

Runesmith 103

[Chapter 103 The hearing.](#)

Roland walked in through the room while wearing his red armor. This time around though, he had his helmet down. This was an official hearing with even the guild master present. There was no use hiding his face, he would need to take it off anyway if they started asking questions.

The room was about the size of a school classroom with a large desk with the guild workers sitting at it. He could see the woman with the glasses sitting to the side along with the gnome that explained taming related skills to him.

In the middle of the table he saw an unknown giant. It was clear from the first glance that he was someone belonging to the Goliath race. He was large and muscular and looked to be the one running the show here. Roland hadn't seen the guild master before but he knew from the rumors about his characteristics.

'Why would the guild master be here...'

This was the first red flag, normally there would be a higher ranking worker from the guild present here but not the guild master. Could this be why Armand was not afraid to attack other adventurers? Could he be backed by the guild master? if so Roland could be the one getting banned from the guild instead.

There were another two people sitting to the other side. It was an older woman and a middle-aged man. The man looked like a fighting instructor, his face was filled with scars and his body was also rather muscular. He was clearly someone belonging to the warrior profession. Next to him was an older woman in a robe, she gave him mage vibes. By the way, mana gathered around her she was someone with a large amount just like Roland here.

Five people in total were behind that table, from what Roland could tell these people would take a vote. You needed three votes in your favor to have the verdict go your way. There was also the guild master present though, he could outright shift the whole thing in Armand's favor. Roland feared that if he gave an order the others would not vote against his judgment.

There was a set of two long tables on the opposite side. In one of them, he noticed a familiar face, it was the muscle-bound Armand who looked quite angry. He was staring daggers at the guild master for some reason. When Roland walked in his target had changed, this was the first time they were actually face to face.

It seemed that the fist-fighter was a bit surprised at how young Roland was. Even though his frame was similar to an adult man, he was still only about sixteen years old. The only person that actually saw his face before was the elven receptionist lady, she wasn't here though so it was a first for everyone gathered.

While being stared at, the woman with the glasses walked up to him.

"Mr. Wayland, Mr. Bernir. Please take a seat."

She pointed to the two chairs that were probably prepared for him and Bernir. They were at the table that was to the left of the one Armand was sitting at. The two nodded and slowly walked over to their

seats. Roland purposely evaded Armand's menacing stare which only caused the muscle idiot to get angrier.

'Those five idiots aren't there? Might have actually skipped town...'

For now, it looked like they were missing the party of the tier 2 thugs that attacked Bernir. Not being here would actually work against them. They wouldn't be able to explain themselves so Roland winning the case was almost guaranteed. The only one he would need to watch for is Armand then.

"It would seem that Mr. Devyn and his party haven't arrived yet. Ms. Elodia would you know anything about this?"

The one that spoke up was the old mage-looking granny. The old woman had a gentle smile on her face while looking at the receptionist lady and asking the question.

"One of our guild members should be bringing them over soon..."

She answered while the warrior-looking man next to the old woman grinned a bit.

"You mean Korgak? Hope he doesn't kill them before they get here, though that might speed things up..."

The man rubbed his chin while looking happy for some reason. He was probably imagining a violent ending for the party of five by the hands of this associate of theirs.

"Let us wait, if it's Korgak then he should get them here."

The guild master waved his hand while leaning back in his chair. Roland took this time to examine this man, this was apparently the most powerful adventurer in the city. A tier 3 class holder that followed the warrior tree.

If someone wanted to become a true guild master this was the main requirement. You had to have successfully attained a tier 3 class. This was a new city and a new guild which made Roland believe that he was probably at the lower end of this tier 3 class.

Albrook was a developing city and no established guild master would take the time to spend years developing it. Most of the time something like this would be given to new guild masters.

Roland wasn't sure about this man's character but he didn't seem like someone that enjoyed guild politics. He was sitting with his back leaned back and legs spread apart like he owned the place, which he did. He looked like the type that would settle things with his fists instead of diplomacy.

'Hope he won't think of something idiotic like having us both fight to clear things out. The victor gets the spoils?'

Something as silly as that would probably not come to place as there were strict rules. The guild master would be breaking guild laws if he ordered such a verdict. On the other hand, Roland wasn't sure what he could do if such a decision was made.

