**Act II**

The previous challenges had been beaten and Valla and her companions had continued their trip. She hadn’t told anyone but she could feel the pain across her body from the attacks of the demons she had faced.

The heavy mace of the Skeleton king as well as the powerful blows of the butcher aided by its demonic speed had certainly taken a toll on her. Under her amor, there was a large sore purple mark going from her left hip all the way up to her midriff. It was painful to the touch. She also had adjusted her armbands to hold her right wrist better as she could feel it hurting. Her back was sore as well.

As she looked at Leah, she knew her burdens were nothing compared with the pain Leah must have been feeling after losing the one person she had in the world. Valla closed her eyes. She could still remember the running water. Her sister. The cold of her drowned skin.

The Demon huntress opened her eyes.

The demons would pay. She would make sure of it.

* We’re close to arriving — She told her companions.
* It is an honor to fight alongside a hero such as yourself — Said the angel.

She smiled.

* As it is to do alongside an archangel.
* A fallen one.
* A worthy one. Let’s go

The plans of the coven had run their course through new lands. The place was insidious, but as they closed in on Maghda, Valla knew something. Her pathetic master had been too much of a coward, using the witch as a sacrificial lamb to run away.

After some problems with the child emperor and the guards, Valla had managed to track the witch. The emperor had offered his help, saying he had no choice but to act that way before.

The demon huntress was much shrewder than she looked however. The woman played along, at least for that time. Finally, she would face the responsible for Cain’s Death.

* You will pay witch, for every death you have caused — She told the evil creature.
* Some deaths hurt more than others don’t they, demon hunter? — The witch said while laughing.

Valla readied her crossbows.

* It’s useless, Leah’s powers…

Before the Witch could say more, she had to dodge a well-placed bolt. Valla wasn’t playing. Well then, Maghda wouldn’t either.

The demon huntress vaulted in her direction. Valla was certainly more thana n expert, she knew well that closing the gap with someone who relied on dark arts like Maghda was the best way to get rid of them quickly. However, she got into the witch’s face, the evil woman spat right across Valla’s face, an abominable power for sure, flies started attacking the demon huntress.

Valla had to quickly spin getting rid of her. As she did so, Kormac attacked from behind, only for him to be blindsided by more insects.

Maghda smiled but right as she did, she felt a bolt hit her shoulder. The witch had to fly around. Cursing Valla’s marksmanship, she pulled the projectile from her flesh.

The insects begun to glow, as if getting more powerful. They could bite through her hood. Valla had to run around avoiding them. She was fast, fast enough to evade them as she jumped and vaulted shooting at the witch. However, her energy was depleting quickly. So much moving around wasn’t good, specially as her hip hurt.

The huntress had to use some grenades to open herself some space between the insects an she jumped towards the witch kneeing her in the face. The Witch hit her with a magic beam, allowing herself some space. And then Valla realized, flies were not the only thing she could summon.

Soon cultists appeared surrounding her and Kormac. The heroes had to fight their way through them.

* Damn you demon worshipping bastards!

Mercilessly, Valla would aim right between their eyes, eliminating the nuisances. They were weak, but they were so many. Still, Valla knew she could beat them. And then, she got hit. Not by the cultist but by a feeling that was very similar to something she had felt before.

A heavy metallic mace struck her right on the hip as she screamed in pain and was launched back. Dark Bersekers were charging at her. Valla vaulted back, using her cluster arrow to open herself some space. Another Dark Berseker appeared from the side, she barely blocked him with her buckler before another hit her on the back.

She felt to the ground spitting blood, and then rolled to the side toa void being hammed in. A well-placed shot dispatched one of the demons. The witch laughed as she hid among her minions.

* You are not getting away!

Valla sued her rockets to seek and attack the mistress of evil, Maghda barely dodged, though not unscathed. Still, the attack had put Valla in a bad position. Soon the heavy mace of a berserker met her face. Valla’s body spined in the air as she hit the ground. She felt her head sipping for a few seconds as she recovered.

Kormac laid on the floor, covered in blood. He seemed to be breathing but was defeated. Valla ground her teeth, readying her weapons. The demonic creatures surrounded her.

* Vengeance descends! — She warned.

And right as the cultists and berserkers attacked, shadow creatures called by Valla fell all around them confusing them. Valla used this chance to vault between them and set up turrets around. One, two, three, she needed one more.

But time had ran out.

She was hit with a magic bolt on the leg, slowing her down. She screamed in pain only to be hit by a berserker. Then another and another clobbered her on the ground.

Maghda laughed approaching Valla. The demon huntress could fight no more. She was barely conscious as she looked at her victorious opponent, lording over her.

