



From the MixCache.com library

SAMPLE COPY

Beneath the Amber Glass

MixCache.com

SAMPLE COPY

Table of Contents

- **Introduction**
- **Chapter 1** Shadows at the Threshold
- **Chapter 2** The Lamp in the Faded Parlor
- **Chapter 3** Echoes on Maple Lane
- **Chapter 4** The Letter with No Name
- **Chapter 5** Fractures in the Looking Glass
- **Chapter 6** Jon Returns
- **Chapter 7** The Society Beneath the Stairs
- **Chapter 8** The Key in the Floorboards
- **Chapter 9** Whispered Confessions
- **Chapter 10** A Gathering of Strangers
- **Chapter 11** Pieces of a Vanished Year
- **Chapter 12** The Silence of Old Friends
- **Chapter 13** Murmurs from the Attic
- **Chapter 14** The Newspaper Clipping
- **Chapter 15** Paranoia Under Amber Light
- **Chapter 16** Shadows at the Window
- **Chapter 17** The Threat in the Garden
- **Chapter 18** Where Truth Sleeps
- **Chapter 19** Broken Alliances
- **Chapter 20** The Night It Happened
- **Chapter 21** The Storm and the Secret
- **Chapter 22** House of Revelations
- **Chapter 23** The Face Behind the Mask
- **Chapter 24** The Last Hidden Door
- **Chapter 25** Beneath the Amber Glass

Introduction

Rose Halberd had always known her hometown as a place of silences and secrets—a cluster of shingled houses arrayed along winding streets, where the moss grew thick on rooftops and stories grew even thicker behind drawn curtains. But now, returning to Waverly after years washed away by a sudden, violent accident, Rose found the town unsettlingly unfamiliar. Each street corner felt treacherous in its familiarity; each neighbor's wave seemed to carry a shadow of something unspoken. Burdened by the wide blank in her memory, she wandered back home not as the girl who left, but as someone searching for the faint outlines of a stranger who once lived in her skin.

Her arrival was hardly the homecoming anyone expected—even herself. The Victorian mansion that loomed at the end of Cedar Avenue stood preserved and untouched, as if time had forgotten it entirely. For a decade, her family had kept its windows shuttered, its rooms locked, and its stories sealed away along with it. What compelled Rose to turn the rusted key in the door—against the wishes of her cautious family—was not curiosity or nostalgia but a restlessness rooted in the vivid flashes that plagued her sleep. Each fragment of memory bore the same image: that amber glass lamp, glowing impossibly bright through a fog of confusion.

Inside, the house was thick with dust and memories she couldn't quite claim as her own. It smelled of cedar chests and forgotten winters. At every step, Rose was reminded of absence—the gap where her childhood should have been, the steadiness of her brother's old laughter echoing down deserted halls, the weight of her parents' glances when she clutched her bandaged head. And yet, in that suffocating nostalgia, the lamp waited for her. Ornate and gleaming, just as she'd seen it so many nights, it offered itself as a beacon in the dark.

She switched it on, half-expecting nothing. Instead, as amber light spilled across lace-draped tables and faded wallpaper, small miracles revealed themselves. Hidden notes tucked into secret panels, cryptic keys left where only she—the younger, braver Rose—would have thought to look. These secrets were breadcrumbs, tantalizing clues that hinted she was not the only one who'd lost and hidden things here. Each discovery was a portal, opening not just doors and drawers but slivers of her own vanishing past, memories she'd tucked away for reasons she could no longer fathom.

But even as Rose pressed deeper, the sense grew within her that she was being watched. The town's familiar faces, knotted by years of shared history, turned wary and evasive with every question she asked. Old friends, grown distant, fluttered near only to retreat. Strangers watched from across porches, pale behind lace curtains. There were stories here, she sensed—dark ones, well-guarded by those with the most

to lose. The unease that gathered each evening was not entirely her own, but something woven into the shadows and stone, nurtured by every secret window and locked door.

This was no ordinary homecoming. In the weeks to come, as Rose struggled to reclaim herself, she would realize the mystery wasn't just about her amnesia or the crimes that haunted the town's history. It was about the danger that comes from unearthing what powerful people will do to keep their truths hidden, and the price of remembering who you are—no matter what you find beneath the amber glass.

