

## Runesmith 117

### [Chapter 117 Gaining knowledge.](#)

“Bored... I’m bored!”

Lobelia called out while looking at a piece of grilled meat in her hand.

“It’s stuffy, hot... I’m all sweaty and there isn’t anything to do... we’ve been sitting here for four days already!”

“Stop complaining, this isn’t that bad.”

Armand was sitting next to her just chomping on a similar piece of meat which was much bigger. Both of them were sitting outside the camp area without much to do. A bit over four days had passed since they set foot in the middle regions of this dungeon.

This region was different from then the upper levels of the maze dungeon. It was a gigantic area that wasn’t fully mapped even after a year had passed. It was also filled with tier 2 monsters which already brought in some good coin.

Most adventurers like to keep it safe and didn’t push in that deep. Though the biggest reason for the slow mapping out of this level was the smoldering biome. The further a party went in, the hotter it became. Lava-filled dungeons like this were historically hard to progress in, a party without a frost mage or magical items that controlled heat, had no way of progressing.

“We get to sit around and do nothing, This is the best possible job we could get!”

Armand gulped down a large piece of meat that came from a salamander they had hunted. Surprisingly this monster was very sought after for its meat and leather. It could be eaten without much preparation as the hard part of this monster were its scales. After getting through them the juicy insides could be devoured.

“I know that it’s easy money... but there is nothing to do...”

Armand rolled his eyes while looking at the encampment of the knights. The group had been slowly advancing further into the dungeon while returning here with their loot. He had no idea what their purpose was here but not like he cared. They had just returned from a small expedition an hour ago so there was some movement now.

While lazily looking around he saw a certain armored man leaving one of the tents. Roland had been noticed by him acting strangely and now for some reason, he was constantly visiting the noble camp.

“Heading out to your little noble lover Wayland?”

“Huh?”

Lobelia had noticed him leaving each day to go to that camp as well. This would be his third time heading there.

“You can’t fool my elven eyes, I see you going into that cave where they are keeping the two mage ladies, didn’t know you were such a charmer, Wayland!”

She started shaking her hips provocatively while describing the situation. Soon Armand joined in on the questioning as he did not pay that much attention.

“He is? The blue-haired one or the blond?”

“It’s the blue one.”

Lobelia replied while Armand rubbed his chin for a moment before looking back to Roland with a dumbfounded look on his face.

“Woah, good choice... she might not look like it, but she can’t fool my eye.”

“Huh what do you mean?”

Lobelia turned to Armand as she wasn’t sure what he meant by that comment.

“Hah, not like a pancake as you would even understand.”

“Hey, what did you say!?”

Roland looked at the two idiots fighting. Lobelia was quick to jump on Armand after the comment and started hitting him with her small fists. He was a large man so he just covered his head while laughing.

‘Those two sure get along... but I feel like I’m losing intelligence points the more I listen to their conversations...’

After a few days had passed not much seemed to be happening. The knights were periodically patrolling the area around their encampment. They faced off against the monsters that were living here, mostly the volcanic salamanders and Wolf types that were similar to Agni.

There was also a monster called ‘Fire Fly’ that liked to spit lava at its enemies and was the size of a domesticated cat. It was hard to defeat with only knights and mages in the party but some of the knights like Robert did have some lesser archery skills that could be used on this occasion. He wondered if the teacher that came with them would lower their score for not bringing any archers to this expedition but it might have been a requirement to only use knights.

“Agni stay here.”

Roland leaned down to his Ruby Wolf companion that gave out a whine and started to look at him with those puppy dog eyes.

“I don’t trust those knights, they might confuse you with one of the monsters living here.”

Agni after his first evolution had gained a lot of intelligence. Roland felt that explaining the situation to him would actually bear some fruit.

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“Agni!”

But before he could convince his wolf to stay without giving an order he was tackled from the side by an overzealous half-elf.

“Who is a good boy!”

The girl started rubbing the Ruby wolf’s belly and his hind leg began to twitch. Soon he flopped his tongue out and was in bliss. It looked like Lobelia had grown fond of his tamed monster and with nothing else to do she bombarded poor Agni with pets and scratches.

“Don’t worry Wayland, I’ll keep him busy!”

