



From the MixCache.com library

SAMPLE COPY

Shadow Mend

MixCache.com

SAMPLE COPY

Table of Contents

- Introduction
- Chapter 1: Ashes of the Guild
- Chapter 2: The Veiled City
- Chapter 3: The Grimoire's Secret
- Chapter 4: Shattered Oaths
- Chapter 5: Whispers Beneath the Lanterns
- Chapter 6: The Broken Alliance
- Chapter 7: Rivals and Runaways
- Chapter 8: The Looming Pact
- Chapter 9: Shadows Stirred
- Chapter 10: The Price of Power
- Chapter 11: Echoes of the Past
- Chapter 12: The Lost Mentor
- Chapter 13: Bound by Memory
- Chapter 14: The Vanishing
- Chapter 15: Dawn of Forgotten Truths
- Chapter 16: Masquerade in Midnight
- Chapter 17: Through the Withered Vale
- Chapter 18: The Mortal and the Divine
- Chapter 19: Hunters in the Dark
- Chapter 20: Flight from the Abyss
- Chapter 21: Crimson Crossroads
- Chapter 22: The Cursed Sanctuary
- Chapter 23: Threading the Shadow
- Chapter 24: Shards of Fate
- Chapter 25: The Weave Remade

Introduction

Aeliana Stone once believed she understood the rules that governed her world—the immutable codes of her guild, the predictable rhythms of spellwork, the uneasy equilibrium between the city's light and its encroaching shadows. But that certainty was shattered the night her defiance erupted into stars and sparks, leaving her exiled—cast adrift from the only home she had ever known. Now, as the walls of Myrholt close in around her and whispers of forbidden magic swirl like autumn leaves, Aeliana is thrust into a city simmering with unrest, where every spell and spoken word carries lasting consequence.

Magic in Myrholt is a delicate negotiation between order and chaos, fiercely policed and tightly rationed. Bloodlines hold sway, and guild alliances are fragile as cracked glass. For Aeliana, survival means navigating a web of old friendships turned brittle with suspicion and making uneasy pacts with those who once called her enemy. Isolation is dangerous, but trust is a luxury she cannot afford. Every step she takes is shadowed by memories of mentorships lost, lessons half-learned, and a hunger for knowledge that once burned brighter than fear.

Yet something deeper simmers inside her—a storm of untamed power and an irrepressible curiosity that will not be silenced by exile. The city's back-alleys, echoing with clandestine duels and marketplace bargains, become her battleground and classroom. Here, the air hums with old magic, forbidden but irresistible, promising answers to questions too perilous to ask aloud. Here, secrets thrive in the gloom, and the line between friend and foe blurs beneath the flickering light of enchanted lanterns.

This is a world built on uneasy truces, where knowledge is as treacherous as a blade. It is a world where darkness does not merely encroach from the edges but seeps from within, tangled with hope, regret, and the desperate need for redemption. Aeliana's journey will test every bond she has ever forged, drawing her into conspiracies older than the city itself and forcing her to confront truths about her own gifts—truths even her most trusted mentors dared not reveal.

As her exile stretches into uncertainty, Aeliana must choose whom to trust, what principles to betray, and how far she will go in pursuit of answers that shimmer just out of reach. The road before her twists through shadow and memory, conspiracy and awakening. Only one thing is certain: the fragile balance that holds her world together is already beginning to break—and she holds one end of the thread.

CHAPTER ONE: Ashes of the Guild

The scent of stale magic and forgotten ambition still clung to Aeliana's worn cloak, a constant reminder of the day she became an outsider. It had been six weeks since the Grand Convocation, six weeks since her name was struck from the gilded roster of the Stonehaven Guild, six weeks since the searing white light of her uncontrolled spell had singed the velvet curtains of the High Council chamber. Now, instead of the crisp, clean air of the guild's sanctum, she breathed the gritty tang of Myrholt's underbelly—a blend of burning refuse, cheap ale, and the ever-present, cloying sweetness of illicit enchantments.

Her current 'residence' was a room above a dimly lit tavern called The Gutter's Kiss, a place where the patrons' hushed conversations were more about shady deals than arcane theory. It was a far cry from the opulent dormitories of the Stonehaven, where every book was bound in enchanted leather and the silence was only broken by the rustle of turning pages or the low hum of protective wards. Here, the floorboards groaned under the weight of revelers, and the incessant clang of tankards served as her unwelcome lullaby.

Aeliana traced the faded runic tattoo on her wrist, a mark of her former affiliation, now a source of bitter irony. It felt like a brand, a permanent scar of her fall from grace. She missed the structured life, the endless libraries, the challenging debates with her peers. More than that, she missed the sense of belonging, the unwavering belief in a common purpose that once unified the guild members. That unity, she now knew, was a carefully constructed illusion.

