Cursed Blood - 61.The Story.61[1,435 words]

"You do?!" Dmitri exclaimed. He grabbed me by my elbow, trying to shake my out of my frozen state. "Can you explain it?"

My mind was stuck on the file with *Angel* written across it, and the need to go see Spirit. I shook him off, chewing my fingernail.

"The red eyed man. He's a god, I know that now. The random painting the Queen let me have -- it's a picture of the godly war. Angel is the woman tied in the center, and that red eyed god is on the top half with the major gods. He once mentioned a botched reincarnation, and it makes sense, doesn't it? If Angel lost her power but is alive, what if her power is a part of the reason I am a hybrid? The gods created the Light and Dark blood types, so if she's their hybrid, what if their wrecked way of saving her created this world's hybrid," I ranted, piecing it together. "And there was something the spirit mentioned about being well loved -- either way, I think Angel is the goddess I'm looking for, but we aren't the only ones who know."

Dmitri and the scholars scowled. "What do you mean?"

"Lillian, one of the Queen's advisors, once gave me a copy of the file they had on me. In the margin, someone had written angel. I hadn't thought much of it, but now... If we're right..."

"Someone else knows who you are," Lori agreed, "and has known for a while."

"I have to visit the spirit. She'll tell me everything."

"But what if you're wrong?"

I paused, frowning at the floor. Honestly, I'd been too excited to even consider what I'd if this lead was wrong. A part of me desperately wanted this to be *right*, just so I could get my head on straight and figure out what I had to do. There was a war coming -- that's what Spirit had first told me. The Darkbloods, even if I was their friend, still had an old hatred with Lightbloods. Hell, their ambassador figure that had come with me to an official, high-class ball had gotten attacked. I wouldn't blame them for being upset.

But how much would they take before a war began?

"You guys stay here and search more. I'll follow this lead and visit Spirit, since I'm pretty sure I'm the only person who can see her anyway."

They nodded. "Do you need us to call a horse for you?"

I snorted.

"Nah, I'll take the flight option."

Sneaking past the family who moved in wasn't as hard as I orginally thought. Once I was in the Valley outside my old home, I used my wings to get up to the roof and wandered around until Spirit materialized in front of me with a curious look.

"Back so soon?"

I crossed my arms, tapping my foot against the roof. We were in the frozen state, when the sky looked like a galaxy and no one else was around.

"The god, or goddess, I should say," I began, "it's Angel, isn't it? The mixed god."

There was a heavy silence before Spirit finally smiled.

"Very good," she murmured, "you finally pieced it together."

My eyes widened, my wings fluttering as I perked up. "So I really do have power from a goddess?"

Spirit sighed. "I forgot, you don't know the real story, do you?"

A mischievous, mysterious smile lit up her face.

"Allow me to tell you about the gods..."

Once upon a time, centuries ago, the world was in a much better state than it is now.

Blood types lived in clans and had minor squabbles over territory, but they worked together and used their abilities to everyone's advantage. The same was with the gods, who were able to cooperate using their middle man, the goddess Angel. Angel was a major god and a minor god, contributing to the creation of Lightbloods and Darkbloods equally. She was adored, and seen as the Goddess of Gods because her powers were vast, though untrained. This particular goddess believed in unity, so she never trained her magic.

That was her fatal mistake.

After the clans went to war following the death of the woman meant to be the first Cursedblood, the gods went to war as well. The Cursedblood was meant to be a tribute to Angel as a hybrid goddess, with both bloods working on it for her. Darkbloods were the children of minor gods while Lightbloods were the children of major gods, meaning that when they went to war, tensions were high in the celestial realm. Feeling guilty about the life wasted in her name, feeling like it was her fault for being abnormal, Angel forgot about keeping the peace.

The godly war started soon after. Terrafell was in ruins, with broken alliances everywhere. Their conflict soon lessened as Lightbloods seemed to dominate, but with gods, almost invulnerable beings, it was a much longer fight.

A long, brutal fight that ended with only one casualty.