Not like he had anyone that he could file a complaint to. The only one that outranked this man would be another guild master from a larger guild.

There were many guilds spread throughout the lands. It worked similar to a chain of stores with the guild masters being managers in them. Then there was someone like a regional manager that the guild masters had to answer to. Above them finally was the strongest one out of them, a tier 5 monster.

This was also mostly where the journey of power ended for everyone. There weren't many people that could achieve something of that height in their lives. The experience it took was massive. Besides that most people ended up retiring after achieving tier 3 which was already seen as being one of the top elites.

'I'd have to go to one of those regional guild masters huh...'

While thinking his eyes met with the imposing-looking man. The man that looked to be chiseled out of granite smirked which made Roland flinch a bit. It looked like he was about to say something but before he could the door slammed open and one of the thugs that attacked Bernir flew through it.

"Ah, Finally. What took you so long Korgak?"

Soon all four of them were in the room, behind them was an imposing half-orc that looked quite similar to the one that he met as a slave. His face and bone structure were quite similar. The main difference was that his shade of green was paler.

"Korgak bring, now Korgak go."

The way that he talked was also akin to what he remembered from Golgrim. He was quick to remove himself from the room after shoving the five adventurers in. They all had bruises on their bodies and it was clear that they didn't come here of their own volition.

"Good, everyone is here, let us get this over with."

The guild master leaned forward while smacking the table with his large hand. Elodia instructed the five to sit at the table with Armand. The five after realizing that the guild master was here along with some other powerful adventures were quick to shrink back. Like puppies with curled-up tails, they waddled over to their seats as the hearing finally commenced.

"We have gathered here due to Mr. Wayland's complaint about the party name: Dread End."

Elodia started listing the names of everyone, Devin and his gang had quite the showy name but not much to show for it. They were only lower-level tier 2 adventurers with basic classes that didn't show much promise for the future.

"Dread End was seen being attacked by Mr. Wayland in the..."

The focus was on the battle at the pub. It seemed that the guild did their research. Elodia explained that Roland was seen walking up to them slowly and that he asked for the backpack more than once before attacking. Devin and his boys were the first ones to draw the weapons which put Roland in an advantageous position.

"Does anyone from Dread End have anything to add?"

"Of course we do!"

“That madman clearly attacked us, we were just defending ourselves!”

“That’s right!”

The ones that were being accused were unwilling to admit to their robbery. The problem with this was that it came to their word against his and Bernir’s. The only thing that could help them were the witnesses. This was a bit concerning as he had no idea who the guild would bring in or if they even took the time to do this.

This was also why he was soon pleasantly surprised as they brought out the first witness, a middle-aged dwarf.

“Could you point out who Mr. Devyn and his party members were following?”

“Yes it was him, I saw it with my very own eyes.”

“He lies! Damn dwarf, I’m going to…”

“Pipe down!”

A little scene unfolded that Roland didn’t predict. The guild brought out this witness from somewhere and apparently he saw Devyn and his buddies following after Bernir. He described how he noticed them walking out of an alley and trailing after his assistant in detail. How they managed to find this guy was unknown to him but someone did a good job.

Dread End was not happy about this surprise witness but they quickly quieted down after the man next to the guild master shouted at them. It was clear that they knew him and were scared.

The hearing continued and it was going in Roland’s and Bernir’s favor. Some people from the pub were questioned and they also mentioned how he left money behind after trashing the wall.

“I think I’ve heard enough. Dread End will be suspended from the guild, we can’t have our adventurers acting like common thugs.”

The guild master spoke out while the others nodded. These five made them look quite bad and even though they were tier 2 class holders they could be replaced.

“I agree with the guild master but this isn’t enough. I say we give them to the city guards, they did almost kill a man.”

The one that brought this up was the old gnome. The others murmured for a moment before starting a vote between themselves. Everyone minus the man with scars on his face was for this idea, his reasoning being that he didn’t like the nobles being involved in guild politics.

“The city guards? You think we’ll take this lying down!”

Devyn and his buddies quickly shot up to their feet before storming for the exit. They were already forced to arrive here due to the half-orc and were probably planning to escape from the beginning.

Roland watched them tackle the large door that was locked, it couldn’t take a full shoulder tackle from a tier 2 tank and broke down instantly. He wasn’t about to chase after them though this was the adventurer’s guild and they had enough people to handle something like this.

