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“Sexy Bloodsuckers
Sex, Suspense and Reader Attraction
in Stephenie Meyer’s
Twilight”

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1. AN INTRODUCTION TO STEPHENIE MEYER'S *Twilight*

1.1. IT'S *Twilight* ALL OVER THE WORLD

“Realistic, subtle, succinct, and easy to follow, *Twilight* will have readers dying to sink their teeth into it” (Hillias).

“*Twilight* is that 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” (Anderson).

„Although the novel is long, its pacing is steady and compelling until the end, when the chase scene rockets out of control” (Piehl).

With 25 Million copies sold in 37 languages, Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* made it to the “USA TODAY's best-selling books of the last 15 years”, ranking 26. Altogether, her tetralogy spent 136 weeks on top of the New York Times bestseller list and 235 altogether (Grossman 1).

The Top 100 Books of 2008[...]

1. <i>Twilight</i>	Stephenie Meyer
2. <i>New Moon</i>	Stephenie Meyer
3. <i>Breaking Dawn</i>	Stephenie Meyer
4. <i>Eclipse</i>	Stephenie Meyer

Figure 1

“The top 100 books of 2008”

Stephenie Meyer achieved, what even J. K. Rowling, author of the bestselling septology *Harry Potter* did not manage. As Figure 1 illustrates, the first four books on “The top 100 books of 2008” of USA Today had her name written on them and consequently every single book of her tetralogy sold better than any other that year.

The success story of *Twilight* began with a dream about a girl and a vampire boy in a meadow. In 2003 Stephenie Meyer decided to write down her dream, only to find she had to continue the story (Bardola 12,14) without yet knowing that it would lead her to be rated number 26 of “The World’s Most Powerful Women” by the Forbes Magazine only a few years later .

Illustrating the success of *Twilight* is a feat easy to achieve considering there is almost no way to escape it, especially when it comes to the tabloid press. Demonstrating the narrative’s success, however, does not offer any revelation as to why this novel has received so much reader attention. Therefore it is the objective of this thesis to discuss and analyze two hypotheses explaining the *Twilight* phenomenon.

1.2. SEX, SUSPENSE AND READER ATTRACTION

My first hypothesis for the success story of *Twilight* is a phenomenon that has attracted reader attention for millennia - suspense. Suspense has the power to make people chew their fingernails, grab each others' hands, sweat all over their body and, in other words, be on pins and needles. Suspense is sought everyday and everywhere, may it be through sports, a movie, books or any other source that gives an individual his or her own personal feeling of suspense in one form or the other. Consequently, one reason for reading *Twilight* is the suspense it offers and this thesis analyzes the various levels of suspense in the narrative.

Suspense is a global phenomenon and present in narratives as well as in movies and real-life situations. Given that the minority of suspenseful narratives has achieved the popularity of *Twilight*, a logical conclusion is to assume another reason for the success of the book apart from suspense.

Romance is often an element of suspense, and in *Twilight* the love the teenagers feel represents a major contributing factor to the latter. However, my second hypothesis suggests that the romantic feelings in *Twilight* are not merely between the two protagonists of the narrative. It proposes that female readers develop romantic feelings for the male protagonist as an explanation for the immense reader response to Stephenie Meyer's novel.

The first part of the thesis focuses on suspense, giving some theoretical background information on the phenomenon before analyzing and discussing the major factors for suspense in *Twilight*. The subsequent second part provides data supporting my second hypothesis. The last part of the thesis highlights the Gothic elements of *Twilight* revealing their importance for the two hypotheses discussed.

2. SUSPENSE IN *TWILIGHT*

While some people seek their share of suspense by jumping out of airplanes with a parachute that might fail to open, or by climbing the Mount Everest without an oxygen mask, others are fully satisfied with riding rollercoasters or simply watching others risk their lives. Books offer the possibility to experience suspense without ever having to actually fear for one's own life.

This part of the thesis is concerned with my first hypothesis, suggesting suspense as an explanation for the success of *Twilight*. It first discusses how and why suspense is generally experienced, focusing on the reasons for and forms of suspense as they can be found in *Twilight*. Subsequently, the novel itself is analyzed, relying on the theoretical background given before.

2.1. ESTABLISHING THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Suspense derives from the Latin term 'suspendere' meaning "to keep in suspense, make doubtful *or* uncertain, leave undecided" (*Langenscheidt's Latin-English Dictionary*). Moreover, the Latin adjective 'suspensus' also includes the states of being uncertain, expectant, hopeful and anxious (*Der kleine Stowasser*). All those translations can in one way or the other be found in the meaning of today's term suspense as it is defined by various dictionaries. The *Random House Dictionary of the English Language* describes suspense as "a state or condition of mental uncertainty or excitement, as in awaiting a decision or outcome, usually accompanied by a degree of apprehension or anxiety" ("suspense"). Considering that generally people tend to be hedonistic, it seems to be rather peculiar that they might engage in something that causes distress. To suspense, however, people seem to be strangely attracted. Both in real life, with rollercoaster rides and bungee jumps, and in books and movies like *King Kong* (2005) or *Die Hard* (2007), people enjoy the negative affects suspense evokes. The definition of the *Webster's*

Third New International Dictionary provides a possible answer as it states that suspense is “a pleasant excitement as to a decision or outcome” (“suspense”) and thus offers a positive connotation for the term. Moreover, according to Vorderer and Knobloch “more suspense leads to a more positive assessment” (65). So why do hedonistic beings engage in suspense though it causes anxiety and uncertainty? This question has been important for anyone interested in suspense since Aristotle.

The first section of this chapter introduces five major theories on why people enjoy suspense despite or probably even because of its concomitant negative affects. Subsequently four major factors of how suspense is created are discussed.

2.1.1. HEDONISTIC MASOCHISM

2.1.1.1. THE CATHARSIS DOCTRINE

The catharsis doctrine was first introduced by Aristotle as an explanation for people's enthusiasm for and attraction to tragedy. The meaning of 'catharsis' "to clean, purify" (*Webster's Third New International Dictionary*) reflects the philosopher's hypothesis. According to Aristotle, experiencing negative and thus undesirable emotions in narrative fiction allows a recipient to diminish those very feelings in real life. (Vorderer and Knobloch 66). In the field of media psychology, the catharsis doctrine is applied by Schenk in his book *Medienwirkungsforschung*.

Die Anhänger der *Katharsisthese* gehen von der Existenz eines angeborenen Aggressionstriebes aus und behaupten, durch das dynamische Mitvollziehen von fiktiven Modellen beobachteten Gewaltakten in der Phantasie nehme die Bereitschaft des Rezipienten ab, selbst aggressives Verhalten zu zeigen. (216)

In other words, the catharsis doctrine suggests that reading a narrative in which suspense is also evoked by descriptions of aggressive actions, diminishes the recipient's readiness to use violence themselves due to their negative feelings being reduced as well. "Therefore [...] the audience seeks aversive experiences through tragedy and finds relief afterwards" (Vorderer and Knobloch 66).

2.1.1.2. ESCAPISM

According to this hypothesis, real life can never be perfect. People always experience trials and tribulations in one form or another and because of this they can never be fully satisfied and content with their lives. Consequently they search for ways to escape reality for a while in order to forget what troubles them there. Books and movies offer a chance to do just that. "Entertainment, therefore, is regarded as an appropriate means by

which to forget the shortcomings of everyday life, fulfilling both a psychological and a social function” (Vorderer and Knobloch 66). Though this theory seems to be very plausible, there is no research data available that could provide proof for escapism. (Vorderer and Knobloch 66)

2.1.1.3. THE SOCIAL COMPARISON THEORY

The social comparison theory, as developed by Festinger, postulates that people generally feel the need to compare themselves with others, especially when those others are perceived as socially less fortunate. “This results in satisfaction with one’s own situation and leads to greater well-being, based on the observation of an otherwise negative and distressing life” (Vorderer and Knobloch 67). Since suspenseful books and movies often include conflicts, violence, and situations where no positive outcome for the protagonist is to be expected, they provide the recipients with a possibility for a downward comparison and to thus enhance their mood. (Vorderer and Knobloch 67)

2.1.1.4. THE EXCITATION-TRANSFER-HYPOTHESIS

The excitation-transfer-hypothesis was developed by Zillmann, who proposes that

individuals who anticipate or witness the victimization of agents toward which they are favorably disposed (a) experience an elevation of sympathetic excitation and (b) appraise their reactions as dysphoric. The intensity of these dysphoric reactions, defined as *empathic distress*, is determined by prevailing levels of sympathetic activity. (Zillmann 225)

In other words, Zillmann postulates that the recipient feels sympathy towards the protagonist and consequently feels suspense when something bad happens to him or her. Thus, the more intense the connection with the agent is, the more distress is experienced when he or she is in trouble. Moreover, the more unlikely a positive outcome seems to be, the higher the empathic distress becomes.

As soon as the resolution has taken place, this distress, or rather this excitement, is partly transferred to the euphoria that is experienced due to the positive outcome for the protagonist. “In other words, the viewers’ experience switches from distress to euphoria, as the outlined backlog of intense excitement passes on to a positive emotional state” (Vorderer and Knobloch 66). Consequently, the more suspense has been felt before the resolution, the more intense the euphoria is afterwards. According to Zillmann, this provides the explanation of why people undergo the distress. It enables them to feel the excitement, the euphoria when the positive outcome occurs. (Vorderer 247)

Though the excitation-transfer-hypothesis is so far the only theory that can offer empirical data to scientifically support its theory, the question is whether it is actually plausible that the audience is willing to undergo long periods of time of negative distress in order to have a short moment of immense euphoria. (Vorderer and Knobloch 67).

2.1.1.5. THE ‘ERLEBNISTHESE’

Vorderer developed his ‘*Erlebnisthese*’ as a reaction to the results of his conducted research (Vorderer and Bube in Vorderer 248-250) that only partly proved Zillmann’s excitation-transfer-hypothesis. He based his hypothesis on Schulze’s research on contemporary socio-culture and postulated a transfer from a society of mass culture into a society of individual life styles.

According to Schulze, the 70s saw the “dichotomy that differentiates between entertainment (that may lead to escapism and suspense) and aesthetically valuable, ‘serious’, ambitious literature, film and TV programs” (Vorderer and Knobloch 68) slowly dissolve, especially with the younger generation. Since the 1970s, the materialistic life style has become normal and a certain adrenaline level has to be reached in order to enjoy it. This may happen through music, video games, movies,

literature or any other form of entertainment. Today's society wants to have their suspense whenever and wherever they need it. It is this availability that can be considered as a difference between the traditional and the modern form of suspense. While the traditional one focuses on the distress being slowly developed up to the point of resolution where it is transferred into euphoria, modern suspense is always available and can be turned on and off whenever the recipient feels like it. Today, suspense, or what Schulze calls the *Spannungsschema*, is understood as a constant condition and not as a cyclical process. (Schulze 155). In other words, suspense, as it is presented in the *Spannungsschema*, is an important socio-cultural aspect of today's society, that is, it influences the choice and use of available cultural practices as well as their evaluation. Books are thus part of the *Spannungsschema* and, consequently, the motivation for the recipient to engage in them and experience the action and suspense that they offer cannot be explained without including the socio-cultural aspect. (Vorderer 246)

In his research conducted with Bube, Vorderer proved what Schulze's analysis of contemporary socio-culture seems to suggest. "Man schaltet am Fernseher herum, bis man eine Verfolgungsjagd im Apparat hat, sieht sie eine Weile an und wählt dann wieder ein anderes Programm, vielleicht ohne das Ende der Verfolgungsjagd abzuwarten" (Schulze 155). Put differently, today's society seeks pure suspense and not the euphoria it causes after the resolution, which is exactly what the data collected by Vorderer and Bube suggests. According to their research, the recipient does not only enjoy the resolution of the distress but also the very experience of the distress itself. Vorderer suggests that the reason for the results can be found in today's young generation's need for intense physical and emotional experiences, no matter whether they are pleasant or not (251).

2.1.2. SUSPENSE ON THE STORY LEVEL

A narrative has at least two different levels, the story and the discourse level. While the former describes what the story is about, the latter is concerned with how it is presented to the recipient.

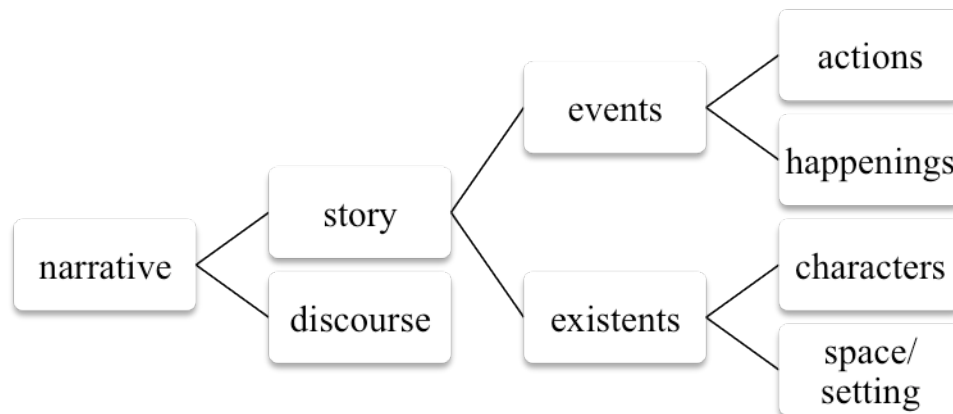


Figure 2
“Elements of a Narrative Theory”

Figure 2 depicts the various sublevels of the story level, showing what parts of a narrative belong to it. In order to explain the importance of the story level for creating suspense, the following event structure applied.

A story tells the recipient about a bomb going off in a room where three men, not knowing about the immediate danger they are in, are playing poker. The story level thus comprises the existents - i.e. the characters - in this case the three poker players alone in the room, and the events that take place, which is the action of the characters playing poker and the happening of the bomb explosion. (Brewer 112). The mere plot-summary of the narrative neither evokes any suspense nor any other emotional responses, though one might already be able to guess the potential for it (Wenzel 26).

In a narrative, both the story and the discourse level are important for establishing suspense. While suspense is determined by the potential of the story, the latter can only be suspenseful if the discourse-level molds the story elements in a sound and subtle way. (Wenzel 23)

2.1.3. SUSPENSE ON THE DISCOURSE-LEVEL

The discourse-level of a narrative is its level of textualization. Thus it is concerned with the question of how the story is narrated. The author molds the story elements together and by doing so he gives them a certain meaning, function, or effect.

This, however, is not the only element the level in question is concerned with and thus, before discussing the various important features for creating suspense on the discourse level, some other factors of the latter are presented.

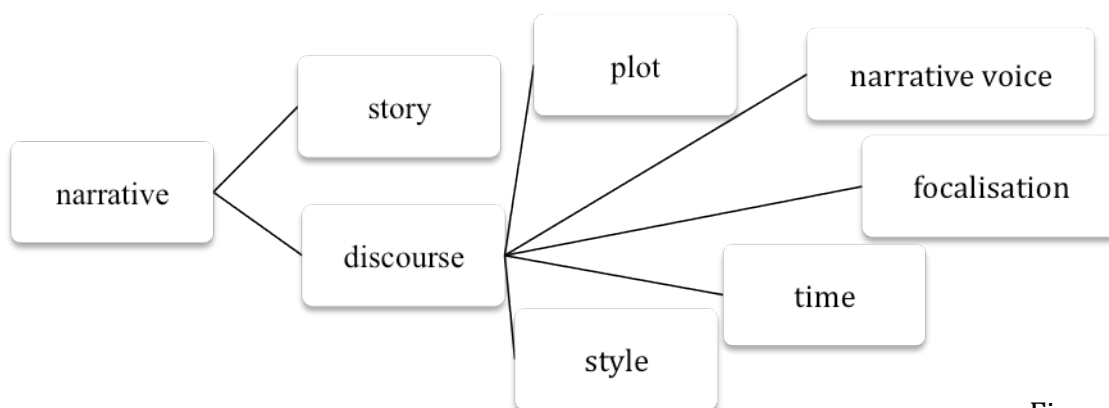


Figure 3
“Discourse”

Figure 3 depicts some major elements of the discourse level. Analyzing the latter would thus include ‘time’, referring to temporal ordering and the time in which a narrative is told. While the latter is the past tense in most literary works (also called the narrative past), ‘temporal ordering’ refers to “the relationship between the events in the story of the represented world, and their arrangement in the discourse” (*Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*), distinguishing inter alia between real time narration, summaries, flashbacks and ellipses. The discourse level also involves the style, that is, how language is used to convey what is happening, including syntax and vocabulary. Moreover the narrative voice - who actually tells the story - and the focalization, that is

who perceives the events that take place or whose perspective the recipient is offered, are part of the discourse level.

Last but not least there is the plot, the element of the discourse level that is concerned with “the temporal arrangement of [...] [the] events in the narrative text” (Brewer 110), in other words with how the individual story elements are molded together to the narrative is presented to the recipient .

2.1.3.1. *MOLDING THE STORY ELEMENTS - THREE DISCOURSE STRUCTURES*

According to Wenzel, there are three discourse structures, namely “das Überraschungsschema, das Rätselspannungsschema und das Konflikt-Bedrohungsspannungsschema” (27).¹

When the surprise structure is applied, an important detail is kept from the recipient. This missing information is then disclosed at the end, producing surprise in the reader. Using the example narrative of the bomb under the table (from the previous chapter) in a curiosity structure the placing of the explosive would be kept from the recipient. Consequently, the explosion of the bomb would surprise the reader since he or she would not be not suspecting anything.

The curiosity structure is prevalent in detective stories - though it is also applied in many other narratives, evoking suspense in the readers by making them curious for the secrets that are disclosed in the course of the book. Brewer hypothesizes that this “curiosity is produced by including a crucial event early in the event structure” (Brewer 112), usually in the beginning of a narrative. The recipient is very much aware of this missing information and thus it causes him to become curious about it. “The curiosity is

¹ To simplify matters the terms *surprise* structure, *curiosity* structure and *suspense* structure used by Brewer will be used instead of Wenzel’s equivalents „Überraschungsschema“, „Rätselspannungsschema“ and „Konflikt-Bedrohungsspannungsschema“.

resolved by providing enough information later in the text to allow the reader to reconstruct the missing event” (Brewer 112).