In a desperate effort to stop the fighting, since she loved both sides dearly, Angel tried to use her vast powers as the Goddess of Gods, only for it to backfire. She used a spell to absorb the damage the gods threw at each other, meaning to dispel it completely, but she instead turned it on herself. That very power killed her. However, her death did in fact stop their war.

At this point, everyone was devastated. The gods agreed to work together to rescue their messenger, and began her reincarnation. They planned on using a human body as a vessel.

After years of planning, they finally selected a vessel from a seemingly weak Lightblood family. Before the child's birth, they began the process of exchanging its soul for Angel's to bring their goddess back to life.

What they weren't expecting was the gift of immunity that was barely noticeable in the girl's aura. It was strong enough to resist the reincarnation, but not all of it. Their ritual was ruined as the shell of what once was Angel came to life; a Goddess of Gods without any real magic. She was still a celestial being, but all of her power had rested inside their reincarnate.

And so, the Cursedblood was born. The screwy ritual left the child with many problems, such as hybrid nature. The gods, knowing the mix of bloods would most likely kill the baby, were ready to absorb the magic back into Angel. However, that child was saved when she was stolen by Darkbloods.

Now, the next war is set to begin, and with two halves of the ultimate goddess in play, no one's plans are going exactly how they wanted them to.

"And that's who you are," Spirit finished.

"I'm... half of Angel?"

She nodded. "The goddess is too weak to come into this realm anymore; she doesn't have the magic for it. She's been reduced to an adored negotiator, and the gods are blaming each other. Like how Darkbloods and Lightbloods blame each other for everything."

A displeased frown graced my face. "So what do I do? Stop the war?"

The ghostly woman shrugged. "It's up to you, Cloud. You have enough power to do anything you want. No one expects you to do *anything,* really. The ideal situation would be for you and Angel to be melded together, but I highly doubt it will work."

"Why?" I wondered. "Can't they just fuse our souls together?"

"Because," she smiled wistfully, "your soul isn't *just* half of hers. You weren't born *as* a vessel for her, you were born a regular child. Fusing your souls won't work because there's pieces of you that aren't actually hers."

"So... she's just... broken," I concluded. Suddenly, I was the one feeling guilty.

"Believe me," Spirit assured me, "she isn't upset. You're like a daughter to her."

I frowned. *That's weird to think of, but alright.*

"This is strange," I admitted. "But somehow, it makes sense."

"Does it?"

I sighed, sitting down on the roof. Spirit watched me with curious eyes. My memories were running through my mind at a ridiculously high pace. *Does it really make sense?* Gods. Gods of gods. Big gods, little gods, crazy hybrid experiments and reincarnations. *How could I get tied up with all this? Why me?* Things were falling into place, pieces of the puzzle locking in which each other, but it felt like someone had picked up the finished product and was trying to shake it to see what pieces would come loose.

"Well?" Spirit prodded. "What will you do now?"

"I want to stop the war," I said slowly, "but I don't know if I can."

"You can't."

I looked over at her, shocked that she could be so blunt.

The smirk on her face set me at ease.

"But you could try."

Cursed Blood - 62.An Attack.62[1,581 words]

After our little meeting, the ghost woman informed me that she'd be gone for a while before I could see her again. I didn't ask why -- I didn't want to know the burdens of being dead quite just yet. So, once my questions were answered, I jumped off the roof and slipped back into reality, prepared to march into the castle and cook up a peace treaty.

The plan was so simple.

With so much room for error.

Which is funny, because it wasn't even in motion when things started to go wrong.

It all started with a scream. Lightblood guards ordered people to get inside whatever building they could before they ran in the direction of the noise. I followed, the group of guards arriving at the fountain just before I did. It was the same one where I beat that one criminal boss, the water's familiar splashing a low background noise. Hovering above the water fountain were three Lightblood girls, all held up by their necks. Darkbloods were gathered around, maybe eight of them in total, three of them holding the girls up above the water. They were virtually unharmed while the Lightbloods were bleeding heavily, turning the fountain water red.

"Your kind does not belong here!" A guard shouted, brandishing a two handed sword. "Leave those girls alone!"

