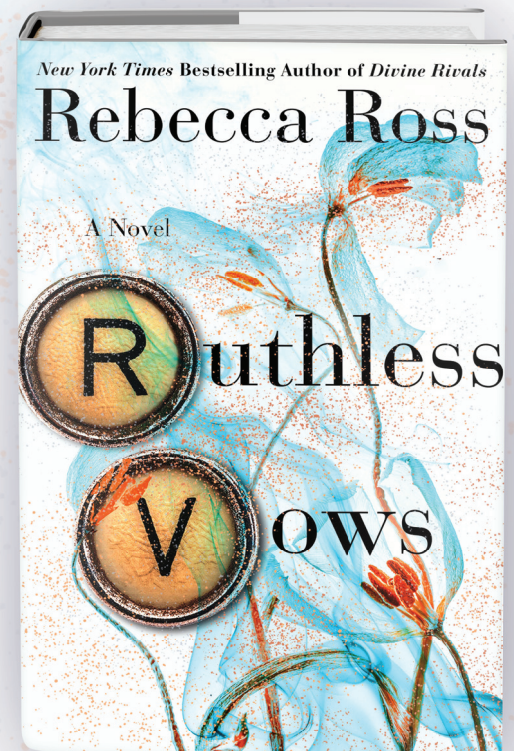
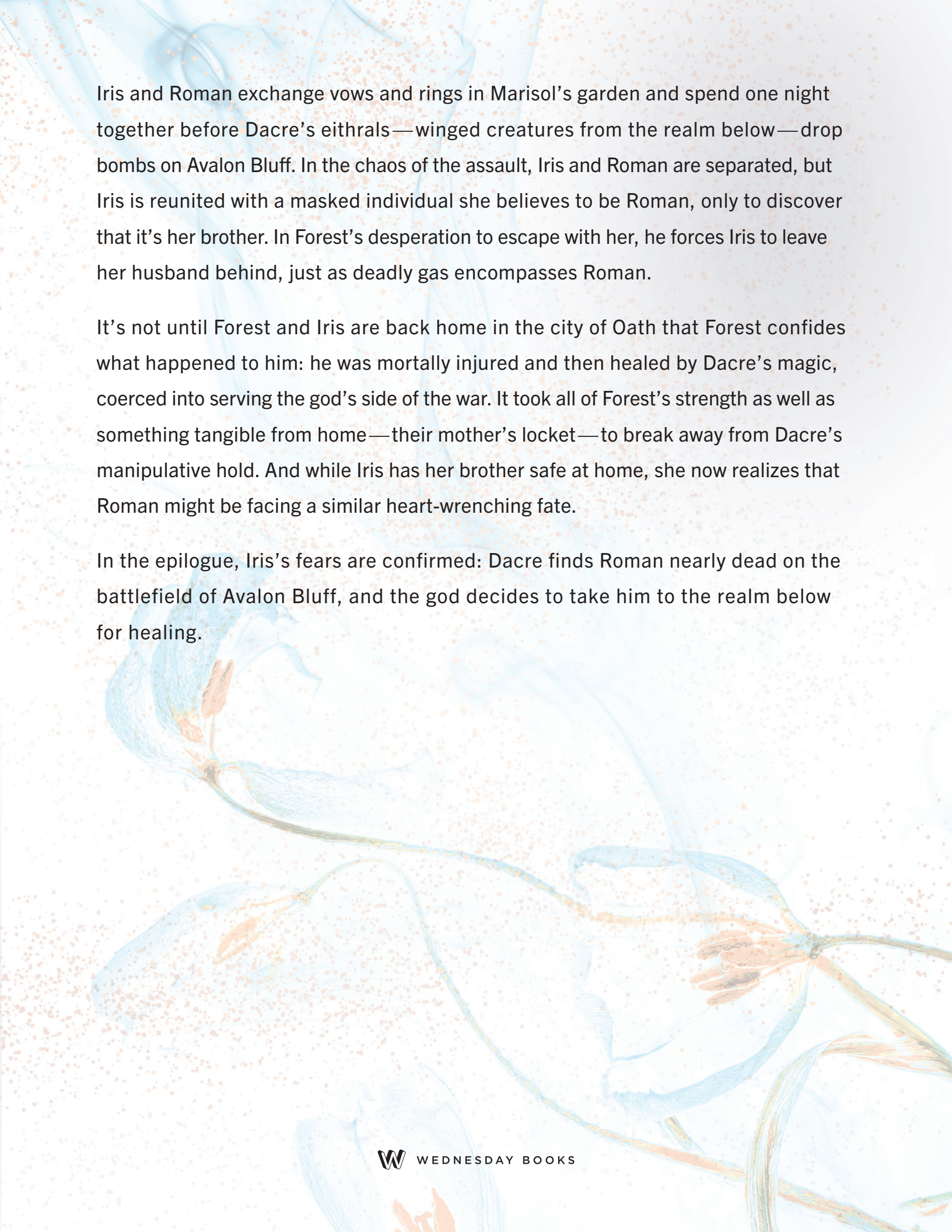


**WHEN *DIVINE RIVALS* BEGINS**, Iris Winnow is working at the *Oath Gazette*, where she hopes to beat Roman Kitt for the prestigious columnist position. But by night, Iris returns to the flat she shares with her mother and writes to her soldier brother, sharing her worries, hopes, and dreams on a typewriter. Iris believes her letters are being magically delivered to Forest, who enlisted to fight for the goddess Enva and is now missing in action, because the letters vanish every time she slips them under her wardrobe door. But little does she know that her words are finding their way to the person she least expects: her rival, Roman.

On a whim, Roman decides one night to anonymously write Iris back, and the two begin a tentative correspondence that soon blossoms into something more. But when Iris's mother is killed in an accident, Iris's world is shaken. She decides to become a war correspondent for the *Inkridden Tribune*, hoping that she will discover what happened to Forest. Along the way, she finds new friendships with Attie, a fellow correspondent, and Marisol, the woman who hosts them at her B&B in Avalon Bluff. All the while, Iris continues to write letters to the boy she knows as Carver, unaware that Carver is Roman, and Roman is on his way to join her at the front.

Roman plans to tell Iris face-to-face who he truly is, as well as his growing feelings, but his chance is lost when Iris is chosen to report from the front line. Roman accompanies her there, where the two are caught in a deadly barrage. Roman's leg is injured by a grenade, and after getting him to safety, Iris finds all her letters in his bag, realizing who he is to her. Their love fully kindles just as Keegan, a captain in Enva's army and Marisol's wife, arrives in town with her troops, announcing that the ruthless god Dacre is on the march.





Iris and Roman exchange vows and rings in Marisol's garden and spend one night together before Dacre's eithrals—winged creatures from the realm below—drop bombs on Avalon Bluff. In the chaos of the assault, Iris and Roman are separated, but Iris is reunited with a masked individual she believes to be Roman, only to discover that it's her brother. In Forest's desperation to escape with her, he forces Iris to leave her husband behind, just as deadly gas encompasses Roman.

It's not until Forest and Iris are back home in the city of Oath that Forest confides what happened to him: he was mortally injured and then healed by Dacre's magic, coerced into serving the god's side of the war. It took all of Forest's strength as well as something tangible from home—their mother's locket—to break away from Dacre's manipulative hold. And while Iris has her brother safe at home, she now realizes that Roman might be facing a similar heart-wrenching fate.

In the epilogue, Iris's fears are confirmed: Dacre finds Roman nearly dead on the battlefield of Avalon Bluff, and the god decides to take him to the realm below for healing.