In the example narrative, the bomb explosion would be right at the beginning, while the events that occurred before it would only be uncovered in the course of the narrative, disclosing the antagonist, who can be assumed to be the person responsible for the placement of the explosive, at the very end.

According to Wenzel the curiosity structure can be divided into five phases (29f): the first one is concerned with drawing attention to the fact that there is some important information missing, usually describing it from a specific character’s perspective. The second phase focuses on the latter’s reaction. The subsequent third, or also analytical, phase is concerned with gathering information and consequently making first hypotheses. Additionally, the readers may be deceived by misleading information setting them on the wrong track. In the fourth phase, drawbacks and other seemingly insurmountable obstacles suggest a mission impossible. Moreover, there is often a recapitulation of everything that happened shortly before the mystery is solved, bringing the suspense to a maximum. The fifth and last phase gradually explains all the details that have been omitted and can now be disclosed after the most crucial information has been released.

There are no strict rules to these phases. In every narrative that applies the Rätselspannungsschema, innovative designs and new ideas can be applied, making the list of possibilities endless.

The suspense structure uses “an *initiating event* [...] that has the potential to lead to a significant outcome (good or bad) for one of the main characters in a narrative” (Brewer 113). in order to create suspense. It causes “the reader to become concerned about the potential consequences for the character [...]. While] the intervening material prolongs the suspense [...] the eventual occurrence of the outcome resolves the suspense” (Brewer 113). In other words, suspense is evoked in the recipients due to an event taking place at some point in the narrative, usually in the beginning, that endangers the characters with whom the readers feel involved. Thus the recipients have to wonder

whether or not the characters will survive everything that they have to go through until the crises is overcome.

The audience of the example narrative would thus be aware of the bomb under the table in a story with a suspense structure. Consequently, they would feel suspense, wondering whether or not the explosion happens in the end, probably hoping that it will not due to their involvement with the would-be victims - the three poker players in the vicinity of the explosive device. The eventual occurrence in this narrative would be the detonation of the bomb, leading to a bad outcome from the reader's perspective.

Wenzel distinguishes five phases in a suspense structure (30f). The events in the first phase foreshadow the dangers that are coming. The second phase is mainly concerned with reader involvement and tries to establish the recipient's emotional involvement in the story. The interplay of hope and hopelessness are prominent in the third phase. The reader becomes more aware of the chances of the character with whom he or she is emotionally involved. The fourth phase reminds the reader that everything comes to an end and at the same time uses retardation and temporal restriction to increase the suspense. The final phase that resolves the suspense can involve the techniques of "changing fortune" and "last minute crisis" (Koch 40) to achieve a higher climax.

All three schemata presented above can be applied to evoke suspense. The Überraschungsschema, though, usually only produces surprise, except in those cases where the recipient is already waiting for something to happen and consequently feels suspense due to awaiting an unexpected event (Wenzel 27). However, if the surprise has a negative effect on the story, for example by reducing the probability of a good outcome, it is also responsible for increasing the suspense.

The Konflikt- und Bedrohungsspannungsschema and the Rätselspannungsschema on the other hand are specifically aimed at creating suspense. Both are based on fractional knowledge, but while the latter uses curiosity for information that can be found in the past, the former one establishes suspense by making the recipient feel fear and hope for their protagonists' future. (Wenzel 30).

However, a story usually does not only comprise one of the schemata, but is rather using a combination of them, in order to build various arcs of suspense in the course of the narrative.

By presenting the three schemata, four important factors of suspense have been introduced, namely the reader involvement with one or more protagonists of the narrative, information gaps to create curiosity, uncertainty for the outcome and temporal restriction.

2.1.3.2. PREREQUISITE READER INVOLVEMENT

“In “real life,” suspense only takes charge when we care about those future outcomes about which we are uncertain. [...] [This] requires a certain emotional involvement” (Carroll 76). This emotional involvement is a prerequisite for fictional suspense. The reader has to “be absorbed in the events of the fictional world” (Brewer 109) and this can be achieved by a “degree of detail in the description of the events and characters of the fictional world” (Brewer 109). Additionally, reader involvement in the story is apparent in the concern of the readers for one or more of the protagonists and “in constructing suspense, authors must find some way of engaging audience concern” (Carroll 77) in order to make it care for the outcome of the narrative. There are four major hypotheses of how this concern is created in the recipient.

The author has to overcome the deficit of having little or no knowledge of the reader’s personal attitudes and thoughts “by resorting to morality in order to appeal to the ethical interests of the viewers and readers alike” (Carroll 77). Referring back to the example narrative, few readers would regard killing the detective who is trying to solve the murder of the three explosive victims as morally right. Consequently, a situation in which the detective is in danger of being shot by someone would evoke suspense, especially if the person firing the gun is the antagonist - the one who placed the bomb under the table.

It is this morally correct behavior that creates concern for the protagonists in the audience since they are the readers only hope for a morally correct outcome. According to Carroll (80) it does not matter whether the recipients can identify with or sympathize for the protagonists as long as the latter's behavior marks them as good. "The protagonists [i.e. the good characters] typically treat their "inferiors" with courtesy and respect, whereas the villains treat such characters with contempt and disdain, if not violence" (Carroll 79). In other words it is the fight between good and evil that creates suspense. In the course of the narrative, the morally good characters have to face danger repeatedly. Suspense is especially high when the forces of evil are greater than those of good, making the morally correct outcome improbable though always still possible. Though Carroll's hypothesis seems plausible it cannot be proven due to the lack of empirical support for its assumptions.

According to the identification theory the reader feels exactly the same emotions as the protagonist him- or herself. For Zillmann, however, this concept cannot withstand closer examination. The recipients are sometimes aware of circumstances the characters are not. While the reader may know about the bomb under the table in the example narrative, while the poker players do not. Thus, they would walk into the room without feeling scared, enjoying a nice get-together with friends, while the recipients would be fearing for the characters' lives. Zillmann also uses the Wild West hero as an example for someone "who calmly and collectedly rides into an ambush, with shotguns aimed at him from all rooftops [. However, he] is unlikely to project his sense of security on the audience" ("Suspense in Drama" 213). For them, their hero is riding right into harm's way evoking concern for the welfare of their hero, which consequently creates suspense. Thus assuming that the readers have the same emotions as the protagonists of the narratives, cannot be correct, at least in stories where the recipients have superior knowledge or simply feel differently than their heroes.

Zillmann does not only criticize the identification theory, but also offers an empirically observable alternative: Rather than assuming that the readers feel the same emotions as their hero, Zillmann proposes that they feel *for* him or her, introducing the empathy concept:

Empathy is defined as any experience that is a response (a) to information about circumstances presumed to cause acute emotions in another individual and/or (b) to the bodily, facial, paralinguistic, and linguistic expression of emotional experiences by another individual and/or (c) to another individual's actions that are presumed to be precipitated by acute emotional experiences, this response being d) associated with an appreciable increase in excitation and (e) construed by respondents as feeling with or feeling for another individual. (Zillmann, "Suspense in Drama" 214f)

Any information about the situation of the protagonists does thus evoke an emotional response in the reader. The recipient does not need to know the facial or bodily expressions or any other emotional displays by the protagonists in order to feel for them. Empathic reactivity "can be instigated by the comprehension of threatening circumstances and the anticipation of harm to entities of concern, usually persons, in the absence of anybody's expression" (Zillmann, "Suspense in Drama" 216). Consequently, the reader does not need to know about how the poker players in the example narrative feel in order to experience empathy for them, due to the life-threatening situation they are in without themselves even being aware.

According to Zillmann, however, sympathy is a prerequisite for feeling empathy. In other words, the protagonist that the reader feels for has to be "liked, or at least not disliked" (Zillmann, "Suspense and Mystery 285). Because of this sympathy the recipient feels, what Zillmann calls, empathic distress for his or her character as long as the outcome is not yet decided .

For Vorderer, Zillmann's empathy concept is too specific and cannot be applied to all narratives, especially those where good and evil cannot be distinguished that easily (237f). According to Vorderer, readers can also feel suspense due to their interest in the story's outcome, whether they feel sympathy for the hero or not. Thus "their primary interest is in the development of the [...] [narrative] (for which the protagonists are, of course, important) and less in the well-being of the protagonist (whom the onlookers may like or not)" (Vorderer 241).

Though Vorderer neither fully agrees with Zillmann's empathy concept nor with the identification theory, he does suggest the existence of a relationship between the protagonist and the reader. He introduces the perspective-taking model, proposing that the recipient develops an understanding of the emotions of the characters rather than actually experiencing them (Vorderer 248). "The perspective-taking model proceeds from the assumption that it is sufficient for readers to know the background of the protagonists to be on their side" (Vorderer 250). This is especially evident when the reader cannot agree with a character's actions and emotions but still wants the protagonist to succeed, especially since he or she usually represents the only hope for a positive outcome.

According to Vorderer, his perspective-taking model does not exclude the possibility of the reader identifying with or feeling empathy for the protagonist. It rather suggests a broader understanding of the relationship between recipient and hero. While in some narratives the protagonist's qualities may not allow the readers to feel close to their hero, others may enable a closer participation of the recipient, which "can happen either in the sense of an empathic process, or at another point as an identification process" (Vorderer 250).

Though all four theories suggest a different approach to how reader involvement is achieved, they all agree with it being an important factor in creating suspense, since it makes the audience concerned for the outcome.

2.1.3.3. BEING LEFT IN THE DARK - FRACTIONAL INFORMATION

The already presented curiosity structure is mainly concerned with fractional information that has to be uncovered in the course of the narrative. It is curiosity that makes the reader want to find out what is kept from him or her. For Cupchik, however, curiosity is just another form of uncertainty. He distinguishes between two kinds of uncertainty: The first one is concerned with the outcome and is thus future-oriented. Consequently, it is rather the suspense structure that uses this form of uncertainty. The

second one “concerns the *understanding* of ongoing events, which may require the discovery of facts and conditions concealed from us by the author” (Cupchik 189). It is the latter form of uncertainty that this subchapter introduces.

A narrative does not tell the reader everything there is to know about the story. It may, among other details, leave out descriptions of places, secondary characters or facial expressions of protagonists. This does not automatically mean that something is deliberately kept from the reader, but is probably rather a consequence of not wanting the narrative to exceed a certain length. Thus there is always fractional information in a narrative that does not evoke any excitement in the reader.

If, however, the recipient’s attention is attracted through various means to a certain fact being kept from him or her, he or she becomes alerted to it and thus curiosity for the missing information is evoked. Put differently, it is necessary to make the reader aware of the fact that he or she is left in the dark in order to make him or her curious.

In a curiosity structure the fractional information is usually disclosed in a “schrittweisen Aufdeckung einer Vorgeschichte” (Wenzel 29). Though the reader is not familiar with the content of the back-story he or she is aware of its existence and knows that he or she has to find out about it to fully understand the events of the narrative in which he or she is engaged. As a consequence, the reader becomes curious about the back-story, that is, he or she has the desire of finding out more, especially since the missing information usually seems to be connected to what he or she is witnessing in the actual narrative.

2.1.3.4. PARADIGM AND PROBABILITY - THE UNCERTAINTY FACTOR

According to Koch (39-41) high suspense is achieved if a minimum paradigm correlates with a low probability, that is, that the odds are against the hero of a narrative. In other words, there are only two possible outcomes. The hero can die or survive, lose or win and the chances for a positive outcome are very low.

However, hope is a prerequisite to keep up the suspense, meaning that even if the odds are heavily against the emotional favorite of the reader, there still has to be a small chance of him prevailing against the antagonist.

2.1.4.5. *THE END IS NIGH - TEMPORAL RESTRICTION*

Temporal restriction is the one factor that all theories and hypotheses mentioned above postulate for every suspenseful story. There has to be some kind of outcome, may it be positive or negative, for the protagonist for what the reader is concerned. It is this outcome that the reader awaits with apprehension or anxiety and it is mostly because of this eventual outcome that the reader is able to feel that pleasant excitement of suspense while engaging in the narrative, since he not only has the desire for finding out about the progress of the story, but also for seeing how it will end.

However, it is the eventual outcome at the end of the story that needs to be discovered, as well as the outcomes of the mini suspense episodes that occur throughout the narrative. They do not only contain important information regarding the characters, but which also help to keep up the suspense.

As soon as the outcome is secure, meaning that “one of the rival alternatives eventuates, there can be no suspense” (Carroll 81). Until that happens, though, “any suspense-paradigm is expected to be discharged in the next segment to come” and it is this anticipation that allows another form of suspense to enter the narrative, namely retardation.

Retardation is “the most conspicuous ingredient of suspense” (Koch 40) and can be defined as a “Verzögerung der dramat[ischen] Handlung” (*Sachwörterbuch der Literatur*). It uses various events, which might be important for other parts of the narrative, to delay the climax.

2.2. A BLOODY STORY (-LEVEL)

The previous chapter has laid the foundation for the following discussion of suspense in *Twilight*, introducing the major factors of suspense on the story and the discourse level. Though the latter is considered to be more important, the potential of the story has a determining influence on the suspense of the narrative. Thus this first chapter on suspense in *Twilight* focuses on the story level of the narrative.

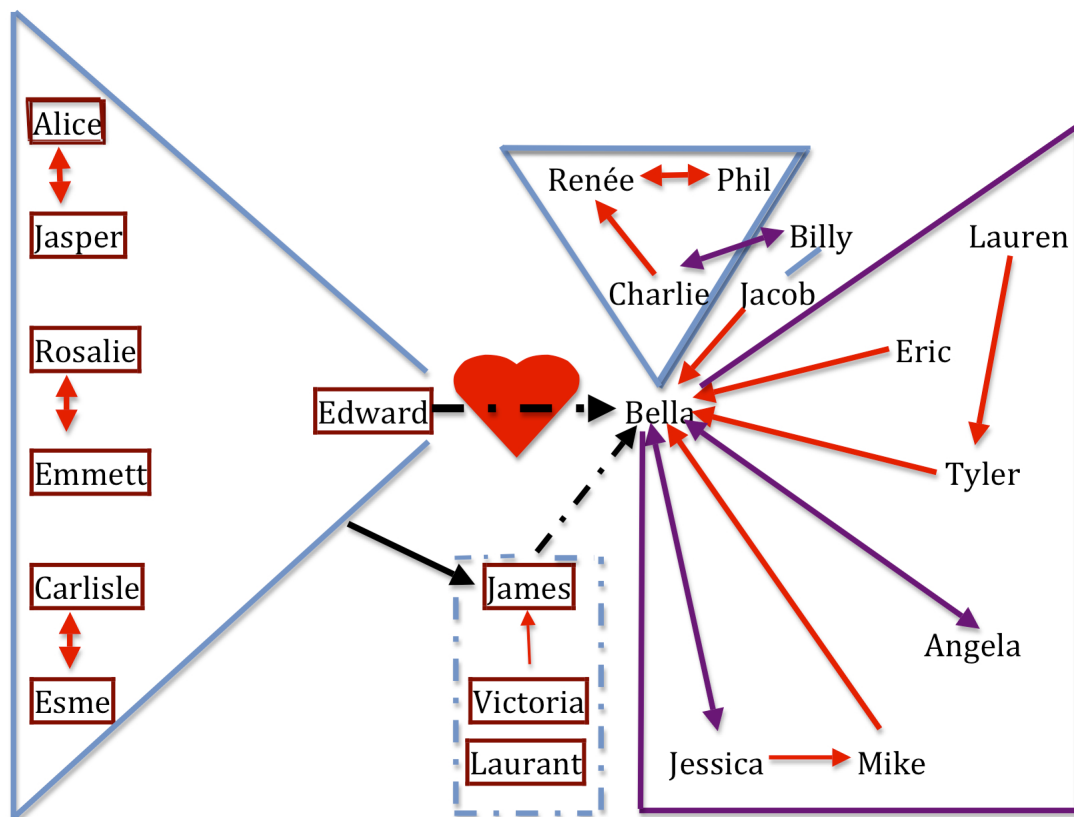


Figure 4
“*Twilight* - The Story Level”

The plot-chart displayed in Figure 4 is concerned with the story level of *Twilight* and shows the major characters and the most important groups as well as their connections with each other. In the plot-chart the names of the characters who are vampires are written in a red box, whereas the human ones are without any marking. The character relationships are represented by the colors blue and violet. While violet arrows and lines represent friendships, the blue ones either connect or hold family members together.

The dashed blue line encircles the members coven, who do not necessarily care for each other. Arrows show special relationships within the already existing community. The red arrows mean love, though, more often than not, this love is not mutual and thus the arrow only points from one character to another illustrating romantic feelings someone has for another character without the latter feeling the same way. The black arrows mean death, or rather murder. The dashed arrows connect one character with his or her would-be-victim.

Looking at the plot-chart, it is apparent that one major arc of suspense centers around the love of Bella and Edward. They are not only joined by a big heart, but also by a dashed black line, meaning that Edward is after Bella's life, whether he wants it or not. It is this very possibility of the hero of the story killing the heroine due to his need that comes with his nature that evokes suspense. However, it is not only the potential murder of the female protagonist that keeps up the suspense but also the question whether or not a love between a vampire and a human could possibly work.

The second major arc of suspense can also already be discovered when analyzing the plot-chart as it is obvious that another vampire is after Bella's life. However, since Edward's family outnumbered the antagonist's allies by far, it seems unlikely, though not impossible, that he succeeds in his attempt of murdering the narrator.

Be that as it may, the outcome of the narrative is already evident in the plot chart since the dashed line between Edward and Bella shows that the hero does not kill his beloved heroine, and neither does James. Moreover, the entirely black line connecting James and the Edward's family tells the recipient that the antagonist does not survive the encounter with the protagonists.

Moreover the story level already reveals a secret that is kept from the reader for a very long time. A curiosity structure, constituting the third major arc of suspense, is applied when it comes to Edward's true vampire identity and it takes almost half the book for both Bella and the reader to find out about him and thus curiosity and, consequently, suspense are evoked.

However, the suspense experienced by the reader of the actual narrative is also evoked on the story-level as happenings and space and setting are also part of it. The scene in the alley, where a couple of men follow Bella with the apparent aim of assaulting her or worse, is an example for suspense on the story-level.

