

CASTLE EXCERPTS FROM SELECTED CHAPTERS

CHAPTER III — THE SPARROW AND THE OWL

In the distant mountains, standing between two falls of shimmering water and surrounded by a halo of dawn, the majestic castle of Olaunda came into view.

CHAPTER V — THE SISTERS OF THE WOOD

The castle of Olaunda stood upon an island of stone in the middle of the Arwe River. Shaped like an arrowhead, the tip of the island divided the river into two cascading waterfalls. Facing north, the main entrance of the castle stood firm against the river's flow. Two wooden-trimmed stone bridges connected the island to the east and west shores of the upper forest. The back of the castle rested on the southern edge of the island, overlooking the waterfalls, the lower forest, and scattered farms across the countryside. Passenger pigeons and Reunion starlings perched on the seven tallest towers of the castle, gazing at the seemingly endless boundaries of the kingdom. In the early dawn, the roar of the twin falls filled the air, and a fine mist drifted through the bridges and along the stone walls, catching the first light like scattered diamonds.