



Transcript

Arts, Literature and Music A Good Read

Twilight, by Stephenie Meyer

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The book I am reviewing for you today is *Twilight*, by Stephenie Meyer, it was published in New York by Megan Tingley Books, in 2005.

Twilight... how did I ever get caught up in a teen vampire romance? It started with my daughter and her friends raving and discussing about the 'oh so very dreamy characters.' Edward: tall, handsome and absolutely gorgeous. Bella Swan, the luckiest girl in the world.

I decided to put my name down for this book, along with 52 other intrigued readers. I've read quite a lot of teen fiction novels throughout my time through working in the library. I buy them for the Library Service, but am not a real fan of romance or horror. But Stephanie Meyer obviously knew what she was doing as it has become the brilliant *Twilight* Saga.

The setting is Forks, Washington State – a real American town – rainforest country with the annual rainfall of 150 inches per year. 500 year old trees, that grows faster than anywhere else.

Bella Swan, 17 years old, had made the difficult decision to move from Arizona to live with her father Charlie. She'd been living with her Mum and new partner Phil – a minor league ball player who was now travelling a lot. Her mum had stayed with Bella but was missing Phil terribly so Bella decided to move and spend some quality time with her dad.

But moving home means making new friends, and going to a new school. Bella is quickly befriended by Jessica, Mike and Eric on her first day in the cafeteria and that is where she first lays eyes on the four perfect figures that stroll through the doors. The Cullen family - Edward, Alice, Emmett, Jasper and Rosalie.

"It was there, sitting in the lunchroom, trying to make conversation with 7 curious strangers, that I first saw them. There were 5 of them. They weren't talking, and they weren't eating, though they each had a tray of untouched food in front of them. They weren't gawking at me, unlike most of the other students, so it was safe to stare at them without fear of meeting an excessively interested pair of eyes. But it was none of these things that caught, and held my attention.

They didn't look anything alike. Of the 3 boys, one was big – muscled like a serious weight lifter, with dark curly hair. Another was lanky, leaner and honey blond. The last was lanky, less bulky with untidy bronze-coloured hair. He was more boyish than the others.

The girls were opposites – the tall one was statuesque. She had a beautiful figure. Her hair was golden. The short girl was pixie-like, thin in the extreme with small features. Her hair was deep black, cropped short.

And yet, they were all exactly alike. Every one of them was chalky pale, the palest of all the students living in this sunless town. They all had very dark eyes and darker shadows under the eyes – purplish, bruise-like shadows as if they were suffering from sleepless nights.

But all this is not why I couldn't look away – I stared because their faces were all devastatingly, inhumanly beautiful.”

I chose that quote because I wanted the listeners to visualise what the characters were like in the book.

At first Edward is aloof, sometimes it almost seems like he can't stand to be in the same room as her, but eventually they strike up an unlikely friendship. Even as Bella falls hopelessly and irrevocably in love with Edward, she still can't work out exactly what makes him so different to everyone else.

On a trip to the beach with Jacob (a childhood friend), Bella is told of the local legend about the “cold ones”, a group of blood drinkers who have sworn off hunting humans but are still not welcome on Indian land because vampires are not to be trusted.

Realising Edward is a vampire changes nothing for Bella, she knows that she still loves him even if he isn't human. But Edward is having a hard time controlling the blood lust she arouses in him. At any moment, the intensity of their passion could drive him to kill her, and he agonizes over the danger. But, Bella would rather be dead than be apart from Edward. Bella risks her life to stay and be with him. The novel burns with the erotic tension of their dangerous and necessarily pure relationship.

As you heard from the extract I read, the story is told in the first person from the perspective of Bella, so the reader only ever knows what she knows, making Edward and his family a mystery that is slowly unravelled through out the book.

By the end of the book I was wanting more – more on what would happen to Edward and Bella. I can honestly say that the characters are developed further in *New Moon*, *Eclipse* and *Breaking Dawn*. Bella herself is a well written and realistic character, shy and lacking in confidence, her sarcastic inner voice narrates the story for the reader.

Twilight is a rare story that combines suspense, desire, love and friendship with an awesome twist on the vampire genre! Both young adults and adults will be “sucked” into Edward's and Bella's world and beg for more, especially after they turn the last page.

Twilight was released in theaters on November 2008, and grossed \$35.7 million on its opening day. With DVD sales and cd soundtrack the earnings are up to 383 million worldwide.

With the second movie – *New Moon* – out in cinemas now and *Eclipse* due out in June next year, the waiting lists on the books at the library will be going strong for some time.

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