



From the MixCache.com library

SAMPLE COPY

Chasing Midnight

MixCache.com

SAMPLE COPY

Table of Contents

- **Introduction**
- **Chapter 1** — The Whispering Artifact
- **Chapter 2** — Shadows in the Library
- **Chapter 3** — The Map of Forgotten Paths
- **Chapter 4** — Crossing the Threshold
- **Chapter 5** — Eldoria Awakened
- **Chapter 6** — Strange Companions
- **Chapter 7** — Echoes of the Elven Blade
- **Chapter 8** — The Rogues of Mistvale
- **Chapter 9** — Secrets in the Shadowmarket
- **Chapter 10** — Nightfall's Warning
- **Chapter 11** — Runes of the Ancients
- **Chapter 12** — Ancestral Revelations
- **Chapter 13** — The Song of Ages
- **Chapter 14** — Tomb of the First Light
- **Chapter 15** — The Enchanter's Truth
- **Chapter 16** — The Forest of Illusions
- **Chapter 17** — Riddles by Moonlight
- **Chapter 18** — Crossing the Draken Pass
- **Chapter 19** — The Tower of Doubt
- **Chapter 20** — Fires of Resolve
- **Chapter 21** — Gathering the Guardians
- **Chapter 22** — Rise of the Shadowcloaks
- **Chapter 23** — Battle at Midnight's Edge
- **Chapter 24** — The Light Unleashed
- **Chapter 25** — A World Reborn

Introduction

Somewhere between the fading memories of history and the unfathomable mysteries of legend, there lies a world forgotten by time. My name is Oliver Gray, and when my story began, I was an ordinary scholar driven by an insatiable curiosity, spending long hours among the dust-laden tomes and faded maps that lined the shelves of the city's oldest libraries. To most, these relics were simply remnants of an age long past, but for me, they were tantalizing links—fragile threads that could lead to truths the world had chosen to forget.

My fascination with the past was more than a pastime; it was a calling. Ever since I was a child, I found myself drawn to peculiar stories of civilizations lost beneath our own, of ghostly footprints echoing through ancient corridors. But nothing prepared me for the day I discovered the artifact—a small, obsidian pendant engraved with runes, exuding a strange warmth even in the cool, autumn air of that fateful morning. It was not just relic or curiosity; it was a key.

As I pored over unfamiliar symbols and deciphered the whispers woven into the artifact's design, I began to unravel the first threads of Eldoria's legend: a hidden world existing in the liminal spaces of shadow, its gateways sealed for centuries. The deeper I delved, the more I felt drawn to a presence lurking just out of sight, as if the past itself yearned to be found. My rational mind insisted that legends remained legends for a reason, yet my heart could not help but race with anticipation. Was it madness, or destiny, that beckoned me onward?

The days that followed blurred into a fever of discovery and doubt. Strange visitors haunted my library desk, and dreams of moonlit forests invaded my sleep. Ancient maps revealed new contours beneath the wash of candlelight, paths and places that had gone unnoticed for centuries. All the signs pointed to a momentous crossroads, one that would either shatter or redefine everything I thought I knew about the world—and about myself.

It was only when the portal appeared—glimmering in hidden shadows and pulsing with energy older than memory—that I realized some mysteries are meant to be encountered, not merely studied. I stood on the verge of the unknown, with the artifact in my hand and questions burning in my soul. Little did I know that by stepping forward, I would awaken an ancient enchantment and set in motion a saga that would entwine my fate with that of Eldoria and beyond.

This is the story of a journey—of learning what it means to chase midnight through forgotten worlds, to confront darkness within and without, and to discover the fragile

yet unyielding power of hope that burns even when all other lights falter. The adventure begins with a question: What if the legends are true, and it falls upon you to become their keeper?

SAMPLE COPY

CHAPTER ONE: The Whispering Artifact

The autumn air, usually a crisp prelude to the city's winter slumber, felt charged with an unidentifiable energy the morning I found it. My breath plumed in front of me as I navigated the winding cobblestone streets, the scent of damp earth and distant woodsmoke filling my nostrils. My destination, as always, was the hushed sanctity of the Lyceum Library, a sprawling labyrinth of knowledge where the dust motes danced in shafts of sunlight like tiny, incandescent spirits. It was a place where time seemed to fold in on itself, and the whispers of forgotten eras were almost audible.

I was on the hunt for a specific text—an obscure 17th-century treatise on pre-Roman Celtic settlements in the British Isles—a topic that, to most, would induce a profound state of narcolepsy. But to me, it held the promise of a deeper understanding of the overlooked fringes of history. My current project, an ambitious academic paper attempting to link ancient folklore with verifiable archaeological anomalies, was proving to be a stubborn beast, resisting my every effort to tame it with conventional facts. I needed something new, something *different*.

The library's head archivist, a formidable woman named Mrs. Gable with an uncanny ability to sniff out overdue books from across three floors, eyed me with her usual mix of suspicion and grudging respect. "Another foray into the fanciful, Mr. Gray?" she rumbled, her spectacles perched precariously on the end of her nose. Her disdain for anything that strayed from the rigorously documented was legendary.