Her exile wasn't just about the uncontrollable burst of magic; it was about the truth that followed. Aeliana had always questioned the rigid interpretations of ancient spells, the stifling adherence to tradition. Her curiosity was an open flame in a world of tightly guarded secrets. The forbidden spell, a fragment she'd found in a discarded scroll, had been the catalyst. She'd been trying to understand its properties, not unleash a chaotic surge of power. But the Council saw only recklessness, a threat to the carefully curated peace of Myrholt.

The Stonehaven Guild, once her sanctuary, had become her prison, then her executioner. They had stripped her of her rank, her access, and her reputation. The formal declaration had been read aloud, her name echoing through the cold stone hall, punctuated by the collective gasp of her former colleagues. She remembered the pity in some eyes, the condemnation in others, and the cold, unyielding gaze of Master Eldrin, the very man who had once been her mentor.

Eldrin's betrayal stung the most. He had taught her the delicate art of weaving protective wards, the subtle nuances of elemental manipulation. He had encouraged her insatiable thirst for knowledge, or so she thought. When the time came, however, he had stood with the Council, his silence a louder condemnation than any spoken word. The ache of that abandonment was a dull throb beneath her ribs, a constant reminder that even the strongest alliances could shatter.

Now, Aeliana's alliances were, by necessity, less distinguished. Her closest confidante, if one could call him that, was a scruffy information broker named Kael. He operated out of a dusty stall in the Shadow Market, dealing in whispers and forgotten trinkets. Kael had a knack for finding things – lost spells, ancient maps, and increasingly, desperate mages looking for work outside the guild's purview. He was untrustworthy, mercenary, and absolutely essential.

Their first meeting had been a matter of desperation. Aeliana, adrift and nearly penniless, had stumbled upon his stall, drawn by the faint shimmer of a magical artifact he was hawking. She'd identified it as a lesser warding charm, not the powerful relic Kael claimed, and her blunt honesty, combined with a quick, subtle display of her own raw magical talent, had earned his wary respect. Or perhaps it was just the potential for profit he saw in her.

"Need to lay low, eh, Guild-ghost?" Kael had rasped, his eyes, the color of tarnished silver, assessing her from beneath a mop of unruly dark hair. "Plenty of dark corners in Myrholt for those who don't fit the grand tapestry." He'd offered her a room, a few odd jobs – nothing that required intricate spellcasting, mostly tracking down small-time enchantments for curious collectors or identifying cursed objects for superstitious merchants. It was enough to survive, barely.

Her days were now a monotonous cycle of avoiding guild patrols, deciphering obscure magical texts she purchased from Kael at exorbitant prices, and trying to reconstruct the fragmented spell that had been her undoing. The irony was not lost on her: exiled for a spell, now obsessed with it more than ever. She knew, deep down, that the incident at the guild hall was just a symptom, not the cause, of something far greater. The raw power she'd unleashed felt ancient, resonant, almost...familiar.

Sometimes, late at night, when the tavern below finally quieted, she would light a single, carefully warded candle and pore over her meagre collection of scrolls. These weren't the sanctioned texts of the guild, polished and censored. These were the fringe theories, the banned incantations, the whispers of magic too wild for official recognition. Among them was the half-burnt fragment that started it all, its edges charred from the surge of her own power.

The symbols on the fragment glowed faintly under her touch, a soft, pulsating light

that hummed against her fingertips. It wasn't a destructive energy; it felt more like a resonant frequency, a connection to something vast and old. The guild had dismissed it as a dangerous anomaly, but Aeliana felt a pull, an almost primal understanding that defied logic. This wasn't just a spell; it was a key.

Her mind constantly replayed the moments before her exile. The hushed chamber, the anxious faces of the Council members, her own rising frustration at their unwillingness to listen. She had tried to explain, to demonstrate the spell's true potential, but fear had gripped them. Fear of the unknown, fear of magic beyond their control, fear of losing their own carefully maintained power. And then, the surge, the wild burst of energy, and the inevitable judgment.

Aeliana knew that if she were to truly survive, she couldn't rely on the scraps Kael threw her way forever. She needed a new purpose, a new direction. The city of Myrholt, with its layers of hidden passages and unspoken rules, offered a strange sort of freedom. Here, outside the guild's strictures, she could explore magic on her own terms, without fear of censure. But that freedom came with a price: danger lurked in every shadow, and trust was a luxury she could not afford.

Her eyes drifted to the window, watching the rain-slicked streets of Myrholt's lower district. The enchanted lanterns, usually a cheerful golden glow, seemed muted tonight, casting long, distorted shadows that danced like restless spirits. A lone figure hurried past, cloak pulled tight against the chill, their face obscured. It was a city of secrets, a place where people hid their true intentions and their true magic. And Aeliana Stone, the exiled spellcaster, was just one more secret in its depths. She knew the guild would be watching, but she also knew they weren't the only ones interested in untamed magic. The storm was gathering, and she was already caught in its first unsettling gust.

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

Visit MixCache.com to purchase the complete book.

SAMPLE COPY