

Runesmith 129

[Chapter 129 Back home.](#)

“Woof!”

“You sure are excited, aren’t you boy?”

Agni wiggled his ruby-tipped tail while running in front of his master. They were on the path towards his house. He had taken it multiple times since he had come here and it was slowly taking shape.

Roland didn’t bother returning to Albrook city, for now, he needed to replace his armor before it totally fell apart. It was a miracle that he could keep his identity hidden away without his helmet falling off.

All the rattling brought quite a bit of attention and he knew that people were looking at him. Everyone was probably wondering why he didn’t take the armor off as they were already out of danger. Luckily the nobles didn’t say anything and his party members stopped prodding after a while.

After coming out of the dungeon the adventurers went their own way. Silvio informed him that he would make a report while they could take a break. They were to meet up at the guild the next day to get their cut. He also informed Roland that he would probably be asked about his little cliff accident.

Robert, Lucille along with Percival and Charlene headed to the city and the mayor’s house. His older brother didn’t get a chance to say goodbye as he was forced back into his old position by Percival.

The noble commander didn’t care for pleasantries and he also didn’t seem interested in having a chat with the adventurers. Roland didn’t really mind, he just wanted to get this expedition behind him.

The contract that he signed stated that after they left the dungeon, he was free to do what he wanted. He wouldn’t even need to do a proper report, he was not compelled to. Due to this, he planned to not disclose the boss chamber or what was beyond it.

Without getting a person that could feel out the runes and crack them, there was no way of entering the caverns. It was also in the middle of that lava lake which would be a hard obstacle to pass.

‘Not like I can get back there in this state, that monster will probably appear again... or maybe something even more dangerous.’

Roland gave out a sigh while thinking about the large cave with all those resources. He wanted nothing more than to just repair his armor and get back in there with Bernir. With a large enough spatial bag and some mining tools, he would become rich.

The problem was the boss monster along with the monsters guarding the boss chamber. He would need to get past them without much help. Bernir wasn’t really a fighter and the only thing he could use would be runic ammunition.

Even with the runic grenade launcher, he felt that Bernir would be more of a hindrance. That monster was intelligent enough to release an area of attack to trap Robert and Lucille. He would probably go for the weakest link which would force Roland to defend Bernir.

Regretfully he would need to postpone the mining expedition for another time. First, he needed to upgrade his armor and restock on his runic ammunition. He felt like waiting till he was at least at the 100th level wasn't such a bad idea.

This was fine as he would have things to keep himself busy. By having this mission end he would be getting those crafting secrets. The inferior build that required him to place mana stones on the exterior of his armor would not hold him back anymore.

During this dungeon run, it became clear that having mana stones attached to his wares would hold him back. Perhaps shields were the only items that could use the old crafting process as he could stack many mana stones on the inside of them.

'I'll have to make a new smelter and then try mixing some batches of metals... The etherium that I managed to take should be enough for one set of armor... should I make it from deep silver this time?'

Roland thought while now being almost at his home. He had a couple of bars of deep silver which he could melt, this was not quite enough for a full set of armor but he could just get more at the market.

This fantasy metal would allow him to keep the resistance of deep steel but would also give him a buff against demons and undead-type creatures. It was something that paladin classes liked to utilize as it helped in resisting curse-type spells.

"Mhh... wished I had a runic shovel..."

"Huh?"

His train of thought was broken after he heard Bernir's voice from afar. He was close to his home but not that close, this meant that Bernir was still in the forest area. The closer he got the more he heard the sound of digging.

"Woof!"

Agni ran forward and started acting more as a dog than a wolf as he barked at the half-dwarven assistant.

"What? Agni is that you? What are you doing here?"

The Ruby Wolf jumped on the red-haired Bernir and took him down to the ground. He started licking his face while wagging his tail. Roland peeked out from around a tree while moving forward, he grasped his damaged helmet and started pulling it off.

What he saw was his assistant digging up a large hole. Next to this hole were four sacks that were tied around the top. Even without asking he could tell what was in there, the flies that were circling around the dark dried blood made things clear.

"What are you doing Bernir?"

Roland called out while Bernir managed to finally push Agni away. Bernir had a confused look on his face and it seemed that he needed a few seconds to process this situation.

