

# Bleeding sword

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*A story i have been working on for a few months... Ugh comment me okay?*

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**Chapter 1 - 1**

**2**

The road stretched ahead of him. He could see for miles out here in the hot, scorching desert. Beside him on the seat lay his sword. His only friend in this wasteland that he was forced to inhabit. He shifted gears and picked up speed. Far ahead in the heat he could see the shimmers floating off the road. On either side of him unchanged landscape stretched out for hundreds of miles. Over the next hill he could just make out the spires of the ruined city. The one he sought was there. He hoped, he felt beside him and gripped his sword as if to comfort himself. He hadn't seen her in years. He frowned for a moment thinking about how long it actually had been since he had last seen her. He came up with a relative figure, 10 years. He had been waiting for his day for a long time. He shifted gears again and picked up even more speed. He was now going over 100 mph. No joke out here in the desert where an engine could overheat easily. He couldn't help it. He wanted to see her, he had to see her. In his pocket his cell phone rang. He didn't pick it up, but then he never did these days. Behind him stretched out in the distance is a storm. A bad one by the looks. The city was now in full view. The blackened towers and even the smaller newer buildings. The city is called Shara. The city had been burned in a long forgotten battle. Just recently people had begun to live there again. His cell rang again. He took it out of his pocket and looked at it a moment before answering it. "Hello?" His voice was the deep drawl of one who doesn't use his voice often. "Jared? Is that you?" "Yes, this is Jared." "Oh thank god, I called earlier but no one answered and I thought that I had gotten the wrong number." Something about her voice tickled something in his memory. "Who is this?" Silence on the other end for a moment. "You don't recognize my voice?" Jared thought for a moment, but he could not recall the voice. "I'm sorry I don't know you." He heard a sound on the other end and for a moment he thought it was someone crying., but then she answered. "I see. Well my name is Danica. Do you remember me now?" Jared gasped. "Danica? But I was just coming to see you!" "I know, that's why I called I will meet you at the outskirts of town, I will find you." She hung up. Jared put his phone away troubled. It was unlike her to be so un-friendly. Then again he thought, it had been ten years.

A few hours later Jared's car rolled to a stop just outside of Shara. He turned off the car and sat back and began to wait. He wasn't waiting long. Not more than ten minutes after he arrived he heard a motor in the distance. A few minutes later Danica pulled up. Immediately Jared noticed she was wearing a leg brace. She stepped out of the car. She limped over to his car. Jared got out of his car, his boots kicking up dust. Danica looked pale and tired. They stood apart from each other, both uncomfortable. It was Jared who broke the silence. "So, I guess I'm back." She nodded. "What's the matter? You don't seem yourself." Her eyes flashed with anger. "Well You wouldn't know what's normal for me now would you? After all I haven't talked to you in nearly ten years." Jared flinched, this was more like the Danica he knew. He hastily changed the subject. "How did you know I was coming back?" She looked up startled. "You sent me a letter, telling me to meet you at the old café we used to go to all the time when we were kids. Don't you remember?" Jared thought but for the second time today, couldn't remember. "No, I am sorry I don't. When did I send it to you?" He thought he could see something shining in her eyes. "I don't remember myself." She gave a weak smile. She said tentatively. "Why did you come back? I mean you haven't been back in ten years why now?" Jared looked puzzled. "I promised I would come back didn't I? Lets leave it at that for now okay?" She nodded. "Well lets get out of here, we don't want to be caught out here after dark and the sun is just setting now." She turned toward the West where the sun was just finishing its slow march back to the other side. Jared whistled through his teeth. "Wow I have never seen a sunset like that one." Danica laughed ruefully. "Have you

forgotten already? The sunsets have always been like this.” She turned away from the darkening sky and went over to her car. She opened the door, and got in. “Hey come on follow me.” Jared nodded and went to his car and started it up. He followed Danica back to where she lived. It was a long drive and the whole way there Jared tried to remember the days of his past and the friends he once knew.