Dread End reached a bad ending as they didn't make it outside. The half-orc was still there on guard along with other instructors. After a little scuffle, the five thugs were apprehended.

"Well, I guess you didn't get a chance to say much, Bernir."

Bernir was to the side wiping some sweat from his brow. Roland could see him flinch a bit as the people that broke his leg stormed out in haste. He wasn't even able to testify as the surprise witnesses took care of that for him.

"Aye, I just want to go back to the workshop and drink some wine, hope they get sent to the mines."

Bernir laughed weakly. Sending people to mine underground was a popular punishment for criminals. People like that would be mostly branded as criminal slaves and used for hard labor.

In this world, there were no large prisons where the prisoners just stayed in without working like in Roland's previous world. Everyone was forced to work for their food and if they didn't then death was the only way out.

"You might want to hold that thought, this isn't over yet."

Roland commented while looking at the one person that was sitting at the other table. Armand started out looking angry but now he just looked bored. The young man had even dozed off during the questioning of the previous witnesses as if it didn't concern him.

After a few minutes, another member from the guild popped his head through the door.

"We got them, guild master."

"Ha ha, good. Keep them locked up till the guards arrive, then they will be their problem."

It seemed that the guild master was finding these scenes quite amusing. Roland already noticed that this man acted quite relaxed and as if he didn't take many things all too seriously. If this was a good or bad thing he wasn't quite sure.

"So are we done here?"

The man with the scars asked while standing up.

"What about little Armand there?"

The old woman next to him commented while causing Armand to look at her with a frown.

"What about him? We got the ones responsible, everyone can agree that it was just a misunderstanding between the adventurers. They can just shake on it like men!"

Roland remained seated while he listened. Half of his requirements had been fulfilled by the apprehension of the band of thugs. They were even going to go to jail but if they got prosecuted and sentenced would remain to be seen.

"Shake on it?"

Roland finally raised his voice while the guild members looked at him.

“Why would you allow someone like that to still work here?”

He said while pointing to the man he was accusing.

“Someone like that?”

Armand called out from the side while looking at Roland with scorn, it was clear that he had not learned his lesson yet.

“How would you wish to resolve this issue then young man?”

The one that asked was the old mage-looking lady.

“I’m not sure how the guild conducts itself but... I think someone that can’t think before acting is unfit to be an instructor. He makes the whole guild look bad.”

Roland’s main issue with Armand was that he was a blockhead that only wanted to solve his problems with fists. It would be fine if he was a regular adventurer but he was part of a larger unit. He made the whole guild seem like a band of thugs not much better than the people that they just sentenced.

“Hear that, you are making us look bad.”

The guild master gave out a chuckle while looking at the angered Armand.

“See, even now that idiot wants nothing more than to attack me... again, just like he did before without thinking. Do you really want someone like that around?”

The issue with Armand attacking him after he cleared out Dread End was already known. Now he only needed to convince these people to see it his way. The best way to do this in his eyes was to make them feel like he made their organization look bad. People could start going to other businesses to sell their monster parts if the guild started being known for their unreasonable practices.

“I had enough of this nonsense, just have the two fight and clear this out as men!”

The man with the scars proposed while most of the people that were sitting with him sighted.

“That’s why they think we are all muscle brains...”

The old woman commented while shaking her head.

“Yes, let us fight!”

Armand looked pumped for this option though why Roland wasn’t sure. He had already shown that he was more than able to beat this man in a one-on-one fight.

“Haven’t you already lost to him twice? Sit down, you idiot.”

The guild master commented while slamming his hand on the table which caused the other people to quiet down.

“That’s only because of that armor.”

“Be quiet idiot. Hey you there, kid.”

The guild master called out to Roland while shouting at Armand.

“Did you make that armor yourself?”

He asked while Roland just nodded, not like he was hiding that he was a runesmith at this point in time.

“Interesting, hey doesn’t the guild lack runesmiths? Why don’t we sign a contract with this kid?”

“Contract?”

Roland’s eyes narrowed, not sure what this man was trying to do.

“We’ll lower the rates of what the auction house is giving you!”

“Better the rates?”

Roland had to take a moment to think, getting more money was always nice. The auction house was kind of scalping the prices as there was no one going up against them. The guild was an entity that could compete with them and some did expand to have their own stores that sold more than just healing potions.