The street was lined on both sides by blank, doorless, windowless walls. I could see in the distance, two intersections down, streetlamps, cars, and more pedestrians, but they were all too far away. Because lounging against the western building, midway down the street, were the other two men from the group, both watching with exciting smiles as I froze dead on the sidewalk. (*Twilight* 139)

Imagining a seventeen year old girl walking in a dark alley with several men trying to corner her is probably better described as thrill rather than suspense. According to Späth thrill is typically evoked by a “Machtgefälle zwischen zwei (selten mehr) Personen sowie eine unmittelbare körperliche, oft eine sexuelle Bedrohung des Sympathieträgers, die mit der Gefahr besonderer Erniedrigung verbunden sein kann” (Späth in Wenzel 25). The scenery alone, the windowless and doorless walls on both sides of the alley, evokes thrill by situating the narrator in a less than welcoming environment she cannot escape from. Nevertheless, thrill is primarily evoked by the group of men, representing a threat for the girl, both physically and sexually, and thus conforming to Späth’s definition. Consequently, thrill is produced by the setting, the characters and the events, i.e. the story level. However, according to Späth, the endangered character is supposed to be the one the reader feels sympathy for and considering that the story level is missing reader involvement, the actually novel stirs up more thrill by threatening the protagonist the recipient does not want to be hurt.

Though the plot-chart reveals the major factors of suspense in *Twilight*, it does depict any mini-suspense-episodes responsible for increasing the suspense. Moreover, the relation of the major arcs of suspense and their interaction with the mini-suspense-episodes can only be discerned on the discourse level. Consequently, given that the story-level alone cannot evoke as much suspense as *Twilight* as a narrative does, the discourse-level may be considered more important for producing suspense (Wenzel 26).

2.3. A SUBTLE DISCOURSE (-LEVEL)

2.3.1. THE CLIMAX AT THE BEGINNING - A FOREBODING PREFACE

“I'd never given much thought to how I would die — though I'd had reason enough in the last few months — but even if I had, I would not have imagined it like this” (*Twilight* 1). This first sentence of *Twilight* already marks the climax of the novel. Although the recipient is not yet involved in the story, he or she already has the desire to find out *why* the narrator seems to be doomed to die. Additionally, the remark between the hyphens suggests a lot of conflicts and dangers, for what other reason could there be for thinking about death over the course of a few months than heightened chances of meeting it.

“I stared without breathing across the long room, into the dark eyes of the hunter, and he looked pleasantly back at me” (*Twilight* 1). While the first sentence merely states that the narrator's death is near without suggesting any cause or reason for it, the second one makes the reader realize that whoever the would-be victim is, he or she is literally staring death in the face. Thus the recipient becomes aware of the fact that there is someone, presumably a murderer, after the narrator. Hence the second sentence is another indication that the narrative the reader has chosen to engage with involves conflicts and dangers.

“Surely it was a good way to die, in the place of someone else, someone I loved. Noble, even. That ought to count for something” (*Twilight* 1). And it does count for something. Because of this remark it becomes apparent that the narrator is someone morally good since he or she is ready to die for someone beloved. Thus the reader is made aware of the fact that the person in mortal danger is someone that ought to be saved by someone or something due to his or her character traits.

“I knew that if I'd never gone to Forks, I wouldn't be facing death now. But, terrified as I was, I couldn't bring myself to regret the decision. When life offers you a dream so far beyond any of your expectations, it's not reasonable to grieve when it comes to an end”

(*Twilight* 1). With these three sentences, the reader is presented another factor. Though the narrator seems to be doomed to die due to something that has happened in the past, there is a reason for it and this very reason is good enough to make it worth dying for, although it could have been avoided by not going to Forks. This reason is, however, kept from the recipient and thus a curiosity structure is created.

The first sentences of *Twilight* meet the requirements a beginning of a narrative has to fulfill according to Fill, who states that “eine wichtige Stelle bei jeder Erzählung ist der Beginn. Hier entscheidet sich - vom Leser aus gesehen - ob der Roman gekauft und gelesen wird, ob er also im Bewußtsein des Lesers “weitergeht” (82). In other words, the beginning is crucial for the decision of the reader whether to continue with the narrative or not. Thus it has to give him or her some incentive to go on, making it important to see how the story unfolds. “Der Romanautor [...] ist am Beginn seines Texts in dem Dilemma, genügend Information zu geben, um Interesse zu erwecken, aber nicht so viel, dass Spannung verloren geht” (Fill 82). This means that the author has to reveal some details in order to make the reader want to engage further in the narrative without lessening the suspense for the recipient. Consequently, the author has to refrain from giving out too much information.

In *Twilight* the first sentences reveal four major facts about the events of the narrative all of which contribute something to increase the overall suspense. Firstly, the narrator, presumably the protagonist of the story, is morally good and thus he or she represents a good character that the reader, according to Carrol (77), will want to succeed.

Secondly, the narrator faces mortal danger and the recipient does not know why and how, creating a curiosity structure right at the beginning of the narrative without the reader even being emotionally involved in the story apart from him or her knowing the high morality of the character.

Thirdly, it becomes apparent that, even though the narrative has to include at least some conflicts and dangers that lead to the perilous current situation, something great and thus something hopeful happens as well. Again, the reader does not know what could

possibly qualify for making a critical situation like that worth happening and thus another curiosity structure is created.

Fourthly, by choosing to reveal the climax at the very beginning of *Twilight*, a suspense structure is created. While the preface shows the narrator in mortal danger, the actual narrative begins with Bella on her way to Forks. Thus it becomes apparent that the narrative is concerned with the events that lead up to the situation of the narrator in the preface. Consequently, the recipients feel suspense due to their knowledge of future events without yet being aware of the reasons that lead up to them.

The very last sentence of the preface adds to both the suspense and the curiosity structure by particularly mentioning the for the reader unknown and thus mysterious hunter and by seemingly evaporating hope for the narrator, thus minimizing the possibility of a positive outcome and consequently achieving a maximum of suspense:

“The hunter smiled in a friendly way as he sauntered forward to kill me.”

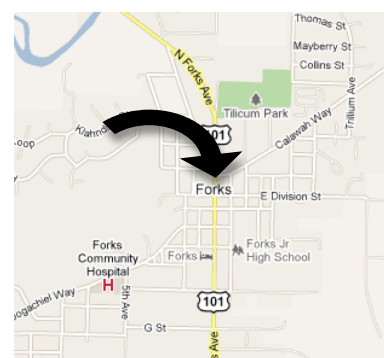
(*Twilight* 1)

2.3.1. BELLA - THAT IS I - IN THE REAL WORLD

This part of the thesis focuses on how reader involvement is evoked in *Twilight*, as it is a prerequisite for feeling suspense. There are two major components responsible for achieving this important aspect of suspense. The information that is given on the setting as well as on the main character, that is the narrator, in the first pages of the narrative, triggers an emotional response in the recipient and consequently increases the reader's concern for the protagonist whose precarious situation has been introduced in the preface.

“MY MOTHER DROVE ME TO THE AIRPORT WITH THE WINDOWS rolled down” (*Twilight* 3). Though the narrative was introduced by a more than perilous situation in the preface, the first chapter of *Twilight* starts with a seemingly average one. A mother driving her daughter to an airport is something that happens in everyday life.

“It was seventy-five degrees in Phoenix, the sky a perfect, cloudless blue. [...] In the Olympic Peninsula of northwest Washington State, a small town named Forks exists under a near-constant cover of clouds” (*Twilight* 3). In *Twilight* the narrative world appears real not only because the supernatural factors are not included in the beginning, but also due to the towns and villages it uses



as a setting. All the places used in *Twilight* are actually real, including Forks, Port Angeles, and even La Push. Even more, the latter is actually a Quileute Indian reservation. Bella's new home town also includes the Forks Community Hospital which is mentioned in the narrative and which exists in actual fact.

Therefore the fictional world becomes reality for the reader not by being described vigorously but rather by actually existing in the real world. Put differently, the recipient

can easily be made to believe that the narrative conforms to reality. Even after the supernatural factors become apparent, the reader can easily imagine the fictional world to depict the real world since the existence of vampires is only disclosed to a few chosen ones and thus not knowing about them does not make their reality less probable.

Apart from having the reader engage in the story as if it was reality, establishing the reader involvement is also concerned with achieving a certain level of sympathy and empathy for the protagonists in the recipient. In *Twilight* this concern is raised through various aspects, including Bella's morally righteous character as well as her ordinariness.

"I [Bella] felt a spasm of panic as I stared at her [Bella's mum Renée] wide, childlike eyes. How could I leave my loving, erratic, harebrained mother to fend for herself? Of course she had Phil now, so the bills would probably get paid, there would be food in the refrigerator, gas in the car, and someone to call when she got lost, but still ..."

(*Twilight* 4). Though the narrator's character was already depicted as morally righteous by showing her readiness to give her life for someone else's in the preface, the way in which Bella describes her mother and the worries that obviously beset her by leaving the latter increase the notion of the protagonist being good. Therefore Bella represents a character whom the reader wants to succeed due to her qualities and virtues.

These become even more obvious in the course of the narrative. The narrator does not only treat her family with respect and love but also acts the same way towards the other characters that are introduced. Jessica's behavior is quite condescending at times, for example when Edward wants Bella to sit with him during lunch. "'Does he mean *you*?' Jessica asked with insulting astonishment in her voice. 'Maybe he needs help with his Biology homework,' I muttered for her benefit" (*Twilight* 74). Bella tries to soothe her friend and not hurt her feelings despite being aware of the fact that Jessica seems to consider the narrator inferior to herself. Thus Bella tries to treat everyone around her with courtesy and respect, irrespective of their behavior.

“And if I couldn’t find a niche in a school with three thousand people, what were my chances here? I didn’t relate well to people my age. Maybe the truth was that I didn’t relate to people, period. [...] Sometimes I wondered if I was seeing the same things through my eyes that the rest of the world was seeing through theirs. Maybe there was a glitch in my brain” (*Twilight* 9f). It is Bella’s problem to fit into society and as well as her perception of herself as being average and common, i.e. nothing special, that helps the reader identify and sympathize with her more easily. Almost anyone can be said to feel disconnected from everyone else at one point or another, a stranger that is understood by nobody, especially during puberty. Hence, the narrator could be anyone, including the reader him or herself.

Another important factor for increasing reader involvement in *Twilight* is focalization. Everything that happens is described from Bella’s point of view. The way she perceives her reality is what matters and it is her feelings that are shared with the recipient. Therefore the reader is able to gain a better insight into Bella’s world and thus becomes more involved in the story.

Moreover, the first person autodiegetic narration, using the first person as the narrative voice, allows the reader to engage with *Twilight* in a way that makes it become his or her own story. If this happens, Bella, that is *I*, becomes the recipient, or rather the recipient becomes Bella. In other words, the recipient starts to identify him or herself with the narrative voice, increasing reader involvement to an absolute maximum.

Altogether, the outcome of the story becomes very significant for the reader, no matter whether he or she identifies or only sympathizes with Bella. Thus an essential prerequisite for suspense is met.

2.3.2. FRACTIONAL INFORMATION - SEEKING KNOWLEDGE

Though the reader experiences a number of incidents in which information is withheld and where knowledge still has to be sought, there are two basic curiosity structures and both are introduced in the preface, although not quite as explicit as in the actual narrative.

The first one is concerned with Edward, involving his family's secret and his connection with Bella, something that is already included in the preface as "a dream so far beyond any of your expectations" (*Twilight* 1). The second one involves the narrator herself and the question of how and why she ended up in mortal danger.

2.3.2.1. CURIOSITY - UNCOVERING WHAT NO-ONE IS SUPPOSED TO KNOW

The curiosity structure involving the Cullen family and thus Edward starts in the preface, which can be considered as the beginning of the first phase of what Wenzel refers to as the Rätselspannungsschema (29f). By referring to a dream so far beyond anyone's expectations, the reader is made aware of the fact that some information is missing, and in the course of the narrative it becomes evident that Edward is the one with whom this dream is concerned. Since this particular connection is not apparent at the beginning of the narrative, the entire first school day might be considered as the actual first phase of the curiosity structure.

"It was there, sitting in the lunchroom, trying to make conversation with seven curious strangers, that I [Bella] first saw them" (*Twilight* 15). By introducing the Cullens that way, the focus automatically turns on them. It is apparent that it will not be the last time Bella sees them, especially since the next couple of pages are concerned with describing their behavior and their outward appearance, marking them as inhumanly beautiful outsiders. Though, the description alone would already make the reader curious about the five pale strangers sitting at their own table, the narrator highlights the importance

of the Cullens herself by explicitly asking the question that is central to the curiosity structure. “Who are *they*?” (*Twilight* 17).

“He [Edward] stared at me [Bella] again, meeting my eyes with the strangest expression on his face - it was hostile, furious” (*Twilight* 20). Though Bella’s previously quoted question can already be considered as hinting at a secret, a something that has to be found out, it is not until she personally meets Edward whose antagonistic stare is everything but welcoming, that the reader realizes that there is indeed something strange going on with the Cullen family.

Thus both the description of the Cullens’ and Edward’s reaction to Bella draw attention to the fact that there is some crucial information missing. The latter’s reaction is on what the second phase focuses.

Bella’s reaction speaks for her naive, innocent character. Noticing Edward’s antagonistic reaction to her, she tries to put the blame on herself though she finally draws the conclusion that “it was impossible that this stranger could take such a sudden intense dislike to me [Bella]” (*Twilight* 23). Unable to understand how and why someone could be so hostile towards her, she feels hurt and almost starts crying (*Twilight* 24). However, after their first conversation during biology, Bella “was eager to get to school because [...] [she] would see Edward Cullen” (*Twilight* 46). This could be regarded as the beginning of the third phase of the curiosity structure in which the information gathering takes place.

“But of more immediate importance was the dark blue van that was skidding, tires locked and squealing against the brakes, spinning wildly across the ice of the parking lot. It was going to hit the back corner of my truck, and I was standing between them. I didn’t even have time to close my eyes” (*Twilight* 47). With those few sentences a suspense structure and thus an arc of suspense, however short, is introduced. The death of the narrator seems inevitable with a van closing in and no time for her to move. For a short while, that is until Edward gets involved, the reader is made to wonder whether or not the protagonist will be harmed, or even killed.

Eventually, though, this accident and thus this suspense structure turns out to be an important source for information about the secret surrounding the Cullen family and Edward. “All I know is that you weren't anywhere near me [...]. That van was going to crush us both - and it didn't, and your hands left dents in the side of it - and you left a dent in the other car, and you're not hurt at all - and the van should have smashed my legs, but you were holding it up ...” (*Twilight* 55). While the narrator and the reader are not able to determine what kind of secret the Cullen family has, the accident made it apparent that supernatural factors were involved. Bella's summary of the event recapitulates all of Edward's inhuman actions, including speed, strength and invulnerability. However, the clues, representing the already gathered information, suggest something rather unnatural. It is very obvious that a lot of details are still missing and thus the feeling of curiosity is far from over.

At this point the information, which both the reader and the narrator have, might be regarded as misleading, considering that a person with supernatural abilities saved an innocent girl from certain death. Consequently, picturing Edward as a superhero seems to be reasonable and even Bella herself suggests it by theorizing about radioactive spiders and thus relating Edward to Spiderman (*Twilight* 79). Bella's theories represent the first hypotheses that are made, constituting one factor of the third part of the curiosity structure.

“What if I'm not a superhero? What if I'm the bad guy?” (*Twilight* 79). Edward's reaction to Bella's theories confronts both the reader and the narrator with another truth, a truth his earlier remarks already hinted at: he repeatedly told Bella to stay away from him and that a friendship between them was not a very wise thing for her to seek. Another pointed remark was made at the very beginning of their conversation that included him practically admitting to be a bad guy. “I decided as long as I was going to hell, I might as well do it thoroughly” (*Twilight* 75). Basically, he could not have been more direct with his allusions. Though it is obvious that the narrator did not choose to pay too much attention to them, the reader might have already fathomed out what Edward was trying to convey with his less than subtle hints. Be that as it may, Bella finally realizes what he is trying to tell her after his reaction to her superhero-theories.

Subsequently, she states her conclusion to what he just admitted to and clarifies the information for the reader. The latter might have already been aware of the fact, but its truth had not yet been proven explicitly. ““You're dangerous?”” I guessed, my pulse quickening as I intuitively realized the truth of my own words. He was dangerous. He'd been trying to tell me that all along” (*Twilight* 80). This information is suspenseful in itself, suggesting that the narrator and thus the character the reader feels for, and probably even identifies with, is apparently socializing with a dangerous man that obviously ought to be avoided. It also has to be considered as another detail helping to unravel the mystery surrounding the Cullens. Moreover, it is the last information the reader and the narrator receive for a whole chapter and thus suspense in the curiosity structure evolves by merely letting every already received clue sink in and be considered.

““Blood drinkers,’ he replied in a chilling voice. ‘Your people call them vampires.’” (*Twilight* 109). With the legend about the cold ones, a new source, namely Jacob Black, a Quileute Indian from the La Push reservation, offers the most important and helpful information on the Cullen family yet. Though Jacob himself explicitly states that the story is merely legend, suggesting that he himself does not believe in it, the narrator is fascinated by ‘the cold ones’.

Jacob’s story initiating both a recapitulation of every bit of information already gathered and a search for more information online, marks the fourth phase of the curiosity structure and helps to increase the suspense involved in it. “Could the Cullens be vampires? Well, they were *something*. Something outside the possibility of rational justification was taking place in front of my [Bella] incredulous eyes. Whether it be Jacob's *cold ones* or my own superhero theory, Edward Cullen was not ... human. He was something more” (*Twilight* 120). Though the aspects of Jacob’s story and of the information found online fit together, it is apparent for both Bella and the reader that there are still unanswered questions, including whether or not the legend and thus the narrator’s second hypothesis after the superhero-theories is true. In other words, the climax of the curiosity structure, that is the unraveling of the mystery, has not yet been reached and it takes another forty pages for the narrator and the reader to finally

discover the truth. This retardation between learning of the Quileute legend and having Edward confirm it slowly brings the suspense to a maximum.

Before Bella and the reader finally solve the Cullen's mystery, another short suspense structure is created when the narrator nearly becomes a victim of an assault in Port Angeles and is once more saved by Edward. And yet again, the latter reveals some of his secrets due to his actions, including his ability to read people's minds. Thus it is after the near-assault, and because of it, that Edward starts trusting Bella with one of his secrets, stating that he does not have another choice anymore. (*Twilight* 151). This marks the beginning of the fifth and last phase of the curiosity structure, though the actual mystery is not yet unraveled and thus neither the narrator nor the reader can be sure whether their theory about Edward being a vampire is correct.

