



From the MixCache.com library

SAMPLE COPY

Chronicles of the Hollow Kingdom

MixCache.com

SAMPLE COPY

Table of Contents

- **Introduction**
- **Chapter 1:** A Whisper in the Woods
- **Chapter 2:** The Silver Pendant
- **Chapter 3:** Secrets Beneath the Hearth
- **Chapter 4:** The Stranger at Dusk
- **Chapter 5:** Into the Fading Mists
- **Chapter 6:** The Path of Hidden Fires
- **Chapter 7:** The Watchers in the Shadows
- **Chapter 8:** Lessons in Lumina
- **Chapter 9:** The Shattered Sigil
- **Chapter 10:** Before the Storm
- **Chapter 11:** Friends Across the Divide
- **Chapter 12:** The Huntsman's Challenge
- **Chapter 13:** Through the Fey Gate
- **Chapter 14:** Bond of Betrayals
- **Chapter 15:** At the Edge of the Hollow
- **Chapter 16:** The Trial of Ancestry
- **Chapter 17:** The Council of Echoes
- **Chapter 18:** Shadows Upon the Throne
- **Chapter 19:** Breaking the Quiet
- **Chapter 20:** The Legacy's Price
- **Chapter 21:** The Gathering at Dawn
- **Chapter 22:** Veil of the Ancients
- **Chapter 23:** The Fall and Rise
- **Chapter 24:** Light in the Hollow
- **Chapter 25:** The Return of the Queen

SAMPLE COPY

Introduction

It is said that every village carries its secrets, nestled in the folds of old hills and whispered amidst the evening winds. For Lyra, the only child of modest innkeepers in the secluded hamlet of Corwick, life had always lingered on the edge of the extraordinary, but never quite crossed the threshold. Days passed gently, marked by the rhythmic beat of mundane chores and the laughter of travelers by the hearth, with only the distant shimmer of the looming forest suggesting a world untouched by simple joys. Yet, even among the most unremarkable days, Lyra could not dispel the sense that she was meant for something more—that somewhere, hidden beneath her ordinary existence, lay a story untold.

Since she could remember, Lyra had been drawn to the old trees standing sentinel at the edge of the village, tangled with vines and rumor alike. Questions had always circled her memories: the parents who'd adopted her one storm-chased night, the odd glimmer in her eyes, and the pendant of silver in the shape of a crescent leaf she'd worn since infancy. These mysteries, though long unanswered, had grown familiar, a blurred outline sketched behind the canvas of her everyday life.

Everything changed on the eve of midsummer, when a stranger cloaked in midnight blue arrived at Corwick's gates. With him came a storm—the first in a generation—wracking the village with wild winds and unsettling dreams. That night, Lyra awoke to a voice in her mind, old as the moon and urgent as winter's first frost. Suddenly, secrets long buried clawed their way to the surface, dragging with them revelations of a forgotten kingdom, and of bloodlines mingled with magic.

As dawn lifted the shadows from her quiet world, Lyra's heart warred between disbelief and the yearning that had always thrummed beneath her skin. What did it mean to be the last heir to a realm spoken of only in lullabies and warnings? What price would she pay to uncover the truths of her birth? With trembling resolve, she stepped beyond the boundaries of her past, the first footfall on a path that would carve the fate of the Hollow Kingdom—and her own soul.

Now, as new dawns rise and ancient powers stir, Lyra's journey begins. Each step draws her deeper into a world of hidden magic, treacherous politics, and unlikely friendship. Betrayals await, as do bonds unbreakable, and before her lies the daunting promise: to claim a throne lost in shadow, and to become the light that might restore her people's hope.

This is the story of how the ordinary can give birth to legend, how a lost royal must discover the magic within to save not just a kingdom, but herself. The Hollow Kingdom

awaits—its history, its perils, and its hope—etched into every page of Lyra’s unfolding adventure.

SAMPLE COPY

CHAPTER ONE: A Whisper in the Woods

The scent of pine needles and damp earth always brought Lyra a sense of peace, a quiet counterpoint to the boisterous laughter and clanking tankards that filled her parents' inn, The Sleeping Dragon. Today, however, the familiar comfort of the Whisperwood felt thin, almost translucent. A subtle tension hummed beneath the usual birdsong, like a string pulled too taut. It had been like this since the stranger arrived, an unease that had settled over Corwick like a shroud.