“Boss, you are back? Why are you back so soon? I thought you would be in the dungeon for at least another week?”

“That’s not the problem here... why are you burying bodies so close to my house...”

Roland pointed to the obvious remains in the tied sacks. This made Bernir look like some serial killer getting rid of the evidence. The grave was still shallow so it seemed that he just got here.

“Oh, these four chumps? Haha, you won’t believe me when I tell you!”

“Chumps, huh?”

Roland raised an eyebrow, it didn’t seem that Bernir was perturbed by the fact that he was digging a grave for four bodies. This made Roland think that their deaths were justified in some way or another, if not then maybe his assistant had a screw loose.

“Listen Boss!”

“I’m listening...”

“A few days ago, these four idiots tried to rob us blind!”

“Oh, did they?”

Roland listened to Bernir’s explanation about the home invasion that he wasn’t part of. Bernir gave him a very colorful tale of a heroic blacksmith that battled four thieves with his bare hands. It was a hard-fought battle that he somehow managed to win while shedding blood to protect the new home he lived in.

“You broke the last one’s neck with your hands alone, huh?”

“Yes Boss, he almost got me when I was tired but he didn’t account for a blacksmith’s strength!”

Roland just gave out a sigh while moving closer.

“This doesn’t explain why you are burying them in the woods...”

“Ah well... I went to the city to report it to the guards, they came over to check it out but...”

“But?”

“They didn’t care, the bastards told me to just bury the bodies myself! Why do we pay taxes if those leeches can’t even take care of thieves!”

It seemed that the guardsmen didn’t care for the dead robbers. They did take their adventurer cards which the thieves possessed. They were apparently all low leveled silver ranked adventurers.

“Hehe, I was sure that they would do that so don’t worry boss, I grabbed anything that was worth something before I called the guards!”

Bernir gave Roland a thumbs up while grinning. He would need to check up on those items but he didn’t expect anything besides some daggers and maybe silver coins.

“Couldn’t just leave them in the backyard, they were starting to reek...”

Bernir decided to bury these four in the forest and not too close to the house.

“That was the right decision...”

Roland nodded as this did make sense. Normally the guards would need to hire an undertaker to come get the bodies. This of course cost the city some good coin, which probably made them leave it up to Bernir. The death was not inside of the city so they didn't care as much.

“Glad that we can always trust in the guards to avoid work...”

Roland didn't know what to say so he just started walking towards his home.

“I'll leave you to it then, I need to get some rest...”

“Leave it to me boss, you can tell me about the expedition later but uhh...”

Bernir trailed off at the end of the sentence while also turning his face away from Roland.

“Something the matter?”

“Oh nothing... rest well, I'll just dig up this grave.”

“Okay then...”

Roland was too tired to prod his assistant for the strange behavior. Soon he would realize why Bernir was acting sheepish. The moment he opened up the door at his fence he saw it.

The whole backyard looked like a blast zone. There were small and large holes everywhere. The grass that he grew to make it look somewhat presentable was all burned up. This made Roland realize what really transpired during the home invasion and how all of the traps must have gone off.

There were also larger craters that probably came from the weapon that Bernir was handed. It was clear to him that his assistant exploded the attacker, this was probably why they were in tightly tied sacks. He could even see some patches of dried-up blood and chunks of human meat that were not properly cleaned out.

‘I need to come up with something better than mines...’

By some miracle the wind turbines were intact, some had some damage but they were in working condition. This could not be said for the wiring that was exposed to the elements. If Roland had gotten here back a week later then maybe Bernir would have enough time to clean this mess up.

“I'm home... “

Roland moved to his house, the building was standing with no visible damage. It seemed that Bernir was successful in defending it. The backyard could be repaired later, first he needed to sleep and get cleaned.

While going in he tossed the miraculously intact helmet to the side. When this helmet collided with the floor the visor flew off and slid to the side. Following this, he started undoing the straps from his chest plate, pauldrons, and all the rest. Some even snapped loose almost instantly, it was clear to him that this piece of equipment was not usable anymore.

This armor had been one of his first works as a proper runesmith. It served him well for many months but now it was time to retire it. The pieces of armor started littering the ground as Roland took them off.