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They arrived at Danica’s house long after dark. It was a small house without much luxury. Danica opened the door and went inside. Jared stepped after her, and entered a room that was devoid of any detail or decoration. “uh nice place you got here.” Danica barked a short rough laugh. “I’m never here. Sit down do you want something to drink?” “No thanks.” She nodded. “So what have you been up to?” He looked at her shrewdly. “I have been doing the same thing. You know what I have been doing.” She sighed. “I guess I do. Have you found him yet?” “No, I haven’t.” Danica looked troubled. “Then why did you come back?” He shrugged. “I have been away too long. Besides, I will find him soon I can feel it.” “How do you know that?” He shrugged again. “I just do.” She laughed. “Same old Jared eh? Can’t say what you mean can you?” He flinched. Opened his mouth then closed it again. “Listen I’m tired. Do you have a place I can sleep?” She nodded. “Yeah over here.” She led him to a room off of the kitchen with a bed. “Good night Jared.” “Good night Danica. It’s nice to see you again.” She nodded and closed the door behind her. Jared sighed and went to bed. His dreams were troubled and uneasy.

Danica limped back to her bedroom. She winced as she sat down on her bed. She undid her knee brace and fell back. She fell asleep in that position. With her knees hanging off the bed. It was the only way she could sleep anymore. She too had her dreams. She opened her eyes in the middle of a wide open field. This was the Shara of 10 years ago. She turned and screamed. The city was burning. There were men running all around her. One of them reached down almost casually and grabbed her. She screamed and screamed trying to get him to let her go. But the grip that held her was like stone. She could smell dirt and sweat. She could hear the screams of the Sharians. She managed to get her head up enough to look about her. She could see Jared fighting with a man much bigger than he was. Even then he was training himself in the combat arts. The man went down in a heap. She tried to call to Jared but her mouth wouldn’t work. Somehow Jared saw her anyway. He turned and ran after her. But he wasn’t catching up. She tried and tried to slow down the man somehow some way so that Jared could catch up. The man carrying her felt her trying to escape. He turned and saw Jared chasing him. He laughed and turned around. He threw Danica aside. She landed hard and she felt her knee break. She hit her head and darkness consumed her. When she woke up Jared had been standing over her with his sword drawn. He had a large gash in his arm and a cut above his right eye. He looked down at her and smiled. Danica lost consciousness again. She sat up in her bed. She was sweating all over. And she could feel the tears on her mouth. That was the worst day of her life. The day the bandits attacked Shara. Not many had survived that day. Actually as far as she knew it had just been Jared and her. Jared would have given up his life for her back then. How had things gotten like this? She sighed and lay back down. In the other room Jared was sleeping peacefully. She tried to stop the memories from coming but she was powerless. Jared had left the next day. Looking for the one who had ordered the attack on his home. And so she thought at the time, on her. She was left to help rebuild the city. All alone, with no one to help her. So she helped herself. Soon she had grown up. She had taught herself the rules of the street. But through that whole time, she had always thought that Jared had loved her. Maybe she had been wrong. It was too much to hope that he still loved her now. She fell asleep again with thoughts of Jared running through her head. She woke up the next morning not remembering her

dream or the thoughts which had followed.

