



Author of EVERNIGHT

CLAUDIA GRAY

Stargazer

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Prologue

FROST BEGAN TO CREEP UP THE WALLS.

Transfixed, I watched lines of frost lace their way across the stone of the north tower's records room. The pattern swept up from the floor, covering the wall, even icing the ceiling with something flaky and white. A few small, silvery crystals of snow hung in the air.

It was all delicate and ethereal—and completely unnatural. The room's chill cut deeper than my skin, down to my marrow. If only I hadn't been alone. If somebody else could have been there to see it, I might have been able to believe it was real. I might have been able to believe I was safe.

The ice crackled so loudly, I jumped. As I watched, my eyes wide and breath coming in thin, quick gasps, the frost etching its way across the window obscured the view of the night sky outside, blocking the moonlight, but somehow I could still see. The room possessed its own light now. All the many lines of frost on the window broke this way and that, not at random but

in an eerie pattern, creating a recognizable shape.

A face.

The frost man stared back at me. His dark, angry eyes were so detailed that it seemed as though he were looking back at me. The face in the frost was the most vivid image I'd ever seen.

Then the cold stabbed into my heart as I realized: He really *was* looking back at me.

Once, I hadn't believed in ghosts—

Chapter One

AT MIDNIGHT, THE STORM ARRIVED.

Dark clouds scudded across the sky, blotting out the stars. The quickening wind chilled me as strands of my red hair blew across my forehead and cheeks. I pulled up the hood of my black raincoat and tucked my messenger bag beneath it.

Despite the gathering storm, the grounds of Evernight still weren't completely dark. Nothing less than total darkness would do. Evernight Academy's teachers could see in the night and hear through the wind. All vampires could.

Of course, at Evernight, the teachers weren't the only vampires. When the school year began in a couple of days, the students would arrive, most of them as powerful, ancient, and undead as the professors.

I wasn't powerful or ancient, and I was still very much alive. But I was a vampire, in a way—born to two vampires, destined to become one myself eventually, and with my own appetite for blood. I'd slipped past the teachers before, trusting in my own