“Shouldn’t we end this hearing first... we don’t have all day...”

The old gnome called out from the side as they did not reach a verdict yet.

“Right, the vote! All for firing little Armand here raise their hands...”

[Chapter 104 A new business venture?](#)

Two hands were raised for and two against Armand being relieved of his position as an instructor. The ones that were against it was the man with the scars on his face which didn’t come as a surprise to Roland. The man was a similar type of person as Armand and he wanted to settle it with a fistfight instead.

The other person that was against it came as a surprise as the woman with the glasses that was a receptionist raised it. He could somewhat tell that she hesitantly raised that hand for some reason. Was this Armand guy blackmailing her or did they have some history?

The old lady and gnome that were clearly people that worked more with their brains were for it though. It all came down to the guild master now, would he choose to fire Armand or would he keep him here. The impression Roland had through the interactions here was that they two were close.

It was as if the guild master was an older brother that liked to make fun of their younger sibling. He would constantly laugh at his anger outbreaks while pointing his finger but not like Roland could do much about it. The real perpetrators were banned from the guild so this was already a win for him.

“Two against two? Maybe little Elodia shouldn’t have been assigned to this hearing...”

The man commented while rubbing his chin, his bald head shining in the room light. This comment only strengthened Roland in his beliefs that the woman was involved with Armand in one way or another. The woman in question just turned her face to the side while evading the gaze of the other people in the room.

“You put this old man in a tough position.”

He shrugged a bit while standing up, after a few steps he was in front of Armand that continued to be in a foul mood. The large bald man from the goliath race smiled brightly while the recipient looked even more dejected.

“Don’t worry Armand, you can keep your adventurer card.”

‘Here it comes...’

Roland wanted to give out a sigh as it seemed that this rowdy adventurer would be getting out of this without losing his position.

“I knew I could count on you old man!”

Armand rejoiced and wanted to stand up while grinning in Roland’s direction. Before he could go through with that a large hand was placed on his shoulder and kept him in place.

“I’m not finished yet, brat.”

The man’s voice got colder and the aura around him also changed.

“You can keep it, but it will need to be updated as your position as an instructor will become vacant.”

“Old man, what are you...”

“It seems like I’ve been too lax on you. Ever since you got here you have been picking fights with everyone that was up for it. Then when someone comes along that can contend with you, you do nothing but complaint like a little brat!”

Soon Roland could see the guild master grabbing Armand’s other shoulder and slowly lifting him up into the air. With both, his mitt-sized palms clenching together even Armand with his large frame looked like a small child in comparison.

“I gave you too much freedom! And what do you do with it? Attack a Runesmith in my city? Do you want our guild to go bankrupt or something?”

The conversations soon shifted into something that Roland didn’t expect. It started to sound like the guild master was more concerned about offending a Runesmith than about what Armand was actually doing.

“He is a human Runesmith of all things! Do you know how rare those are? Do you realize how hard it is to find a Runesmith that isn’t forced into the dwarven union? Huh? Do you?”

‘Dwarven Union?’

Roland knew this name, it was a huge behemoth of united dwarven companies. At one point all of the dwarven craftsmen gathered under a large banner to hike up the prices of the magical items.

They were the gatekeepers of 80% of all the magical weapons, armor, and items. Their race had a natural knack for smithing and creating, which also caused them to have the most Runesmiths from everyone.

Being a Runesmith and a Dwarven Runesmith was also seen differently. The race of craftsmen had a long history and shared secrets among each other. They were seen as superior item makers. When people had a choice between a human or a dwarf they would always go with the latter for blacksmithing.

“S-stop shaking me around o-old man!”

The guild master continued to berate Armand while finally letting him down to the ground. He then turned over to Elodia while maintaining the menacing look.

“Go file the paperwork and don’t think I don’t know what you were trying to do here. Next time something like this happens you will also be out of a job.”

The woman with glasses went pale in the face while bowing before the guild master.

“My apologies, I’ll go get it done swiftly.”

The other guild members that were here remained silent and soon started to stand up. Armand was a bit stunned by the decision and it looked like he wanted to say something. One stare from the large man that owned this place was enough to make him not to.

“Okay, everyone get back to work, this hearing is now over!”