Only in the car, and thus quite some time after Edward imparted one of his secrets, does Bella reveal her new theory. “‘He was telling me some old legends - trying to scare me, I think. He told me one ... [...] about vampires.’ I realized I was whispering. I couldn’t look at his face now. But I saw his knuckles tighten convulsively on the wheel” (*Twilight* 159). With this, the suspense of the curiosity structure is finally at its maximum. The narrator and the reader await Edward's reaction, dreading it, but also hoping for relief and thus truth. This final retardation that is marked by the seemingly unimportant exchange of words between the narrator and Edward ends with the latter's resignation. “He was suddenly resigned. ‘What are you curious about?’” (*Twilight* 161). With this the most crucial information is released. The Cullen family's secret is disclosed. They are indeed vampires; the legend is true.

Over the course of the novel, the fifth phase of this curiosity structure continues. Gradually all the details of the secret that had been withheld and are needed to explain the past, as well as the ongoing events in the narrative, are imparted. Though there are many mysteries about the vampires, including their age, origins and laws, there is one secret disclosed in a more suspenseful way than the others:

“Don't laugh - but how can you come out during the daytime?’ He laughed anyway. ‘Myth.’ ‘Burned by the sun?’ ‘Myth.’” (*Twilight* 162). Shortly after the truth was revealed Bella asks about the Cullen’s apparent ability to come out during daylight, a very obvious question to ask, considering that the sun’s deathly effect on vampires can be seen as common knowledge. With Edward declaring it as a myth, though, it seems as if there was nothing else to find out. Later, however, it is discovered that his answer was not entirely correct.

“Well, you asked if the sun hurt me, and it doesn't. But I can't go out in the sunlight - at least, not where anyone can see.’ ‘Why?’ ‘I'll show you sometime,’ he promised” (*Twilight* 165). Although the narrator and the recipient are aware of the fact that there is still a lot to discover about Edward’s species, his suggestion of showing Bella the effect the sun has on vampires himself does not only make her more curious, but also evokes suspense in the reader. This happens by both drawing attention to another mystery and by including temporal restriction due to his allusion that it will not stay a secret forever.

“The weather will be nice, so I'll be staying out of the public eye ... and you can stay with me, if you'd like to.’ [...]. ‘And you'll show me what you meant, about the sun?’ I asked, excited by the idea of unraveling another of the unknowns” (*Twilight* 186f). With this the reader is reminded of the still unresolved mystery that was mentioned twenty pages earlier. Moreover, Bella’s and Edward’s date makes it apparent that the mystery will be solved in the very near future, that is the next day. In other words, temporal restriction is even narrower than before, evoking suspense by heightening the curiosity evolving around the sunny secret.

“Only then did I remember what the beauty of the meadow had driven from my mind — the enigma of Edward and the sun, which he'd promised to illustrate for me today. [...] Edward seemed to take a deep breath, and then he stepped into the bright glow of the midday sun” (*Twilight* 227). After an hour-long hike through the woods, Bella is fascinated by the meadow that Edward lead her to and because of it she forgets about the mystery that still has to be solved. Hence, this can be regarded as a form of retardation, delaying the end of the curiosity structure.

“Edward in the sunlight was shocking. [...] His skin, white despite the faint flush from yesterday's hunting trip, literally sparkled, like thousands of tiny diamonds were embedded in the surface. [...] A perfect statue, carved in some unknown stone, smooth like marble, glittering like crystal” (*Twilight* 228). With this the curiosity structure is finally solved, explaining the Cullen's ability to walk around during the day as well as their absence from school on sunny days.

2.3.2.2. *WHY HER?*

This part of the thesis concentrates on a curiosity structure with only three phases, that is the introduction of the mystery, the gathering of information and the unraveling of it. This curiosity structure, whose first phase can be found in the preface, evolves around Bella and is basically concerned with the question of *why her*.

How did she end up in mortal danger and in whose place is she dying? Though the reader might, at some point, guess that one reason for her situation in the preface can be found in her engagement with vampires, the arc of suspense whose climax centers around Bella's near death does not start until more than three hundred pages into the narrative. In those pages a lot of information on the narrator is given, including character traits that make her amiable to both the other characters and to the reader, which increase the reader involvement as discussed in chapter 2.3.1.. However, although receiving more details on the narrator is more concerned with reader involvement, it also scales up the importance of the question of how someone so innocent and considerate can become the victim of a hunter aiming at killing her. Who is responsible for the situation in the preface and what could have happened in the course of the narrative that such an amiable girl ended up in mortal danger all alone? Although the recipient does not get answers that are explicitly concerned with the situation in the preface until he reaches the last third of the book, some short remarks and allusions are made. Most of them address Bella's missing sense of balance and her consequential proneness to accidents.

“‘Your X-rays look good,’ he said. ‘Does your head hurt? Edward said you hit it pretty hard.’ ‘It’s fine,’ [...] The doctor’s cool fingers probed lightly along my skull. He noticed when I winced. ‘Tender?’ he asked. ‘Not really.’ I’d had worse” (*Twilight* 53). After the accident, Carlisle, Edward’s father, has a look at Bella and her injuries. It is apparent that she is in pain due to hitting her head on the pavement during the accident. Her denial can also be considered as revealing her unwillingness to be taken care of. Moreover, her comment stating that she already had worse proves her earlier allusions to already sustained injuries due to her “crippling clumsiness” (*Twilight* 46).

“I didn’t have the necessary hand-eye coordination to play sports [...] harming both myself and anyone else who stood close” (*Twilight* 9). This remark at the very beginning of the narrative already suggests that the narrator’s experience with injuries is extensive. Bella also admits that she “had enough trouble not falling down when the ground was dry; it might be safer for me [Bella] to go back to bed now” (*Twilight* 45). However, both statements are concerned with Bella’s own body. Put differently, it is her own balance problem that causes her to inflict and sustain injuries. However, according to Edward, Bella “seem[s] to be one of those people who just attract accidents like a magnet” (*Twilight* 93). With this remark, Edward points out one of Bella’s character traits: being involved in or even causing accidents. Thus he seems to allude that Bella is, in one way or the other, responsible for the injuries she and others sustain by basically just being there, seeing as she attracts the accidents that cause them.

After the events in Port Angeles, Edward reassesses his opinion and observes that Bella is “not a magnet for accidents - that’s not a broad enough classification. You [Bella] are a magnet for trouble. If there is anything dangerous within a ten-mile radius it will invariably find you” (*Twilight* 151). Due to this observation Bella herself becomes a source for suspense since it alludes that whatever bad could happen does happen to her. In other words, Bella’s mere presence evokes suspense.

However, though those allusions mark Bella’s character as suspenseful by merely describing her person, they can also be considered as information for the curiosity structure concerning the question of *why her*. She does not like to be taken care of and

she does not want anybody to get hurt because of her inability to coordinate her hands and feet. Additionally, she is accident-prone, that is anything that could cause trouble is bound to find her. Those character traits can actually be seen as details leading to the unraveling of the mystery introduced in the preface. They eventually provide an answer to the curiosity structure that one might have not expected to receive.

Nevertheless, it is of course the fact that the Cullens are vampires that gets the arc of suspense, whose alluded to climax is found in the preface, started. Even so, it is Bella herself who is to be held responsible for the situation in which she eventually ends up.

It is obvious that she does not stand a chance against James. Yet, she does not want any of the Cullens to be involved for her mother's sake, whom the antagonist threatens to kill if she does, and for Edward's as well. She would rather face certain death than allowing even the chance of anyone getting hurt besides herself.

Thus the mystery introduced in the preface, evoking suspense through a curiosity structure centering around the question of *why her*, is to be found in *herself*, that is Bella. Even the narrator herself observes that she "'d made the decision to meet him [James] there" (*Twilight* 380). Thus the entire narrative can be considered as the second phase of the curiosity structure, providing the reader with allusions hinting at this very solution, with both the narrator herself and Edward pointing out Bella's character traits and accident proneness. When Bella finally faces James, the answer to the curiosity structure has already been gradually disclosed throughout the novel. Be that as it may, the suspense is far from over. Although the mystery of why Bella could end up in the situation described in the preface has been unraveled, the arc of suspense whose climax marked the first phase of the curiosity structure, is still unsolved. However, since it belongs to a suspense structure where paradigm and probability are central, it is discussed in the following subchapter.

2.3.3. PROBABILITY DIMINISHED

Though the curiosity structures are very important factors for evoking suspense in *Twilight*, probability represents another source for it throughout the narrative. Basically, there are two main arcs of suspense whose potential can be found in a minimum paradigm, that is only to possible outcomes, correlating with a low probability achieving a maximum of suspense. This part of the thesis first focuses on Edward and Bella as a couple and how the outcome of their love remains uncertain for the greater part of the novel. Subsequently, the second arc of suspense is discussed, representing a typical suspense structure as presented in chapter 2.1. on the theoretical background.

2.3.3.1. EDWARD VS. BELLA

After the introduction of the protagonists, it quickly becomes apparent that Bella's feelings for Edward surpass those of a friendship. She already confesses to being eager to see him at school before the car accident happens. Afterwards, however, her feelings for him are even stronger. "I [Bella] was consumed by the mystery Edward presented. And more than a little obsessed by Edward himself" (*Twilight* 57). Though this statement does not suggest her falling in love with him, it still hint at stronger feelings being developed for Edward. Though his secret represents a source for Bella's interest in him, she explicitly distinguishes between his person and the mystery he poses. In other words, the reason she is obsessed with him, which obviously suggests more than friendship, does not originate in the secret he has, but rather in himself as a person.

As already pointed out in the introduction to this chapter, this arc of suspense evolves around Bella and Edward as a couple. Obviously, the narrator and the reader can only be sure of Bella's feelings for Edward, especially in the beginning. In the course of the narrative, the narrator and the reader are repeatedly confronted with allusions that suggest a negative outcome for Edward and Bella's relationship even after they declare their love for each other. However, before the low probability of their romantic

relationship's positive outcome can be realized, both the narrator and the reader have to learn whether or not Bella's feelings for Edward are mutual or not.

After the accident Edward explains that "it's better if we're [Bella and Edward] not friends" (*Twilight* 64). Later it becomes apparent that this statement is actually meant as an allusion to him being dangerous for Bella, or anyone else for that matter. Of course Bella, as an infatuated teenager, interprets his words a little differently and since the reader does not know of Edward's secret, he or she might agree with Bella's perception.

My [Bella's] head was spinning, trying to analyze every word Edward had spoken today. What did he mean, it was better if we weren't friends? My stomach twisted as I realized what he must have meant. He must see how absorbed I was by him; he must not want to lead me on... so we couldn't even be friends... because he wasn't interested in me at all. (*Twilight* 67)

Believing Bella's interpretation, the probability of Edward being interested in her are practically zero and since the reader is confronted with a minimal paradigm, that is either the romantic feelings being mutual or not, the odds are heavy against a positive outcome for Bella. In other words, suspense is evoked by Bella's misinterpretation of Edward's statement, diminishing the probability of the protagonist having mutual feelings for each other.

However, only a short while later, hope is raised by Edward clarifying his former remark. "I said it would be better if we weren't friends, not that I didn't want to be. [...] It would be more ... *prudent* for you not to be my friend[.] [...] But I'm tired of trying to stay away from you, Bella" (*Twilight* 72). Edward consequently explain his earlier allusion as not meaning that he did not *not* want to be friends. He also admits that he tried to stay away from Bella the weeks after the accident. Moreover he declares his unwillingness to pursue that course any longer. In other words, he now wants to spend time with Bella. This points towards a positive outcome concerning the possibility of Bella's feelings for Edward being mutual.

As Edward starts imparting his secrets, especially after Bella disclosed her newest theory, hope is raised to an even higher level than before due to their relationship reaching a new level of trust. This is probably what Bella refers to when pointing out that “last night [i.e. Bella’s conversation with Edward while driving home from Port Angeles] all the walls were down” (*Twilight* 173f). On their way home, though, Bella had not known about Edward picking her up for school the next day:

“Me [Edward] [...] allowing myself to be alone with you” “This is a mistake?” I [Bella] heard the sadness in my voice, but I didn’t know if he could as well. “A very dangerous one,” he murmured. We were both silent then. I watched the headlights twist with the curves of the road. [...] I was aware of the time slipping away so quickly, like the black road beneath us, and I was hideously afraid that I would never have another chance to be with him like this again - openly, the walls between us gone for once. His words hinted at an end, and I recoiled from the idea. I couldn’t waste one minute I had with him. (*Twilight* 163)

In other words, Bella again interprets Edwards statements in a way that seems to suggest that hope for any kind of relationship, friendship or otherwise, ought to be abandoned, since, according to the narrator, Edward’s remark seems to allude that the time they are spending alone together is not going to repeat itself.

Up to this point, Bella merely hinted at her feelings for Edward, stating that she was obsessed with him and that she “wanted nothing more than to be with him” (*Twilight* 121). However, after their conversation in the car, she admits her true feelings for Edward. “I [Bella] was unconditionally and irrevocably in love with him [Edward]” (*Twilight* 171). Though this finally ascertains that the positive outcome for the character the reader is involved with can be found in a romantic relationship with Edward, it does not solve the suspense evolving around Edward and Bella as a couple, since the former’s feelings have not yet explicitly been stated.

It takes almost another hundred pages for the protagonists to finally admit their feelings to each other, releasing the tension, the suspense that the reader felt due to the uncertainty of the outcome concerning their relationship. Before that happens, though, the events and remarks of both Bella and Edward repeatedly remind the reader that

there is still the possibility of their feelings not being mutually strong. Bella herself is of the opinion that she likes Edward more than he likes her (*Twilight* 179). However, due to his ability of reading minds, Edward is able to listen to Bella's confession and confronts her about it. All through the narrative the recipient is faced with Bella's low self esteem concerning her looks and her appeal to other people. Though Bella repeatedly refers to herself as "absolutely ordinary - [...] except for bad things like all the near-death experiences and being so clumsy that I'm [Bella] almost disabled" (*Twilight* 184). However, this certainly does not correlate with the behavior of Mike, Tyler and Eric, all of whom would obviously not agree with her description of herself and it is Edward that finally tries to open her eyes by saying "Trust me just this once - you are the opposite of ordinary" (*Twilight* 184). Though Bella does not agree with him, his remark helps to raise hope for their feelings actually being mutual.

The suspense of whether or not Bella and Edward will enter a romantic relationship is brought to a maximum by including temporal restriction.

I intuitively knew - and sensed he did, too - that tomorrow would be pivotal. Our relationship couldn't continue to balance, as it did, on the point of a knife. We would fall off one edge or the other, depending entirely upon his decision, or his instincts. My decision was made, made before I'd ever consciously chosen, and I was committed to seeing it through. Because there was nothing more terrifying to me, more excruciating, than the thought of turning away from him. It was an impossibility. (*Twilight* 217)

A day before their conversation in the clearing, Bella explicitly states that she is aware of their oncoming date being vital for their future relationship. In other words, the end of the suspense concerning Edward and Bella's relationship is highlighted by suggesting it will be solved the next day.

"You are the most important thing to me now. The most important thing to me ever" This is the moment when the two protagonists acknowledge their feelings for each other at last. This remark eventuates the alternative option and thus the arc of suspense

evoked by the possibility of Bella's feelings not being mutual is finally over. This does not, however, mean that their relationship is bound to end well.²

Altogether, it seems to be Bella's perpetual reminders of her being ordinary and average, in other words not good enough, that helps keeping up the suspense, making it appear impossible for someone as perfect as Edward to be romantically interested in someone like Bella. Even more important for diminishing the probability are her constant misinterpretations of Edward's remarks, practically eliminating the positive alternative of Bella's romantic feelings being mutual.

2.3.3.2. *BROWN VS. RED - THE GRAND FINALE?*

The second arc of suspense in *Twilight*, whose climax the recipient already witnesses in the preface, is a typical suspense structure as presented by Wenzel. However, it is more than three hundred pages into *Twilight*, after two thirds of the narrative, that the suspense of this structure to finally begins increase. Altogether this suspense structure consists of seven phases, repeating two of the five phases as distinguished by Wenzel.

The preface can be described as the first opening phase explicitly foreshadowing the dangers that are coming, depicting the yet unknown narrator of the story in mortal danger.

According to Wenzel, the second phase is responsible for evoking reader involvement. Due to not being introduced for the better part of the narrative, reader involvement is already established at the beginning of the suspense structure.

“Carlisle was up to bat, Edward catching, when Alice suddenly gasped. My eyes were on Edward, as usual, and I saw his head snap up to look at her. Their eyes met and something flowed between them in an instant. He was at my side before the others

² see chapter 2.3.4., concerned with the last pages of *Twilight*

could ask Alice what was wrong” (*Twilight* 324). The third phase of the suspense structure begins with a surprise structure. The Cullens and Bella, are in a clearing playing baseball. Everything seems perfectly fine. Bella and Edward finally declared their love for each other and spend all time possible together when suddenly everything changes. Though being aware that other vampires were passing Forks neither of the Cullens were truly worried about a confrontation with them since “they probably won’t come into town at all” (*Twilight* 287). However, in the middle of their baseball game, surprise is produced by Alice’s vision suddenly disclosing the information that “she had the perspective wrong before [...] [and that] they heard us [the Cullens] playing and it changed their path” (*Twilight* 325). Thus the visitors the Cullens were merely a little worried about before, now pose a real threat due to Bella’s presence in the clearing. After “they emerged one by one from the forest edge” (*Twilight* 328). everything seems to run smoothly. Bella and Edward, together with Alice and Emmet, were to leave the perimeter, while the three visitors were to take over their spots on the playing field. But then

three things seemed to happen simultaneously [...]. My hair ruffled with the light breeze, Edward stiffened, and the second male, James, suddenly whipped his head around, scrutinizing me, his nostrils flaring.

A swift rigidity fell on all of them as James lurched one step forward into a crouch. Edward bared his teeth, crouching in defense, a feral snarl ripping from his throat.

It was nothing like the playful sounds I’d heard from him this morning; it was the single most menacing thing I had ever heard, and chills ran from the crown of my head to the back of my heels.

