwarted, she squeals in rage and storms off the stage leaving Elena as the Founder's Queen at the end of the celebrations. Elena cannot understand what has happened until she spots Damon after the celebrations, holding her diary. He had saved her, but, as Aunt Judith tries to match-make the two, Elena explodes and informs them both that she is engaged to Stefan and will never be given to Damon. Damon is furious and leaves.



The Struggle, Chapters 13-14 Analysis

Chapters Fourteen and Fifteen present a lot of drama for Elena's character as she tries to navigate the problems ahead, but feels unable to truly confide or turn to anyone for help, not her family and not even Stefan for fear of what he will do. When she is unable to tell him everything about Damon and pleads with him to share blood with her, we can see it as a sign that Elena is becoming desperate. She is hating herself for giving in to Damon, and hating the fact that she is attracted to him. Their sharing of blood is, in some ways, an attempt by Elena to 'clean out' what Damon has shared with her.



The Struggle, Chapters 15-16

The Struggle, Chapters 15-16 Summary

In the penultimate chapter of *The Struggle*, the second book of *The Vampire Diaries*, we find Elena in a hot row with her Aunt Judith and almost - Uncle Robert over whether she is allowed to marry Stefan or not. They both state that she is not, and that Stefan is the cause of all of these problems in her life, if not also in the town. Angry and alone, Elena screams in front of the whole town that they they are not her parents and that she will do just what she wants. She leaves the celebration trying to find Stefan, but instead finds Matt and, on a wild feeling, asks if she can borrow his car. Elena immediately drives to the Boarding House to escape everyone else but cannot find Stefan there. Instead, the wind picks up and she feels the presence of Damon in the threatening storm.

The storm gets worse as trees fall about her car and she remembers what Stefan had told her, that more powerful vampires are more affected by the ancient limitations and, terrified, she decides to drive to Wickery Bridge, to cross it and so cross running water and avoid Damon's attacks. The unnatural weather gets worse and worse as Damon tries to thwart her, buffeting the car as it starts to get onto the bridge. Suddenly the bridge starts to give way under the car, and in a final swipe by the supernatural storm the car loses control and descends into Drowning Creek. There Elena is engulfed by water and the car sinks beneath the waves.

Elsewhere, Bonnie suddenly looks up in premonition of what is happening and tells Stefan to help as they race in Meredith's car to the bridge. They are too late to save Elena as they haul her body out of the waters.

In Chapter Sixteen, Stefan is infuriated and grieving, telling Bonnie that he will lay Elena's body by the Willow tree and Bonnie should take Meredith and flee. Stefan explodes in fury, tracking down the gang that Tyler had summoned to beat him up and attacks them in his vampiric form. He feeds on almost all of them and, now drunk with the powerful human blood, transforms into a falcon and flies out to kill his brother Damon, whom he thinks is responsible for Elena's death.

Meanwhile, Elena wakes up under the Willow trees. She at first is confused and doesn't know what is happening to her; seeing a squirrel, she tries to grab it but later doesn't understand why. Then she hears the brothers fighting in the forest and, realizing that she loves one of them, gets up and decides to go help him out. This impending confrontation signals the climatic end of the first two books of *The Vampire Diaries*.

The Struggle, Chapters 15-16 Analysis

In the final two chapters we see Elena beginning to break as all the pressures around her reach a crescendo. She is unable to stop Damon, and now her Aunt and Uncle are

standing in the way of her feelings for Stefan. She explodes in rage and tries to flee the situation, but ultimately fails as she falls over Wickery Bridge in the car.

During the last two chapters, the author sets up the following set of Vampire Diaries books, not allowing the reader to experience completeness at the end of a tale, but instead offering them a surprising twist to the tale; that Elena is now a vampire.