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Jared got up the next morning to an empty house. A note on the kitchen table said that Danica would be gone for a little bit. It further said that Jared should go around town and see the stuff that had changed. A side note said that the town wasn't very nice anymore and to bring his sword. The last thing on the note was a post script that said that breakfast was in the refrigerator and to help himself. It was signed with a quick jab of the pen with nothing else. Danica's style through and through. He got dressed and sat down to eat. It was cold eggs with some toast. He ate it mechanically. He couldn't stop thinking about the past ever since he had gotten back. That day ten years ago. The day Shara died. He had only been fifteen. His brother Amus had been 20. Jared still didn't know why Amus had done it. But Amus had made secrete alliances with the bandits of the surrounding areas. They had attacked on Danica's birthday. He had been on his way with his present to her. He could still remember it. A teddy bear, it had been holding a heart with a card inside. The card has been a special one. For Jared himself had made it. He wasn't particularly good with arts but he thought he had done a good job on the card. It had taken him hours to do. He had even wrote a little poem in it. Jared couldn't recall what had happened to the bear after the fighting broke out. The only thing he could remember right after the fighting had started was that he had searched for Danica. He knew that she had been outside that day. Probably wandering the streets as she liked to do sometimes. He had found her, just in time to see a big brute of a man trying to carry her off. He had chased him for several blocks before Danica's screams had made him turn around and he had seen Jared. He had thrown Danica aside to attack Jared. The man was big but he was no match for Jared. He had stood over her prone form defending her. Protecting her against all that attacked. He didn't know how many men he had killed. But he did know that he had seen his brother. Amus had been carrying his custom sword. A huge thing, it was as long as Amus was tall. Nearly a spear. He could wield that blade deadlier than anyone Jared had ever seen. He had done some killing himself. But the blood on his sword was the blood of the innocent town people. Jared had been shocked and horrified to see his noble brother killing men, women and children without pause. He would have tried to stop Amus but Danica still needed his help and he wouldn't leave her. Amus had never seen Jared, or most surely Jared would have died. Jared was good but he wasn't as good as Amus. Finally the bandits had run away believing that everyone had been killed. By that time Jared had hidden himself and Danica in a building. Ever since that day Jared had been hunting Amus down. For revenge for what he did to his own town and his own people. Jared had tracked him across the country. But he had never seen him. And Jared still didn't know why Amus had done it. He still intended to find out, but he was tired and it was time for a rest. Jared finished his breakfast and went into the bathroom to take a shower, still thinking about the past.

15 minutes later Jared stepped out of the shower feeling much better. He put his pants on and carried his shirt out of the bathroom. As he did Danica came in through the door with bags in her hand. She turned and saw Jared standing there with no shirt on still wet from his shower. She blushed, Jared was a very well built man. She noticed that he had scars traced all up and down his torso. She gasped. "Oh my god Jared how did you get all of those?" Jared quickly darted into his room and came out a moment later with a shirt on. "They aren't important." Was all he said. She stepped closer to him. He could smell her scent, it smelled like lilies. Her favorite type of flower. "They matter to me." He grunted. "Well they are old now." She nodded. "Did you go out into the town yet?" He shook his head. "No, I was going to take a shower then go out." "Ok, maybe I will join you then." He nodded. She started to go about her daily chores. Cleaning the house and such. She called to him from her bedroom. "So. Jared,

are you married yet?" Her tone was deliberately casual. He called back. "No, I haven't even dated anybody. All I have been doing is hunting for Amus." He heard her grunt from in her room. "Are you married yet?" He asked. She came out of her room with a pile of clothes. "No." Was all she said. He nodded. "Well I am going to go out and see some of the town. Are you coming with me?" "Yeah I think I had better, you don't know your way around anymore. If you get lost here you would be lost for days. "Ah come on Danica I remember my way around my own hometown." She laughed. "Not now you don't, its been completely changed." "Okay, then when do you want to leave?" "How about right now?" She said. He nodded. "Alright lets go then." They left the house, and started up the street. They didn't get home till late that night. They had spent the entire day walking around the city marveling at the changes. And the similarities.

