



From the MixCache.com library

SAMPLE COPY

The Watchers of Mirrorgate

MixCache.com

SAMPLE COPY

Table of Contents

- **Introduction**
- **Chapter 1:** Reflections Unveiled
- **Chapter 2:** The Antique Shop's Secret
- **Chapter 3:** Shards of the Impossible
- **Chapter 4:** The Whispering Glass
- **Chapter 5:** Through the Mirrorgate
- **Chapter 6:** A Garden That Dreams
- **Chapter 7:** Sentinels of the Shifting Sands
- **Chapter 8:** Time Out of Joint
- **Chapter 9:** The Cartographer Watcher
- **Chapter 10:** Fractures
- **Chapter 11:** Echoes of the First Traveler
- **Chapter 12:** Masks and Motives
- **Chapter 13:** The Origin of Mirrorgates
- **Chapter 14:** A Prophecy in Silver
- **Chapter 15:** The Heart of the Watchers
- **Chapter 16:** Shadows Stirring
- **Chapter 17:** Warnings from the Rift
- **Chapter 18:** Nightfall in Nowhere
- **Chapter 19:** Allies and Adversaries
- **Chapter 20:** Threads Between Worlds
- **Chapter 21:** The Gathering
- **Chapter 22:** Mirrored Fate
- **Chapter 23:** Into the Storm
- **Chapter 24:** Refractions and Revelations
- **Chapter 25:** The Choice Beyond the Glass

Introduction

Some people pass by mirrors barely noticing themselves, but for Callie Darrow, their cool depths have always promised more. Among her classmates at Northbridge High, she is known as the “daydream artist,” never quite grounded, always sketching worlds that no one else could see. Yet, nestled between canvas and charcoal, Callie nursed a persistent longing: that somewhere behind shiny glass, adventure and wonder waited, just beyond the reach of her everyday existence.

Northbridge isn't the kind of place where the extraordinary happens. Nestled in a patchwork of suburban monotony and ancient, whispering woods, its secrets are tightly shut behind painted doors. For Callie, life in the Darrow house is comfortable but predictable—her mother fusses over grocery lists, her brother is lost in computer games, and her father travels so often that his laugh is almost a ghost. The closest she comes to magic is the feeling she gets when her drawings start to take shape—as if her pencils know secrets she hasn't learned to ask.

But mirrors have always unsettled her. At home and at school, Callie can't shake the sense that her reflection lingers an instant too long after she turns away, or that, sometimes, the world behind her is just a little out of sync. She never breathes a word of it to her family or friends—who would believe her, anyway? It is this fascination, bordering on obsession, that leads her into the shadowy corner of McAllister's Antique Shop, where the dust glitters like diamond dust and secrets hang in the air, waiting for the right set of eyes.

Here, oddities line every wall—clocks with backward hands, coins that glimmer with unfamiliar empires, mirrors whispering memories in the golden afternoon light. It is here, on a rainy Thursday, that Callie's world cracks open with the soft chime of a silver bell and the chance offer of a mirror she can't resist. She does not yet know that this moment will unravel the fabric of her reality and cast her adrift in a river of worlds, each more uncanny and dangerous than the last.

As Callie soon discovers, her ability to traverse these mirror worlds isn't just an accident, but a legacy sewn into her very being—a gift, or perhaps a curse, that will demand courage she isn't sure she possesses. The Watchers, ancient custodians of the mirrorgates, have been waiting for someone like her, though not all share the same vision of what the future should become.

This is the story of a girl who dared to peer behind the glass—and stepped beyond. Within these pages waits a tale of peril and possibility, of identity and choice, and the sometimes-blurred line between reflection and reality. The adventure of Callie Darrow

begins not with an explosion, but with a reflection, a longing, and the fragile hope that the world is vaster and stranger than anyone suspects.

SAMPLE COPY

CHAPTER ONE: Reflections Unveiled

The rain lashed against the bus window, blurring the already grey world into a smear of muted greens and browns. Callie, her nose almost pressed to the glass, ignored the rhythmic thud of the wipers and the drone of the bus engine. Her sketchbook lay open on her lap, a half-finished drawing of a fantastical tree with roots that spiraled into an unknown abyss. Even the grumpy old woman next to her, clutching a string bag full of suspiciously fresh-looking leeks, couldn't pull Callie's attention away from the intricate lines forming on the page.

Her destination, a place she rarely visited, was the old town square, a cluster of brick buildings and cobbled streets that felt like a relic from another century. Today, though, it held a particular draw. Tucked away on a narrow lane, just off the main square, was McAllister's Antique Shop. Callie had only been there once before, a year ago, dragged along by her mother who was searching for a vintage tea set that never materialized. But the shop itself had left an indelible mark on Callie's imagination.

It wasn't just the smell of aged wood and forgotten dust, or the way the sunlight fractured through stained-glass lamps, creating pools of kaleidoscopic light. It was the mirrors. Dozens of them, in every shape and size, adorned the shop's shadowy corners and crowded shelves. Some were grand and gilded, others simple and weathered, their silvered surfaces holding a thousand silent stories. As Callie remembered it, each one had seemed to hum with an almost imperceptible energy, a silent invitation to something beyond.

The bus groaned to a halt, jolting Callie from her reverie. "Old Town Square!" the driver barked, his voice hoarse. Callie grabbed her worn canvas bag, her sketchbook tucked securely inside, and hurried off, pulling her hood tighter against the sudden chill. The rain had intensified, soaking the paving stones and turning the air a misty grey. She navigated the narrow, winding streets, a familiar sense of anticipation bubbling in her chest.