He was tired but even then he was unwilling to just leave this on the floor. While grumbling he picked the parts all up and descended into his workshop.

The armor made it into the scrap box where he kept most of the pieces of metal that were cut up for later smelting. He did not have a replacement runic suit at the moment, at least not a full one. He had made some replacement gauntlets with which he could cast some spells but that was it.

After being free of his old suit he felt a lot lighter, it was time to take a bath. Before leaving though he spotted a finished armor on display. It was not one that he made nor did he remember buying one either.

'Did Bernir make it?'

He gave it a quick examination and could see that it was all at the intermediate level and made from deep steel.

'It looks like it will fit me...'

Without any spares, this new set of armor would do nicely for when he needed to report to the city. He could use the spare gauntlets that already had the runes and he also could take a spare helmet. Roland still had to watch out for Robert as his brother and the rest of the nobles were staying in town for another week.

He didn't need it to be combat-ready, just so that it would cover his face. Even though his brother seemed to have mellowed out with age, he wasn't sure how he would react if he knew Wayland the Runesmith was his lost younger brother.

'It's almost over... they will be gone from here in a week...'

While heading back up Roland thought about tomorrow. He needed to pay the adventurer's guild a visit. Silvio would be there to make the report but he needed to get what he was promised from the guild master.

With that in mind, he prepared his bath. Even though he looked to be doing okay from the outside, he was really tired. While being down in the tunnels he didn't get any sleep and even after getting out he was only able to take a small nap before they left.

Now while being submerged in his tub, he glanced at his status screen. His levels had gone up after killing all those monsters and that boss.

Name :

Roland Arden L 85

Classes:

T2 Runesmith Lord L10 [Primary]

T1 Mage L25 [Secondary]

T1 Runic Mana Scribe L 25 [X]

T1 Runic Blacksmith L 25 [Tertiary]

HP

3024/3024

MP

8141/8141

SP

2082/4082

Strength

81

Agility

58

Dexterity

110

Vitality

81

Endurance

90

Intelligence

142

Willpower

129

Charisma

17

Luck

10

Roland glanced at his Mana numbers as well as his stamina numbers. The more he looked at them the more he thought that the class that he received was a cheat. Even if Robert caught up in levels with him, he felt like he would be physically stronger than him even without the armor.

Roberts class gained strength, vitality, and endurance somewhat equally but even with that, it couldn't go against the Lord class two-time multiplier.

'I wonder if other people have this class variant...'

Roland closed his eyes and started thinking. He was probably not the only one with a class like this, there were probably also variations of this class at tier 3. What would be the multiplier then? Four or five?

Would he be able to also get a prestige class when the time came and would it force him into another troublesome trial? His thoughts started becoming hazy but then drifted towards a new skill that he had learned after attaining the 10th level of Runesmith Lord.

Basic Rune Overload

Skill

Allows the runesmith to boost the power of a runic spell temporarily. There is a chance of the rune breaking when this skill is used, the higher the runes grade the lesser the chance of the rune structure collapsing.

He didn't get to test it as he feared that his armor would get damaged too much. He already used his runic mending skill a couple of times and at the end, all of his runic gear fell to a level below intermediate.

'I'll test it out tomorrow...'

....

"Hey boss, are you here? I took care of the bodies but I'm sure you've seen the backyard, I didn't have time to..."

Bernir returned to the house after an hour of digging. His digging skill was quite high so he was able to finish up quite fast. He wanted to apologize for how he didn't have time to get the backyard in better shape but before he could he saw something interesting.

In front of the door to the bathroom, he spotted a dark crimson ball of fluff. This was Agni curled up and sleeping as if he was guarding the entrance to where his master was in.

"Did he fall asleep in the tub again? Bit early for that..."

The sun was going down but it was not yet dark outside so Bernir was a bit confused. Then he realized that Roland had just come back from a long dungeon expedition and was probably tired.

With that in mind, he decided to remove himself from the house. This was not the first time his boss had fallen asleep in that bathroom and most of the time he woke up during the night and found his way back to his bedroom.

"I guess I can try fixing those wires... where was that magic dark liquid again..."