Characters

Elena Gilbert

Elena Gilbert, older sister to Margaret Gilbert, is a high school age girl in her final year at Robert E Lee High School. At the start of the book we discover that she is being looked after by her Aunt and her Aunt's long term fiancée Robert, because her parents died many years ago before the story begins. This early loss has led Elena to become a determined, resilient and self-supporting person, often willful and independent-minded compared to many of her friends.

Elena is the undisputed queen of her high school in competition with Caroline, being the Homecoming Queen for this new year and the most attractive girl in the school in her year group's eyes. At the start of the novel, she moves from being a selfish, immature girl at the height of her social powers to a more responsible young woman by the end of *The Struggle* as she learns to love for the first time, and has to rely upon her friends.

Through the course of the story Elena is at first attracted to the newcomer Stefan Salvatore and, characteristically, tries to 'catch' him for herself. What she does not realize is that she is unwittingly plunging herself into danger since her new love is actually a vampire caught in a centuries old vampiric feud, and that the cost of true love is learning how to sacrifice what one wants for another. As Elena tackles the supernaturally dangerous aspects of the plot, she also matures and tackles the issues of personal responsibility and honesty.

Stefan Salvatore

Stefan Salvatore, appearing to be a youth of high school age, is a newcomer to Fells Church who arrives mysteriously at the start of the year and gains admittance to the school just as mysteriously. No one realizes that he is in fact a vampire who was born in Florence, Italy, during the Renaissance. Stefan is darkly handsome and very gentlemanly, if a bit old fashioned.

Stefan has come to Fells Church to hopefully finally find somewhere quiet and out of the way where he can rest and rejoin society in some form or another. He is, we understand, intensely lonely and has never fully accepted his vampiric nature. Stefan is seriously remorseful over what he is. This emerges as an impenetrable wall of tact and unfeeling politeness, which he uses to keep all comers at bay so he will not hurt them or in turn be hurt by them.

Through the course of the novel Stefan learns that he is in love with a human girl, Elena, and that his love is also putting her in harm's way since his evil brother Damon has followed him here to Fells Church and will not give him rest. Stefan has to learn to open up, to be honest about not only his vampirism, but also his feelings if he is to ever know love or trust another person again.



Damon

Damon Salvatore is Stefan's older brother who was transformed into a vampire alongside his younger brother by the same woman many centuries ago in Florence, Italy, during the Renaissance. He is pale and handsome, and acts with polished grace and sadistic politeness as he seeks to win what he wants through the course of the book.

Damon had been turned into a vampire alongside Stefan by Katherine, the woman with whom Stefan was in love and whom he thought loved him. When Damon realizes that he cannot have Katherine, he goes berserk and tries to kill his younger brother, succeeding only in the fact that he manages to kill his mortal life, leaving Stefan to become a vampire fully.

Damon is presented as the dark shadow of everything that Stefan could be if he gave in to the blood lust. Damon is painted as cruel, sadistic, powerful and eloquent, and utterly ruthless. Through the course of the story, we discover that Damon has followed his brother here to Fells Church and is seeking the same woman as Stefan: Elena Gilbert. Damon uses his powers, guile and intimidation to try and get what he wants.

Bonnie

Bonnie is one of Elena's closest friends in Fells Church and is everything that Elena is not. She is small and unathletic, a dreamer and also a psychic. Bonnie claims to be descended from Druids of Ancient Scotland, and through the course of the story uses her psychic powers several times in the forms of premonitions, spells and trances to help Elena as she moves through the story. Bonnie is also the owner of Yangtze, the dog.

Meredith

Meredith is one of Elena's oldest friends who is more level headed than Bonnie, and who had helped comfort Elena through the time when she lost her parents. Meredith knows the main character Elena the very best, and spends a lot of her time worrying about her and looking out for her. Meredith is actually the one who initiates the searches for Elena whenever she runs off, and is the one who is most skeptical about Stefan. Meredith represents 'normality' in Elena's circle and, in a sense, Elena uses Meredith to 'touch ground' again.