He just nodded while turning to the camp of the nobles. One of the knights greeted him along the way without doing anything to stop him from entering. He had made a small deal with the blue-haired woman. For money and access to the runic books she had, he would help her with some runic research.

Roland was previously unaware of this but mages could somewhat affect the runic structures themselves. Not by changing them with runecraft but they could empower their effects with their own mana and even convert some simple runic spells to more complex ones on the fly with their own magic.

These runic mages were somewhat able to affect the magic language that was embedded into the runic structure. They were unable to affect the outside of these runes, this was all dependent on the runesmith.

This mage type was not that sought after due to this limiting factor. They relied on runic weapons without being able to actually alter the ‘hardware’ part of the runic structure. If anyone wanted to maximize that class they would have to get a Runesmithing class as well.

However, mages and craftsmen weren’t that similar in that regard. Hammering hard metal into shape and working in a smithy wasn’t something that magical types liked to do. Thus it was a very rarely seen profession.

Roland was now aware of this class, it was also a tier 2 profession. He wasn’t sure if he could even acquire it due to the lack of elemental proficiencies. He could not ask Lady Lucille about it as him not having any elemental affinities would be a dead giveaway to his true identity.

If it was a worthwhile class was also up to debate. He could already affect the runic code with his Runsmith Lord class. It might have not added anything new and the skills could very well overlap with one another. The only thing he would be getting from it would be the mage-focused stats if he went with it after his current class was maxed out.

“You may enter...”

Roland was greeted by a new knight this time around. Luckily his brother Robert wasn’t this lady’s exclusive knight. Her bodyguards switched out from time to time depending on who was on guard duty.

“Sir Wayland, I’ve been waiting for you, have you read through the research material? Do you need more time?”

Inside of the cave that the two girls were living in had changed a bit. There were some curtains made from some flame-resistant materials hung up all over the place. It separated each of the girl’s sections, further in the back there was even a toilet and a hot tub. It didn’t look like these two were in any kind of danger, it was like a vacation.

“Yes, I’ve read through them, it was very insightful.”

Thanks to this girl he was getting hidden resources that no one besides nobility could get their hands on. This blue-haired girl was really interested in runic magic and even had some proper skills related to them.

He was unsure if she was trying to become a runic mage though. From his perspective, it would be a bad idea. The girl was already a frost mage which was more of a traditional caster. If there was something like a Tier 3 Runic Frost Mage class was unknown, even if there was would it be better than all the other tier 3 classes that didn't need runic weapons?

"Really? So today we can discuss the lecture about ... "

Roland wanted to ask if the girl was really serious about this but he was not that nosy. She was already a proper adult and had to make the choices herself. If she really liked runic structures this much she might actually be the right person to go for a runic mage profession.

For a couple of hours a day, he would explain the runic schematics to her and how they worked. At first, there was a slight barrier between the two. He was self-taught so he had no idea how proper mages were taught. Thanks to this encounter his eyes were also opened to the world of magic.

He was given runic spell books and gained even a lot of experience by creating improved schematics of some of the runes from the books. Money and runes were given to him, this expedition already bore fruit. Even if they returned now and he didn't get those manufacturing secrets he would be able to progress with his golem design.

Just like that, a week had passed with not much happening. The knights continued to slay monsters left and right and the corpses kept piling up. Soon it was time to move out as the first part of the expedition was complete.

With the order given they all marched out. This time Roland's party was back to scouting out from the front while others followed after. Silvio was quite good at detecting any danger which then was eliminated by either some arrows or runic spells.

The fire-type monsters were just too susceptible to the cold effects. However the further they ventured in, the warmer it became. With this, the ice magic started to falter under the heatwave that were the many lava pools.

"Wait... we have arrived at the molten lake..."

Silvio looked at the map that the adventurer guild prepared for them. This section was quite far into the lava dungeon. In front of them was a large section with molten rock. It made it look like a giant lake that went on for a kilometer.

In the middle of it was a sort of bridge that would periodically get flooded by this lava. Luckily for them, they had gathered the information beforehand. One unlucky party of adventurers fell to this trap. The lava would flood at certain times and engulf anyone foolish to walk through the bridge.

"We need to get the timing right or we will all die here..."

Silvio commented while Roland nodded.

"Are you sure those lordlings will pass through it fast enough?"