Bernir whistled to himself while closing the door to Roland's house. While his boss was resting he would do some work and then follow it up with a nice drink.

[Chapter 130 Getting his cut.](#)

“Ugh...”

A somewhat wrinkled Roland moved out of the bathroom. It was about seven in the morning and he had stayed inside the tub filled with water for the entire night. His body was kind of aching after resting against the metal tub that was clearly not meant for sleeping.

“I need to stop sleeping in that thing...”

Roland twitched a bit after feeling something press against the rear side of his knee. Agni was there to greet him which almost caused him to tumble forward.

“Good morning Agni...”

“Woof!”

With only a towel around his waist, Roland moved towards his bedroom to get dressed. After finding a plain white shirt and some pants he was ready to eat something. After looking inside the refrigerator he luckily found it restocked.

There was some cheese, eggs, and even meat in the form of sausages. There was also no lack of beer in here that Bernir was sure to buy.

“Here your share, you’ve earned it.”

Agni got a little pat on the head and also a bowl filled with meat. He had saved his hide back there in the monster chamber which Roland would never forget.

Roland started eating, the dried provisions that he had at the dungeon ran out quite fast. Afterward, he was stuck eating grilled monster meat which got quite boring after two days.

He wanted to relax and go to one of the more famous Albrook restaurants but that would have to wait. The guild owed him some money and crafting knowledge. The guild master stated that he would have everything ready when he returned.

‘This is the last time...’

Again he was consumed by greed and fear. The only reason he took this job offer was that he didn’t want to wait. With his profession, he would be able to make money even with the mana stone variant of the runic items.

With time he would have a chance to get that knowledge himself. He could even try going to different cities and hire some bodyguards with enough money. Yet he got scared of people moving in the background.

There were the cultists and the assassin hired by someone from the Arden estate. Roland found it hard to relax so he risked it all to get his hands on items that would help him build up his power.

He was successful this time around but he could have very well just fallen to his death during that volcanic worm event. It didn’t seem that his family was aware of his existence, even his older brother didn’t notice that it was him.

After so many years had passed he didn't think that anyone was looking for him anymore. That would still leave him with the cultists which were probably a more realistic adversary. Yet he didn't think they would bother sending anyone too powerful to find a young blacksmith.

They probably never looked into his identity and were forced out of the city rather fast. It was more believable that they focused their eyes on his previous gnome boss and his tier 3 bodyguards that fled the city around the same time as he did.

It was hard to relax for someone like Roland that was trapped in his own mind. Only when he gained enough strength to face someone at the level of those cultists, he would not be able to relax fully. With that in mind, he was already planning his next move, which was a golem.

After going through some of the runic theory books that Lucille lent him he was closer to achieving this. He had also nabbed a nice big Elokin crystal that could be used as a power source.

With it this automaton could move around freely, still this was a finite power source that could not be replenished. He was hoping to design a sort of runic battery that could be recharged with his wind turbines.

For now, he had a lesser prototype that could store an excess but it was not portable enough to insert into a human-sized golem. The easiest way would be to use some wires but this would be an easy target for any opponent this golem faced.

"Good morning boss!"

Roland's thoughts came to a halt after his assistant appeared. Bernir looked somewhat different than before as if he matured slightly. The little scuffle with the thieves had apparently given the half-dwarf some confidence.

"G'morning, I've seen that you have been busy, that armor isn't bad."

"Aye, so you've seen it... wanted to give you a surprise but then those thieving bastards appeared..."

"Yes, I've seen the backyard, didn't know your punches could produce holes that big, maybe you should become a pugilist instead."

Roland smiled while Bernir turned his head to the side. His previous retelling stated that he battled the four with his bare hands but Roland obviously knew that that wasn't true.

"So, how was the weapon I gave you?"

"Ah, the Runic launcher? It was great but..."

"But?"

"The reloading mechanism could use some work..."

Roland rubbed his chin while Bernir told him the real story. He described how he fumbled during the reloading procedure and almost died.

"The weapon is meant more for ranged support, maybe a sidearm would do the trick..."

Instead of improving on the reloading mechanism, Roland contemplated creating a smaller backup weapon. Something closer to a regular handgun that people without combat classes could somewhat utilize.