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That night Danica and Jared both slept peacefully. Neither dreamed, and the next morning both seemed at peace. Jared woke up around 10:00. Danica was sitting at the kitchen table reading the morning paper. She looked up when he walked in. "You sleep alright?" He went over to the table and sat down opposite from her. "Yeah I did and you?" She nodded. "Say Jared there is a good movie playing at the theatre across town. Want to go with me tonight?" He smiled and said. "Sure." So they passed they day with small talk about the town and how the rebuilding was coming along. It seemed that the town was on the verge of getting everything back in order. They were actually thinking of holding elections for a new mayor. The last one had died in the attack ten years ago. At seven that night Danica and Jared left the house. It was dark by that time, and the shadows danced on the walls as they walked by. They walked together talking of idle things. Jared was looking at Danica in a way he hadn't in a very long time. Danica noticed it but pretended not to. It was better to not get her hopes up. Danica had dressed for the occasion She had put on a beautiful black dress. And had done her hair up in graceful swirls. She had even put on makeup Jared noticed with some amusement. Jared had never seen Danica wear makeup before. She looked quite good. They were nearly there now. Danica looked around carefully. "Here follow me it's a quicker way to the theatre." She pulled him through a dark alley. Jared could barely see a foot in front of him. Danica held his hand to make sure neither one of them bumped into a wall. Suddenly Jared felt Danica's hand let go of his. He heard a thump as something heavy fell beside him. He reached down to see what it was and felt a breeze of air fly over is head. He looked up in time to see a glint. He jumped backwards and reached underneath his coat and drew out his sword. He backed out of the alley. The man who had attacked him followed. That was a mistake. Jared made short work of him. A howl split the silence of the night. Jared's head jerked up. A frozen feeling came over him. He had heard these howls before. Every time he did it usually mean death for wherever he was. He ran back down the alley and grabbed Danica. He hoisted her above his shoulders and carried her out of the alley. He set her down in a patch of moonlight. She had a cut on her arm and it looked like she bumped her head. Her eyes fluttered open. "Danica are you alright?" Jared asked. But he was looking all around him as if searching for something. He heard just barely soft padded footsteps. He spun around in time to see a large dog launch itself and fly at his throat. Jared barely had time to react. He sidestepped and cut the dog in half through its mouth. The bloody pieces fell on either side of him. Danica struggled to her feet. "What the hell was that thing?" Jared shushed her with a hand movement. He grabbed her and dragged her into a doorway. "They are fiends, Hell hounds. They are impossible to stop without a large army. They are servants of Amus. His personal guards. If they are here that means that Amus is here too!" Danica looked around in horror. "What do we do." "We, do nothing I will look for Amus, you will go back home and lock your door." Danica shook her head firmly. "No, I'm going with you." "No your not these things are dangerous, I can't kill them and protect you." "I don't need you to protect me." Jared

grimaced. "Look Danica, I can't worry about you while I'm fighting these things. They will rip us into shreds. Go home and I will come and find you later." She hesitantly nodded. "Fine, but if your not back in an hour I'm coming back to look for you." He nodded. She gave him a kiss on the cheek and ran off back down the street. Jared smiled after her. He turned away from her retreating back. It was time to hunt.

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Jared searched for Amus. He searched for hours, killing as he went. Eventually he reached the edge of the city. By that time his sword was stained with blood. His long black coat was stained with blood. His hair was dyed red. He stepped out into the desert, and looked around. This would be where it ends he thought. He heard footsteps behind him. He spun around sword raised. He stopped short. It was Danica. "What the hell are you doing here? I told you to go back to your house!" "I know but I'm here with you always." Jared was shaking with fury. "I don't want you here! If he sees you he may hurt you and I may not be able to protect you!" Danica had a stubborn set to her eyes. "I can protect myself." Jared opened his mouth to argue but the words died in his mouth. "Ah, it seems we have ourselves a little reunion now doesn't it?" A deep voice said. Jared spun around. Out of the shadows walked a tall figure with long white hair. His eyes were shock blue. A stark contrast to Jared's grey. The man carried a huge sword. That is the only way to describe it. It was massive. Jared squared his shoulders. "Hello Amus." He stared in silence at Jared. "Why don't you speak?" Amus still did not speak. Jared could not control his rage any longer. "You Bastard!" He flung himself at Amus. Amus now wore a small sad smile. Jared roared with rage and charged. Amus stepped aside nonchalantly and grabbed Jared by the neck. "How dare you be angry with me? You who destroyed my entire life." He threw Jared backwards, he stumbled and nearly fell. "What are you talking about? You're the one who destroyed everything." Amus gave a start. "What are you talking about? I didn't kill our father and destroy the town." Jared looked confused. Something clicked in Danica's head. Before the thought could fully form something flashed on her right. Amus and Jared both turned at the same time. Suddenly Jared's eyes widened. He threw himself at Danica. His sword came up so fast that Danica didn't even see it. She heard a clang like two swords coming together. When her eyes focused again she saw Jared planted in front of her with his sword in a classic block position. In front of him was a massive man. He wore no clothes except for his pants and a sword belt. He had a long grey beard. He was heavily muscled. In his hand was a sword. It was pointing just below Jared's. The blade was sunk halfway into Danica's stomach. Her eyes opened and she looked down at herself. Blood was pouring out of her. Her legs wouldn't support her anymore, and she fell ripping the blade free. And Darkness took her.