"Just broadening my horizons, Mrs. Gable," I replied, offering my most charming (and usually ineffective) smile. She merely grunted, gesturing vaguely towards the cavernous Restricted Archives, a section notorious for its perilous ladders and an alarming number of resident spiders. I took it as permission.

The air grew cooler as I ventured deeper, the scent of old paper and leather intensifying. Shelf after shelf loomed, filled with volumes bound in decaying vellum and brittle parchment. It was here, tucked away in a dimly lit corner, that I spotted it. Not the Celtic treatise, which was nowhere to be found, but something far more intriguing. Resting on a shelf dedicated to "Curiosa and Uncategorized Items," sat a small, wooden display box, its glass lid clouded with age.

Inside, nestled on a bed of faded velvet, was the obsidian pendant. It was no larger than my thumb, carved with an intricate series of swirling symbols that seemed to writhe and flow even in the low light. The stone itself was a deep, lustrous black, but as I reached for it, a faint, almost imperceptible gleam emanated from its surface. It felt cool to the touch at first, then warmed rapidly in my palm, as if responding to my

presence. A curious tingling sensation spread up my arm.

The runes etched into its surface were unlike any I had encountered in my extensive studies of ancient languages. They possessed an organic quality, less like deliberate script and more like veins running through a living thing. A sudden, faint whisper seemed to brush against the edges of my hearing, a sound like rustling leaves in a distant forest. I dismissed it as the creaks and groans of the old building settling, or perhaps the early onset of caffeine withdrawal.

I examined the pendant more closely. There was no accompanying label, no catalog number, not even a handwritten note to indicate its origin or purpose. It was an orphan artifact, cast adrift in a sea of ordered knowledge. This immediately piqued my historian's curiosity. Why was it here, hidden away, seemingly forgotten? And why did it feel so... alive?

Ignoring library protocol, which strictly forbade handling items from the Restricted Archives without prior authorization and a white-gloved escort, I slipped the pendant into my pocket. It continued to pulse with a low, rhythmic warmth against my thigh, a silent companion to my burgeoning intrigue. I promised myself I would return it immediately after a quick, clandestine examination in my small, cluttered apartment.

Back in the main reading room, Mrs. Gable was fortunately engrossed in an ancient ledger, her brow furrowed in concentration. I made a swift exit, the cool autumn air now seeming to hold a new, almost electrical charge. My apartment, usually a haven of quiet contemplation, felt strangely inert when I returned. I needed better light, a magnifying glass, and, most importantly, uninterrupted silence to decipher the obsidian enigma.

I laid the pendant on my worn wooden desk, surrounded by stacks of books, loose papers, and an assortment of forgotten teacups. Under the harsh glare of my desk lamp, the runes seemed to deepen, their swirling patterns becoming more pronounced. They weren't just decorative; they were clearly a form of script, albeit one completely unknown to me. I spent hours poring over my extensive collection of linguistic texts and archaeological journals, comparing the symbols to everything from Pictish carvings to Etruscan inscriptions. Nothing matched.

As the afternoon light faded into the soft glow of twilight, a subtle change occurred. The warmth emanating from the pendant intensified, and the faint whispers I'd heard earlier became more distinct. They weren't words, not precisely, but a cascade of ethereal sounds, like wind chimes played by an unseen hand, or the distant murmur of a crowd. It was disorienting, and frankly, a little unnerving.

I realized I was holding my breath. My rational mind, the one so carefully cultivated through years of academic rigor, was scrambling for an explanation. A geological

anomaly? Some unknown property of obsidian? Or perhaps, as my grandmother used to say, I was simply “hearing things” after too many late nights. Yet, the sensation was undeniable, almost as if the pendant was trying to communicate.

Frustration mounting, I decided to try a different approach. Instead of trying to *read* the runes, I would try to *feel* them. I closed my eyes, focusing on the warmth in my hand, letting the strange whispers wash over me. I allowed my mind to drift, to open itself to whatever the artifact was trying to convey. It was a risky move, bordering on the mystical, a realm I usually avoided like the plague.

And then, it happened. A flash, not of light, but of pure sensory input. I saw images in my mind's eye: towering, ancient trees with leaves that shimmered like polished silver, rivers flowing with luminescence, and structures crafted from living rock, reaching impossibly high into a sky painted with shades of violet and emerald. I heard the melodic chirping of unseen creatures and felt a profound sense of awe, tempered by an underlying current of melancholy.

It was fleeting, a mere glimpse, but it left me breathless. The pendant pulsed violently once, then settled back into its steady warmth. The whispers faded, replaced by the familiar sounds of my quiet apartment. My heart hammered against my ribs. This was no geological anomaly. This was... a memory. Or a vision. A window into a world utterly unlike our own.

Could it be Eldoria? The very name, when I first encountered it in fragmented legends, had felt like a forgotten echo. A world hidden within the shadows of our own, sealed for centuries. The academic in me still clung to skepticism, but the images I had just witnessed were too vivid, too coherent, to be mere figments of an overactive imagination. This artifact was more than a relic; it was a key. A key to unlocking a truth that transcended the dusty pages of history and ventured into the impossible. The journey had just begun, and the obsidian pendant, now a constant, warm presence in my pocket, was pulling me further down a path I never knew existed.

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

Visit [MixCache.com](https://mixcache.com) to purchase the complete book.

SAMPLE COPY