

*Stargazer*

Claudia Gray

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In the sequel to *Evernight*, Bianca Olivier returns to Evernight, wary of the new year. Ever since her vampire-hunting boyfriend, Lucas, was chased out of the Academy, Bianca has been left with fewer friends than before. In these times of solitude, she notices an influx of human students and gradually becomes interested in finding out the reason behind this growth. When Bianca returns to school one night after secretly meeting Lucas, she gets caught by Balthazar, who agrees to keep her secret under one condition: he needs to fulfill his own mission off school grounds. The year progresses with many secrets and disturbing events that take place at Evernight, all building up to a much unexpected climax.

Although Claudia Gray's plot twists do not disappoint in this thrilling fantasy novel, her character development falls short. Bianca comes across as the girl who does her best to act perfect. Her actions are precisely timed with the reader's expectations, which makes the story drag with predictability. Lucas, on the other hand, is weak. Unlike the fierce vampire hunter he actually is, his actions parallel those of an obedient boyfriend. When he and Bianca are together, all the drama that unfolds is the typical teenage drama.

The few characters that are developed well, like Balthazar and Vic, don't get enough page time. Balthazar takes a surprisingly prominent front role in this book. With his traditional good looks and dynamic personality, readers will fall to his charm. The resulting suspense from his end is what keeps the book going. Overall, *Stargazer* was a decent read as a library book, but it didn't match up to par with a book to be kept and read again. Hopefully its sequel will turn out to be fantastic.