SAMPLE COPY

CHAPTER ONE: Shadows at the Threshold

The air in the house was thick with the scent of long-dormant dust and something else, something metallic and sharp, like forgotten coins on a damp windowsill. Rose ran her fingers along the banister, the wood surprisingly smooth beneath a decade of accumulated grime. Each step creaked a protest, a whisper from the past, as she ascended the grand staircase in the silent hall. Her parents, bless their well-meaning but ultimately futile attempts to shield her, had insisted the house remain locked. "For your own good, dearest," her mother had said, her voice laced with the usual cocktail of concern and unspoken fear. "There's nothing there for you."

But Rose knew better. The flashes in her mind, disjointed and maddeningly brief, showed her otherwise. A specific angle of light, a particular pattern on a rug, the glint of something amber. They weren't random phantom images; they were invitations, breadcrumbs leading her back to a house she'd seemingly forgotten, yet inexplicably yearned for. Her brother, Leo, had been less subtle. "It's a black hole, Rosie. Just let it go." He'd always been the practical one, the one who saw the past as a weight, not a riddle.

She reached the landing, sunlight filtering weakly through the grimy panes of the tall landing window. The dust motes danced like tiny, forgotten spirits. To her left, a long hallway stretched into shadow, flanked by closed doors that felt less like entries and more like sealed tombs. To her right, the master bedroom, her parents' domain, remained a fortress of undisturbed sorrow. Her own room, she remembered vaguely, was on the second floor, facing the sprawling, overgrown garden.

But it wasn't her room that called to her. It was the parlor, a room she instinctively knew was off the main hall, downstairs. The same parlor that featured so prominently in her dreams, always bathed in an ethereal, amber glow. She descended, the creaks of the stairs echoing her own internal uncertainty. The house hummed with a low, oppressive stillness, broken only by the distant caw of a crow outside. It felt less like an empty house and more like a slumbering beast, stirring awake with her presence.

As she entered the parlor, the air grew noticeably colder, despite the shafts of afternoon sun piercing through gaps in the heavy, velvet drapes. The room was shrouded in white sheets, ghostly figures draped over every piece of furniture, like forgotten residents awaiting their resurrection. A grand piano stood silent, its keys hidden beneath a shroud. The scent of lavender and old paper mingled with the dust. It was the scent of a life interrupted, of a story abruptly paused.

Rose walked slowly, her footsteps muffled by the thick, dust-laden rug. She pulled the

sheet from a wingback chair, revealing faded floral upholstery. Her hand brushed against something hard and cool beneath the fabric. It was a book, leather-bound and surprisingly heavy, tucked deep within the chair's cushion. Her breath hitched. This wasn't just dust and old furniture. This was a message.

She flipped open the book, the pages brittle and yellowed with age. It was a collection of poems, but one page was marked with a faded ribbon. A line was underlined in faint pencil: "The past is never dead. It's not even past." A chill traced its way down her spine. The words felt like a personal accusation, a warning. Had she left this here for herself? A clue, a whisper across the chasm of her amnesia?

A sudden rap on the front door made her jump. Her heart hammered against her ribs. She hadn't expected anyone. Waverly was a small town, but not one for impromptu visits, especially not to the house that had been shuttered for a decade. She hesitated, the book clutched in her hand, feeling an inexplicable urge to hide.

The rapping came again, louder this time, more insistent. She walked back to the main hall, her gaze sweeping the familiar-unfamiliar surroundings. The front door was a heavy oak affair, with a frosted glass panel inset. Through the distorted glass, she could make out a blurred figure. Tall, broad-shouldered. Male.

"Rose? Is that you, Rose?" a voice called out, muffled by the thick wood. It was vaguely familiar, tugging at the edges of a memory she couldn't quite grasp. The voice was deep, laced with an underlying current of concern, or perhaps something else she couldn't identify.

She swallowed, her throat suddenly dry. Should she open it? Her family had warned her against attracting attention, against stirring up old ghosts. But the voice, even muffled, felt like a thread, a potential connection to the missing pieces of herself. Curiosity, stronger than caution, pulled her towards the door.

She unlatched the heavy bolts, one by one, each click echoing loudly in the silent house. The door swung inward with a groan, revealing a man standing on the porch. He was taller than she'd initially estimated, with kind eyes that held a hint of sadness, and a shock of sandy-blond hair falling across his forehead. His face was etched with a mixture of relief and apprehension.

"Jon?" The name surfaced unbidden, a whisper from the depths of her mind. It felt right, tasting familiar on her tongue. The man's face broke into a tentative smile, a flicker of genuine warmth in his eyes.