"Honey, all is fair in the time of war," the Darkblood mused. "You're about to get what's coming for you."

With that, the three Darkbloods clenched their hands. There was a sickening snap before the three bodies were dropped into the fountain, red water splashing the Darkbloods and the road. The guards charged, only to be blasted back by what seemed like a telekinetic ability. Then came a smoke bomb, and the Darkbloods were gone.

This is bad.

"Get those girls out," I shouted, ordering the guards. My wings were flared, my horns, tail and other physical traits already out. I was in full Darkblood form. "Then, get everyone to safety. Someone tell the Queen what happened!"

"Who are you to order us around?!"

I glared at the guard who tried to fight my orders.

"My name is Cloud. I am the Queen's personal warrior, and a hybird. You should know damn well that I hold the power here.

"Now get on it!"

They sprung into motion, and I jumped into the air. My wings propelled me forward, my mind focused on a sole thing. Rebecca's home camp -- they would've known about a planned attack, and if they did...

How come I wasn't warned?

However, I noticed right away that the guards, who were on foot, would make it to the castle in hours. I, on the other hand, could make it there in minutes.

Screw it, I sighed, shooting like an arrow toward the castle. My wings flapped with enough power to last the entire Valley, my body slicing through the air like it was nothing. My tail was coiled around my leg, the claws on my hands scraping against each other. Something was wrong, and I knew it. The Darkbloods were too cocky, too bold, for it to be a normal attack.

Did I run out of time?

Bursting through the doors to the castle, I found the Prince and his warriors in the foyer.

"Cloud? What's wrong?" Andrew inquired, seeing the frazzled look in my face.

"There might be a war brewing," I panted, "three Lightbloods were just killed. Someone needs to tell the Queen, I'm going to Rebecca's camp to find out what's happening."

"You shouldn't go," the Prince snapped, "it could be dangerous for you."

"They can barely give me a scratch," I countered. He scowled, pointing to the three soldiers around him.

"Take them with you."

"Fine. Go speak with your mother, and call Kyra."

We shared frustrated glares before the Prince turned away, his warriors looking slightly awkward. They followed me outside, Travis handing me a spare dagger he had with him. My wings twitched in anticipation as the dragon appeared in front of us, snorting sparks. The warriors got onto her back, settling in as she glared at me.

Freak.

Brat, I thought back. We had a decent relationship -- we didn't bother each other and helped each other when ordered to. This was one of those times when we had to help each other, and Kyra seemed pleasant enough.

The five of us leapt into the sky, my body shooting in front of Kyra. As a much smaller but equally strong creature, I was able to go much faster than the dragon. I gained ground, zipping into the trees. Instead of zigzagging back and forth for entertainment, I took the quickest route possible. The forest spat me out just in front of their camp, and my eyes widened.

Each child below the age of fifteen had been put into their homes for their safety, while everyone else except the elderly was suited for battle. I spotted Zen, the tattoo artist, with

two clones beside him. He wore thick leather armor, his clones holding several weapons. Even Rebecca was amongst the gathered people, bathed in chainmail and holding daggers.

"What is going on here?!" I snarled, dropping down in the center of them. Sven, their leader, smiled at me.

"Good of you to join us, Cloud. You'll be just in the right place for us to make sure you don't get caught in the crossfire."

My tail flicked side to side, my shoulders shaking with fury. "*What did you say*?"

He opened his mouth to speak when there was a flapping of wings. Kyra, with the three unknowing warriors, had begun descending into the camp.

Stop! I telepathically shouted. *Get them out of here.*

"You brought us sacrifices? How sweet," Sven mused, motioning to a Darkblood with a bow in her hands. "Shoot them down."

I was blinded by rage at that point. It was obvious this camp was prepared for a fight, which meant the others I'd never visited were probably ready as well.

They didn't support me enough to let me know they were planning a war against the people I grew up with.