(*Twilight* 331)

Once more, everything changes in one instant. James, together with the other two members of his coven, becomes aware of Bella being human and is eager for a little snack. Bella’s description of the events following the light breeze are suspenseful on their own, showing Edward’s other, wild side and James’s appetite for Bella’s blood. Due to James’s behavior, the reader might already guess his role as the hunter in the preface .

With the three vampire visitors leaving the clearing, the fourth phase of the suspense structure, whose function is represented in the third phase of Wenzel's suspense structure (i.e. the focus on the interplay of hope and hopelessness) begins.

“‘How many?’ Emmet asked Alice. ‘Three,’ she answered tersely. ‘Three!’” he scoffed. ‘Let them come.’ The steel bands of muscle flexed along his massive arms” (*Twilight* 325). Even before the situation escalates, Emmet's concern is at a minimum. And not without reason. The probability of the seven Cullens losing against the three visitors seems indeed very low, especially since their family not only includes a vampire stronger than an average one, but also a psychic and a telepath. Consequently, Edward's reaction to the negative outcome on the clearing seems a bit exaggerated and disproportionate to the danger the Cullens face. However, he justifies his behavior by disclosing some information that the others, including Bella, did not have before. “‘You don't understand,’ he roared in frustration. [...] ‘He's a tracker. Alice did you *see* that? He's a tracker!’” (*Twilight* 334). Though both the reader and the narrator have no idea what the term tracker is supposed to mean, Edward seems to think of it justifying his reaction. Emmet's reaction also suggests that the word “meant something more to the three of them [Edward, Alice and Emmet] than it did to me [Bella]” (*Twilight* 334). Both the narrator and the reader continue to wonder about Edward's reaction and thus the meaning of the term. The latter, however, is only disclosed after Bella explicitly asks Edward why James is after her specifically, considering that there are so many other potential dinners, i.e., victims, running around in Forks and its environs.

“I [Edward] got a good look at his mind tonight,” he began in a low voice. “I'm not sure if there's anything I could have done to avoid this, once he saw you [Bella]. It *is* partially your fault. [...] If you didn't smell so appallingly luscious, he might not have bothered. But when I defended you ... well, that made it a lot worse. He's not used to being thwarted, no matter how insignificant the object. He thinks of himself as a hunter and nothing else. His existence is consumed with tracking, and a challenge is all he asks of life. Suddenly we've presented him with a beautiful challenge — a large clan of strong fighters all bent on protecting the one vulnerable element. You wouldn't believe how euphoric he is now. It's his favorite game, and we've just made it his most exciting game ever.”

Since this explanation diminishes the probability for Bella surviving, the suspense structure conforms to Koch's suggestion for evoking high suspense by correlating it with a minimum paradigm, that is, either the narrator's death or her survival of James's hunt.

Moreover, remarks of the other characters both help raise and cause abandoning hope. Emmet repeatedly states that James is "not match for [...] [them and that] he won't be able to touch her" (*Twilight* 335). His confidence in their easy victory is, however, dashed by Laurent's description of James. "You [the Cullens] can't bring him [James] down. I've [Laurent] never seen anything like him in my three hundred years. He's absolutely lethal" (*Twilight* 349)

Altogether, though the probability of the Cullens losing seems very low due to them outnumbering their opponents by far, Edward's remarks, together with Laurent's, are responsible for perceiving the situation in James's favor, evoking suspense by diminishing the probability of Bella's survival.

The fifth phase of this suspense structure can be considered as what Wenzel refers to as the fourth phase, since the time spent in the hotel room can be regarded as retardation. Bella, Jasper and Alice basically wait for something to happen, trying to kill time by sleeping, watching TV, and following lines on the ceiling. Within this retardation, however, three surprise structures occur, all of which diminish the probability for a positive outcome and eventually lead to the grand finale with James. Since the interplay of hope and hopelessness is very prominent in those surprise structures, making the reader aware of Bella's chances for survival, they could be regarded as what Wenzel refers to as the third phase of a suspense structure.

"Then, without warning. Alice leaped from the bed, landing lightly on her feet. [...] 'Something's changed.' Her voice was urgent, and she wasn't talking to me anymore" (*Twilight* 362). In the middle of their conversation on how vampires are created, Alice has a vision of James's future actions. While the Cullens had been more or less in control of the situation before, Alice's first vision tells them that James managed to

escape them. Moreover, Bella recognizes the room Alice draws as a ballet studio resembling the one she used to dance in. “I [Bella] didn’t miss the look they exchanged” (*Twilight* 367). Even though Jasper and Alice’s reactions seem to suggest that they do not believe it to be a coincidence, neither the characters nor the reader can be sure of the meaning of Alice’s vision. This uncertainty of whether or not they missed something important and the diminished probability of confronting James before the latter manages to get to Bella increase the suspense within the retardation.

“I [Bella] watched as Alice drew a square room with dark beams across its low ceiling. [...] ‘The phone goes there,’ I whispered, pointing. Two pairs of eternal eyes stared at me. ‘That’s my mother’s house.’” (*Twilight* 370). The second surprise structure evokes more suspense than the last one, proving the antagonist to be nearer than everyone, including the reader, would have thought.

“I can’t win, Alice. You can’t guard everyone I know forever. Don’t you see what he’s doing? He’s not tracking me at all. He’ll find someone, he’ll hurt someone I love ...” (*Twilight* 370f). For Bella Alice’s visions prove that there is no hope, even after the latter tries to reassure her of the Cullen’s ability to catch James before he manages to get to anyone. “There was no escape, no reprieve. I could see only one possible end looming darkly in my future” (*Twilight* 371). Though one might not agree with her being doomed to die, Bella’s perspective on the events do not help to raise hope, but rather seem to further diminish the probability of her surviving James’s hunt. However, the Cullens are still on her side, ready to defend her at any moment.

This last hope, though, is abandoned as the last surprise structure takes its toll. “But then, the phone rang again, distracting me” (*Twilight* 372). Though both Alice and Bella first believe the latter’s mother to be on the line it turns out to be James, giving instructions to Bella on when, where and how to meet him. Up until then neither the narrator nor the reader knew why Alice saw James in those rooms. The latter’s phone call reveals that his plan involves Bella’s will to freely come and face her own death in her mother’s stead. With Bella’s decision to do as the antagonist asks her to, all hope seems to evaporate. “For I [Bella] had no other choice now but one: to go to the

mirrored room and die. I had no guarantees, nothing to give to keep my mother alive. [...] But I still had no choice. I had to try” (*Twilight* 375). While at their first meeting, Bella would have had seven vampires defending her, it is now Bella against James, a human against a vampire.

With this prospect, the sixth phase begins. The scene at the airport in which Bella manages to escape Alice and Jasper is nothing more than retardation, at least for the reader. Though Bella believes the mirror room to be her fate, she cannot be sure of whether or not she will manage to elude her watchful companions. The reader, having read the preface, is aware of Bella’s fate of ending up in the long room, staring into James’s eyes, being all alone and dying in everyone else’s stead. Thus Bella’s escape to the airport only retards the inevitable, though increasing the suspense to an even higher level at the same time.

Another retardation is introduced by the antagonist, who starts recapitulating his plan, congratulating himself on the way. Moreover, he explains his intention of making Edward hunt him down after seeing the video of Bella’s death, raising suspense by threatening the other main character of the narrative. It is only at the end of the chapter, almost twenty pages after James’s call, that the seventh and final phase of the suspense structure begins.

“I heard, as if from underwater, the final growl of the hunter. I could see, through the long tunnels my eyes had become, his dark shape coming toward me. With my last effort, my hands instinctively raised to protect my face. My eyes closed, and I drifted” (*Twilight* 393). Bella’s death seems to be near for what could stop the hunter from killing his most-wanted victim. In other words, everything seems to be lost, the prospect for a positive outcome, for the alternative in her favor appears to be at an end.

“AS I DRIFTED, I DREAMED. Where I floated, under the dark water, I heard the happiest sound my mind could conjure up - as beautiful, as uplifting, as it was ghastly. It was another snarl; a deeper, wilder roar that rang with fury” (*Twilight* 394). Edward’s appearance changes everything. He even tries to calm Bella down by saying that she

was going to be fine and that he loved her (*Twilight* 395). While the recipient believes to have already witnessed the climax of the grand finale when Bella saw James approaching her, it is a surprise structure that leads to a last-minute-crises, achieving an even higher climax in the suspense structure.

“My hand is burning!” I screamed, finally breaking through the last of the darkness, my eyes fluttering open. I couldn't see his face, something dark and warm was clouding my eyes. Why couldn't they see the fire and put it out? His voice was frightened. “Bella?” “The fire! Someone stop the fire!” I screamed as it burned me. “Carlisle! Her hand!” “He bit her” (*Twilight* 396)

As everything seems to be over, information that has been kept from the reader due to Bella's inability to narrate the events while being unconscious is suddenly unveiled, surprising, or rather shocking the recipient as well as the other characters. For a split second Bella's fate seems to have been decided for her by James - his bite started her transition into a vampire. Within the few moments of realizing what had happened without neither the narrator's nor the reader's knowledge and Edward's decision to not let Bella become a vampire, another climax is reached, one that surpasses the suspense of the previous one by building upon the latter's. In other words, though the reader had already been feeling a high amount of suspense when Edward saved the seemingly doomed Bella, it increases even more, that is to its maximum for this suspense structure, when the last-minute-crises occurs.

“And I [Bella] was in his [Edward] arms, cradled against his chest - floating, all the pain gone. ‘Sleep now, Bella’ were the last words I heard” (*Twilight* 398). With this the suspense structure comes to an end, After Edward manages to suck out the venom in Bella's body that would have changed her into a vampire the suspense structure comes to an end with Bella falling asleep safely in Edward's arms. Consequently, the suspense evoked by James's intention to kill Bella is solved and the recipient can now feel relief. However, suspense is not over yet and though it is referred back to the events connected to James's hunt of Bella, the suspense in the last chapter and the epilogue does not revolve around either Bella or Edward being endangered by someone from the outside, but rather focuses on their future as a couple again.

2.3.4. EVERYTHING COMES TO AN END ...

Like every narrative, *Twilight* also has its last chapter, though also including an epilogue. The thirty-five pages after the suspense structure that is introduced by James's obsession with killing Bella are not really concerned with the latter, but rather discuss Bella's and Edward's options for their future as a couple. One of those possibilities is presented by solving a curiosity structure that already started before James disrupted the peace. However, it is the other possibility that succeeds in the end. Or rather, at least at the end of *Twilight*.

2.3.4.1. PREVISIONS - CERTAINTY UNCERTAIN?

The curiosity structure evolves around Alice's ability to see the future. The first phase already starts with Edward mentioning his sister being psychic. "“She [Alice] knows other things. She *sees* things - things that might happen, things that are coming. But it's very subjective. The future isn't set in stone. Things change.’ His [Edward's] jaw set when he said that, and his eyes darted to my [Bella's] face and away so quickly that I wasn't sure if I only imagined it” (*Twilight* 253). Though the fact that there is some information missing is not yet obvious, Bella's observation of Edward's reaction, can be interpreted as at least subtly hinting at a retained detail.

Though neither the narrator nor the reader are yet sure that there is a secret to be disclosed, some of Edward's reactions to Alice's ability seem to hint at it and this does not escape Bella. "“So did Alice see me [Bella] coming?’ His reaction was strange. ‘Something like that,’ he said uncomfortably, turning away so I couldn't see his eyes. I stared at him curiously. [...] I was still wondering why he responded that way when I mentioned Alice” (*Twilight* 277). At this point it becomes rather obvious that Edward is keeping something from Bella and the reader consequently starts to wonder what that could be, evoking suspense through a curiosity structure.

“‘Alice has her own way of looking at things,’ he said through tight lips. [...] A moment of wordless communication passed between us. He [Edward] realized that I [Bella] knew he was keeping something from me. I realized that he wasn't going to give anything away. Not now” (*Twilight* 286). Though it has already been apparent that Edward is hiding something from Bella, it is not until this very point that the attention is explicitly drawn to the fact that there is some important information involving Alice missing.

Moreover, the last sentence of the previous quotation, suggesting that the detail that Edward keeps from Bella will be disclosed, can be referred to as the second phase of the curiosity structure, since it is concerned with Bella's reaction to being made aware of the missing information.

“‘Alice already saw it, didn't she?’ I guessed. ‘That's why the things she says upset you. She knows I'm going to be like you ... someday.’” (*Twilight* 415). It is only after the suspense structure evolving around James is solved that this important detail is released. Now, both the narrator and the reader know why Edward reacted oddly when it came to Alice.

However, even though the information is crucial for the solution of the curiosity structure it does raise more questions than it answers since it is concerned with Bella's and Edward's future, something that is still not assured, especially since the couple's opinions do not coincide. While Edward wants to preserve Bella's humanity the latter is more than eager to join him in his eternal life.

The end of the curiosity structure evolving around Alice is not the first time, though, that the subject of transition is approached. As Edward tells the story of how the Cullen family grew in numbers, Bella's curiosity leads to questions whose answers are merely superficial and perfunctory, not giving all the details that would be necessary to satisfy the need for information in both the reader and the narrator, especially since it has obviously been omitted on purpose: “I could tell from the set of his lips, he would say no more on this subject. I suppressed my curiosity, though it was far from idle. There

were many things I needed to think through on this particular issue, things that were only beginning to occur to me. No doubt his quick mind had already comprehended every aspect that eluded me” (*Twilight* 252). Though Bella merely hints at the importance of the subject, it is quite apparent that it is more crucial than its short and sparse occurrence in the better part of the narrative suggests.

Bella is human and her boyfriend Edward is not. He is a vampire and thus incredibly strong, unchanging, forever seventeen and almost indestructible. His constant thirst for her blood makes it impossible for them to fully consummate their love. Moreover, her aging puts a very strict deadline to their relationship, apart from the fact that his young and beautiful staying body will at some point stand next to his wrinkled, shriveled but of course still beloved Bella. The uncertainty of the outcome of their relationship represents another source of suspense in *Twilight*. Though their love for each other has already been declared, the future of their relationship is still pending.

Since Edward does not seem to be willing to offer an explanation concerning the transition into a vampire, the narrator and the reader have to be satisfied with simply knowing that there is one.

“We're also venomous,” she said, her teeth glistening. “The venom doesn't kill - it's merely incapacitating. It works slowly, spreading through the bloodstream, so that, once bitten, our prey is in too much physical pain to escape us. [...] “So ... if the venom is left to spread ...” I murmured. “It takes a few days for the transformation to be complete, depending on how much venom is in the bloodstream, how close the venom enters to the heart. As long as the heart keeps beating, the poison spreads, healing, changing the body as it moves through it. Eventually the heart stops, and the conversion is finished. But all that time, every minute of it, a victim would be wishing for death” (361)

Eventually, it is Alice and not Edward who discloses the secret of how to become a member of the undead. Thus one more mystery is unraveled, solving another smaller curiosity structure of the narrative. Her description suggests the transition to be very painful, worse than death even. Thus the solution to the curiosity structure is in itself suspenseful, suggesting that if Edward and Bella eventually decide to turn the latter into

a vampire, she will be feeling more pain than she could possibly imagine, at least until she experiences it after James's bite.

“‘*Why* you did it. Why didn't you just let the venom spread? By now I would be just like you.’ [...] ‘I can't do it, Bella. I won't do that to you.’” (*Twilight* 412f). Since Bella learnt of the theory of transition from Alice, Edward was not aware of her knowing about it until she asked him to explain his actions. Through this it becomes apparent that Edward is not willing to turn Bella into a vampire. It is not a shortage of feelings for her that makes him deny her eternal life, but rather his angst of taking away her life when she has so much to still experience as a human. Moreover, he reminds her of the pain James's bite caused her and of the high price she would have to pay for becoming a vampire - losing her parents.

“‘I have my own life to live.’ ‘Exactly,’ he snapped. ‘And I won't end it for you.’” (*Twilight* 414). Their argument seems to make an actual happily ever after as it would be possible in their case, rather improbable, thus increasing the suspense evolving around an eventual positive outcome for their relationship.

It is at this point that Bella realizes what was bothering Edward about Alice. “‘She knows I'm going to be like you ... someday.’ ‘She's wrong. She also saw you dead, but that didn't happen, either.’ ‘You'll never catch *me* betting against Alice.’ We stared at each other for a very long time. [...] ‘So where does that leave us?’ I wondered. He chuckled humorlessly. ‘I believe it's called an *impasse*.’” (*Twilight* 415)

Edward's reaction to Bella's observation does not only end the argument about the narrator being turned into a vampire for now, but also suggests Alice's vision being incorrect. Thus the two probable outcomes, representing a minimum paradigm - that is Bella either becoming a vampire or not - are both very possible. Moreover the outcome does not only depend on whether or not Edward reconsiders his point of view but also on the other vampires Bella knows.

As the discussion turns out to be a barren one, leaving both Bella's desire unanswered and her future with Edward in question, dysphoric feelings, that is the empathic distress due to the unlikely positive outcome concerning these issues, continue to exist.

Though the discussion marks the end of the last chapter of the narrative, it is the epilogue after it that actually is the end of *Twilight*.

2.3.4.2. *BUT SOME THINGS DON'T*

The epilogue starts off with introducing another, very short curiosity structure that is important in so far as it introduces the main issue causing suspense in the end.

“‘At what point exactly are you going to tell me what's going on?’ [...] ‘I'm shocked that you haven't figured it out yet.’” (*Twilight* 419). Though the reader might have already wondered at the description of Bella's attire at the very beginning of the epilogue, Bella's question explicitly draws attention to the fact that there is something happening about which neither the narrator nor the reader have any knowledge. Be that as it may, Edward's answer suggests a rather obvious solution that nevertheless escapes Bella.

If the reader did not already figure out the occasion that Edward is taking Bella to before Tyler's phone call and Edward's reaction to it, it is Bella's outraged realization of what Edward plans to subject her. “My face and neck flushed crimson with anger. I could feel the rage-induced tears starting to fill my eyes. [...] ‘You're taking me to *the prom!*’ I yelled” (*Twilight* 421)

Though Bella's outward reaction to Edward's plans are quite intense, or rather vigorous, offering a solution to the curiosity structure introduced in the beginning, her inward thoughts are more crucial for the coming events. “My half-fearful hopes seemed very silly now” (*Twilight* 422). It is obvious that Bella thought of a far different event looming at the end of their drive. Taking into account that the reader is aware of Bella's

wish to become vampire it might occur to him or her that this was what she was expecting to happen. However, if the recipient does not think of Bella's particular desire, another very short curiosity structure is introduced.