Armand managed to stand up from the ground and it looked like he wanted to contest this decision. Before he could do that Elodia approached him started to yank him out of the room. In time Armand dropped his shoulders in defeat and followed along, the look of defeat plastered on his face.

The two didn’t look all that happy about this resolution but the guild master word was the rule. They soon left probably to carry out the orders. Armand would be keeping his adventurer card but he would lose his position. He was still a promising silver rank adventurer so this wasn’t the end of the world for him.

There were many ways to make money even without those bonuses he received by being an instructor. For Roland this was enough of a punishment, he didn’t want to push his luck with this guild master that was now showing some interest in him.

At his word, the people started to stand up. Bernir that was next to Roland remained quite quiet during this whole predicament. The half-dwarf looked a bit pale, probably a bit affected by the guild master’s killing aura.

“Everyone but you kid that is.”

“Huh?”

Roland was about to call it a day but was held back by a rather large hand. He considered himself to be tall but this guild master made him look like a ten-year-old.

“Me? Is there something else?”

He looked up at the man, the baldy before him was back to being all smiles. This person was quite fast to change his mood. It was better not to get on his bad side though, otherwise you could be shaken around violently like Armand.

“Yes human Runesmith, we need to talk about money.”

Roland wanted to refuse at first but after thinking it through he just nodded. This was the guild master he was talking with. There was a certain degree of respect that he was required to show here.

Otherwise, he could be very well removed from the guild as well. Besides that, he was also interested in what this man was offering. It seemed that he wanted to strike a deal with him, probably to craft weapons for the guild while abandoning the auction house.

“About money?, not that many guilds offer runic weapons or armor.”

“Exactly.”

The bald man nodded while the others slowly removed themselves from this room. Bernir remained next to Roland while not knowing what to do. He wasn't really an adventurer so he didn't feel like the guild master here could order him around. The only person he would actually listen to was his own boss.

“It's fine Bernir, just wait for me this shouldn't take long.”

Roland told Bernir to wait for him mostly as he wasn't sure if his assistant should be walking back home alone without protection. He looked a bit meek today and was probably stressed after seeing Dread End try to escape from their faith.

“Okay boss.”

“Just don't drink too much...”

Bernir turned around while trying not to show his facial expression.

“You make me sound like some kind of drunkard boss...”

Roland didn't reply to that as he just stared at his assistant's back. It seemed that the mention of alcohol had at least helped Bernir recover his humor.

“You done?”

“Yes.”

“Follow me, kid.”

The guild master smirked while finally getting out of the room that the hearing took place in. Outside he could see some blood and cracks in the walls. It looked like Dread End did meet a demise. The half-orc was nowhere to be seen, probably stuck guarding the five ruffians after beating them up.

The other people weren't there anymore either. Elodia was probably filing out some paperwork to get her younger brother removed from the guild roster.

Just as the guild master ordered he followed behind him. This was the first time he was this far back here so he took time to look at this guild. They went through a long corridor with various doors on the side. Some of them were labeled while others remained a mystery.

One room was used for monster part harvesting. Normally here they would just be allowed to deliver the parts to a side room while given a slip that proved what they left. A person could just leave a whole monster carcass and be given the regular market rate for it.

They could also decide to wait, the guild would then sell off the parts, and depending on the quality they could get more gold. This way mostly brought in more money but took a lot longer, most adventurers were fine with taking an average cut and using that gold instantly.

There was a large aversion to banks in this world, they mostly functioned with merchants and nobles while the adventurers liked to carry their winnings around with themselves.

On this level was where the guild instructors were stationed. Armand could have occupied one of these rooms. They were named instructors but they were required to do many other tasks which could range from training people to monster slaying.

Quite often they were hired by merchants or nobles to protect their kids that descended into the dungeon for the first time. While the young masters and misses were hunting monsters they would guard them against any unforeseen disasters.

This type of work was risky. If a noble child died during such a mission the instructor would be held accountable. They could then end up as a slave or even dead depending on how influential their noble parents were.

Besides that he also spotted some potion-making rooms, the guild apparently did hire some alchemists to produce potions cheap. Ordering them from stores always brought in lower margins for them.

This was probably also why the guild master was now interested in Roland. The guild offered some weapons but they were mostly overpriced and only there for when an adventurer had no other choices or lacked time to get a proper weapon from a reputable store.