I saw red, lunging for the nearest archer. Before she could shoot Kyra, who was doing her best to turn and run, I knocked her to the ground, my claws digging into her shoulders. Someone grabbed me from behind, only to be batted away by my tail. Blood poured from the girl's dainty joints as I raked my iron-like claws down her front. She screamed, another Darkblood using their abilities to put an invisible wall between us.

I tried to break through it only to hear a thud.

Darkbloods all around me grinned. I shot up into the air, hovering. While I'd been blind with rage, other archers had gathered and had been shooting the dragon. Kyra lay on the ground, her eyes shut, her chest heaving as she whimpered in pain.

No, I thought, heading for her as a rope tied itself around my ankle. I slashed it away easily, but more took its place. They were slowly reeling me in, and I was unable to do anything but watch as the Prince's three favourite warriors stumbled to their feet. Mysterious, playful Shade. Smart, strong-willed Travis. Goofy Andrew. The three of them stood in a triangle, weapons drawn. They looked dirty but relatively fine, however they were greatly outnumbered.

"You knew this was going to happen, Cloud," Sven insisted. "That assassin told you that it was your job to let us fight it out. You should've gone on vacation, you know."

My blood boiled. *So he sent the assassin? Or maybe he just heard about it.*

"If you kill them," I growled, my fangs creating the hint of a lisp, "I will sever your head from your shoulders in an instant."

Sven looked back at me, his minions strolling casually toward the cornered Lightbloods. A lasso caught my wrist, pulling me closer to the ground. One wrapped around my neck, yanking me until my side rammed into the dirt.

The Darkblood camp leader sighed. "I don't think you could, Cloud. You're not thinking straight."

I glared at him.

I am stronger than everyone here. I have enough power to wipe them all out.

But, a seed of doubt whispered, *what if your power backfires the way* hers *did?*

I shook it off. Before the Darkbloods could get to me, I sliced through my ropes. Waves of them charged, each one too weak to really do anything. That wasn't the point of their attacks though. They were swarming me, preventing me from escaping or getting to my friends, but there was enough of them that I couldn't stop to kill each one -- meaning they just kept coming. I used every possible means of freeing myself; clawing people, biting them, hitting them with my tail, headbutting them, hell I even used my wings to smack a few.

But no matter what I did, Sven and two others were slowly getting closer to my friends.

"Sven!"

Everyone froze, seeing a golden haired werewolf in chainmail standing between the two groups. One was the Darkbloods surrounding me, while the other was them closing in on the three Lightbloods. Kyra, who was still alive, laid off to the side.

"Stop this! Cloud is our friend!"

My heart swelled with gratitude.

She's here to help me.

Sven strolled up to her, smiling.

"You're right. The Cursedblood is our friend, but..."

His smile fell.

"Those who oppose me are not."

I screamed for her to move when his hand lifted, blades taking the form of a clawed glove resting on his hand. She didn't flince as he swung the strange weapon down in a wide arc.

Effectively severing *her* head from her shoulders.

Cursed Blood - 63.Casualties.63[1,354 words]

There was a sudden surge of power before the image of Rebecca flickered. Something shifted in the air, and she disappeared.

What?

An illusion?

My eyes widened and I whipped my head around.

No...

No, I...

They're...

Lying lifeless in a pool of blood was the three warriors, all of them face down in the dirt. Kyra was chained to the ground, her side patched up. Someone had put me in an illusion, meaning I was distracted when they finally got the chance to take out my three escorts.

It's my fault they're dead.

My heart shattered, the betrayal, pain and guilt flooding my systems. I heard myself cry out, my wings flaring as the same black magic from before exploded into my hands. Without even having to think, I uprooted an entire hut and threw it at the Darkbloods around me. There was enough force that it drove into them and continued to skid for another ten meters. No one could even get close to me as I seethed, tears streaming down my face.

"You were supposed to help me make peace!" I screamed, directing the words at Sven. I stared him down as my wonderous magic responded to my anger. The ground itself cracked as I dashed forward, meeting five Darkbloods head on. Their torsos were severed in half when I stopped, my claws dripping with their blood.

"We were allies!" I continued. "But you just had to kill them, huh?!"

