

The Battle of Valesia

The Festival of Blades

The air smelled of roast meat, sweat, and cheap ale. Music rang from every corner of the stone square, and banners in every color danced overhead. Valesia was alive, brighter than ever, hosting the famed Adventurers' Festival. We had come from all corners of TerraFirma to boast, brawl, and barter.

I was sharpening my axe when the first scream cut through the crowd. Not the playful kind from a tavern scuffle--this one curdled the air.

Then came the horns. Low, guttural, unnatural.

And the sky turned red.

The Evoked Horde

They came not from the hills, but from within the very earth--pulled through runic scars carved into the cobbles. Orcs, twisted by ritual and blood magic, burst into the square with blackened steel and foaming mouths. This was not a raid. This was a message.

I saw adventurers--heroes of ballads--cut down before they could draw weapons. A bard tried to shield a child with his lute. A cleric chanted until her voice vanished in a spray of crimson.

There was no time for valor. Only survival.

The Last Stand at Silverbridge

We regrouped at Silverbridge, where the canal meets the inner wall. Dozens of us, wounded and furious. A dwarf lit the bridge on fire to hold them off. An elven archer climbed the clocktower and rained fury until the arrows ran out.

We did not hold.

The Battle of Valesia

But we made them bleed. And sometimes, that is enough to be remembered.

Ashes and Echoes

When dawn broke, Valesia was broken. The streets were painted in smoke and silence. Survivors crawled from cellars and ruins. The Festival of Blades would never return.

I still carry that axe, dulled and cracked. I do not polish it. I let it rust, so it remembers.

Because I do.