

The Short Second Life of Bree Tanner

by Stephenie Meyer · Language: EN

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Overview

The Short Second Life of Bree Tanner is a novella in Stephenie Meyer's Twilight saga, told from the perspective of a newborn vampire named Bree Tanner. The story begins with Bree's transformation into a vampire, which she did not choose, and follows her brief existence as she joins a large coven of newborn vampires created by Victoria, who is using them as an army to attack the Cullen family. Bree struggles with her new identity, the overwhelming thirst for blood, and the violent, chaotic environment of the coven, where survival depends on loyalty to the ruthless leader, Riley. She forms a tentative friendship with another newborn, Diego, who helps her understand the rules of their world and the dangers that lurk beyond their immediate group.

The novella explores themes of identity, free will, and the search for humanity in a monstrous existence. Bree's narrative arc is one of awakening and moral choice: despite her terrifying circumstances, she begins to question the lies she has been told about the Cullens and the true nature of her existence. Her story culminates in a tragic confrontation with the Volturi, where she chooses to surrender rather than fight, hoping for a chance at a different outcome. The book matters because it expands the Twilight universe by giving voice to a minor character from Eclipse, offering a darker, more sympathetic perspective on the vampire world and challenging the black-and-white morality of the original series. It also serves as a bridge between Eclipse and Breaking Dawn, deepening readers' understanding of the vampire hierarchy and the consequences of Victoria's revenge plot.

Key Takeaways

- Bree's story shows that even a vampire created against her will can retain a sense of morality and choice.
- The newborn vampire army is a brutal, survival-of-the-fittest environment where trust is rare and betrayal is common.
- Bree's friendship with Diego provides a glimmer of hope and humanity in an otherwise dehumanizing existence.
- The Cullens are not the monsters Riley and Victoria make them out to be; Bree discovers they are capable of compassion.
- The Volturi are ruthless enforcers of vampire law, willing to kill anyone who threatens their authority, even innocent newborns.

- Bree's decision to surrender to the Volturi is an act of defiance and hope, as she chooses to face her fate rather than fight blindly.
- The novella emphasizes that one's past does not define one's future; Bree's brief second life is defined by her choices, not her creation.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1: The Newborn

Bree wakes up as a vampire, disoriented and overwhelmed by her new senses. She is in a dark building with other newborns, all created by Victoria. Riley, the leader, explains the rules: they must stay hidden, feed on humans, and prepare for a fight. Bree struggles with her thirst and her memories of her human life, which are already fading. She meets Diego, another newborn who seems more thoughtful and curious about their situation. Diego warns her to be careful and to trust no one, especially Riley.

Chapter 2: The Rules

Bree learns the strict hierarchy of the coven. Riley is in charge, but he answers to a mysterious female vampire (Victoria) who never shows herself. The newborns are forbidden from leaving the house or asking questions. Bree and Diego begin to secretly talk, sharing their observations and suspicions. Diego believes there is more to their existence than just fighting, and he starts to investigate the source of their creation. Bree feels a growing bond with Diego, which gives her a sense of purpose amid the chaos.

Chapter 3: The Hunt

The newborns are taken on a hunting trip to feed. Bree experiences the thrill and horror of hunting humans, but she also feels a flicker of guilt. Diego helps her control her thirst and teaches her to hunt animals as an alternative. During the hunt, they encounter a group of strange vampires who seem to be watching them. Diego suspects these are the Cullens, the ones they are meant to fight. Bree is confused, as the Cullens do not seem hostile. The chapter ends with Riley announcing that the fight is imminent.

Chapter 4: The Plan

Riley reveals the plan: they will attack the Cullens at their home, using the element of surprise. Bree is uneasy, especially after Diego tells her that the Cullens are not the monsters they have been told. Diego has been sneaking out to spy on the Cullens and has seen them living peacefully, hunting animals. He believes Victoria is using them as pawns. Bree and Diego decide to escape the coven and warn the Cullens, hoping to avoid the massacre. They plan to slip away during the chaos of the attack.