Along with my voice, a blast of kinetic power came from inside me, blasting everyone in a certain radius onto their asses. Someone tried to shoot me, but the arrow began to dissolve milimeters away from my skin. Swords became nothing as I grabbed them with my hands, the blade disintegrating with whatever power coated my skin.

"You had no right," I snarled. Sven looked appropriately afraid, lifting his strange weapons. "You had no right to choose whether or not I was ruling over you! Whether or not the Lightbloods got taken out, because I am the Cursedblood. I will choose!"

My anger dissipated as my chest heaved, tears itchy on my cheeks. With one last wave of fury-fueled power, the Darkbloods around me were hit with a force that made every last bone in their body crack.

It was only Sven and I, the real Rebecca nowhere to be seen.

"Where is she?"

The leader of the camp crossed his arms. "She didn't want us to betray you, so..."

He shrugged.

"I killed her."

There it was again. A burning betrayal and pain that fueled whatever magic I had. However, I didn't use that power. I used my bare, clawed hands to rip into Sven, moving so quickly it was like I had teleported.

When there was no one left to destroy my feelings, I fell to my knees in front of the three unmoving bodies.

"I'm so, so sorry..," I choked, my tears splashing in the pool of red beneath them. The camp was in ruins by now, with bodies splattered everywhere.

It had taken less than an hour to waste so many lives. It had taken more time for me to put the pieces together of who I was than it took for me to kill more people than I cared to count.

And it had taken less than an hour for me to lose four people.

Your brother will not be the last.

"But why did they have to *die*?!" I screamed, my voice causing birds to jump from the safety of the trees. My voice went rough, unable to keep up with the immense pain in my chest. Rebecca had been the person I was going to name my best friend, and she had been trying to protect me. Hell, she had a little sister to think of, and he just killed her. Sven

tricked me into thinking I was *watching* him kill her just to kill three simple escorts who'd been loyal warriors to everyone.

Just so that some petty Darkbloods could start the Gray War.

I should kill them all. Make them pay.

Cloud.

I flinched, my eyes passing to Kyra. She was pinned to the ground, but not in critical condition.

I know you're in pain, the dragon told me, *but you need to warn the Queen. Please, at least protect my master.*

Elijah, I thought. *She wants him to survive.*

"I will do my best," I promised. The dragon sighed, slumping onto the ground.

I will regain my strength and break free soon, she reassured me. *Hurry.*

"Their bodies..," I murmured, making sure to slip my hand over their eyes and close them.

I will collect them. Go.

"Thank you," I whispered weakly, wings flaring. My feet left the ground and I soared, climbing higher as I shot toward the castle. Below me, in the Valley, I could see multiple battles. Villagers and warriors alike doing their best to fight back against waves of Darkbloods.

You must wait for revenge, I reminded myself, turning a blind eye to the war going on. I zipped into the castle, the doors already propped open as soldiers ran in and out. They ducked as I flew in, skidding along the floor. The Queen and her advisors were standing on the stairs, discussing strategy.

"There's pockets of fighting all over the Valley," I interrupted. "As far as I know, every camp around us has joined together. They don't plan on taking prisoners. They plan on wiping out every Lightblood alive."

The four ex-legendary warrior advisors and their Queen looked disturbed as they took in my appearance. I was dripping with blood, panting, and my clothing was torn. To add to that, I had every Darkblood feature out, and there was still gray magic hovering in the air around me.

"What do we do?" Jason, one of the advisors, groaned. "We don't have the power to fight them back all at once. We're stuck."

"We should evacuate the royal family," Lillian offered. "Get them to a stronger kingdom."

"I am the best asset this kingdom has," the Queen snapped. "I'm a healer, after all."

"Actually..."

The six of us focused on the approaching figure. He wore light metal armor, a sword swinging at his hip. A certain one-winged dragon strode behind him, hovering behind the Crown Prince.

"Cloud is the best asset this kingdom has," Elijah corrected. "And she may have the power to wipe them all out. But... we have to keep in mind, they are her blood."

I gritted my teeth together.

"I will never associate with the monsters out there. They killed Travis, Andrew, Shade *and* Rebecca.

