



From the MixCache.com library

SAMPLE COPY

The Echoes of Eterna

MixCache.com

SAMPLE COPY

Table of Contents

- Introduction
- Chapter 1: Embers in the Guildhall
- Chapter 2: The Forbidden Pulse
- Chapter 3: Whispers of the Past
- Chapter 4: Shadows on the Walls
- Chapter 5: The Awakening Realm
- Chapter 6: The First Guardian
- Chapter 7: Veiled Motives
- Chapter 8: Bonds and Betrayals
- Chapter 9: Crossing the Luminara
- Chapter 10: The Hidden Court
- Chapter 11: The Ancients' Call
- Chapter 12: Trial by Memory
- Chapter 13: The Shattered Oath
- Chapter 14: Flames of Reckoning
- Chapter 15: The Second Gate
- Chapter 16: Gathering Storms
- Chapter 17: Echoes of Rebellion
- Chapter 18: War in the Shadows
- Chapter 19: The Betrayer's Mark
- Chapter 20: Lines in the Ash
- Chapter 21: The Heart of Eterna
- Chapter 22: A Crown Reclaimed
- Chapter 23: The Edge of Prophecy
- Chapter 24: The Final Sacrifice
- Chapter 25: Dawn Beyond the Echoes

Introduction

Magic is the lifeblood of Eterna. To those under its shimmering sky, magic is as constant as the sunrise—yet its source remains tightly bound, the wellspring jealously guarded by rulers who fear its wild, untamed spirit. Within the walled city of Aurelith, the Guild of Magics oversees every spell cast and every spark conjured, transforming wonder into rote and awe into decree. The penalty for transgressing the Guild is swift and severe, for legends speak of a devastation long ago, when unchecked magic tore the world asunder and buried kingdoms beneath the sands of oblivion.

In this world of secret histories and fragile peace, Aurora lives simply. An orphaned apprentice, she is a quiet shadow in halls brightened by the brilliance of others' talents. Each day she works tirelessly to measure and balance the Guild's precious energies, carefully following the rules scripted by those who neither trust magic nor its makers. To Aurora, the whispers of Eterna's true origins are little more than bedtime stories, and the notion of prophecy—where destinies are forged in fate's fire—is a luxury for poets, not pragmatic spellcasters.

But all histories, however well hidden, eventually find voice. A single, unintended act—a surge of forbidden Eterna magic far beyond her control—unravels the quiet order of Aurora's life. In that instant, as ancient energies ripple through the domed ceilings and cobbled streets of her world, the first echo awakens. The Guild, ever vigilant, senses danger and draws its net ever tighter, seeking the source of the disturbance. Yet some among them see not a threat, but hope—a chance to undo the centuries-old shackles binding Eterna's power.

Outside the city walls, where ruined statues gaze sightlessly from the wilds, stirrings of old promise and peril begin anew. Shadows rise, and long-forgotten guardians quicken from slumber, compelled by prophecies carved in lost tongues. Orphaned though she may be, Aurora is no longer alone; she is pursued not only by the enforcers of order, but by enigmatic strangers who claim knowledge of her fate and the kingdom that vanished with the morning mists.

As Aurora's path twists into the heart of mystery and danger, she is forced to question all she has ever known: her place in the Guild, the origin of her abilities, and the truth behind the prophecy that now entwines her destiny with that of a world longing for freedom. In the echoes of Eterna, she will confront ancient forces, face betrayal and temptation, and awaken powers long considered lost.

And as the old kingdom stirs, rebirth and ruin march as twin shadows at her side. Aurora's journey—what she will embrace, and what she will sacrifice—may yet decide

not only her own future, but the fate of Eterna itself.

SAMPLE COPY

CHAPTER ONE: Embers in the Guildhall

The air in the Guildhall of Aurelith always carried the faint scent of ozone and singed parchment, a testament to countless magical mishaps and the relentless, often futile, pursuit of perfection. For Aurora, the smell was as familiar as her own heartbeat, a comforting constant in a life that offered few others. She moved with practiced ease through the labyrinthine corridors of the Apparatus Wing, her worn leather apron collecting another fine layer of dust from the overflowing shelves. Her task today, as every Tuesday, was the meticulous cataloging of residual Eterna signatures, a process as tedious as it was vital.