Armand chimed in from the side while throwing a rock into the lava lake. He as some of the party members were a bit unconvinced about these knights. They were quite slow and this section required a faster pace.

“It should be fine... that’s not something we should be concerned about...”

Silvio looked at the sinking stone that Armand threw into the large pool of lava. It was quickly engulfed by it as it sank down. He used one of his detection skills while looking further than anyone from this party could see.

“There are a few of them... get ready for a fight while we go across...”

“A lot of what? I don’t see anything.”

Armand called out while looking at the empty lake of lava. He could see anything besides bubbles of magma bursting, no monster in sight.

“There should be some monsters in the lake...”

Roland stepped forward, in his hand was a ball of metal. He injected his mana into it and a strange holographic landscape appeared before them.

“Huh, what’s that?”

The party member’s eyes widened after seeing the green light that this ball of metal was producing. This was an improved version of his previous mapping system. Now with some more knowledge about the inner workings of runes this could be called a map.

“It’s a map... see those red dots, those are monsters...”

The explanation was quite short but Silvio who was versed in tracking didn’t take long to figure this map out. This map was showing a lot of red dots below the surface of this lake. There were monsters, lurking to jump out at the chance of people crossing to the other side.

“Lot red!”

Korgak proclaimed while poking the light that was produced from this runic sphere. The moment the large digit poked one of the red lights it was dispersed. This product was something that Roland wanted to introduce to the Guild Master after the expedition so he wasn’t worried about showing it off to the others.

It could even be used as free if the group found use in it and told their adventurer friends. By this point, he had already decided on partnering up with the adventurer guild. Everyone also knew that he was a runesmith so there was no reason to hide his wares anymore. The more people saw them in action, the more he could sell later.

“Quite a bit of them there... but we should be fine if we cross the bridge in time... if not we could take the other path...”

Silvio mumbled to himself while Roland also inspected the area. He had been here before but he had not ventured in further than this spot. From the previous adventurer teams that had gone past this point, they had gained some information.

They reported that there was just enough time to get past to the other side while running at a moderate pace. Roland examined the distance a bit beforehand and also thought that if they bolted it they would be safe before the whole thing was flooded.

Even if the monsters appeared, they just needed to move forward to the other side without looking back. It seemed like an easy task of moving forward, that is if they didn't have certain two people that liked to slow down the others.

"Right there was another path..."

He said while turning to Silvio.

"Yes, we could travel further west. It will take half a day but there is another way. It's longer, the danger level is about the same but we wouldn't need to move fast."

There it was, two options and the decision would be left to the noble leader Lord Percival. Though without even asking Roland had an idea of which path he would choose. Silvio went away to make a report while the rest of the party waited.

Armand and Korgak just stood there while yawning, Sister Kassia was right next to him and his large magical rod that gave out chilling air. Lobelia just continued to ruffle up Agni's fur, the poor ruby wolf's leg was in continuous motion.

At this area, the heat started to become quite uncomfortable and it would only get worse the further they traveled. Luckily for him, the armor he was wearing had a constant chilling effect.

He had made some armbands which everyone from this party was wearing that had a similar effect. They were all made from deep steel and could cover the body of the person wearing them in a thin layer of chilled energy.

This wasn't an item that most of this group could use for a prolonged time due to the mana drain but it could be used to periodically cool them down, or even save their lives if they found themselves against too much heat.

"So, where are we going?"

Silvio returned with a slightly annoyed look on his face and Roland's hunch was confirmed.

"We'll be taking the side path, the lordling doesn't think that it would be proper to expose these noble ladies to danger."

"Hah, why are they even here then, to have a picnic?"

Armand asked while also groaning.

"Has anyone from you visited that path?"

Silvio asked as he was still a first-timer in this dungeon and quite a bit of work was shoved on Lobelia that knew the layout.

“Not really, we always went through here.”

This time around she just shrugged as most people didn't bother with taking the long route as there wasn't anything profitable there. They also just ended up back at this lake but on the other side instead.

“Great... okay, let us head out.”

They moved forward, only when the nobles took a break and set up a new encampment would they be allowed to rest with them. For now, they needed to act as scouts and pave the road for their employees.

### [Chapter 118 On a cliff.](#)

“This is supposed to be the safer path?”