* STUPID BITCH — Screamed Maghda — YOU REALLY THOUGHT YOU WOULD BEAT ME!? MY MASTER!?

The angry Witch stepped on Valla’s face making sure her sole would end up well marked on the huntress’ skin. She then kicked her on the visage and spat on her. She kept laughing and laughing paying no mind to what was going around.

* You are NOTHING, my master did not betray me, he TRUSTED ME!! — She continued screaming as she ordered her berserker to keep hitting Valla on the stomach over and over.

Valla had trouble breathing. As she felt Maghda stepping on her head again, and kicking down, squishing her cranium with her boot over and over. The demon huntress simply passed out.

Magdha laughed. She had beaten a Nephelem, she was superior to even the “Super humans”. She was victorious. And as she continued laughing, she finally noticed something. Blood on the floor.

She turned back right as her last berserkers fell down.

Valla’s turrets. They had been hidden by the dust and confusion caused by the shadow beasts and her useless minions had been unable to stop them. Magdha had been too preoccupied gloating to order the berserkers to destroy them.

As her mistake dawned on her. The clever devices show their last ammunition. Magdha dodged one, two, but she couldn’t dodge the rest. Her body was pierced all over. With a last curse to Valla, she fell to her knees dying.

Valla and Kormac woke up late. The turrets had done a good job. Valla touched her stomach. She had a couple broken ribs. Didn’t matter, she still had a job to do.

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With the help of Leah’s recently found mother, the group had located and struck a deal with Zoltun Kulle, an evil, twisted sorcerer who once had betrayed his order and had created a relic able to trap even the prime evil. They could use it to defeat the lords of hell. But of course, waking up Kulle hadn’t resulted in an easy road.

* I am alive again! and it’s time to finish my life’s work… —The evil sorcerer had declared.

Valla readied her weapons.

* You will not be alive much longer if you don’t stop — She warned, but she knew, it was useless.

Kulle’s golems moved towards Valla, but the creatures were slow, much slower compared to her. Hey hit the ground with great strength however, causing the floor to tremble. Just enough for Valla to fail her first shot. The second one would hit, but the intelligent sorcerer had teleported.

* Your tricks can’t fight against the real power of the universe, Demon hunter! — He yelled laughing.

Valla vaulted and rolled around as she avoided his fireballs. And ten right as she was close to the golem. A new spell came. It was as if time itself had slowed. But only for her.

Despite her strength she couldn’t move as quickly as she wanted. And then the golem struck her sending her flying across the room. She screamed as her wounds got worse. Kormac attacked the wizard but he teleported again.

* Idiots! I‘m untouchable! — Declared Kulle, flinging fireballs at the man.

Valla Took that chance to set up a turret. Though she didn’t have any more, it would at least keep the attention of one of the golems. Once again as Kulle lost his train of thought, Valla felt her body responding at a good speed.

Quickly she used some rockets but the sorcerer caused some of the cave to fall, using the rocks to protect himself. Kormac jumped at him but Kulle slowed him down. Thinking it was her chance, Valla charged but the sorcerer had yet another ace under his sleeve. A Tornado formed in front of him, moving directly to her. It was pure arcane energy. Destructive and fast.

Valla could dodge it but some of her volts were absorbed. As another Tornado carried Kormac away, the sorcerer focused on the huntress. As she recharged her weapon, she felt a new spell hit her. Suddenly her limbs felt limp. She was getting tired.

* Shit, damn you bas-

She couldn’t complete her sentence as one of the Golems kicked her away. She felt so weak. Once again, a fireball was thrown at her but she managed to dodge. And then the sorcerer made the cave break a bit again. She was trapped. Another fireball was flung at her but this time it hit.

* AAAAARGHH… nhhg…— Some of the skin of her left arm had been seared.

She had not much time to dwell in the pain however. She had to move away from the golem quickly. And as she dodged once more, she felt time slowing down, and then a punch from the other golem straight to her face. As the beings slowly approached, she recovered. Her turret had managed to mostly destroy one of those. With a good seeking arrow she finished it off.

She dodged the other one. She had a clear shot and then the damn cave once again fell in front of her, protected Kulle. She cursed only be met with an arcane tornado. Valla screamed as the arcane force twisted and made her spin around. Kulle used his magic to move her around, trapping on it. She was hit against the wall, then dragged around.

She screamed and cried in pain until her voice gave in. Most of her armor was broken, her curvaceous body shining now, uncovered as the sweat coating her caused her body to glimmer among the arcane energy. Her own energy drained, her body bruised and even a bit burned. The Sorcerer had won. He had time to play around with his prize however. He using the arcane tornado to continue moving and clashing with her around the room. To do that to a nephelem. This would be his brand, this would be what the world would fear forever.