Jared hadn't noticed her fall. He stabbed forward at the man. The man disappeared. Jared staggered forward, but regained his balance quickly and jumped aside as the man landed with his sword pointed down exactly where Jared had been standing only a second before. Jared landed right next to Amus, who had a look of horror on his face. Jared lowered his sword. "F..father?" The man laughed. "Yes. It took you two long enough to realize who was really behind the attack on Shara. It was so easy. All I had to do was make Amus believe he was being chased by the ones who killed his poor dear father." The man was smiling hideously. He started to laugh. "You fools." Was all he said. He disappeared again. Jared was surprised and would have died except that his brother, took the blow fully on his sword. Amus's knees buckled under the blow. Jared shook himself out of his stupor. He Stabbed at his father. He disappeared again. Amus straightened. "He is fast." Jared nodded. Jared looked over and noticed Danica lying on the ground. He gave a start and ran over to her. His father appeared in front of her and slashed at Jared's head. He managed to duck just in time to lose nothing but hair. Amus was right

behind him. And his father was forced to jump away again. Jared knelt before Danica lying prone on the ground. She was not breathing. Silent tears fled down Jared's face creating a river. Amus put a hand on his shoulder. "I know this may not mean much right now, but I am sorry." He turned to face his father. Jared stood and screamed at his father. "Father... No you are not my father. Patrick. I will see you dead before this night becomes day." With that Jared leapt high in the air. Amus charged. Patrick laughed and punched Amus in the face before stabbing upward as Jared was coming down. Jared took it on his blade and he felt the shockwave all the way up his arms. He fell to the ground rolled away and came up ready. Patrick had Amus in a chokehold. Amus had lost his sword and his eyes were bloodshot. Jared charged but Patrick batted him away as if he was nothing. Amus managed to break the hold by kicking up and out forcing Patrick to drop him. He got his sword back and leapt back to stand next to Jared. Jared looked grim. "We can't beat him like this can we?" Amus shook his head but didn't answer. Instead he called to his father. "Why did you do it father? Why try and destroy your own sons?" Patrick laughed. "Alright I suppose I could spare a few moments before killing you. Lets see where should I begin? Well it was all for power of course. I planned to take over Shara. And become kind of the desert. Of course I knew you both would oppose me. So instead of killing you right then. I decided to send you against each other, and I have to say it worked beautifully. Neither of you ever knowing you were fighting the same men that day. If it makes you feel better you were the ones who foiled my plans. You killed too many of my men and the townsfolk would have destroyed us. But now I have returned to take what is rightfully mine." He laughed a long and cruel laugh. "You fool, no man can rule the desert. It has been tried by better men than yourself." Amus said amazed. Jared's head was bowed, he was slowly taking off his coat and shirt. Amus began to do the same. "You fools think you can defeat me?" Amus still looked scared. Jared's head was stilled bowed. He spoke. "Patrick, you have taken from me the only thing that mattered in my life... So let me introduce you to a little skill I learned." He flexed, and a green flow started to form around his fist. It spread to his arms and up his torso to his head and down to his legs. His muscles bulged and contracted. Amus nodded approvingly. He too flexed, but his aura was white not green. Patrick looked nervous for the first time. "What is this trickery?" Jared laughed. "Oh I think you will like it." Suddenly without warning Jared and Amus both vanished from view. Reappearing a few feet forward then disappearing again. They did this until they were only feet from Patrick. He stepped forward laughing. He snagged seemingly at nothing but suddenly Amus's neck was in his hand. Jared appeared ten feet to the left of Patrick. Patrick laughed at him. "So.. This is the best you have?" With that he brought up his sword and cut Amus's throat. He cast the body aside like it was nothing to him. Jared stopped in his tracks stupefied. His aura slipped away. Patrick laughed. Jared fell to hid knees. Patrick was still laughing. Jared felt his anger explode inside of him. This time the aura didn't spread it enveloped him like a lightning flash. It was difficult to look at. Patrick was still laughing, a maniac's glow in his eyes. He charged Jared. They clashed blades too many times to count. Neither had the upper hand. But Jared had loosed everything he had, and he was tiring quickly. A cut appeared above his eye and along his ribs. Patrick was still unwounded. Jared was losing ground. He sword was a blur of silver reflecting off the starlight. Neither of them noticed Amus crawling toward Danica. Jared was kicked in the face and flew backwards. He flipped in the air and came on again. Jared knew he was going to die. He couldn't beat his father by himself. So if he was going to die he was going to leave everything he had out here. Besides he thought grimly, the desert is where he knew he was always going to die. Patrick's blade was a whirlwind of attacks. He no longer needed to defend himself. Jared was giving everything he had into defending himself. Amus had reached Danica's body. He began murmuring over it. Saying words no one could have understood even if anyone heard him. Amus was quickly bleeding to death. His eyesight was fading to black. He spoke the final words of an incantation he didn't know would even work. He fell forward his red eyes wide open and already glazed over with death. Danica's eyes flickered. Jared was down on his knees. His sword was 20 feet away. His aura