Matt

Matt is Elena's off and on boyfriend for many years before the start of the novel. He is poorer than most of the rest of the characters in the book, coming from a poorer neighborhood, but is deeply loyal to his friends. His looks are described like an 'all-



American' hero. He has short blonde hair, blue eyes, and an athletic build and is the captain of the Robert E Lee High School football team.

Matt starts off the story a little hurt by Elena, who dumps him officially and obviously has fallen for someone else (Stefan Salvatore). However, his good nature and honest character soon show through as he agrees to help Elena in her task to 'catch' Stefan, even though he doesn't entirely agree with it.

Matt appears throughout the story as a solid friend and is the epitome of loyalty and responsibility since it is actually Matt who first manages to become friends with Stefan, breaking through his walls, and it is Matt who helps the girls to find Stefan when he is injured.

Tyler Smallwood

Tyler Smallwood is one of the main antagonists in the book. He starts out as a minor annoyance to the main protagonists Elena and Stefan, but grows to hate them with a passion after his fight with Stefan at Fells Church Cemetery. Tyler Smallwood is a large, thuggish sort of boy who has a large coterie of friends in Robert E. Lee High School and comes from one of the oldest families in Fells Church. As the story progresses, we find that he has long been harboring resentments about the town since his family is actually among the original founders but has never been given the consideration or kudos they deserve.

Caroline

Caroline Forbes starts the story as part of Elena's close circle of friends and is in her year group at Robert E. Lee High School. It soon becomes apparent however, that Caroline is unhappy at having to play second fiddle to Elena Gilbert, and during the story starts to make moves to dethrone her friend from the top spot of their peer group. This jealousy is made worse during the story as Caroline sides with Tyler Smallwood after she and Elena fight for Stefan and Caroline fails.

Vickie Bennett

Vickie Bennett is a young girl in the same year group as Elena, Meredith, Bonnie and Caroline at Robert E. Lee High School in Fells Church. Vickie starts the novel going out with Dick, a friend of Tyler Smallwood, and accompanies Elena and Tyler the night of the Homecoming Ball when they all go out to party at Fells Church. Vickie is attacked presumably by Damon and, throughout the rest of the novel, starts to act strangely and hysterically. The character of Vickie Bennett serves as a frightening reminder to the other characters of what the dangers are of involving yourself with vampires.



Mr. Tanner

Mr. Tanner is a disagreeable teacher at Robert E. Lee High School who is known to pick on and bully students for what he believes is their ignorance and lack of effort. Mr. Tanner teaches European History and is shown up by the vampire Stefan Salvatore for his lack of knowledge in that area. Mr. Tanner is attacked and killed during the novel by Damon Salvatore at the Halloween Ball at the High School, starting the spiraling rumors that threaten Stefan's safety.

Alaric K. Saltzman

Alaric K. Saltzman is the new History teacher at Robert E. Lee High School, who is asked to replace Mr. Tanner with short notice after Mr. Tanner's death. Mr. Saltzman appears to be a friendly and engaging teacher who tries to win his students over by getting to know them informally and tries to help them talk about their feelings about the recent round of deaths and attacks around Fells Church.

Margaret

Margaret is Elena's younger sister who is barely older than a toddler at the start of the book. She, along with Elena Gilbert, is an orphan and is being looked after by their Aunt Judith.

Aunt Judith

Aunt Judith Gilbert is Elena and Margaret's aunt on their mother's side who had agreed to look after the two children after the Gilberts died many years ago. She has a long term fiancée called Robert, and between them they have brought up Elena and Margaret as their own children. Aunt Judith is very caring and protective, if a little unconnected to the events in Elena's life.



Objects/Places

Stefan's Lapis Lazuli Ring

Stefan's Lapis Lazuli ring is one of a series of three rings which were made for his former lover, Katherine, to protect vampires from sunlight. Both Stefan and his brother Damon are given one of these magical rings by Katherine before she takes her own life. Stefan takes her own ring as a memento of her, and ends up using it to become engaged to Elena Gilbert.