Lyra usually found solace here, sketching the intricate patterns of moss on ancient stones or simply listening to the wind sigh through the towering evergreens. She carried a small, worn leather-bound sketchbook and a charcoal stick, her refuge from the endless stream of chores at the inn. Her drawings weren't masterpieces, but they were her world, her way of understanding the subtle shifts in light, the delicate curve of a fern, the fierce gaze of a hawk. Today, however, her hand trembled, leaving an erratic line where a steady one should have been.

The storm that had accompanied the stranger's arrival had been unlike any Corwick had ever known. Rain had lashed down for three days straight, turning the dirt roads into muddy rivers and swelling the normally placid stream into a raging torrent. Villagers whispered of ill omens, of the stranger's dark cloak seeming to draw the clouds closer. Lyra had felt it too, a strange hum in her bones, a prickling sensation on her skin whenever the thunder rolled.

She remembered the night the voice had come. It wasn't a sound in her ears, but a thought in her mind, clear as a bell, yet ethereal as mist. *"The time is near, little star. The Hollow stirs."* She had shot upright in bed, heart hammering against her ribs, convinced she was dreaming. But the feeling of ancient power, cold and distant yet undeniably present, had lingered. She had tried to dismiss it as a side effect of the storm, a trick of the mind born from the eerie quiet between lightning strikes. But the memory gnawed at her, a pebble in her shoe she couldn't dislodge.

Lyra traced the outline of a particularly gnarled oak, its bark a tapestry of deep furrows and dark crevices. This tree, she'd always felt, held secrets. It stood taller and older than any other in the immediate vicinity of Corwick, its branches reaching like skeletal fingers towards the sky. Children dared each other to touch its trunk after dark, claiming it whispered forgotten tales. Lyra often felt its quiet presence, a comforting anchor in a world that suddenly felt adrift.

Her adopted parents, Elara and Thomas, had always been a bastion of normalcy. Thomas, with his booming laugh and perpetual flour-dusted apron, was the heart of

The Sleeping Dragon. Elara, quiet and sharp-eyed, managed the books and kept the peace. They loved Lyra fiercely, their devotion a warm blanket against the lingering chill of her unknown past. They never spoke of her true parents, only that they had found her wrapped in a linen cloth, left on their doorstep during a fierce winter storm, a silver crescent leaf pendant around her neck.

The pendant. Lyra reached for the cool metal at her throat, hidden beneath her simple homespun dress. It was her only tangible link to her origins, a small, silver leaf, intricately detailed, with a tiny, almost invisible etching on its underside that looked like a swirling vortex. She had tried, as a child, to ask her parents what it meant, but they would only shake their heads, their expressions softening with a sadness she couldn't quite fathom. "It's yours, sweetheart," Thomas would say, his voice thick with unspoken emotion. "A gift from whoever left you with us."

A rustle in the undergrowth startled her, pulling her from her reverie. Lyra instinctively grabbed a fallen branch, her heart leaping. A squirrel, chattering indignantly, scolded her from a nearby branch, its tiny eyes beady with annoyance. She let out a breath she hadn't realized she was holding, a wry smile touching her lips. The storm, and the voice, had her on edge.

She continued deeper into the woods, following a narrow, overgrown deer trail that few villagers ever ventured upon. This path led to a hidden clearing, a place she considered her own. Here, ancient standing stones, green with moss, formed a rough circle, remnants of a forgotten era. It was a place of quiet power, a place where the air felt thick with untold stories.

As she stepped into the clearing, a cold shiver ran down her spine. The air was unnaturally still, the usual gentle breeze absent. The stones seemed to hum, a low, almost imperceptible vibration. She noticed something new, something that hadn't been there before: a faint, ethereal glow emanating from the largest of the standing stones, a tall, slender monolith in the center of the circle.

It pulsed softly, a pale, almost silvery light that seemed to draw the shadows into itself. Lyra stared, her charcoal stick forgotten in her hand. This wasn't a trick of the light, nor a peculiar lichen. This was... magic. Unbidden, her hand went to the silver pendant at her neck. As her fingers brushed the cool metal, the pendant itself began to warm, emitting a faint, answering glow that mirrored the stone.

The voice returned, clearer this time, a resonant whisper that seemed to echo not just in her mind, but from the very air around her. "*The blood remembers. The magic calls. Lyra, daughter of the Hollow, your path begins.*" It was not a dream. It was real. And in that moment, standing in the heart of the ancient clearing, Lyra understood that her quiet life in Corwick, the life she had always known, was about to unravel. The ordinary had indeed given birth to legend, and she, Lyra, was standing at its very

cusp.

SAMPLE COPY

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

Visit MixCache.com to purchase the complete book.

SAMPLE COPY