"I want revenge."

The Lightbloods paled at the mention of the dead, and I swore there were tears in the Prince's eyes. He cleared his throat, glancing at me.

"So, what can you do?"

I looked down at my hands, staring at the hints of swirling magic.

"I'll kill as many as possible, as quickly as possible."

"Kill?" Elijah echoed. "Are you ready for that?"

I fixed him with a deadly glare. "I just wiped out an entire camp in a fit of rage. Don't underestimate me, Princeling."

"Don't overestimate yourself."

This time, seven of us and a dragon flinched. I whirled around, my eyes widening.

The red eyed major god stood behind me, his arms crossed.

"Angel," he said, his expression unreadable. "You have found yourself, at least a little."

"We're in the middle of a war right now," I snapped, "can I help you?"

"I came to warn you," he confessed. His eyes were gentle now, his expression warmer. There seemed to be some sort of connection between us, one that didn't belong to me specifically.

"About..?"

"Your fate," he clarified.

The god stepped toward me, his hand gently laying on my shoulder.

"This ends in two ways, Cursedblood. Your fate is tied with the curse of being a hybrid. You, just like dear Angel, cannot survive this happily."

"Just tell me your prediction," I snapped, "so that I can protect who I have left."

A sad smile graced his face. "If you wish. You, love, will die today, and your soul will pass on with your power returning to Angel."

"You said I had two possible fates," I countered. His lips turned downward into a displeased frown.

"The only other option..."

I found myself holding my breath as he gently caressed my hair, acting rather fatherly.

"Is to kill them all -- Light and Dark."

Cursed Blood - 64.The Loss.64[1,001 words]

With a final sigh, the god gently pressed his lips to my forehead.

"Be safe, Angel."

His body disappeared slowly, vanishing from sight. I was trembling, my hands shaking as I processed his words. He didn't lie to me before, so how would I know if he was lying to me now?

"Cloud..?"

I jumped back into action. "He doesn't scare me, it's fine. He's one of the gods, but what he says doesn't matter. I won't do either of those things."

The Queen looked disturbed as I headed for the door, armed with my power and Travis' knife. "Cloud, maybe you should stay behind to be safe," she offered, but her words fell short as I glared at her.

"I am not afraid. I'm not weak or powerless anymore. I am going to defend this kingdom, and you can't stop me."

"We're coming with," Lillian said decisively. I nodded my thanks to her, wings spreading their feathers before I jumped into the air and soared toward the Valley. The fighting had worsened, with several buildings on fire. I flew downward, grabbing several buckets and helping children put out the fires. Once the worst of it was taken care of, I ushered them into safer homes. Darkbloods were scattered everywhere, stealing from buildings or attacking Lightbloods. Most hesitated when they saw me, probably having been told about me and my form, which was a damning physical description. Those who hesitated had no chance in hell of getting away from me, though I did end up knocking them out more than outright killing them. I had gotten more than enough lives in return for them taking four from me, but I still had an unsatisfied need for revenge.

That, or maybe I needed closure.

Either way, I made my way back and forth between fights for quite a while before the Queen and the others finally made it down into the Valley. Now that we had some stronger forces, the Darkbloods were switching their strategy. They formed a large, powerful group by the treeline. Anyone with ranged powers stood behind several lines of strong melee fighters, meaning it was harder for us to get rid of their snipers. Every time I jumped into the air, someone would try and catch me in a net. This led to me being forced to fight with everyone else to get rid of their front lines.

All was well until I heard a familiar grunt from behind me. My tail smacked all the nearest opponents as I turned to see my brothers in armour, holding some of the finest weapons. They fought fiercely at my side, covering my back. Things were going pretty good for us and we were gaining some ground when the Darkbloods ramped up their power. Before I could use any sort of shield to save us, my brothers and I were scattered by an explosion. My wings wrapped around my body, keeping me safe as I skidded along the ground. The twins were blown backward into the Lightbloods and virtually fine, but it was Charles who got the worst of it.