A certain half-elven girl kicked a small rock down into a deep chasm. She leaned over to look down but even after some time passed she couldn't hear the stone hitting anything.

“Just don't fall down...”

Silvio replied while looking out into the distance. Roland was also there looking at this mapping device, this time around there weren't any monsters here. The path looked clear but the fall down below would probably be a death sentence.

‘The path looks clear...’

Roland didn't see anything out of the ordinary in this place. They journeyed half a day to the west and finally, the large lava lake ended. The molten rocks at the end were pouring into a large chasm that at one side had a long winding path through it. They only needed to cross it to get to the other side and that would be it.

On the way here they had to battle through quite a bit of tier 2 monsters, their levels mostly between fifty and sixty. Even he managed to level up and finally reached the 80th level. Thanks to the book of runes he had managed to use his old cheat to gain levels faster. Even with that, his progress had slowed down, if he wanted to hasten it he would actually need to fight monsters closer to his own level.

Name :

Roland Arden L 80

Classes:

T2 Runesmith Lord L5 [ Primary ]

T1 Mage L25 [ Secondary ]

T1 Runic Mana Scribe L 25 [ X ]

T1 Runic Blacksmith L 25 [ Tertiary ]

HP

2696/2696

MP

7641/7641

SP

3636/3636

Strength

71

Agility

50

Dexterity

100

Vitality

72

Endurance

81

Intelligence

131

Willpower

120

Charisma

17

Luck

10

He took a glance at his status screen and now was convinced that it was the right choice to get this class. He mostly gained 2 points in each stat with agility lagging slightly behind the others.

Roland had a choice to make, the tier 2 class change requirements were a bit different as he could push this class all the way up to level 50 instead of 25. Yet, he could switch to another class after 25 levels were gained in it. This left him with the option of getting more classes on the way to tier 3.



The minimum level limit of a tier 3 class was 150, which left him with 25 levels of another class after he was done with the Runesmith Lord class. He felt like going to the very end with this class would be the best option. It could be a requirement for acquiring a similar strong job for his tier 3 life.

This was something to think about but not something he needed to worry about much yet. His progress would slow down exponentially now. Unless he battled through hordes of high level tier 2 monsters or gained massive amounts of runic diagrams to copy over, he would remain a tier 2 class holder for many years to come.

“I hope the noble ladies don’t slip and fall, I bet those knights would blame us for it.”

Armand chuckled with his arms crossed over one another. He was looking behind them at the group of nobles that he had no respect for. Even now they were slowly moving here, their sluggish pace had now become annoying to him as well.

‘If this continues, we will be stuck here for over a month...’

Roland gave out a sigh while remembering the plan of the expedition. After going through this passage they would arrive at another wider area. There they would make camp for another week and the knights would sharpen their blades on larger monsters.

The secondary encampment would last for a longer period of time than the first one. That one would be closer to nests of monsters and beasts, which would be the main test for these young nobles and knights.

Their group on the other hand would be quite bored and just on constant guard duty. Silvio as the best monster detector would have to stay awake for prolonged amounts of time.

“At least, it’s easy on us, we don’t need to rush much.”

Lobelia commented while leaning back against the rocky walls. This area of the dungeon was quite spacious, the place could even be mistaken for a smaller mountain range that went mostly downward.

“They caught up with us, let us move on.”

Roland nodded and they started walking. The path was wide enough to allow two people to walk side by side. Even with that everyone decided to keep to the walls, if someone slipped and fell it would be over for them.

From what Roland knew some adventurers did try to climb down from here. there were even some attachments that had some thick ropes on them. This never bore fruit as the party abandoned the descent. The further down they got the windier it became, this was no summer breeze as the heated air didn’t allow anyone to get past a certain point.

They walked and walked, then walked some more. The path stretched for a lot longer than most expected. They were still underground but this dungeon seemed like it was a world of its own.

Roland started wondering about how these dungeons were created. Did this thing expand for many years below ground and finally connect to the outside a year ago. Maybe it was just created by the dungeon core in a burst of magic energy that filled out this large cavern that was here before.

Some smart people even theorized that dungeons were just portals into another world that somehow existed on this plane of existence. This would somehow explain why the living monsters could never leave the dungeon unless their bodies died.

“What is this...”