Each shimmering crystal, each ancient scroll, hummed with a unique magical fingerprint, a ghost echo of the spell it once channeled. Aurora's job was to record these echoes, ensuring no forbidden surge or rogue resonance went unnoticed. It was the lowest rung of Guild work, often relegated to the greenest apprentices, yet Aurora found a peculiar solace in its precise, repetitive nature. It was a world of certainty, unlike the vague pronouncements of the senior Enchanters or the ever-present whispers of ancient doom.

She reached for a particularly troublesome Amulet of Quietus, its magic stubbornly resistant to classification. The Guild's meticulous records stated it had been used in a minor shielding ritual some two centuries prior, yet its signature pulsed with an unusual intensity, far more potent than its supposed function. Aurora frowned, her brow furrowed in concentration, as she carefully positioned the amulet on the scanning plate. She activated the Guild's primary Eterna-reader, a clunky brass contraption that whirred to life with a groan.

A series of faint, shimmering lines rippled across the reader's crystal face, depicting the amulet's energy output. They were erratic, spikey, defying the smooth curves expected of a simple Quietus charm. "Peculiar," Aurora murmured, adjusting the focus knob. The lines intensified, pulsing with a faint, almost violet light. Her fingers, usually steady, trembled slightly. This wasn't right. The amulet was supposed to be inert, a relic.

Master Elara, Aurora's stern but fair mentor, often warned against straying from protocol. "Curiosity kills the apprentice, Aurora," she'd say, her voice like dry leaves skittering across cobblestones. But something about this amulet tugged at Aurora. It felt alive, not merely echoing a past spell, but humming with a dormant power. Against her better judgment, she ignored the official Guild directives regarding anomalies and instead reached for a specialized resonance lens, a tool meant for deeper, more invasive analysis.

The lens clicked into place, and the Eterna-reader shrieked, a high-pitched whine that grated on Aurora's ears. The violet light emanating from the amulet flared, casting dancing shadows on the walls of the small chamber. The shimmering lines on the reader's display contorted, twisting into intricate, unfamiliar patterns. A wave of intense heat washed over Aurora, making her recoil. This wasn't a residual echo; this was a live current.

Suddenly, a shockwave erupted from the amulet, throwing Aurora backwards. She landed hard against a stack of dusty grimoires, a cloud of ancient parchment fragments billowing around her. A searing pain shot through her right hand, the one that had held the lens. She looked down to see a faint, glowing mark pulsing on her palm, shaped like a stylized, three-pronged leaf. Fear, cold and sharp, pierced through her. This was forbidden. Every apprentice knew the symbol. It was the ancient mark of Eterna, a sigil of unchecked power, believed to have vanished with the lost kingdom.

The Guildhall's alarm bells began to clang, a deafening cacophony that echoed through the stone corridors. Red emergency lights flickered on, casting an ominous glow. Aurora scrambled to her feet, her heart hammering against her ribs. She had broken every rule in the book, and worse, she had awakened something. The Amulet of Quietus, now glowing with an ethereal, violet light, hovered unsupported in the air above the Eterna-reader, its purpose utterly transformed.

Footsteps pounded down the hall, growing louder with each passing second. Guild Enforcers, she knew. Their armor, typically a dull grey, would be gleaming red under the emergency lights, their faces grim, their spells ready. Aurora's mind raced. What had she done? How could a simple cataloging task lead to this? She glanced at the ancient grimoires she'd crashed into, their leather bindings cracked, their pages yellowed. One, in particular, lay open, its archaic script swirling with images of a world both familiar and alien.

A voice, stern and laced with authority, boomed from the doorway. "Aurora! What in the Guild's name have you unleashed?" Master Elara stood framed in the doorway, her usually neat grey hair disheveled, her eyes wide with alarm as they fixed on the floating, glowing amulet. Behind her, two heavily armored Enforcers stood poised, their hands already hovering over their activation runes.

Aurora stammered, trying to find words. "I... I don't know, Master. It just... changed. The amulet, it wasn't quiet at all." She gestured weakly towards the offending object, which now radiated an almost palpable energy. The mark on her hand pulsed in response, a faint throbbing sensation. She quickly hid it behind her back.