McAllister's Antique Shop was just as she remembered it, perhaps even more so. Its façade was a riot of peeling paint and dark, leaded windows, a stark contrast to the modern storefronts that now peppered the square. A small, tarnished brass bell above the door chimed a discordant note as she stepped inside, the sound swallowed by the shop's cavernous interior. The air was heavy with the scent of old paper, polished wood, and something else – something metallic and faintly sweet, like ozone after a storm.

Mr. McAllister, a man whose wrinkles seemed to hold more stories than his shelves,

peered at her over the rim of his spectacles. "Back again, young lady?" he rasped, a faint smile playing on his lips. "Looking for another lost treasure, are we?" His voice was like dry leaves rustling, but his eyes, behind the thick lenses, were surprisingly sharp and knowing.

Callie managed a shy smile. "Just looking, Mr. McAllister." She moved deeper into the shop, her eyes immediately drawn to the shimmering surfaces that called to her. There was a full-length mirror with a chipped, ornate frame leaning against a wall, its reflection warping the dusty display of porcelain dolls. Another, smaller one, with a sleek, almost modern design, sat on a cluttered table, surrounded by antique pocket watches.

She ran her fingers along the cool, smooth surface of a hand mirror with an ivory handle, the glass faintly clouded with age. Her reflection stared back, a girl with a splash of freckles across her nose and eyes that always seemed to be searching for something just out of sight. It was a familiar face, yet in the soft, ancient light of the shop, it seemed almost... different. More defined, perhaps, or simply more *there*.

As she moved further into the shop's labyrinthine aisles, the light grew dimmer, and the air seemed to thicken with unspoken histories. Here, the mirrors were more numerous, creating a dizzying array of reflections. Callie saw herself multiplied, distorted, stretched, and compressed, each image a slightly different version of her own reality. It was a strange, unsettling feeling, yet undeniably captivating.

She found herself in a particularly dark alcove, tucked away behind a towering grandfather clock that ticked with a slow, deliberate rhythm. Here, amidst piles of forgotten books and tarnished silver, stood a mirror that commanded her attention. It was not particularly large, perhaps the size of a dinner plate, framed in dark, unpolished wood that looked almost like petrified bark. The glass itself was unlike any she had seen before. It wasn't perfectly smooth, but seemed to ripple faintly, as if a gentle breeze were passing over its surface.

Curiosity overriding her usual shyness, Callie reached out, her fingers hovering inches from the glass. There was a faint warmth emanating from it, a subtle pulse that seemed to match the beat of her own heart. As her fingertips finally brushed the surface, a jolt, like static electricity, shot through her. It wasn't painful, but it was undeniably startling. Her breath caught in her throat.

For a fleeting moment, the reflection in the mirror wasn't her own. Instead, a landscape shimmered there – a vast, open plain under a sky painted in impossible hues of violet and gold. Strange, crystalline structures rose from the ground, catching the light like giant jewels. Then, as quickly as it appeared, it was gone, replaced by her own startled face.

Callie blinked, shaking her head. Had she imagined it? The shop was old, full of tricks of the light and peculiar atmospheric effects. She must have been tired, or perhaps the strange scents had gotten to her. But a prickle of unease, mixed with an undeniable thrill, settled in her stomach. She stared hard at the rippling glass. Her reflection seemed unusually vibrant, almost *alive*.

Mr. McAllister's voice cut through the silence, making her jump. "Ah, you found that one, did you?" He materialized beside her, his movements surprisingly quiet for a man his age. "Came in last week, part of a lot from an old manor house. Peculiar thing, that. Doesn't reflect quite right, does it?" He peered at the mirror, his expression unreadable.

Callie hesitated. "It... it changed for a second," she admitted, her voice barely a whisper. "I saw... a place."

Mr. McAllister chuckled, a dry, rustling sound. "A place, you say? Perhaps it's a dreaming mirror. Some say the oldest glass holds echoes of dreams, or memories of places it once resided. Or perhaps," he added, a glint in his eye, "it's simply a very old mirror that's seen better days." He paused, then gestured vaguely at the small, dark mirror. "It's yours if you want it, for a modest sum. I have no room for dreaming mirrors, nor do they seem to attract the usual clientele."

Callie looked at the mirror again, then back at Mr. McAllister. The faint warmth still emanated from the glass, and the memory of that strange, impossible landscape was vivid in her mind. It felt like a secret, waiting to be unlocked. "How much?" she asked, her voice a little firmer now.

The old man named a price that was surprisingly low, almost too low for something so intriguing. It was as if he knew she was meant to have it. Callie, her heart thrumming with a mixture of disbelief and excitement, reached into her bag for her small stash of saved allowance. This wasn't a tea set or a fancy antique; this was something entirely different. This was a promise.

She carefully wrapped the mirror in a piece of old newspaper Mr. McAllister provided, feeling the subtle pulse against her palm even through the layers. As she turned to leave, the brass bell chimed again, a more resonant sound this time, as if in approval. Mr. McAllister watched her go, a knowing smile now fully formed on his wrinkled face.

Back on the bus, heading home, Callie kept the mirror close, nestled securely in her lap. The rain had softened to a drizzle, and the light outside was beginning to fade, painting the sky in soft mauves and oranges. But Callie barely noticed. Her mind was racing, replaying the moment she saw the strange landscape, the jolt, the warmth. She told herself it was her imagination, fueled by too much time lost in her sketches.

But a tiny, insistent voice whispered otherwise.

What if it wasn't her imagination? What if the world wasn't just the mundane streets of Northbridge? What if, just perhaps, that peculiar mirror was a window, not just to a reflection, but to something far grander, far stranger, and far more real than she could possibly conceive? The thought sent a shiver down her spine, a thrill that dwarfed any fear. She clutched the mirror tighter, a silent pact formed between a girl and a piece of glass. The journey, she knew, had just begun.

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