As before instead of gunpowder runes would be used, the biggest problem would be the ammunition. He was not able to condense the runes into something small like a bullet. This would mean that for now, the bullets would just be regular bullets.

A regular gun was still a good weapon for someone without any skills. A powerful archer would still be better with a bow and all the skills made them even deadlier than a modern-day sniper.

This would be only a backup weapon meant for more of a surprise attack. Without knowing what to expect, the enemies would not be able to react to a bullet in time. The problem would be the design, nothing like a revolver existed in this world.

On the other hand, something like a musket wouldn't be hard. A small explosion rune or a pressurized wind rune would push the bullet outside. The reloading would be faster than a regular musket as the person would not need to shove gunpowder into the muzzle.

Instead, they could just insert a round bullet and then instantly take aim. A smaller handheld version could also be made before he figured out how to create a proper runic revolver.

"So that's what happened... Good job."

"No need to thank me, boss! I'm sure the news spread through those thief guild circles, they will probably think twice before trying something like that again."

Bernir commented while Roland nodded. He would also start working for the adventurer's guild from this day forth. They would probably think twice before attacking someone affiliated with a giant organization as the adventurer's guild.

The possibility of getting robbed while they left on business was always there. Roland would need to prepare more defenses while also thinking about hiring some muscle from the guild.

Just like any other merchant he needed some help. For now, he didn't quite have the money to get himself competent protection. The most he could hope for is silver or maybe one gold-ranking adventurer.

After having his breakfast and discussing some things with Bernir, Roland descended into his workshop. The armor was put on and his face was hidden yet again. This suit of armor looked a bit strange as the parts on the arms didn't match the rest of the set and were also in red color.

"This will have to do..."

"I didn't think you'd wear it yourself boss... isn't it a bit tight?"

Bernir scratched his forehead while looking at Roland standing in the armor he made. He didn't show it but he was quite happy that the item he made was already being used.

"It's fine... surprisingly fits well, did you use one of the old schematics?"

“Yes, why do you ask, boss?”

“I redid most of them to fit my size...”

Without knowing Bernir apparently used one of the schematics that Roland previously customized for his own height.

In reality, what Bernir was doing wasn't that profitable. Making a full set of armor required taking measurements of the person that would be using them. Roland was on the taller side which would make this finished armor harder to sell.

The best way to sell these was to make them at an average height so most men could use them. This is why Roland mostly only sold weapons, shields, and separate armor parts like gauntlets, arm guards, and shin protectors that could be used as replacements by almost anyone.

He would need to talk with Bernir about these sorts of things in the future as he did want to make more money. His assistant on the other hand had a less coin-focused mindset, he just wanted to craft items and have other people use them.

“Agni stay here, I should be back in a few hours.”

Agni dropped his head a bit but Bernir was quick to get his attention. While those two handled the backyard problem he would go to the city. He was not in a hurry so he just walked while taking in the sights.

“Good day Mr. Wayland.”

He nodded at the guard that instantly let him through even while keeping some other wanderers waiting. His fame was slowly growing, being the only real runesmith in the city he started to get some pull.

Even now, after seeing the runic inscriptions on his arm guards the people could tell that it was him. With his contract with the guild going into motion, he also would be getting free . He just hoped that no one would bother him at his home for custom wares.

“May the ladies' blessing be upon you all.”

Before the adventurer's guild, he witnessed a peculiar sight. It was Sister Kassia all dressed up in a white nun's uniform with a golden sun pattern sewn in. She was not alone as there were other members of the sun church with her.

She was next to the adventurer's guild speaking out loudly. The adventurers could not evade her gaze and almost everyone that got near got a little custom preach session.

“Glad that you made it, Wayland.”

“Oh, hey there Silvio.”

Silvio appeared from the side, he was wearing a large backpack and looked ready for another expedition.

“Was nice working with you, if you ever find yourself in Isgard be sure to visit the guild. Think that cleric is staying here, well see ya around.”

Roland nodded while the party leader made his exit. It seemed that he had gotten his reward and completed his assignment. With nothing more to do it was time for him to return to his own city.

‘Isgard huh? Isn’t that the one closest to the super dungeon?’