Silvio suddenly jumped forward and increased his pace. The rest of the party didn't comment and just followed after the experienced adventurer.

“What the hell?”

Armand grumbled after seeing something that would just stall this expedition even further.

“Blocked?”

When Roland finally arrived he could see the path blocked by rocks. It seemed that part of this underground mountain range had slid down and was blocking the path. This made Roland think back to the barricade those bandits built that one time. Luckily there was no place for a bandit ambush as the path they were on connected directly to the ceiling above them.

“Why did you stop?”

They were moving slowly with everyone else behind them. The knights caught up to them quite fast and Percival had moved to the forefront to see what the problem was.

“There must have been a landslide, it's blocking the path.”

There wasn't much space here but both the Knight commander and the mages came over to take a peek.

“Lord Percival, let me. With my earth magic I'll move these rocks in a matter of moments!”

The blond girl looked pumped up, she was the earth specialist here and would finally have a moment to shine.

“Wait, if you use magic the path under us could give up...”

Silvio interjected rather quickly. It was a good idea which would probably hasten their progress. It was also very risky as the earth mage was limited in creating earth out of thin air. Certain spells could create earth like bullets but they required a lot of mana.

In this situation the girl would be shifting the existing earth to push the rocks out of the way. This could affect the foundation of this pathway which in effect could cause them to fall down to their doom.

“Yes, Adventurer is right Lady Charlene, it could cause another rockslide.”

Lucille the frost mage backed up Silvio's proposition. The old man nodded his head as a thank you to the young lady while the blond fumed a bit in disappointment.

“Very well, we will move the rocks out by hand then...”

“Huh... why are you looking at me?”

Armand was leaning up against the wall while Silvio and Percival looked at him.

“Armand, there isn’t enough space for the knights to go through, Korgak will help you.”

Korgak and Armand had the highest physical stats from the whole party here, the knights didn’t compare to them either. There was just enough space for the two and they could just throw the boulders down into the chasm below.

“Ah here take this.”

Silvio handed Armand a pickaxe that they had brought along the trip. The porter that was with them had a large variety of tools including shovels. They were bought for just this sort of occasion.

“I’m getting paid extra for this, don’t you forget it”

Armand looked dejected at the fact that he would need to do this sort of work. Korgak on the other hand didn’t seem to care as he started to pick up the rocks with his bare hands and toss them down into the hole below. He even started smiling at the large boulders that he threw.

“This is going to take a while...”

“Yes...”

Roland answered while both him, Lobelia and the nun went back to give the two muscle men space. He was still holding onto the large magical rod which continued to exude cold energy. One person in particular saw this magical item that he previously didn’t show off that much to her.

“Sir Wayland, what type of ice magic is that?”

“Ah... This is ...”

He had talked with this girl about runes for some days now but this didn’t mean that he wanted to disclose all of his secrets. This rod was a spell structure that he himself created and also had its own operating system that no one besides him or a runic mage would be able to activate correctly.

“It’s just an altered chilling rune with a couple of other modifications...”

Where the blue-haired frost mage was, there was always Robert. Even when he was on guard duty Roland could see his brother glancing at where this young woman was. It didn’t take a genius to put two and two together, there was clearly something going in between these two. By how the girl sometimes looked to Robert it also seemed mutual.

This was not really something that he cared about. The love life of his brother or any other person didn’t matter one bit. The problem was that he was getting paid by this woman and also given runic research that he could not easily turn down.

Due to this, he found it hard to be around her. Robert was constantly looking over his shoulder and was highly overprotective. Roland on the other hand acted suspiciously and never took his helmet down. He explained it by telling the two that he had a breathing condition and could not remove the helmet due to it.

The lie seemed to have worked but he feared that his brother would somehow find things out. He needed to get that research though and as fast as he could.

“We are almost through...”

Armand whipped the sweat from his eyebrow while tossing a large boulder to the side. Thanks to his enhanced stats he didn't really feel that tired and even the larger boulders weren't that much of a problem. Soon the other side could be seen and the path ahead of them looked clear.

But then as everyone was chatting away, used to the lack of monsters Silvio felt something. The tier 3 adventurer's detection skills kicked in as he could feel something moving.

“Wait... hurry up, we need to leave!”