Elena's Apricot Ribbon

Elena's apricot-colored ribbon is a ribbon that she uses to tie her hair back but loses early on in the story. Stefan picks it up and keeps it as a reminder of her love.

Stefan's Florentine Coin

Stefan's Florentine coin is a heavy golden coin that was common in the Renaissance era, and Stefan keeps it as a reminder of his human life.

Elena's Diary

Elena's diary, from which the book gets its name, is a series of entries through which Elena catalogs her experiences, but it is stolen and used against her halfway through by Caroline Forbes.

Fells Church Cemetery

Fells Church Cemetery is one of the oldest parts of Fells Church and contains within it the tomb of Thomas and Honoria Fell, the town's founders. It is here that Elena's parents are buried, and near here that Damon has his lair.

Wickery Bridge

Wickery Bridge, standing over Drowning Creek, is an old bridge that leads to Fells Church and Cemetery, and it is this bridge where Bonnie has a premonition that Elena will meet her death.



The Boarding House

The Boarding House, owned by Mrs. Flowers, is an old guest house on the edge of town near Fells Church in which Stefan has a room with an attic trapdoor leading to the roof.

The School

Robert E, Lee High School is the main and only school in the town of Fells Church, where a lot of the drama is placed. It is here that Elena and her friends first meet Stefan Salvatore.

The Francher's Well

The abandoned Francher house lies in the heart of the woods that surround Fells Church, and on its grounds is a capped disused well, into which Damon throws his brother Stefan after he tries to kill him.



Themes

Love

Love plays an important role throughout the first two books of *The Vampire Diaries*, and it is through the romance that plays out between Elena and Stefan that the drama of the story is expressed. At the start of the story Elena has finished her ongoing relationship with Matt in favor of the new, handsome and mysterious Stefan Salvatore, and we can assume that at first it is not love that she feels for either Matt or Stefan. Instead, as the book progresses we see Elena's fascination and attraction become a much deeper emotion as she learns to rely upon Stefan and in turn sacrifices in order to aid him, before realizing quite how much she needs him. Through facing these challenges Elena begins to learn what real love is and what it requires.

Love is also an important theme for the other protagonists in the book, Stefan and Damon. Stefan was in love before with the beautiful vampiress Katherine who later dies as a result of his fighting with his brother. We can see that the shadows of that almost-relationship have hurt and wounded the character of Stefan, so much so that he is unable to forgive himself or trust another person.

The theme of love is examined and compared through all of the characters during the course of the two novellas, as we can see a primitive form of love emanating from Damon towards the previous Katherine and now Elena; but it is a controlling Love that does not sacrifice. Elena's friends Bonnie, Meredith and Matt all experience a form of strong love for their friends in the way that they are unswervingly loyal to them, and place their friends ahead of their own interest almost without exception. The questions that each of the characters have to face (and especially Elena) are just what would you give up in order to have love, what would you sacrifice for your love, and what price does one have to pay for it?

Loyalty

The theme of loyalty is expressed in *The Vampire Diaries* most strongly by Elena Gilbert's three friends, Bonnie, Meredith and Matt, although it can be seen in other characters as well. At the start of the book, Elena is presented as a girl at the top of her social peer group and someone who has a close bond with her friends, but perhaps does not really appreciate them. Through the course of the story Elena learns what true loyalty is by having to realize that she needs her friends more than ever and by becoming a social pariah at her school.

The loyalty of the different characters is contrasted against each other when we see how Matt constantly seeks to support his friends, especially Elena, even though she hurts his feelings by dumping him and starting a rumor that she has been seeing someone else.