After getting through this corridor they moved upstairs where the guild master's office was. On the way, he could see some other offices belonging to different high-ranking officials. There were positions like Vice-guild master or a guild treasurer and they were also here. Where he was going though was the office at the very end and with the biggest door.

"Take a seat kid."

The guild master pushed the door open with one hand and the two walked in. Roland took a second to look around this place and the first thing that he noticed was the giant black desk at the end of the room. Behind it was an equally large-sized armchair where the guild master sat down in. It was clear that these items were custom-made for this baldy as they were far too large for any regular human being.

While looking for a seat he also noticed the many monster heads hung up on the walls. They all looked to be evolved monsters or beasts, they were probably all hunted down by this man.

He spotted a couple of chairs to the side. It was a bit strange how they varied by size but it all made sense all things considered. Races here all varied in height so having chairs to fit them all was actually a good idea. He grabbed the one that was human-sized and placed it in front of the desk where the bald man was sitting.

“So what would you like to discuss, guild master?”

“Let’s get right to the point then, I want you kid?”

“You want me?”

Roland flinched a bit at this reveal. He also noticed that the bald guild master was looking at him with passionate eyes which brought him to one conclusion.

“Sorry but I don’t swing that way...”

Could this be why this muscle monster was hesitant to remove Armand from the guild faster? The guy was a handsome young man, what if this guy just liked to keep those types around!

“Hey, stop looking at me like that and stop backing away you stupid brat!”

The man slammed his hand on the giant desk which shook around but somehow remained intact. It was clearly made from a superior wooden material that could take these tier 3 hits.

“I want you to work for the guild and only for the guild!”

Roland gave out a sigh of relief as he didn’t think that he could win a one-on-one fight with this man. At most he could spray some icicles in his face and make a run for it.

“Why would you want to hire an unknown Runesmith? Even one that is a human.”

Craftsmen that weren’t dwarves were seen as slightly worse in a general sense. Their racial traits were just fashioned to work with molten metal and hammers. They also had a vast history and many hidden techniques that were not shared with any other races.

“That’s why I want to hire you, you are unbound by them, a blank slate!”

While they were talking Roland noticed a strange shift in the mana around the guild master’s desk. Almost instantly after this strange feeling, a person barged in through the door with something in her hand.

“I brought it, guild master!”

The one bursting in through the door was the elven receptionist that he usually visited. The item that she was holding was wrapped up in cloth and was placed on the guild master’s desk.

Roland could somewhat tell what was in this cloth by the general shape. The guild master didn’t wait long before pulling this cloth to the side and revealing the weapon inside.

“This is...”

“Yes, it’s one of yours.”

What they were looking at was a longsword that Roland had made about a month ago. It was created from deep steel and had a mana stone in the hilt along with two runic enchantments.

“The craftsmanship of the sword is only adequate...”

Roland took a critical hit to his pride instantly. He knew that he wasn't the best blacksmith and most of his weapons came out at an intermediate grade.

"But that isn't important, these runes on the other hand are perfect! You have a talent for rune smithing!"

His runes were a notch above the rest. Most new runesmiths that just started out would have a hard time inscribing a basic rune at the intermediate level. He on the other hand only produced the high and highest ones.

One part of this was that he could improve on every schematic thanks to his skill. The other was his work ethic that brought him this far. Then another was the talent for mana which aided in the creation of these runes.

Most dwarven runesmiths had a fatal weakness. Their race was not the best with mana as they were mostly given warrior and crafting professions. Their magicians were inferior in some ways to humans and elves thus a lot of them chose to go with rune smithing or enchanting instead.

"Thank you but, what are you offering me here?"

Roland was not keen on working for anyone besides himself at this point. This didn't mean that he could not be swayed into a sort of partnership. This all depended on what he would get from this exchange. If it was just a small contract to limit himself to the guild with sales then he would probably refuse.

The rates in the auction were not that good but the bidding wars that sometimes transpired there made up for it. The prices were sometimes hiked up to twice or more of what the item was worth.

"I see that you aren't convinced, well let us talk business then!"

Roland recalled the old gnome that he had a similar conversation before. He wasn't really that interested in this offer but there was no problem in hearing this guild master out. Maybe the deal would be better than anticipated and having the guild master on your side was always a good thing.