Charles, the brother who looked like me. Who was my favourite of the three, admittedly. Who'd been my closest friend since the day I was born. Who never lost faith in me, even if I was a Cursedblood.

Charles, who was blown toward the Darkbloods. One particular burly man picked him up by the collar, my brother too dazed to react. I let out a cry of distress, scrambling to my feet. My magic reacted, but instead of doing what I meant it to, it created a protective dome around Charles...

And his attacker.

I panicked, realizing there was no way anyone could break through that barrier. I ran full force into it, pounding on the surface as the burly Darkblood sneered. He raised his sword, positioning it to be pointed at Charles' heart.

My voice became raspy as I screamed, trying to take back my magic. Trying to take back the barrier so that I could protect my brother.

However, who was I to be able to control a power the Goddess of Gods couldn't even control?

The impact of watching the man slide a sword through my brother's heart made me feel like I, too, was hit with the sword. Charles went limp almost instantly, his body hitting the ground. My voice cut out, my mind frozen in time. The sight of his body hitting the stone road replayed in my mind, the continous loop burned into my memories.

Charles...

Charles... Charles!

"Ch... *Charles*!"

A blast of power let my core as I screamed, my fist shattering the surface of the dome. My hands wrapped around the hilt of the sword, pulling it from my brother's chest. I wasted no time, seething as I sliced his killer clean in two. The Darkbloods around us were all on the ground, and upon closer inspection, I could see blood pouring from their ears, mouths and eyes.

"You... You killed him," I snarled, the sword's tip drenched in red as I stabbed a random corpse. My eyes were unfocused as I stabbed at random bodies, rambling. "He's dead because of you. You killed him. You killed Travis. Andrew died because of you. Why did it have to be Shade? Why did you betray Rebecca?!"

Tears blurred my vision, the sword falling from my hand.

"Charles..."

Dead.

He's dead.

But he wasn't the last one. Life wasn't done with kicking me while I was down.

"I'll save him!" I heard someone shout. I looked over my shoulder, watching the Queen rush to my brother's side. Her hands glowed green, placed over his wound.

Of course she had thought it was safe. Everyone around us was dead. Who could hurt her while she saved my brother?

I'll tell you who. The next wave of Darkbloods, one of which was armed with a particular weapon.

A particular ranged weapon called a bow.

My world froze as an arrow cut cleanly through the Queen's temple. Her body went lax, falling on top of my brothers.

There was a distant feeling of reality shattering.

Travis.

Andrew.

Shade.

Rebecca.

Charles.

Queen Amara of Mythira.

Dead.

Cursed Blood - 65.Rampage.65[1,115 words]

The ringing in my ears, the blur of my vision, the blinding rage and the ache of my chest became all too familiar as I stared at the slumped bodies of my most precious brother and the Queen who had been good to me despite messing with my life.

I couldn't feel their pain or emotions. Couldn't hear their heartbeat or breathing.

Because they were dead. Gone for good.

I couldn't help it. I was screaming, surely causing my own ears to bleed. My hands were coated in red, my feathers ruffled. The sword's blade hit the stone with a loud clang, my

hands limp at my sides. I felt like a sentient ragdoll that had been torn in half. Lost. Empty. Alone.

I was screaming until I felt hands on my shoulders. Dmitri was crouched in front of me, his eyes red. He shook me until I regained my ability to breathe properly, his grip tight as if he was trying to distract himself.

"Cloud. Cloud, this is still a war. We need to get away from here. More are coming," he instructed. His words struck a chord, one that sung for the need to gain revenge.

There's more of them. More I haven't killed. More that will kill the others if I let them.

Dmitri pulled me to my feet, but when he tried to guide me to safety, I pulled away from him. I squared my shoulders, facing the trees was a deadly, blank expression.

"I'll kill them all," I said softly. "All the Darkbloods who had a hand in this."

Then, for once my magic responded to me. The gray swirls made of black and white magic turned to sparks, flying toward the trees with a single mental command. They grew into hungry flames, consuming the trees at an impossible rate. The ashes cleared to reveal hundreds of Darkbloods dressed for battle.