More and more of Valla’s armor was Broken until she was barely covered. Her bruised body, covered in her sweat as she panted from the torture. The Golem stepping on her companion. And now with his life’s work ready, there was nothing that could stop Kulle.

And then a large stone hit his head.

The tornado was undone. Valla was able to react at that moment, to see as the sorcerer, groggy, attempted to recover. An then he was squished by a rock larger than him and then more fell over. He had caused so many cave ins that coupled with his tornado had made the place unstable. His golem stopped responding as the sorcerer once more, died. Valla rescued Kormac and took the evil artifact.

As she got out with them, the cave finished falling down.

Leah hugged her. Tyrael immediately did his part to get her some new armor.

* You have done well friend, with this we can save this realm, we can end the lords of hell.

Valla nodded, as she rested.

* You should take some time off now, with this we can…
* We can’t waste any time — Valla said decided — Belial has control of the city.
* What? That means the emperor is in danger.
* The Emperor is Belial — Valla said closing her eyes as new armor was brought to her.

Painfully she put it on. She adjusted the belts. It was good. She had been given new weapons and gadgets as well.

* This will work.
* You’ll go confront him now? Then let’s…
* Stay behind, the witch said they are after Leah, protect her, and let Kormac rest. I’ll deal with this demon.

Tyrael nodded, placing a hand of confidence over her shoulder.

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Valla had no time to waste.

* I won’t fall for your tricks, lord of lies — She told the demon.

Belial didn’t attempt any further deception. Soon enough, his guards were attacking her. Steeled her resolve.

* I will kill you all demons! — She said with fury.

Her hatred, her desire for vengeance, fueled her. Despite her wounds she moved with her usual prowess dispatching one after another. She could still see it, smell it, the blood of her family, the ashes of her home, the corpse of her drowned sister. Al because of the demons.

One by one they were shot. Rockets, Bolts, Grenades. The demons were Slaughtered.

* I WILL NOT BE UNDONE!

Belial jumped onto the fray. More damn flies attacked Valla but she burned them away with her cluster arrow. She attacked the demon head on. More reinforcements arrived for him but her turrets took care. She kicked him. Shot at him and beat him down. She was truly being too much for him. But the lord of lies, always had more up his sleeve.

Before she could finish him up, he teleported away. Had he run? No. As she turned around, she saw his true form. A gigantic being made out of sin and foul energies. She had to take a step back, before taking a breath and attacking him.

The creature slammed her down. Valla avoided a second impact but them it hit her with its breath. Valla screamed gutturally as she was electrocuted. The demon hunter had never felt so much pain before as the electricity ran through her body. Once it was over, she spat on the ground, panting, trying to recover as the creature destroyed her turrets. With the little time of respite, she had, she had regained enough strength to avoid another attack and then the next.

She shot at him causing the demon to curse.

* YOU WILL FALL NEPHELEM!

Suddenly a green energy caught her. She knew the feel. It was draining her strength. She cursed as she ran through the platform. But things got worse, suddenly a meteor came raging towards her. She barely had time to dodge when Belial hit her hard. She had to run from him again. Some of the area was burning due the meteor. The heat was unbearable. She had to remove her hood.

 She was covered in sweat and some blood coming from her forehead. She blew her hair away as she ran more and more. But with her energy drained she was just losing her breath. She felt pain in her lungs.

* YOU WILL DIE!

The demon was getting angry. Once more he connected a hit. She then had to dodge a meteor. Then another. Valla used her grenades and seeking arrow to buy herself some time but eh grew impatient instead. Hitting the floor all around him. Valla attempted to dodge him but he caused more and more meteors to fall. She had to place to move when he started beating her down. Belial slammed her so hard Valla immediately lost consciousness.

Having defeated the demon huntress he proceeded to laugh. He grabbed her body and shook her around. He slammed her unconscious self over and over on the floor. He shook her and dragged her all over the place.

* Stupid broken toy — He laughed maniacally.

He threw her away like a broken toy. However, as he moved her around, he didn’t realize. Her bombs had been scattered all over the place. And then with the heat of the meteors they reacted. It was too late when he realized as he was engulfed in flames and the force of the explosions hit him all over. This dispelled his illusion and the demon regressed to his normal form.

Belial managed to resist but as the smoke cleared a familiar vice reverberated.

* NOW LEAH, HE’S WEAKENED — Screamed the angel.
* No…

The black soulstone was before him. He could do nothing as he was trapped down. Imprisoned. He had won the battle, but lost the war.

As the lord of lies disappeared, Kormac tended to Valla’s wounds.

* She fought valiantly said Tyrael, she will recover soon, thanks to her, one of the Lords of hell is no more.

Valla could rest for a while. Her body mangled and beaten. For now, they had won.