Silvio was gone but the nun remained, the church’s presence in this city was low at the moment but it seemed that this woman would try to change that. Even now he could see some people approaching her. Was it her beauty or charisma he didn’t know but maybe soon the city would finally get its own grand cathedral?

The tavern door swung open and he was greeted by some familiar faces. Elodia with her resting secretary face was giving some coins to an adventurer that finished his quest. Armand and Korgak were there drinking while his younger sister was shouting at him and complaining.

It seemed that for once he was late to the party. Everyone looked to have already gotten their rewards and he was probably the only one left.

“Mr. Wayland, the guild master is waiting for you.”

While approaching the receptionists Elodia called out to him. He looked at her and almost could spot a small smile that quickly vanished as she moved her attention back to the person at her counter.

He was now more or less part of this guild. All of his items would be deposited here and sold at the stores affiliated with the guild. This was acceptable to him, he could earn more at the auction house but the fees were much higher which brought the all-around earning potential to around the same.

There was also the guild master that promised him runic research. If he was able to procure the crafting knowledge now, he might be able to get some later. This time around he would not take any life-risking requests, at most he could fashion some custom items for some bigshots.

It felt a bit strange but Roland started remembering his old job in Edelgard. The store he was working in was not as large as this guild but it had a similar structure. Whenever the people saw him they either greeted him or nodded their heads. It seemed that his runsmith title had already given him some respect from these guild workers.

“I’m coming in...”

Roland knocked on the door before opening them up, inside he saw a grumpy-looking guild master. The muscular giant of the man looked somewhat tired and it seemed that he had lost some weight. He was looking over some papers while not really paying attention to the man that just entered his office.

“Fuck!”

Before Roland could ask about his rewards he heard the large man smack that large desk of his with all his might.

“Damn nobles making demands! Can you believe this”

Aurdhan looked up to a fully armored Roland that didn't reply. Not like he knew what to say, this guild master here was somewhat hard to talk to.

"They want us to clear up the best hotel in Albrook and get them a servant per person... Do those little shits want to be found out or not?"

The desk was slammed again. From what Roland knew, the nobles were supposed to keep a low profile and not stand out for the remainder of the week. They could not return to the academy before a certain point as it would just show that they failed in their mission.

"Ah... it's you, Wayland..."

Aurdhan finally moved his head up and noticed that it was not one of the usual workers but a certain Runesmith.

"You probably came for your cut, good job."

The large man smirked a bit while pointing with his finger to a sack on one of the bookshelves. Roland slowly walked up to it and grabbed it, inside he found some books and money.

"That's the runic knowledge you wanted and also a little bonus for keeping that lass safe. I don't know how I would explain this to the viscount, you saved my hide there brat."

Roland nodded while looking over the items, it seemed like everything that he wanted was indeed here.

"It's all here."

"Of course it is, I keep my promises! Don't forget that we have a contract now, start sending those runic items when you can."

"Everything seems to be in order... I'll lead myself out then..."

The old man leaned back and gave out a sigh while waving his hand.

"Do you have to be so stiff all the time? Loosen up kid, you won't find a nice girl if you're like that... your looks are being wasted and stop wearing that blasted armor everywhere!"

"...Okay..."

Roland just turned around without knowing how to reply. Now with the notes and some change he was ready to give the new smelting process a try. First, he would need to digest the new knowledge and see if he had the materials to fashion it.

This should not be a problem as the new runic forge would mostly look like the old one just made in a specific way and with specific runes on it. With his debugging skill, it would be instantly upgraded into a high-quality tool that would probably last him for a while.

The nobles were stuck in some hotel for now but that was not his problem. His involvement with them was over, he could now take his sweet time in designing his new wares. Roland's most ambitious project would be on the way, something that would cement him as a proper Runesmith. That was, to make a golem.

After entering the large guild hall he ignored all the adventurers and headed for the exit. It was finally over, with one push the door swung open and he was on the way back home. At least that is what he had hoped for because as he was just about to leave he heard a familiar voice behind him.

“Sir. Wayland!”

He stopped in his tracks and slowly turned his head around in a sort of mechanical way. There he saw a familiar-looking blue-haired woman, with someone closely resembling his half-brother.

‘God damn it, what do those two want...’