"So I was hoping that you might have changed your mind... that you were going to change me, after all" (*Twilight* 432). Edward's inquisitiveness of Bella's thoughts eventually lead to the solution of the curiosity that was aroused by the narrator's allusion of having different hopes for Edward's evening plans. As a consequence to Bella's confession, the discussion of her becoming a vampire is resumed.

"I don't want my presence to take anything away from you, if I can help it. I want you to be *human*" (*Twilight* 431). Edward's former remarks obviously prove that he neither wants Bella to miss any human experience because of his being there nor, by implication, intends to turn her into a vampire for her own sake. Therefore, the course the discussion takes is rather a surprise to both the narrator and the reader.

"You're ready now, then?" he asked. "Um" I gulped. "Yes?" He smiled, and inclined his head slowly until his cold lips brushed against the skin just under the corner of my jaw. "Right now?" he whispered, his breath blowing cool on my neck. I shivered involuntarily. "Yes," I whispered, so my voice wouldn't have a chance to break. If he thought I was bluffing, he was going to be disappointed. I'd already made this decision, and I was sure. It didn't matter that my body was rigid as a plank, my hands balled into fists, my breathing erratic ... (*Twilight* 433)

For a short moment, it seems as if the narrative takes another turn, in the true sense of the term. For a split second, the narrator and with her the recipient, have the hope of the protagonist's wish to become reality. Edward seems to have reconsidered his point of view, though it appears impossible for him to have changed his mind so drastically in the course of a few sentences in a conversation.

Bella's anticipation of Edward biting her in the neck increases the suspense to a maximum, making the reader almost feel the near relief regarding the positive outcome for the future of the relationship being secure. "He chuckled darkly, and leaned away.

[...] ‘You can't really believe that I would give in so easily,’ he said with a sour edge to his mocking tone. ‘A girl can dream.’” (*Twilight* 433). Suddenly, right when the narrator believed to have a happily ever after, Edward's actions turn out to be a ruse. Instead of suspense being relieved by a positive outcome, that is, the fulfillment of Bella's desire, the dysphoric feelings that were already evoked after the first barren discussion on the issue, are even more elevated due to the seemingly near solution of the suspense evolving around the question Bella's transition and the concomitant problem of Bella's and Edward's future as a couple.

These final pages of *Twilight* offer suspense beyond the one surrounding Bella and Edward. Jacob's appearance at the prom and his messages from his father suggest another complication not yet disclosed. The expression “‘We'll be watching.’” (*Twilight* 428) is already an allusion to the next parts of the *Twilight Saga* and thus something neither the narrator nor the reader have any knowledge about, at least not at the end of the first book.

Altogether, *Twilight* ends with two questions yet to be answered. The suspense evolving around Edward's and Bella's future, especially the issue of the latter becoming a vampire, remains to be solved and the mystery, that is the background knowledge to Jacob's father's hidden threat still has to be disclosed.

2.4. CONCLUSION - IT'S NOT OVER YET

Altogether, paradigm and probability, uncertainty and curiosity all play important roles in increasing the suspense in *Twilight*, though basically suspense can be said to be experienced on four different levels - four bigger, more important arcs of suspense.

The first level develops around Bella and Edward. It involves the practically simultaneous unraveling of the mystery surrounding Edward and the question of whether or not he shares Bella's feelings. Therefore both a curiosity and a suspense structure are responsible for the first arc of suspense.

The second level is introduced by James's hunt and hence the second important arc of suspense in *Twilight* is built by a suspense structure.

The third level is a summary of mini-suspense-episodes that are responsible for an increase in suspense throughout the narrative. These episodes also have an affect on the overall suspense, increasing the reader involvement, repeatedly minimizing the odds for a positive outcome and arousing curiosity for smaller mysteries. These mini-suspense-episodes include Bella's accident and her near-assault in Port Angeles. Moreover, the curiosity structure developing around Edward's secret concerning Alice's ability and the surprise structures that occur during the time in the hotel room can be regarded as mini-suspense-episodes. Consequently, they are often responsible for making the positive outcome appear very unlikely. As a result, the reader's uncertainty grows with every mini-suspense episode and thus the overall suspense increases.

The fourth level is one aspect of suspense that is quite specific to *Twilight*, or rather to *The Twilight Saga*. Since it comprises more than one volume, the final page of *Twilight* does not conclude the story about Bella. In other words, the narrative is not over yet especially since Bella's and Edward's love is not certain to last happily ever after. Though the suspense concerned with whether their feelings are mutual or not has already been solved, their future is still hanging in the balance. The recipient's concern for Bella not only gives rise to the question of whether or not she will be able to make

Edward reconsider his point of view on turning her into a vampire. Moreover, Edward's remarks at the hospital about him only staying as long as it is good for Bella may be considered as an allusion to him leaving as soon as he believes this pivotal requirement to be gone. Thus it is not only the happily ever after that actually lasts forever that is uncertain. The recipient even has to wonder whether Edward will stay with Bella when she remains human. Put differently, there is a possibility of Bella and Edward not having a future at all, neither as the narrator being human nor one as her being a vampire.

Apart from that, there are still some questions unanswered, including Jacob's part in Bella's life, especially concerning his father's message that suggests a bigger involvement of the Quileutes in the next part of the saga.

Thus, altogether, the reader's insatiable thirst for knowledge is not yet satisfied and the only chance he or she has to obtain all the information necessary to put the pieces together and figure out whether or not there is a happy ending is to continue reading. This is also unavoidable since the reader wants to arrive at certainty about the outcome for his or her emotional favorite character.

Suspense is also described as "the art of making the reader care about what happens next" (Rodell in Carroll 75). In *Twilight* this art results in the reader's desire to continue reading after the narrative ended. Consequently, the narrative makes the reader want to engage in the other volumes of the *Twilight Saga*. Thus, the final reader reaction to *Twilight* caused by suspense is that the reader wants to know more.

3. BEYOND READER ATTRACTION

“Ich spüre an den Reaktionen meiner Leser, wie groß die Sehnsucht nach romantischen Beziehungen ist” (Bardola 16f).

An author writing a narrative usually intends to attract readers with his or her story and the way the story elements are molded together. One way of doing so, is by including suspense, as it draws readers to engage in the book for the various reasons given in the previous part of the thesis. However, the audience’s needs go beyond experiencing empathic distress. The desire to engage in suspense is as much an integral part of life as the need for love and romance. Consequently, including love and romance in a narrative intends to attract readers, though their success is often used as the improbable positive outcome in books and thus employing them usually aims at increasing the suspense.

My second hypothesis focuses on the reader’s reaction to *Twilight*, proposing that love and romance go beyond attracting the reader’s interest for engaging with the book, suggesting that the recipient develops feelings for or even falls in love with the main character Edward.³ By trying to appeal to their audience’s desires and tastes, fictional characters are not only created to be more or less morally good but also ‘immorally’ good-looking and the situations they find themselves in can be regarded as more or less ‘pornographic’, that is as “pandering the base appetite or desire” (*Webster’s Third New International Dictionary*). Those descriptions of the protagonists and the events constitute a possible explanation for the female readership’s reaction to *Twilight*.

This part of the thesis first analyzes the main characters and some situations of *Twilight* as they represent a likely source for the emotions that are evoked in the female readership. Subsequently, the second hypothesis is supported by quoting readers and analyzing their statements.

³ Since the majority of *Twilight* fans are female, the hypothesis is based on the reader reaction as observable on the latter gender, focusing on teenagers but also including mature women.

3.1. ALLURING CHARACTERS

In many ways, *Twilight* conforms to the genre of popular romance fiction. The story evolves around two lovers who first have to find each other and then fight against everything that stands between them and their happily ever after. *Twilight* does not only resemble the genre concerning the story. The perfect, strong and attractive hero, the sexually aroused and helpless heroine and the erotically charged situations can all be found in popular romance fiction, though *Twilight* alters the elements a little bit.

“Romance fiction is full of detailed descriptions of their hero. [...] They are embodiments of hegemonic masculinity, presented as desirable, highly eroticised and utterly irresistible” (Talbot 107). Regarding Edward’s description in *Twilight* as detailed, seems to be an understatement, especially when it comes to his looks. The adjective ‘perfect’ is used over twenty times for describing his features. His voice⁴, including his articulation and also his face, musculature, lips, chest, teeth and even his nose are not merely good, but ‘perfect’. He is not just a little polite and sincere but perfectly so. Edward’s perfection is complemented by his family’s obvious wealth (28). But of course, all of this does not matter to Bella, who is of the opinion “that there is a lot more to him than that” (8) and she makes no secret of what she means by that: “[...] he’s even more unbelievable *behind* the face.’ The vampire who wanted to be good - who ran around saving people’s lives so he wouldn’t be a monster ... [...]” (*Twilight* 179).

Edward being a vampire adds another very important masculine factor to the list. His strength, his ability to save people, particularly ‘his girl’ Bella, from any danger that she might be confronted with, apart from himself of course, can be considered as central features of masculinity. But due to his perfect character, even the obstacle of his need for blood cannot stand in the way of their love. His species, rather than being a hurdle, adds to his noble character traits. It does not matter that he killed a couple of humans

⁴ In order to increase readability the parenthetical references are given here: voice (395); articulation (247); face (70, 192, 397); musculature (224, 229); lips (18); chest (173); teeth (43, 301); nose (242); politeness (37); sincerity (299); perfection (184, 199, 225, 419)

along the way of becoming a vegetarian - a vampire sustaining him or herself from animal blood - or that he is more dangerous to Bella than to any other human before, due to her luscious, inviting smell. Those factors neither shock Bella nor make her reconsider her decision for him - far from it! Edward, being a vegetarian with a few dark stains in his history and more dangerous to Bella than to any one else, intrigues rather than frightens the narrator (*Twilight* 299) and seems to make her love him even more.

“Some kind of prohibition is always in place, inhibiting the heroine’s response to the sexual male” (Tablot 109). In *Twilight* two people belonging to different species fall in love and this is not even their greatest problem: The male hero thirsts for his beloved heroine’s blood. Being near her represents a challenge beyond any imagination. Needless to say, though, that Edward, as a godlike creature with character qualities surpassing most saints, withstands the sore temptation in order to be with his Bella. Nevertheless, there are some boundaries that the couple cannot cross, at least according to Edward.

“‘Is that ... marriage ... the same as it is for humans?’ He laughed in earnest now, understanding. ‘Is *that* what you’re getting at?’ [...] ‘Well, I did wonder ... about you and me ... someday ‘ [...] ‘I don’t think that ... that ... would be possible for us.’” (*Twilight* 270f). Although it is apparent that Edward is not committing to this relationship for sexual satisfaction - after all he thinks of Bella as fascinating (*Twilight* 214) - any kind of intercourse beyond kissing and cuddling is prohibited for Bella’s safety according to this conversation. On the surface this might be considered as romantic - a beautiful, perfect, strong vampire enters a relationship with a fragile human being whom he can barely endure to kiss her due to her nutritional value for him. Thus, he craves her company more than her blood. Sex is not possible and, apparently, neither is talking about it explicitly. Not only in *Twilight* but also in *New Moon* and *Eclipse* sex is merely alluded to by Edward and Bella. The only time the ‘bad word’ is used is when Bella’s father Charlie decides to be a responsible parent and has the ‘sex talk’ with his daughter, or at least tries (*Eclipse* 58). Consequently, it is not only the relationship that

is chaste, that is abstinent “from all sexual intercourse; virginity” (“chastity”, *The Oxford English Dictionary*), but also the novel itself.

It might be ignored or even overlooked by the *Twilight* fans, but Edward and Bella’s more or less forced chastity is not really romantic. Put differently, according to Edward, they are in the unenviable position of knowing that they are *never* going to be able to have sex. This is especially evident in *Twilight* since Edward firmly refuses to change Bella into a vampire. Since the latter is too fragile for having sexual intercourse with a vampire as a human, the only way of them sleeping together is by belonging to the same species. With Edward being against that solution - at least at the end of *Twilight* - their relationship seems doomed to go without sex.

3.2. AROUSING SITUATIONS

Though Edward and Bella's relationship seems to be based on just talking and no sex *Twilight* is full of erotically charged situations and it does not need sex to achieve that. Bodies and their reaction to each other are enough to create almost pornographic scenes full of unspoken but implied sexual desire without even the slightest reference to sex.

Metaphors and similes are used to describe the physical reactions to closeness between the two lovers. They help to make the virginal relationship anything but chaste, resulting in highly eroticized situations (almost) equivalent to sex without so much as touching the idea of the protagonists losing their virginities before entering holy matrimony⁵.

The following three subchapters try to prove the hypothesis that *Twilight* is not as chaste as its no-sex concept suggests by analyzing some arousing situations that manage to be highly erotic without using the terms desire or sex. Moreover two literary devices meant to increase the erotic connotation of the scenes in question are discussed.

⁵ The author Stephenie Meyer is a confessing Mormon (Bardola 16-17). For her, chastity is a major issue as she is against sexual intercourse before marriage due to her religion. Thus, marking Edward and Bella's relationship as virginal can be considered a very important factor for her as she might want to preach premarital chastity to her readers.

3.2.1. IN THE BEGINNING THERE WERE ELECTRIC CURRENTS

A very prominent metaphor for desire is electricity. “The sensation of an electric shock [is related] to the feeling of being near a person who evokes sexual desire” (Deignan 34). The two following arousing situations are discussed to demonstrate the use of electricity as a metaphor in *Twilight*.

“When he [Edward] touched me [Bella], it was as if an electric current had passed through us” (*Twilight* 38). Here a simile is used to convey desire without actually labeling it with the taboo term. Thus the notion of desire is already established at the beginning of the narrative without a romantic relationship even being suggested between Edward and Bella. „I [Bella] was stunned by the unexpected electricity that flowed through me“ (*Twilight* 191). Again electricity is used as a metaphor for desire. Bella is sitting right beside Edward in their Biology class when the teacher turns off the light. Since they both remain in the same posture “fists clenched under [...] [their] arms, right down to the eyes, peering sideways” (*Twilight* 192) at each other, it can be assumed that it is not only Bella who feels the electricity flowing through her. The fact that they are not even touching each other in any way is what makes this scene so special. Their desire for each other is so strong that they do not need touching in order to feel it. Nevertheless, “a crazy impulse to reach over and touch him [...] just once in the darkness, nearly” (*Twilight* 192) overwhelms Bella. Hence, the presence of desire only makes the need for Edward deeper in the narrator.

Another interesting factor in this scene is the place and the circumstances under which the desire is awakened. It is not at home, in a bedroom, a remote clearing or any other private place. Edward and Bella feel that immense need to touch each other - the sexual desire to have their bodies closer together - in a classroom full of fellow students and consequently in a situation in which the physical connection they crave is not allowed. However, the classroom situation only mirrors Edward and Bella’s dilemma on a smaller scale. They cannot go beyond innocent kissing and cuddling no matter if they are inside or outside of the classroom, alone or with many witnesses. Sex and sexual desire are a taboo, a line that the couple cannot dare to cross.

For Bella, the forbidden fruit - a symbol from the Old Testament that is already used on the cover of the narrative (Figure 6) - is right next to her, needing and wanting her as much as she wants it. In her case the apple is as juicy and bootylicious as it can be. Be that as it may, the forbidden things usually arouse more desire than anything permissible. The two lovers not being able to touch each other or sleep together can consequently be regarded as a factor for increasing the feeling of sexual desire between them.

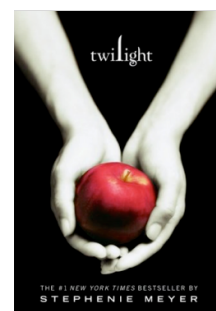


Figure 5
“The *Twilight*
Cover”

“I tried unsuccessfully to relax, but the electric current that seemed to be originating from somewhere in his body never slackened” (*Twilight* 192). On the surface, this remark only seems to suggest a continuously felt desire in Bella. However, the last part illustrates a key point in the relationship between Edward and Bella: it is *his* body that is responsible for the situation they are in. *His* body sends out the electric current that flows between them and thus *he* is the source, the reason for them to feel their desire. It is not only the desire that originates in *his* perfect body. *He* is always the one taking the first step. *He* starts talking to Bella. *He* saves her from certain death during the car accident. *He* asks her out on a date. *He* rescues her in Port Angeles. *He* first declares his love to her. *He* kisses her. *He* stops kissing her. In other words it are *his* actions that control their relationship. Bella is the one things keep happening to and Edward is the one that makes things happen, though mostly to aid his beloved. This concept is both romantic and archaic. It is modernized by showing Bella making decisions for herself, but nevertheless Edward is almost always the active participant in their relationship. This does not, however, have a negative influence on the erotically charged situations. If anything, it makes them even more pornographic, depicting a female, unable to control herself, succumbing to her desires for a dangerous male or rather to the male himself.

Bella’s inability to contain her desires, especially in situations in which Edward is closer than necessary for an average conversation - and thus their usual distance from each other - becomes even more apparent when we learn that Edward makes her blood boil.

3.2.1. THEN THE BLOOD STARTED BOILING

Fire and heat seem “to have been established [as metaphors for desire] in English for some time” (Deignan 34). In *Twilight* they are frequently applied and the two situations below are meant to demonstrate their use.

“The trail his fingers left on my skin was alarmingly warm - like I’d been burned, but didn’t feel the pain of it yet” (*Twilight* 93). Though Edward is barely touching Bella, her body reacts to it. Since sexual desire seems to be a taboo in *Twilight*, the already established metaphors are applied. “In the weaker form of a simile” (Talbot 116), Bella tries to convey the feelings she obviously does not really understand with heat and thus uses a typical metaphor for desire.