He rushed over to Percival to tell him something while Roland started at the adverse reaction. It seemed that they were in trouble but there wasn't anything out of the ordinary here. There were no screaming monsters or any movement for now. Thus to be sure he took out his own detection device to see if there were any enemies around.

After the initial look, he didn't see any red dots anywhere. Silvio continued to explain that they needed to hurry up though which he took very seriously.

“Agni, stay close to me...”

“Woof!”

The ruby wolf raised his nose up into the air while sniffing but even he didn't see a problem anywhere, which caused him to just look at Roland with a vacant expression. It didn't seem that his canine companion could detect any danger yet.

Then out of the corner of his eye, he spotted a red dot, then another one appeared followed by many more. The dots just started increasing till there were hard to count.

“What is this... but this is coming from...”

He looked to the large rocky wall that connected to the ceiling above. The red dots were coming from this wall, were there monsters behind it? Could this wall be hollow?

‘No...it must be those... we need to move..’

The path wasn't fully opened up but they needed to move forward. There was a little problem here, the group of nobles was not listening to Silvio's warnings. This blunder would cost them as finally, a rumbling sound came from within these very walls.

“What is that...”

If it was only Roland's party then they would have been fine but with so many knights behind them, it would be troublesome. Roland moved his hand into his pouch and took out some card-sized scrolls and quickly ran towards the half-cleared path.

“Huh, what are you doing?”

Armand asked while being shoved to the side by Roland.

“We don’t have time, get back, I’m going to blow it away.”

“What? Are you crazy?”

Armand protested but Silvio somehow appeared right between the two men.

“Do as he says, we need to get off this passage.”

Armand pulled away and nodded, he looked behind him and could see that the nobles were a bit in disarray. Percival did not give the order of blowing it up but not like they had to listen to the knight commander if their life was at stake.

“Get behind me, everyone.”

Roland shouted while also taking out the large kite shield that he wore on his back. It was covered in runes and on the inside was a vast array of mana stones. After placing the runic explosives that were just plain old runic scrolls he jumped back and raised his shield.

He injected mana into the structure and the shield lit up. A barrier made of blue energy pushed itself out from this shield and covered most of the area in front of Roland while the people behind him covered up. Before Percival could shout the runic scrolls detonated causing a flash of fire.

“What are you doing!”

Percival shouted while covering himself up with his own shield. After the smoke had cleared a passage wide enough for at least one person was blown through and the road ahead was open.

The knight commander was not happy about getting ignored. He was about to give a piece of mind to this party of adventurers that were ignoring his orders. Before he could do that a strange rattling sound was heard by him, which caused his gaze to wander towards the chasm below.

“What is that...”

A strange worm-like creature was spotted by him and the other knights. It just appeared out of the wall and flew down into the chasm while gnashing its teeth. Soon enough more of these strange creatures started to appear and they were burrowing through the walls.

“Volcanic Worms, we must flee, they can tunnel through hard rocks...”

These monsters started to appear from below them but soon enough one appeared out of the wall beside one of the knights. The creature had no eyes and wasn’t that large, no one here would have a problem killing one of these creatures but that wasn’t the problem.

There were just too many of them, it looked like an avalanche. Most of them appeared right below them while others from above. Many of these volcanic worms just fell down into the chasm but others made their way towards the party of people below. The moment they spotted other living beings they attacked.

The knights had never seen something like this before, so they started to panic. Percival shouted out orders and somehow managed to get them in line. They all pushed towards the opening with the adventurer party moving first.

On the other side, Silvio and Lobelia gave the knights range support. Roland also joined in by sending arrows made from ice towards the monsters. This didn't even put a dent in their numbers and they continued to burst through the rocky wall.

Luck was not something Roland was known for and this time around it would prove his weakness once again. He wouldn't be the only one though as at a certain point the large volcanic worms burst through the nearby rock.

Lucille the frost mage was the unlucky person hit by this pile of creatures which sent her tumbling down the chasm. Robert quickly followed suit, his attempt of saving the young woman was ineffective as he fell down right after.

Before he knew it, Roland was also feeling gravity pulling him down as a massive pile of rocks and monsters connected with him from the side.

'Why always me...'

That was what he thought before falling down the cliff along with his tamed beast that for some reason decided to jump right after him.