was gone. His head was bowed. He stared at the dirt. Trying to make his peace with death. He just couldn't get it through his head that he was to die here. Patrick raised his sword high for the finishing blow. "So Jared, we come to this at last. You fought well my son. But you were never as good as Amus now were you?" A loud bang split the night and Jared heard a whistling in his ears. He grimaced waiting for his world to end. When it didn't he looked up and saw Patrick groping at his chest where a small wound had appeared in his chest. He blinked. "But how?..." Patrick looked up and saw Danica holding a small pistol. He laughed. "So... You did beat me after all." He groaned and fell backwards. Jared stood over his body. He looked around just in time to see a large amount of brown hair and then he was being hugged fiercely by a crying Danica. "Oh my god Jared. I thought he was going to kill you." Jared was too shocked to speak. He looked to where Danica had been lying, and saw Amus's dead body and understood. He whispered under his breath so that no one heard him. "Thank you Amus.... I love you." He looked down at Danica. He smiled at her. She smiled back. "Come on Danica, let's bury this sack of garbage and Amus." She nodded. They buried Patrick in the sand. They erected a mound for Amus. And marked it with a special phrase that had always stuck with Jared.

The ones who die with honor shall always be remembered. Die with honor.

Jared stood at his brother's grave. Remembering all the memories he missed. An enormous sadness stole over him. Danica slipped her arm into his. "Jared?" "Yeah?" "Can we go home now?.. Will you stay awhile longer with me.. Please?" He nodded. And they turned away from the graves. On the mounds stood three swords. All of them bore the same crest. A lion with a full mane running. And there those swords remain to this day. For no one goes there for fear of wraiths and other foul things. But in fact it is a holy place. And if one were to stumble near the mounds, they would feel an overwhelming sense of calm and peace.

When they got back to Danica's house, she asked him. "What now Jared?" He shrugged. "I don't know. I guess maybe I will stay here, start a life." She stepped closer to him. "A new life with who?" He looked down at her and smiled. "Whoever will have me." Jared didn't know which one of them started grabbing but all he remembered was her saying to her. "Be careful of my knives." She was very careful.....

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