"Rose. You're really here." He took a step forward, then hesitated, his gaze sweeping over her, as if searching for something lost or changed. "I heard you were back. It's good to see you." His voice was gentle, a stark contrast to the pounding of her heart.

She found herself staring at him, trying to place him fully. Jon. The name resonated with a feeling of comfort, but also something else, something unresolved. He was a piece of the puzzle, a face she knew, but couldn't quite connect to a narrative. He was looking at her with an intensity that made her self-conscious, as if he expected her to be different, or perhaps, exactly the same.

"It's... strange," Rose managed, her voice a little hoarse. "Being here. It's like walking into a dream you can't quite remember waking from." She gestured vaguely at the cavernous, dusty hall around them.

Jon nodded, his gaze softening. "I can imagine." He paused, then took another step, his presence filling the doorway. "I wanted to make sure you were okay. After... everything." His voice dropped on the last word, acknowledging the elephant in the room – her accident, her amnesia.

"I'm... getting there," Rose said, a familiar lie. She wasn't getting anywhere, not really. She was drifting, tethered only by the elusive fragments of her past. She still clutched the poetry book.

Jon's eyes fell on the book in her hand. "Reading poetry, huh? Still the same old Rose." A faint, almost nostalgic smile touched his lips. It was then that she noticed the slight tremor in his hand as he adjusted his worn leather jacket. He seemed nervous, almost hesitant, despite his initial approach.

"Is that... a bad thing?" she asked, a spark of defensiveness rising within her. She didn't know what kind of Rose she had been, but the implied familiarity in his tone, even gentle, felt like a judgment she couldn't understand.

"No, not at all," he quickly clarified, his smile fading slightly. "Just... memories. You always had your nose in a book." He looked around the entrance hall, his gaze lingering on the closed doors, the shrouded furniture. "So, you're really staying here? In the old house?"

"It feels... right," Rose admitted, surprised by the conviction in her own voice. "Like there's something here I need to find." She didn't mention the flashes, the lamp, the hidden notes. Not yet. She felt an instinctual need to protect those secrets, even from someone who seemed friendly.

A flicker of something unreadable crossed Jon's face. Concern? Apprehension? "This house... it holds a lot, Rose. A lot of history." He wasn't looking at her, but at the shadows that stretched into the deeper parts of the house.

"I know," she said, her voice softer. "That's what I'm hoping to find." The truth of it felt

heavy and real. She needed to know what had happened, what had led to the blankness, what memories had been so dangerous they had to be erased. She needed to understand who she was before she became this fractured version of herself.

Jon finally met her gaze again, and this time, his eyes held a deeper sadness. "Be careful, Rose." The words were a quiet warning, whispered almost to himself. "Some histories are better left undisturbed." He shifted his weight, his hands going into his pockets. He seemed to want to say more, but held back.

A gust of wind rattled the large windows, sending shivers through the old house. The air outside had grown heavy, the sky darkening. A storm was brewing, both literally and figuratively. Rose felt a prickle of unease, a cold sensation that had nothing to do with the temperature. Jon's warning echoed in her ears.

"Why?" she asked, her voice barely above a whisper. "Why are some histories better left undisturbed?" She searched his eyes, but they were guarded, revealing nothing more.

He sighed, a deep, weary sound. "Waverly is a small town, Rose. People like their secrets. And you... you used to be very good at finding them." His gaze flickered towards the poetry book still clutched in her hand. It felt less like a compliment and more like a premonition. He turned to leave, his figure framed by the darkening doorway.

"Wait," Rose called out, a sudden urgency seizing her. "Jon, what happened to me?" The words hung in the air, raw and desperate. She needed to know. He was a link, a thread in the tangled tapestry of her past.

He paused, his back to her. When he finally turned, his expression was pained. "I don't know, Rose. Not really. I wish I did." He looked genuinely regretful. "But some people in this town... they have long memories. And a long reach."

With that cryptic warning, Jon stepped off the porch and into the fading light, disappearing into the twilight as the first fat drops of rain began to fall. Rose watched him go, the heavy door closing silently behind her, plunging the hall back into shadow. The house was quiet once more, but the silence felt heavier now, charged with unseen dangers. The past, it seemed, wasn't just lurking in the dust and forgotten objects; it was watching from the shadows, and perhaps, from behind the faces of those she once called friends. She looked down at the poetry book, the underlined words a stark reminder: "The past is never dead. It's not even past." And Rose knew, with a certainty that chilled her to the bone, that her journey into the past had only just begun.

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

Visit MixCache.com to purchase the complete book.

SAMPLE COPY