“Blood boiled under my skin, burned in my lips” (*Twilight* 247). Edward and Bella’s first kiss evokes so much desire in the narrator that she has to resort to figurative speech to convey the immense physical and emotional response to it. It is not just the metaphor of heat that transforms an innocent kiss into an almost pornographic scene. Using terms deriving from the animal world “seems to highlight the lack of rational control associated with desire” (Deignan 32). Bella’s breathing does not just accelerate - though this would be enough to increase the erotic undercurrent of the scene: “My breath came in a wild gasp” (*Twilight* 247). The striking similarity with sexual release aside, using the adjective ‘wild’ to describe Bella’s breathing seems to subtly suggest that she is not in control of her reaction. In other words, her passion has taken over and she has succumbed to desire, forgetting the danger she is putting herself in. “His [Edward’s] eyes were wild, his jaw clenched in acute restraint” (*Twilight* 247). The metaphor of heat may have not only been applied to express the powerful desire awaking inside of Bella. “Fire as a metaphor for sexual desire highlights the notion of desire as a dangerous or even destructive force, which can spread rapidly in a way that is difficult to control” (Deignan 34). Consequently, using heat as a metaphor was probably meant to imply mortal danger. Thus it might have been applied to remind the reader of the danger Bella is in by being with Edward.

3.2.3. BEFORE ERRATIC BREATHING MARKED THE END

“He smiled, and inclined his head slowly until his cold lips brushed against the skin just under the corner of my jaw. [...] It didn't matter that my body was rigid as a plank, my hands balled into fists, my breathing erratic ...” (*Twilight* 433).

This scene, mere sentences away from the end of the narrative, does not only increase the suspense once more⁶ but also offers the reader some last minute eroticism. The latter is evoked by including two essential ingredients of pornography both of which are caused by Edward's shammed change of mind.

The first component is close contact between two bodies. Though in Bella and Edward's case very gentle, the touch is nevertheless sensual as well. The hero does not just kiss her neck. The feeling of anticipation is included by making the hero *slowly* come closer to his heroine and his perfect lips - Bella emphasized that on various occasions (*Twilight* 18, 37, 131) - “pass lightly over” (‘brush’, *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*), gently touching her.

The second component is the way the bodies react to their touching each other. While Edward is the one seeking the physical contact with the narrator, it is Bella's response that can be considered more appropriate for adult entertainment than for teenage fiction. With some imagination - not that much actually - the narrator's reaction seems to be more equivalent to sexual release than to a mere kiss beneath the jaw. The only things missing are the description of the noises accompanying erratic breathing and an account of Bella's perspiration.

This scene does not only describe another arousing situation supporting the hypothesis that *Twilight* does not really conform to its chastity concept, it also gives further proof that the narrator is depicted as the weaker part in Edward and Bella's relationship not just due to her physical strength but also because of her inability to stay in control of her body. At the end of the narrative, it is again the hero that is in control and the heroine that is the one being controlled, either by her own body and its reactions or even by her

⁶ see chapter 2.3.4.2. But Some things Don't

beloved since she cannot make her desires, i.e. becoming a vampire, come true without his help.

3.3. DESIRE OUT OF THE BOOK

“My name is Ashlei and i LOVE Edward Cullen!” (Ashlei, “About Me”)

In this subchapter, the hypothesis suggesting that the reader develops feelings for or even falls in love with the main character Edward is supported by quoting fans and their websites. Additionally, the remarks are related to the discussed alluring character traits and the arousing situations in order to demonstrate the connection between those features of *Twilight* and the reader attraction it evokes.

“i don't no how bout stephenie meyer makes him sound lyk the hottest hottie ever “ (edwardc4life). Whoever edwardc4life may be, she - the gender of the authors of the all cited quotes can safely be assumed to be female - obviously does not know how to read a narrative properly. How else could she have missed the obvious? Bella's depiction of Edward is generally confined to describing his flawless body and his perfect character. Consequently it is quite evident, how Stephenie Meyer makes Edward sound like the 'hottest hottie' ever. Though this quote does not explicitly mention any feelings of the author for Edward, it can be inferred that she thinks of him as the most attractive man she has ever met, probably forgetting that he does not exist in reality, but only in her mind and fantasy.

“All girls that read the books are in love with Edward, and some for Jacob” (darkangel 001). Though this post is not only referring to *Twilight*, but rather to all the books of the Twilight Saga, since it also includes Jacob, the statement still suggests most girls who read the book to be in love with Edward. Moreover the author of the comment can be assumed to include herself when talking about all girls.

“I luv Edward cullen to death!!!! I love Edward Cullen and nothing can change that and i will NEVER move on nothing can make me!!!!” (wildflower5010) Although the previous quote already mentions actual romantic feelings for a fictional character, this post by wildflower5010 is clearly more desperate, not only because of excessive use of

exclamation marks. ‘Till death do us part’ gets a whole new meaning when being in love with a protagonist of a narrative, as the beloved person cannot die. Though the author might also be referring to her own death it does not change the fact that she is apparently absolutely positive of her feelings for Edward being both real and permanent.

“the first chapter I was already a changed woman in my theory and thoughts ... [...] LOVE EDWARD ... totally jealous of Bella” (Chantel, J) Though on the surface Chantel may seem to be just another reader who has fallen in love with Edward, she provides an example for the so-called *Twilight* Moms - women over the age of eighteen who are “in love with fictional underage vampires and werewolves” (Meyer) - by referring to herself as a woman. Apart from including female readers, who have left their teenage years behind, to the list of people in love with Edward, this *Twilight* fan goes even further than confessing her feelings for the protagonist of a narrative: “I had officially begun my affair with Edward” (Chantel, J). Consequently, she actually admits having an affair with Edward, suggesting an actual relationship with a fictional character. However, this might be explained by the autodiegetic narration in *Twilight* which may be responsible for increasing the reader involvement to a maximum and thus achieving actual identification with the main protagonist of the story. Additionally, the scenes analyzed in the previous chapter are highly erotically charged, sometimes describing emotions and physical reactions more or less equivalent to actual intercourse. Thus, Chantel may not have to strain her imagination that much to be able to bring her sexual fantasies with Edward to life.

“We promise to always love and support Edwards choices” (Ashlei, “Our Edward Cullen Promise”). This quote suggests that the author approves of Edward being the active one in the relationship, promising to support him whatever choices he makes. However, Ashlei does not seem to be the only who accepts the archaic concept of relationships that is conveyed in *Twilight*.

The scene in the meadow in which Edward and Bella declare their love for each other includes a conversation that seems to be very important for fans, being quoted on

various homepages. “‘And so the lion fell in love with the lamb ...’ he [Edward] murmured. ‘What stupid lamb,’ I [Bella] sighed. ‘What a sick, masochistic lion.’” (*Twilight* 240). By referring to Bella as the lamb and to Edward as the lion, the parts they have in their relationship are openly stated. The lion as the stronger, less vulnerable and thus responsible animal is in charge. The lamb as the innocent, weaker animal, which is regarded as something providing sustenance for the other, is to be protected by the lion. Consequently, the lamb has to follow the lead of the lion and the only decision that it has to make is whether or not to be with the protector in the first place. In the clearing, and already before that, Bella chooses Edward and with this she simultaneously renounces her right to make her own decisions without Edward’s approval: “‘Turn around! You have to take me home!’ I shouted. [...] ‘Emmet,’ Edward said grimly. And Emmet secured my hands in his steely grasp. ‘No! Edward! No, you can’t do this.’ ‘I have to, Bella, now please be quiet.’” (*Twilight* 333). In this scene Edward does not only deny Bella her wish and takes away her ability to move by making Emmet hold her tight, but to some extent also orders her to be quiet. Even though Bella is able to offer her opinion and ideas - although not without Alice’s help - it is only after modifying them that Edward approves of the plan. Considering that this scene is quoted on various homepages and that some fans like Ashlei explicitly approve of Edward being the one who makes the choices, the fact that the hero is the dominating one in the relationship is a positive feature of *Twilight*.

The following closing quote is the subheading of a fansite. Since it uses the conversation of Bella and Edward in the meadow, it does not only offer one last concluding support for the hypothesis that the some readers fall in love with the male protagonist but also highlights the importance of the archaic concept of the dominating male by using the metaphors offered in *Twilight*.

“And just like the lamb, we fell in love with the lion ...” (Merissa)

3.4. CONCLUSION - SEXY BLOODSUCKERS

“Ich [Stephenie Meyer] hoffe, dass meine Geschichten etwas von dieser Romantik wiederherstellen. Warum sollte man die Händchen-Halten-Phase nicht genießen und sie wieder etwas länger andauern lassen?” (Bardola 17).

Edward and Bella holding hands? The narrator does not even once mention them doing so. The kissing and cuddling on the other hand is described with meticulous precision, transforming a seemingly innocent touch into something more appropriate for adult entertainment.

“Unschuld ist verloren gegangen. Ich finde, die Lust am Begehren fehlt oft in unserer Gesellschaft. Ich [Stephenie Meyer] spüre, wie groß aber die Sehnsucht nach solchermaßen unschuldigen Beziehung ist daran, wie die Leser auf die Beziehung zwischen Bella und Edward reagieren” (Bardola 17). Though the two protagonists do not lose their virginities until after having entered holy matrimony in *Breaking Dawn*, it nevertheless appears to be rather ironic to have Stephenie Meyer refer to Edward and Bella’s relationship as chaste considering the highly erotically charged situations she has the narrator describe in the *Twilight Saga*.

Stephenie Meyer’s evaluation of the reader reaction, however, seems to be more accurate than her thoughts on the relationship itself. According to her, the reader’s longing for a chaste relationship is evident in their reaction. However, considering that the reactions include recipients declaring their undying love for and admitting to affairs with the male protagonist, it is not only the chastity factor that seems to attract the readers.

Quoting readers and analyzing their statements merely supports the assumption explaining the immense reader response to *Twilight* by suggesting that recipients develop romantic feelings for the male protagonist. In order to scientifically prove the hypothesis, a representative survey including a standardized questionnaire for ascertaining a person’s feeling for someone else would need to be conducted.

Nevertheless the data provided in this thesis indicates the validity of the second hypothesis and thus calls for further investigation on the subject matter of reader attraction in *Twilight*.

Altogether, the second hypothesis represents a reason for the reader to engage with *Twilight*: It is her only possibility to meet Edward and the only way to experience arousing situations with her beloved hero. *Twilight* offers its readers various erotic scenes to relive in their fantasy. Even for those readers who enjoy *Twilight* because of its chastity concept and who long for a relationship like Edward and Bella's, reading the book is the only way for them to experience their yearnings second-hand.

Thus, though love and romance in *Twilight* seem to be at least partly responsible for the reader reaction demonstrated by the analyzed quotes - i.e. they help to evoke the romantic feelings in the fans - they are basically just another reason for making the audience want to engage further with *Twilight* and consequently with the *Twilight Saga*.

4. 'JUST' GOTHIC

This chapter highlights those Gothic features that are congruent with elements influencing the two hypotheses that are presented in this thesis, thereby revealing that Stephenie Meyer's bestseller adopts already existing formulas of success deriving from Gothic novels.

“When thinking of the Gothic novel, a set of characteristics springs readily to mind: an emphasis on portraying the terrifying, a common insistence on archaic settings, a prominent use of the supernatural [and] the presence of highly stereotyped characters are the most significant” (Punter 1). Of course this represents a condensed and thus rather imperfect portrayal of the Gothic, a genre that has its roots in the eighteenth century and that has evolved over the course of the last two hundred years. Nevertheless Punter's definition encapsulates the major characteristics of the Gothic Novel and *Twilight* certainly manages to employ every single one of them. The presence of vampires constitutes the element of the terrifying and the supernatural and Forks as an old, little town can be said to represent the archaic setting. Moreover, Edward and Bella conform to the stereotyped Gothic characters of the hero-villain and the innocent girl.

The following three subchapters discuss four basic elements of the Gothic as represented in *Twilight*: vampires, hero-villains, innocent girls and love and lust. Additionally, the importance of these key terms in relation to the two hypotheses in this thesis is illustrated.

4.1. THE IMMORTAL BLOODSUCKERS

The most conspicuous Gothic element in *Twilight* is the presence of vampires, representing both a terrifying and a supernatural element. In older Gothic novels, though, their appearance is described quite differently. In those narrative the vampire “frequently exhibits a swollen, bloated body and display a ruddy or livid face, discoloured through the posthumous accumulation of blood” (Hughes 242). The only resemblance with today’s modern popular vampire can be found in the color of the skin and their need for blood. Other than that, they have nothing in common.

Today, the “cultural image of the vampire [is that of a] [...] noble, sophisticated, mesmeric, and, above all, erotic” (Hughes 241) creature. Those features are an almost perfect portrait of the Cullen family. Bella herself admits to being mesmerized by their looks (*Twilight* 27) and considering that they remember everything they ever heard or saw, referring to them as sophisticated might be an understatement. Relating noble to rich, the Cullens certainly also conform to this feature of the cultural image of the vampire given that “there was enough cash stashed all over the house to keep a small country afloat for a decade” (*Breaking Dawn* 647).

Interestingly enough, Stephenie Meyer did not only take over the cultural image of the modern vampire, but she also included a feature that according to Hughes has been applied in vampire fiction over the last decades: “The individual novels frequently script the characters as being fully aware of the restrictions placed by fiction upon their type, only to have the vampires ridicule them as the produces of superstition” (245). Edward repeatedly laughs when Bella mentions wide-spread superstitions on vampires, including their inability to walk in the sun and their dependency on coffins as beds. “‘Will you turn into a bat?’ I asked warily. He laughed, louder than I’d ever heard. ‘Like I haven’t heard *that* one before!’” (*Twilight* 244). Consequently, Edward obviously knows of the theories on vampires and he certainly enjoys laughing at them conforming to another established feature of the Gothic element of vampires.

However, the Gothic element of vampires is not the only Gothic feature included in *Twilight* by the Cullens' presence. They do not only embody a supernatural factor, they are also involved in "supernatural or otherwise inexplicable events" (Harris) and Bella is the one noticing these mysterious details, including Edward's speed, strength, changing eye color and ancient language.

"The action takes place in and around an old castle" (Harris). Due to Bella's description of the Cullen's residence⁷ - the term 'house' would practically be an insult - can be considered the modern version of a castle and thus constitutes another Gothic element represented in *Twilight*.

Edward, Alice and Jasper's additional powers add another supernatural factor to the list. However, as "omens, portents, visions" (Harris) represent a feature of the Gothic novel, it is only Alice's ability to see the future that constitutes another Gothic element that has been included into *Twilight*.

Altogether the presence of the Cullens entails more than just one Gothic feature. Moreover, vampires constitute an important part for both hypotheses explaining the immense reader attraction, being a source of suspense⁸ as well as a root for love and romance⁹. As vampires are a Gothic key element and considering that the most of the main characters of *Twilight* belong that species, Stephenie Meyer has taken over a Gothic feature that is anything but new.

⁷ "The house was timeless, graceful, and probably a hundred years old" (*Twilight* 281)

⁸ see chapters 2.3.2.1. Curiosity - Uncovering What No-one is Supposed to Know, 2.3.3.2. Brown vs. Red - The Grand Final? and 2.3.4.1. Previsions - Uncertainty Uncertain

⁹ see chapter 3. Beyond Reader Attraction

4.2. THE VILLAIN, I.E. THE HERO

“The vampire who wanted to be good - who ran around saving people’s lives so he wouldn’t be a monster” (*Twilight* 179)

This chapter focuses on Edward’s nature - including his virtues and actions - that portray him as the typical hero-villain, a character that “is, indeed, an invention of the gothic form” (Fiedler 128).

As a vampire he is dangerous and potentially lethal for every human being. However, even in his darkest hours - the days during which he drew on human blood as sustenance - he did not resort to killing innocents but merely preyed on criminals he considered as evil as himself. “If I [Edward] followed a murderer down a dark alley where he stalked a young girl — if I saved her, then surely I wasn't so terrible” (*Twilight* 299). Consequently Edward tried vindicating his actions by demonstrating their justness and their positive impact on potential victims of his prey. But not even his justifications could help Edward ignore the monster he began to “see in my [Edward’s] eyes. I couldn’t escape the debt of so much human life taken” (*Twilight* 299) and thus he returned to his family. With his depiction of his short non-vegetarian vampire life - sustaining from human and not animal blood - and his return to his family, rejoining them in their vegetarian life style, Edward’s character traits are emphasized: Though he was indeed a villain at some point, he never entirely succumbed to vampirism, not caring about whose blood he was drinking, but rather remained as morally good as he could. Even more, his short villain existence saved innocent people, marking him the hero that Bella sees in him. However, his morally good character did not even spare him the guilt over killing evil criminals.

Another feature of the hero-villain is that though he is “both violent, threatening and often demonic (signaled by the piercing eyes), he is yet at the same time always an outsider [...] in a state of suffering” (Stoddart 177f). Edward’s strength and his sudden mood swings sometimes scare even Bella: “I sat without moving, more frightened of him than I had ever been” (*Twilight* 231f). Though he tries to control his wild side,

some actions, including his sudden outbreak in the clearing (*Twilight* 231f) demonstrate his other, violent and threatening side.

Though Edward's eyes are not demonic, they nevertheless have a 'dazzling' effect on Bella. This is repeatedly demonstrated by describing her inability to move or speak after he inadvertently has released their power on her: "[Edward leaned] closer to me [Bella] as he spoke, his dark golden eyes piercing. I tried to remember how to exhale. I had to look away before it came back to me" (*Twilight* 183).

Edward and his siblings are immediately recognized as outsiders by Bella (*Twilight* 19). Additionally, their vegetarian life-style "doesn't completely satiate the hunger — or rather thirst. But it keeps us [the Cullens] strong enough to resist. Most of the time" (*Twilight* 164). Being around humans, smelling their blood and not being able to drink it, is painful for vampires. Consequently, the Cullens' choice to sustain on animal blood only puts them in a state of constant suffering. Thus Edward altogether conforms to Stoddart's description of hero-villains.

Edward's striking beauty and his conspicuous behavior are central to the story and thus he embodies another feature of hero-villains, who according to Stoddart are "mostly notably characters in whom there is strong romantic investment" (179). "'Apparently none of the girls here are good-looking enough for him [Edward].' She [Jessica] sniffed, a clear case of sour grapes. I [Bella] wondered when he'd turned her down" (*Twilight* 19). Given her reaction and Bella's assessment of it, the narrator is not the first schoolgirl who has developed feelings for Edward. Though Jessica's interest in Edward already implies it, it is nevertheless Bella's immense love for him that introduces the feature of *strong* romantic investment in the hero-villain to *Twilight*.