Loyalty, as a theme, is called into question when Elena realizes that she might have to turn to Damon for help instead of Stefan, and what this means for their love. Loyalty, too, can be contrasted against the virtue of love during the book when considering which is a better quality. We are forced to ask how far loyalty goes in the case of the Blood Oath that Elena, Meredith and Bonnie swear together, and how much we should sacrifice for it.

Death

One of the most prominent themes in the book is death, both as a silent warning and as a real possibility for almost all of the characters in *The Vampire Diaries*. Death is presented as 'a silent partner' during the novel since it haunts Elena Gilbert's life after the death of her parents which left her and her sister as orphans, and the constant appearance of the graveyard as a location in the book.

Death itself is viewed both as a horrible and sometimes as a desirable thing through the characters of Stefan and Damon. Since they are vampires, they are very hard to kill and do not naturally age and die at all. Is it better for them to experience death than to live feeding on the blood of others? Death is the ultimate warning and threat present during the book, and the central protagonist of Elena Gilbert can be seen to have a contradictory and an ambivalent relationship to it, not realizing that she is rushing towards it as she allows Stefan and Damon to drink her blood. As a constant shadow cast over the entire book, Death is implied by Bonnie as she predicts it again and again for Elena, creating dramatic tension and emphasizing the horror.

Style

Point of View

There are several points of view used throughout *The Awakening* and *The Struggle of The Vampire Diaries*, ranging from second to third person. The use of these 'personal' second person points of view makes the story seem more intimate and allows the reader to get into the minds and the emotions of the protagonists much more easily. The author uses this second person narrative to highlight the emotional drama going on under the surface of the events, and helps the reader to understand the motivations of the characters.

The two main points of view are either from Elena Gilbert's perspective or the vampire Stefan Salvatore's, with occasional third person scenes as Meredith, Bonnie and Matt have to react to Elena's actions or escape danger. This switching between the two main protagonists Elena and Stefan allows the reader to examine their relationship from both angles, and understand what motivates each character and how they are feeling, adding emotional tension to these scenes. Furthermore, the use of the two points of view creates a Light and Dark feel to the whole book, since Elena's narratives are most often taking place in the daytime while Stefan's most often occur at night.

Setting

The main setting for the two books in *The Vampire Diaries* is Fells Church, a tiny North American town of quite an old origin that is surrounded by forest. The author spends some time describing the various mini-settings and locations within Fells Church, as we understand this town, its history and the people who live there are going to form the larger part of her stories in the entire *Vampire Diaries* series.

At the start of the book, the main protagonist character of Elena Gilbert is staying at her home in Fells Church, and from there goes to Robert E. Lee High School to study. Here, she first encounters the vampire Stefan Salvatore. From here she makes trips to the Fells Churchyard and the Cemetery to visit the grave site of her parents, and also to confront Damon.

Other settings include the Boarding House where Stefan is staying, her friends' houses, and Wickery Bridge (the old bridge that leads to the church by the side of the forest). As the protagonists go to these locations, each one is used to further develop the story since at each one there is a confrontation, or a threat, or a realization that moves the plot forward. By using such a small setting (just one town with a handful of places), the author is setting up the setting for the rest of her series of books, and is also encouraging a sense of entrapment and claustrophobia for the protagonist Elena Gilbert.



Language and Meaning

The language used throughout the book is conversational and modern American, the kind you would expect other teenagers and normal people living in Modern America to be using. The only exception to this is the speech of Damon and Stefan Salvatore, which has an old fashioned air and further decorates their characters as coming from the distant past and different places. The choice of words is dramatic and punchy, with shorter words chosen over any longer descriptions to enhance the feel that most of this book is from a dynamic teenage girl's perspective, and also to make it easier to read.

The language changes slightly from character to character to further highlight each. Matt is straightforward, Elena uses a lot of emotional description, and Bonnie uses artful and kooky speech. Sometimes this simple narrative flow impedes the enjoyment of the book, because we feel like we would want more description of the surroundings or a more detailed information on exactly how the characters are feeling and the reader can sometimes get the sense that they are merely skimming the surface of the characters' emotions rather than really understanding why they are doing the things that they are doing.