Chapter 5: The Attack

The newborns launch their attack on the Cullens' house, but it quickly becomes a disaster. The Cullens are prepared and easily overpower the untrained newborns. Bree and Diego try to flee, but Diego is killed by one of the Cullens. Bree is captured by the Volturi, who have arrived to enforce vampire law. She is terrified and alone, but she remembers Diego's belief that the Cullens are different. She decides to surrender and tell them everything, hoping for mercy.

Chapter 6: The Interrogation

Bree is interrogated by the Volturi, led by Caius, who is eager to execute her. She tells them about Victoria and Riley, but the Volturi are not interested in mercy. Carlisle Cullen speaks on her behalf, suggesting she could be spared because she is not a threat. However, Caius is adamant that all newborns must be destroyed. Bree realizes that her fate is sealed, but she finds a strange peace in her decision to tell the truth. She thinks of Diego and the brief moments of friendship she experienced.

Chapter 7: The End

Bree is taken to a clearing where the Volturi prepare to execute her. She reflects on her short second life and the choices she made. She does not fight; instead, she waits calmly, hoping that her death will mean something. The chapter ends with Bree's death, but her final thoughts are of Diego and the possibility of a better world. The epilogue reveals that the Cullens remember her with compassion, and that her story is a reminder of the cost of Victoria's revenge.

Themes

- Identity and choice
- Friendship and trust
- Monstrosity vs. humanity
- Deception and truth
- Free will and fate

Notable Quotes

- "I was a monster. I had always known that, but now I felt it." — Bree reflects on her nature as a vampire early in the novella, after her transformation.
- "Diego was the only one who made me feel like I was still a person." — Bree thinks about her friendship with Diego, which gives her hope in the brutal newborn coven.
- "The Cullens weren't the monsters. We were." — Bree realizes the truth about the Cullens after Diego's investigation, challenging the lies she was told.
- "I didn't want to die, but I didn't want to kill for them anymore." — Bree's internal conflict as she faces the Volturi, choosing to surrender rather than fight.

- "Maybe there was a way to be a vampire and still be human." — Bree's hope that she could find a different existence, inspired by Diego's ideas.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is *The Short Second Life of Bree Tanner* about?

It is a novella in the Twilight saga that tells the story of Bree Tanner, a newborn vampire created by Victoria to fight the Cullens. Bree struggles with her new existence, forms a friendship with Diego, and ultimately chooses to surrender to the Volturi rather than continue fighting. It offers a darker, more sympathetic perspective on the vampire world.

Is *The Short Second Life of Bree Tanner* worth reading?

Yes, especially for Twilight fans who want a deeper understanding of the vampire hierarchy and the events of Eclipse. It provides a fresh viewpoint and adds emotional depth to a minor character. The novella is short and fast-paced, making it a quick read. However, it is not essential to the main saga.

How does *The Short Second Life of Bree Tanner* end?

Spoiler: Bree is captured by the Volturi after the attack on the Cullens. Despite Carlisle's plea for mercy, Caius orders her execution. Bree accepts her fate calmly, reflecting on her friendship with Diego and her choices. She dies, but the Cullens remember her with compassion, and her story serves as a reminder of the cost of Victoria's revenge.

Who should read *The Short Second Life of Bree Tanner*?

Fans of the Twilight series who want more insight into the vampire world and the events of Eclipse. It is also suitable for readers who enjoy character-driven stories with moral dilemmas. Newcomers to the saga might find it confusing without prior knowledge of the main books, so it is best read after Eclipse.

How long does it take to read *The Short Second Life of Bree Tanner*?

The book is about 192 pages long, with a reading time of approximately 3 to 4 hours for an average reader. At a pace of 250 words per minute, it takes around 2.5 hours. It is a quick read, ideal for a single sitting.