Altogether Edward embodies the typical hero-villain features included in this analysis. Thus he can be labeled as a hero-villain. Consequently, Edward does not only introduce the Gothic element of a vampire and thus a supernatural factor to *Twilight*, but also the highly stereotyped Gothic character of the hero-villain. It is the villain in him that creates suspense by evoking a curiosity structure due to his conspicuous behavior¹⁰ and

¹⁰ see chapter 2.3.3.1. Curiosity - Uncovering What No-one is Supposed to Know

by the potential threat his diet poses for Bella¹¹. The hero in him can be considered the source for romance and love as evoked by his alluring character¹².

¹¹ see chapter 2.3.4.1. Edward vs. Bella

¹² see chapter 3.1. Alluring Characters

4.3. THE SUBLIME GIRL IN DISTRESS

Bella character's conforms to the typical Gothic "beautiful, sensitive and vulnerable heroines" (Horner 181): She cries on various occasions, though sometimes out of anger rather than because of feeling sad. She blushes repeatedly in every chapter and her heart rate, usually describing a form of palpitation due to Edward's presence and actions, is referred to more than once. Both of the latter traits are specifically referred to as "signs of virtuous sympathy" (Todd 285) introduced to the Gothic novel heroines at the end of the eighteenth Century (Todd 285).

Women in distress are another Gothic element embodied by Bella's character description, including her situation, her reactions, and the events she is involved in.

As an appeal to the pathos and sympathy of the reader, the female characters often face events that leave them [...] terrified [and] screaming [...]. The women suffer [...] because they are often abandoned, left alone (either on purpose or by accident) [...]. [...] [She is] often the central figure of the novel, so her sufferings are even more pronounced and the focus of attention" (Harris)

"‘She [Bella's mum] stayed with me [Bella] at first, but missed him [her husband]. It made her unhappy ... so I decided it was time to spend some quality time with Charlie.’ [...] ‘I'd [Edward] bet you're suffering more than you let anyone see.’"

Though Bella has not literally been abandoned, she is nevertheless separated from her mother, her best friend (*Twilight* 90), because the latter married a man whose job seeking did not allow a permanent residence. Bella suffers because of the separation from her beloved mother, especially because she has to live in a town that she does not like. Apart from feeling alone in a place she does not want to be, her descriptions of herself mark her as an outsider, someone who does not relate well to people (*Twilight* 9). The events Bella faces terrify her - including the car crash and Edward's outbreak in the clearing. Moreover, the wounds inflicted on her by James make her scream and writhe in pain. Additionally, since Bella is the narrator of the story, her sufferings are indeed the focus of attention. Thus she altogether conforms to the description of the Gothic element of women in distress by Harris.

The Gothic heroine “may suffer [...] cruelty at the hands of her pursuer [...] [but] the heroine demonstrates a passive courage in the face of such danger” (Horner 180). Though Bella eventually “couldn’t hold back [...] [her] scream of agony” (*Twilight* 392) she first bravely faces James by her own choice. James even represents a Gothic element of his own since he is “a powerful, impulsive, tyrannical male” (Harris) threatening a woman. However, even after James breaks Bella’s leg and inflicts so much pain on her that she can not keep herself from screaming, she still begs Edward not to avenge her death (*Twilight* 392), demonstrating her valor and her immense love for the hero of the narrative. “Let it be quick” (*Twilight* 393) is the only hope she has when her death finally seems to be near. Put differently, the narrator shows passive courage, both by her response to her approaching death and by meeting James in the first place.

Bella’s character and the events she is involved in, especially her confrontation with James, conform to the Gothic features of a heroine and they are crucial for the reader’s involvement, which is a substantial factor for suspense¹³. Moreover, her confrontation with James, marking her as a sublime girl in distress and consequently as a typical Gothic heroine, constitute the second great arc of suspense¹⁴ in *Twilight*.

¹³ see chapter 2.3.2. Bella - that is I - In the Real World

¹⁴ see chapter 2.3.4.2. Brown vs. Red

4.4. LOVE AND LUST - ELEMENTS OF GOTHIC ROMANCE

“Der Vampir ist [...] schon seit Byron ein Sexsymbol” (Köppl 267). Thus the presence of vampires in Gothic novels is generally accompanied by one or the other erotic situation, and *Twilight* is no exception. Lust is embedded in *Twilight* in a new, though nevertheless archaic manner. Contrary to older Gothic vampire literature in which the innocent girls were either raped or otherwise seduced, the relationship in *Twilight* does not include any intercourse. Nevertheless lust plays an important role in the kissing and cuddling scenes, i.e. those erotically charged situations representing a possible explanation for female readers falling in love with Edward¹⁵. Stephenie Meyer’s narrative, however, does not only involve lust but also tells the reader of a love between a vampire and a human girl. Including romance in a Gothic novel is nothing exceptional. On the contrary, Gothic romance can be considered an established subgenre of the Gothic and *Twilight* comprises various elements of the latter.

Edward and Bella’s love for each other represents a typical feature of Gothic romance: “Heart stirring, often sudden, emotions create a life or death commitment. Many times this love is the first the character has felt with this overwhelming power” (Harris). Neither Bella nor Edward have ever been in love before and their readiness to risk everything in order to keep their beloved other half alive and safe is especially apparent during James’s hunt. Bella begs Edward not to avenge her death and Edward risks both him as his family to find James and kill him before the latter hurts Bella.

“How much to you [Bella] like him [Edward]?” “Too much[...]. More than he likes me.” (*Twilight* 179). The “uncertainty of reciprocation” (Harris “Elements of the Gothic Novel”) represented in Bella’s insecurity and her doubt concerning Edward’s feelings for her constitute another element of Gothic romance. As the narrator “becomes a target of some evil man’s [...] schemes” (Harris), James’s desire for Bella’s blood and his consequent hunt for her constitute another feature of Gothic romance. Additionally, James embodies the “obstacle [that] arises and separates the lovers, geographically or in

¹⁵ see chapter 3.2. Arousing Situations

some other way” (Harris), representing yet another element of Gothic romance in *Twilight*.

Altogether, love and lust represent Gothic features that are responsible for almost pornographic scenes in *Twilight* and elements of Gothic romance evoke suspense in the narrative.

4.5. CONCLUSION - SOMETHING OLD AND SOMETHING NEW

*Something old, something new
Something borrowed, something blue*

Twilight includes features that have long been established in the Gothic novel. However, they are interwoven with new elements from more recent Gothic narratives and with components borrowed from the Gothic romance. Stephenie Meyer has managed to merge those ingredients together in a narrative that was a success out of the blue. This chapter has highlighted the elements of the Gothic novel that can be found in *Twilight*, focusing on features with an impact on the two hypotheses discussed in this thesis. Vampires, hero-villains and innocent girls are long established Gothic features and all of them have been used in *Twilight*, some representing an important source for suspense and others a possible explanation for female readers to fall in love with the male protagonist.

In *Twilight* vampires do not conform to the old evil concept focusing on their need for human blood as sustenance. They are rather represented as an intriguing, erotic species and some of them, especially Edward, are more heroes than villains. Edward embodies the perfect modern vampire/hero-villain: He is beautiful, sophisticated, mesmeric and erotic, risking everything, even his family, to ensure Bella's safety and happiness. While his species and his seemingly doomed love for Bella evoke suspense, his alluring character and the erotically charged situations arising because of him can be considered as factors responsible for readers developing romantic feelings for him.

Bella's Gothic heroine features, including her innocence - a source for reader involvement - and the events she is involved in, are important factors for suspense. The relationship in *Twilight* has borrowed some features from the subgenre of Gothic romance, particularly the obstacles and dangers Edward and Bella have to overcome to be together, creating both a suspense and a curiosity structure.

Lust plays an important role in the narrative even though it can only be found in the kissing and cuddling scenes. They represent those erotically charged situations discussed as possible explanations for reader attraction going beyond feeling sympathy for the male protagonist. Altogether, the Gothic element of love and lust is featured in

an archaic, in an old and in an innovative manner in *Twilight*: The archaic premarital chastity concept is abided by while at the same time including almost pornographic scenes which rather conform to older, already established Gothic vampire literature, where women are raped or otherwise seduced. Consequently, *Twilight* introduces an innovative way for merging of love and lust as a Gothic element.

Considering that suspense in *Twilight* is mostly evoked either by the presence of vampires or by Bella as a sublime girl in distress, Gothic elements appear to be the basic sources for suspense in the narrative. Additionally, the analyzed explanations for reader attraction going beyond feeling sympathy for the male protagonist, i.e. the second hypothesis of this thesis, conform to the Gothic features of modern vampires and love and lust. Consequently, Stephenie Meyer's basic ideas seem to have been adopted from already long established Gothic elements, interweaving them with newer Gothic features from more recent novels, while retaining the archaic concept of chastity.

However, it is only elements of the story level (i.e. the characters, the events and settings) that conform to some of the long established features of the Gothic novel. Thus it is Stephenie Meyer's way of molding the story elements together that results in a narrative as suspenseful as *Twilight*, a character as alluring as Edward and situations as erotically charged as the kissing and cuddling scenes.

5. CONCLUSION - 'JUST' *Twilight*

There is no Frigate like a Book
 To take us Lands away
 Nor any Coursers like a Page
 Of prancing Poetry -
 This Travers may the poorest take
 Without oppress of Toll -
 How frugal is the Chariot
 That bears the Human soul.

- Emily Dickenson

Books have the ability to draw the reader into the stories they tell, allowing him or her to escape reality. As the recipient makes this journey, this 'travers', into the narrative world, neither the economic status nor relationships in the real world matter. The reader needs nothing but the book to let his or her soul be transported onto the frigate, a symbol for adventure in the poem by Emily Dickinson.

In *Twilight* this adventure includes suspense and romance, enabling readers to experience danger and love and thus satisfying their need for both. This thesis has analyzed those two elements as possible explanations for the immense reader attraction Stephenie Meyer's narrative has received.

Suspense as a means of awakening desire and exciting curiosity for the outcome of a narrative represents the first hypothesis for the singular success of *Twilight*. The preface of the latter immediately evokes suspense, resulting in the reader's need for more information. This includes the knowledge over the eventual outcome for the narrator. In the narrative two major arcs of suspense are experienced, comprising one curiosity and one suspense structure, interwoven with multiple mini-suspense episodes. While the suspense structure evolves around James's hunt, the curiosity structure is concerned with gathering information on Edward and learning whether he shares Bella's feelings for him.

Usually, every arc of suspense is resolved in the last pages of a narrative which usually signify the end of a story. *Twilight*, as the first book of a multivolume narrative, however, does not give the reader every information necessary to relieve the tension. Edward and Bella's happily ever after is still uncertain and Jacob's father's allusions hint at more complications looming on the horizon. Consequently, the reader's thirst for knowledge is not yet satisfied, especially after having received indications of further adventures and dangers lying ahead of Edward and Bella. Thus *Twilight* manages to direct the reader's interest towards the other books of the *Twilight Saga* by evoking the reader's desire to gather information that can only be obtained by engaging in *New Moon*, *Eclipse* and *Breaking Dawn*.

The second hypothesis explains reader attraction by focusing on the reader reactions to *Twilight* which indicate female recipients to respond to the love and romance presented in the narrative with more than just sympathy for the protagonists. Readers declare their unconditional and irrevocable love¹⁶ for Edward, some of them even fantasize about having an actual affair with him. *Twilight* takes the female reader 'Lands away', to a reality, where the perfect gentleman does exist and not only is he "absurdly handsome" (*Twilight* 24) but also impossibly rich. In this reality, the reader can be 'the one', the love of Edward's life. He loves her so much that he does not care about not being able to sleep with her due to her fragility. Nevertheless, the reader can enjoy highly erotic situations with her beloved hero. Thus reader reactions represented in this thesis can be explained with the arousing situations together with a character as alluring as Edward.

Though the proposition that female readers develop romantic feelings for the male protagonist of *Twilight* is supported by the analyzed reactions to the narrative, this thesis does not offer enough empirical data to scientifically prove this second hypothesis. To gain further support for the latter, I suggest to apply either Sternberg's scale or Rubin's scales of liking and loving (Amelang 190f). These questionnaires measure the feelings one person has for another. Since neither of the two is meant for narrative characters, some of their items would have to be adapted when used for assessing the female readership's feelings for the male protagonist of *Twilight*. Nevertheless,

¹⁶ "And third, I [Bella] was unconditionally and irrevocably in love with him [Edward]" (*Twilight* 171).

applying either of the standardized questionnaires for a representative survey would scientifically prove or falsify the second hypothesis.

The last chapter of this thesis analyzed those factors of the discussed two possible assumptions on the success of *Twilight* congruent with long established elements of the Gothic genre. Vampires, hero-villains, sublime girls in distress and love and lust have been introduced to the Gothic novel long before Stephenie Meyer applied them on the Cullens and Edward and Bella in *Twilight*. However, although she has adopted the analyzed Gothic features for her events, characters and settings, *her* way of molding these story elements together in the discourse level exploits the full potential of the story level. Thus Stephenie Meyer's deployed techniques are the major contributing factor for evoking suspense. Moreover, though adopting the image of the vampire for her main protagonist and depicting him as a hero-villain, it is Stephenie Meyer who manages to transform a mere kiss into a highly erotic scene.

Altogether, *Twilight* attracts the readers' attention by evoking suspense and love in them, both of which have been analyzed as possible explanations for the immense reader attraction to the narrative in this thesis. However, while suspense as the first hypothesis is a scientifically established factor for attracting reader attention, the second hypothesis still needs more empirical data to be scientifically proven.

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DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight Saga* hat in den letzten Jahren sehr viel Aufmerksamkeit auf sich gelenkt und ist mit ungefähr 25 Million verkauften Exemplaren auf Platz 26 der "USA TODAY's best-selling books of the last 15 years" gelandet. Die Hype um die Geschichte der 17-jährigen Bella hat 2005 mit dem ersten Buch der Saga - *Twilight - Bis(s) zum Morgengrauen* - begonnen. In dieser Diplomarbeit habe ich zwei Hypothesen vorgestellt, mit denen der große Erfolg des Buches, der vor allem in der Medienpräsenz und dem großen Leserzulauf zu bemerken ist, erklärt werden könnte. Zusätzlich wurde auf die gotischen Elemente des Romans und welche Auswirkungen sie auf die zwei Hypothesen haben, eingegangen.

Die erste Hypothese befasst sich mit dem Prinzip der Spannung, des *Suspense*. In *Twilight* wird *Suspense* durch Neugierde über den Ausgang der Geschichte und durch die geringe Möglichkeit eines ‚guten‘ Ausganges für die Protagonistin ausgelöst. Im Großen und Ganzen wird *Suspense* auf vier verschiedenen Eben erzeugt, wobei sich die ersten zwei auf die Hauptspannungsbögen des Buches beziehen.

Die erste dreht sich um Edward und Bella und ist in der ersten Hälfte des Buches für die Neugierde um Edward's Geheimnis und die Spannung um seine Gefühle für Bella verantwortlich. Auf der zweiten Ebene wird *Suspense*, wie auch schon oben angeführt, durch die geringe Möglichkeit eines guten Ausgangs erzeugt, da Bella von James, einem Vampir, gejagt wird. Allerdings sind nicht nur die eben genannten Hauptspannungsbögen für den *Suspense* in *Twilight* verantwortlich, sondern auch kleinere Spannungsepisoden, welche eine Vertiefung der Gesamtspannung erzeugen und deshalb die dritte Ebene darstellen. Da *Twilight* nur das erste von insgesamt vier Büchern der *Twilight Saga* ist, offenbart die letzte Seite des Romans nicht das Ende der Geschichte. Ganz im Gegenteil, es wird nochmals die unsichere Zukunft der Beziehung zwischen Edward und Bella hervorgehoben. Die vierte Ebene von *Suspense* bezieht sich also auf jene Spannung, die den Leser dazu bewegt, sich mit den anderen Büchern der *Twilight Saga* auseinanderzusetzen, da dies die einzige Möglichkeit darstellt, die Neugier über die noch immer fehlenden Informationen zu stillen und den Ausgang der Geschichte zu erfahren.

Die zweite Hypothese bezieht sich auf die Reaktion der vor allem weiblichen *Twilight*-Leser auf den männlichen Hauptcharakter Edward und seine Liebe zu Bella. Auf zahlreichen Fanseiten wird diesem von Frauen und Mädchen jeden Alters ewige Liebe geschworen. Die Tatsache, dass er nur eine fiktive Figur ist, stört die meisten seiner Fans mit ihrer Sehnsucht nach einer für sie bestimmten Person dabei nicht. Romantisch emotionale Beweggründe erkennen Edward jedoch als den Inbegriff des Unerreichbaren: Er ist unglaublich schön, perfekt um genau zu sein und er ist bereit sein Leben für die Liebe zu opfern.

Zusammenfassend behauptet die zweite Hypothese, dass *Twilight*-Leserinnen starke romantische Gefühle für den männlichen Hauptcharakter entwickeln. Allerdings muss eingeräumt werden, dass auch wenn Kommentare und Postings auf Fanseiten die zweite Hypothese unterstützen, ein wissenschaftlich fundierter Beweis fehlt, welcher nur durch einen standardisierten Fragebogen, der die Gefühle der Leserinnen für Edward ergründet, erbracht werden könnte.

Der dritte Teil der Diplomarbeit bezieht sich auf jene Elemente der *Gothic Literature*, die einen Einfluss auf die zwei vorgestellten Hypothesen haben. Dabei ist deutlich geworden, dass die Spannung auf der *Story Level* vor allem durch für *Gothic Literature* typische Charaktere, Orte und Beziehungen ausgelöst wird. Außerdem wird die zweite Hypothese, welche sich auf die Reaktionen der Leserinnen bezieht, durch Edward als schönen Vampir und durch einige lustvoll ‚keusche‘ Liebesszenen - jeweils typische *Gothic Literature* Bestandteile - erklärt.

Diese Diplomarbeit hat den unglaublichen Erfolg von *Twilight* durch das Spannungsfeld zwischen Lebensgefahr und ewiger unerreichbarer Liebe unter Verwendung von Elementen der *Gothic Literature* zu erklären versucht. Die Gegensätze der drohenden Gefahr und unüberwindbarer gegenseitiger Anziehung mit gleichzeitig erzwungener körperlicher Zurückhaltung, beschrieben in mitreißenden, keuschen Liebesszenen, erzeugen die einzigartig fesselnde Spannung und können als Auslöser für die emotionalen Gefühle der Leserinnen betrachtet werden.

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