I drew Travis' knife, brandishing it like it held the power of the world.

"*I'll kill you for what you did!*"

Shocked faces appeared everywhere as I seemingly teleported from pocket to pocket of Darkbloods, appearing to finish them all with a single blow before disappearing. Magic fueled the dagger in my hand, raw power crackling along the short blade. Pieces of people were scattered on the ground, my energy not even dropping the slightest. Darkbloods began to run, trying to save themselves, but it only satisfied me more when I caught them.

I was ready to gut a particular archer when a shadowy figure appeared in front of me.

Spirit, looking horrified, grabbed my hand.

"Cloud, stop! This isn't what you're meant to do!"

I pulled away from her, holding my dagger in one hand. The other was open, palm facing the sky, a swirling ball of power floating above it.

"You're the one who told me that this was up to me," I snarled, "so get out of here."

Despite being dead, I swore she was crying. "Please. Cloud, stop. This isn't you."

"This *became* me when this ridiculous feud took the lives of people I cared about," I snapped. "Now get out of my way, or I swear I'll--"

"You'll what?"

For a second, it seemed like all the fighting stopped.

A woman stood behind me, dressed in white. She had black hair and equally dark eyes with flawless golden skin. Furthermore, she had her own magnificent white wings.

"Angel," I stated flatly.

"Reincarnate," she said gently. "This was not your purpose. Please stop this."

"You have no business telling me to stop," I sneered. "You don't belong here."

"I am partially at fault for this. I recognize that. And I'm sorry that I ruined your chance at a normal life, Cloud," the goddess apologized. I didn't move, unimpressed by her actions.

She sighed. "If you do not stop this bloodbath, I will force your submission."

I lifted the dagger and my ball of magic. "*Try*. You're only a sliver of who you were. I have your power now."

She glared, and I knew I hit a sore spot. Faster than I seen anyone move, Angel lunged and wrapped her dainty hand around my neck. As she lifted my feet off the ground, the world around us went white. We were somewhere else, and I saw the goddess' eyes glow black.

"I will just have to take my soul back," she hissed, squeezing my windpipe. Magic charged the air around us, crackling as we fought against each other. There was a hazy, gray outline of my own body that was barely surfacing from my skin. Her eyes gleamed as she set sight on it, another surge of magic hitting me as I choked. I figured that was my soul, which meant I couldn't afford to lose it.

In this strange realm, I was in a regular Lightblood state.

However, when I focused on the stories of who I was, on the people I lost, I felt a familiar pressure in my back.

"I am the new Goddess of Gods," I rasped. "I am the rightful Cursedblood, and not even the curse can touch me."

She scoffed. "A hybrid's blood will kill them whether its from misfortune or the Darkblood destroying the Lightblood. It is why we call you cursed. You have *cursed blood.*"

"You're wrong."

Holding the memory of those I'd lost and those who were fighting, I saw my soul slip back toward me. My wings sprung free, saving me from choking as I hovered in the air. *I am the reincarnate. I am her replacement!*

"You... You do not get to decide what happens to me," I stated. Her eyes lost their glow as I grabbed her wrist, the one connecting to the hand wrapped around my throat. The tables turned as her soul began to slip from her own body, her arm trembling.

"You... You are just a shell of a goddess who nearly died in a reincarnation. You are *weak*."

I could see the entire defined face of her soul floating toward me, and I grimaced.

"You've been replaced."

As if my words carried the power of a thousand gods, the white space around us shattered. We were thrown back into reality, my form back in full. Angel was on her knees, her soul standing in her place.

"I, the true Gray One with Cursed Blood, pronounce you...

"Reincarnated."

A soundless scream tore from her body as her soul flew into me, a bright flash appearing as her soul completed mine. Power flowed freely through me, and I knew instantly that I had true control. Not only that, but my skin had taken on the godly golden complexion, and one wing had gone white.

That, and Spirit had miraculously disappeared along with Angel's body.

Unfortunately, they weren't the only interruption that kept me from getting my revenge.

That's when I found out when dozens of bowing people materialized around me.