Structure

The structure of The Vampire Diaries is split into two books, The Awakening and The Struggle, and each book is made up of sixteen chapters. All of the chapters are fairly short, concentrating on a handful of scenes that further the next stage in the plot, and quite often a scene will bleed over between two chapters to further the dramatic tension and to create an apparent sense of conflict and apprehension for the reader before they continue to read the next part. Each scene ends definitively, often with some drama, decision or realization, giving the whole flow of the narrative a feeling of it being a series of fast-paced events when in actual fact the events take place over an entire school year.

Each of the two novellas - books in The Vampire Diaries - has its own mood and feeling. The Awakening concerns itself with discovery, as we explore the characters and each of them discovers horror, or love, or loyalty. The second book, The Struggle, is much darker in tone and urgent, with a sense of creeping threat as all around the main protagonists events seem to be spiraling out of their control.



Quotes

"Perhaps he should go back to Italy; to his hiding place. What made him think he could rejoin the world of daylight."

Stefan, *The Awakening*, Chapter One, page 6

"Now she let her mind leaf back through memoies, and the lump in her throat swelled, and the tears came easier. She missed them so much, still."

Elena, *The Awakening*, Chapter Four, page 38

"She was frightened of what she was seeing; frightened of what Stefan might do. And frightened above all else of Stefan's voice, that cold voice that was like rapier dancing, beautiful and deadly and utterly merciless."

Elena, *The Awakening*, Chapter Seven, page 84

"Something is wrong with Stefan and me. There is this terrible sadness inside him that I can't reach, and it's driving us apart. I don't know what to do."

Elena, *The Awakening*, Chapter Eleven, page 134

"Stefan had been caught in that flash of light, half turned towards her, his body twisted into a bestial crouch, with a snarl of animal fury on his face."

Elena, *The Awakening*, Chapter Thirteen, page 162

"But the conflagration in her heart was searing hot and burning away the cold. She knew now what a towering rage meant."

Elena, *The Awakening*, Chapter 16, page 198

"Winter is coming, Elena... Before it comes, you'll have learned what I can and can't do. Before winter is here, you'll have joined me. You'll be mine."

Damon, *The Struggle*, Chapter One, page 208

"Before, she had felt his agonizing need, his deep hunger. Now, though the bond they shared she felt only fierce joy and satisfaction. Deep satisfaction as the hunger was gradually assuaged."

Elena, *The Struggle*, Chapter Four, page 240

"For a moment, apprehension chilled her. Five hundred years ago, Katherine had tried to keep them from fighting, and had succeeded only in forcing them into a death match. But she wouldn't make the same mistake, Elena told herself fiercely."

Elena, *The Struggle*, Chapter Seven, page 271

"Oh Stefan, if you only knew, Elena thought. The gift had come one night too late."

Elena, *The Struggle*, Chapter Nine, page 299

"Something awful is going to happen today."

Elena's stolen diary, *The Struggle*, Chapter Fourteen, page 361

"She remembered him. He was the one who understood her, who loved her. He was the one she wanted to be with forever."

Elena, The Struggle Chapter 16, page 388



Topics for Discussion

Compare and contrast Elena's character at the start and at the end of *The Vampire Diaries*. What has changed? Has she changed? What are her character flaws and her strengths?

Discuss the theme of loyalty in *The Vampire Diaries*. Is loyalty always a good thing? How far will Elena go for Stefan, and how far will Elena's friends go for her?

Compare the two vampires, Stefan and Damon. What makes one evil and the other good?

Why does Caroline hate Elena so much? What events cause the split in their friendship?

What is Elena's greatest fear?

Why does Stefan hate himself so much? What events have shaped his character?

How is Elena's diary used as a plot tool by the author in *The Vampire Diaries*?