Elara's gaze sharpened, moving from the amulet to Aurora's flustered face. She took a cautious step into the room, her eyes narrowed. "That is no mere Quietus charm,

child. That is a conduit. And that energy... it is unlike anything I have ever seen within these walls. It feels... ancient." She approached the Eterna-reader, her own hands now glowing faintly with a diagnostic spell.

The Enforcers, less patient than Elara, stepped forward, their gauntlets crackling with defensive wards. "Apprentice, step away from the device," one commanded, his voice devoid of emotion. "You are under Guild detention for unauthorized magical experimentation and breach of security protocols."

"Wait," Elara interjected, holding up a hand. "There's more to this. The energy signature... it's spiking exponentially." As she spoke, the violet light from the amulet intensified further, illuminating the entire chamber in an otherworldly glow. The floor beneath them began to vibrate, a low thrumming that resonated in Aurora's bones. Dust rained down from the ceiling.

Aurora felt a strange pull, a magnetic force emanating from the amulet. It wasn't hostile, but urgent, as if calling to something deep within her. The mark on her hand burned, no longer a throbbing ache but a fiery warmth. Visions flickered at the edge of her consciousness: fleeting glimpses of sprawling silver cities, soaring spires, and a sky alight with a thousand vibrant stars. They vanished as quickly as they appeared, leaving her disoriented.

The Guildhall itself seemed to protest, groaning and creaking as if under immense strain. Cracks spiderwebbed across the ancient stone walls of the Apparatus Wing. The alarm bells had shifted from a frantic clang to a sustained, deep tolling, like the heartbeat of a sleeping giant suddenly roused. Other apprentices and lower-ranking mages, drawn by the commotion, began to gather in the hallway, their faces a mixture of fear and awe.

"Master Elara, we must contain it!" the second Enforcer urged, preparing a nullification spell. His hands glowed with a dull, grey energy, the Guild's standard counter-magic.

"No!" Aurora cried out, an instinctive protest. She didn't know why, but she felt a profound sense of wrongness at the thought of suppressing the amulet's energy. It felt like trying to stop a sunrise.

Elara hesitated, her gaze fixed on the amulet, then on Aurora. A flicker of doubt crossed her face. The power surging from the artifact was immense, but it didn't feel malicious. It felt... raw. Untamed. And the mark on Aurora's hand, barely visible, seemed to mirror the amulet's glow.

Just as the nullification spell was about to be unleashed, the amulet exploded in a silent burst of violet light. It wasn't a destructive explosion, but a wave of pure energy, a pulse that expanded outward, washing over everyone in the room. Aurora felt it

course through her, igniting something deep within her core. The visions returned, clearer this time: not just cities, but faces, ancient and regal, looking at her with eyes full of sorrow and hope.

The violet light dissipated, leaving the chamber oddly quiet. The amulet was gone, dissolved into pure energy. The Eterna-reader lay shattered on the floor, its brass casing warped and smoking. The cracks on the walls were still there, stark reminders of the event. But the most profound change was in the air itself; it felt lighter, cleaner, humming with a subtle energy that hadn't been present moments before.

Master Elara stood frozen, her diagnostic spell dissipated, her eyes wide with a mix of shock and dawning comprehension. The Enforcers, their nullification spell uncast, stared blankly at the empty space where the amulet had been. The other apprentices in the hallway murmured amongst themselves, their fear slowly giving way to bewildered curiosity.

Aurora, though shaken, felt a strange sense of exhilaration. The burning mark on her hand had faded, leaving behind only a faint warmth, a phantom echo of the power that had flowed through her. The visions, though gone, had left an imprint, a whisper of a world she had never known, yet felt intimately connected to.

Elara finally stirred, her voice a hushed whisper. "The prophecy," she breathed, her eyes now fixed on Aurora, a new, unsettling light in their depths. "It speaks of a catalyst. An unwitting hand to awaken the forgotten." She reached out, her fingers brushing against Aurora's arm. "Aurora, what have you done?" It wasn't a question of accusation, but of profound wonder, laced with a tremor of fear.

Aurora had no answers. She only knew that the quiet, predictable life of an apprentice was over. The embers of Eterna, long dormant, had just ignited, and she was somehow, irrevocably, at its heart. The true awakening had begun.

This is a sample preview. Purchase the book to read the full content.

Visit MixCache.com to purchase the complete book.

SAMPLE COPY