

Runesmith 171

[Chapter 171 Returning home to some news.](#)

"Damn idiots..."

Roland looked at one of the thieves that ambushed him as he was getting back home. He was holding his unmoving body in one hand while his legs were dangling around. Agni appeared next to his master with a somewhat bloody mouth that was slowly burning up due to his flaming bite.

It was a total wipe for this band of thieves with one exception. The lookout that he saw on his radar made the smart choice of running away instead of aiding his companions. While he could probably catch up to him, there was no reason for it.

He wasn't some bloodthirsty bandit like the ones that attacked him here. The person might have been aware of his identity but that was probably a good thing. There would be no repercussions for him, slaying these people would be seen as just in this world.

The person could not make a proper report to the thieves' guild either. If he did, then the truth that they attacked a black market member would come to light. This was akin to suicide in those circles, the man had two options.

Either leave this region or stay while hoping that the black merchant that they attacked didn't know he even existed. Roland had already spent some time in the criminal underbelly but he never really ventured past the black market dealings.

His biggest informant Lobelia has been moving up through the ranks over the past three years. If he brought up this issue with her, there would be a possibility of getting to the bottom of who these people were. There was also the fact that not all of them were dead.

"I won't kill you but I don't have to save you either..."

Roland received some experience after blasting the unsuspecting robbers with a couple of spells. Some with more vitality than the others were just knocked out, one of the people was missing a limb. The fight didn't take long as magical attacks that didn't require incantations were hard to counter without a proper mage in the party.

This was still the lower area of the dungeon. If the monsters didn't get to the survivors, then there was a chance that they could live. The chances were slim but a returning party of adventurers could spot them and give them a hand.

With how much stronger Roland was than they were, it didn't sit well with him to finish them off after they were all disabled. He felt that he was being somewhat soft for feeling this way but the old moral compass that he had taken from his old world was still with him. Killing people during a fight was one thing, finishing them off after they didn't pose a threat was another.

'Their chances of survival are low.'

Roland called over the mule golem that was on standby during the whole predicament. The spider golems weren't needed for low leveled adventurers so they were left inside of the spatial bag.

As he walked away, he recalled some of his previous close calls. While trying to avoid any type of confrontations he managed to get himself into hot water every time. Even this attack was proof of his bad luck.

If he came out a few hours later the bandits would probably not be there. But not like he did anything to avoid them, the radar clearly showed him that they were there and he decided to confront them while knowing well that they were below his level.

‘At least that helped me to level up...’

Name :

Roland Arden L 117

Classes:

T2 Runesmith Lord L42 [Primary]

T1 Mage L25 [Secondary]

T1 Runic Mana Scribe L 25 [X]

T1 Runic Blacksmith L 25 [Tertiary]

The boss monster that he faced was above his own level but even it didn't push him through the threshold. Only now after slaying a few bandit adventurers was he able to reach the 117th level, with his Runesmith Lord class now being at 42 he only needed to level up eight times.

Only then would he make the jump to the next class. As it stood he was already able to change his classes at this point in time. The requirement was to only get twenty-five levels in any given class.

If he really wanted to, he could get three different classes to level 25 before he got to the 150th which opened up tier 3 classes. The current class that he had was much too good for him not to max out. Even now he received some valuable skills from just gaining levels in it, ones that helped him out in runecrafting.

“Common boy, let's go home.”

“Grrrrr....Woof!”

Agni barked at Roland while previously growling at one of the survivors of the battle. Roland didn't expect to find any tough opponents while going up, so he would leave the fighting up to Agni while he gave him some ranged support. While they were slogging through the dungeon levels he decided to bring up his system screen and look through some of the skills that he had gained through these three years.

Debugger L 7

Passive Skill

Allows the user to find and resolve defects. Bonus to Intelligence +5.

His most precious skill had seen a big boost since he started working at the tier 3 schematics that the kitty professor had given him.

He was not really sure what would become of this skill if it ever reached the 9th level, was there some kind of higher form of it? The black card that he could not examine was also still on his mind. Would he now be able to scan it when his skill reached level 7 or would he need to further increase it?

Circuitry L 9

Passive Skill

Bonus to repair and creation of circuits or circuit equivalents. Bonus to Dexterity +6 and +6 intelligence.

Circuitry on the other hand seemed to level up faster than his debugging skill. It clearly was profiting from all the runes that he created through the years but seemed to be stuck on the 9th level for half a year now.

‘Maybe I need to be tier 3 for it to turn to the higher tier skill?’

Roland could only base this theory on the basic skills that he was stuck on when he was just a tier 1 class holder. There was also a possibility of him needing some kind of special class to further his skills, one related to actual circuits. It could very well forever be stuck at this level without ever turning into a higher tier skill.

Expert Tinkerer L 3

Passive Skill

Increased proficiency in the creation and repair of various components. Bonus to Dexterity 10.

High Analyze L 6

Passive Skill

Used for identifying and analyzing the world.

His tinkerer skill that he brought over from his previous world on the other hand managed to go past the threshold. It became an expert skill that increased his dexterity bonus by ten instead of five.

High **Analyze** was the improved version of the **Analyze** skill that was normally the limit for tier 2 classes. But thanks to Roland’s various scholastic titles and his high intelligence stat he was able to learn a better form of this skill. Thanks to it he was now able to tell levels of every creature that was at tier 2, this also included seeing the classes of people.

This skill was quite useful but it was not without drawbacks. There were various ways of fooling this skill to give the user false information. Just as he was wearing the trinket that he received from his old gnome boss, so could other people.

Basic Rune Mending, Basic Rune Overload, Runic Cleansing the skills that he got at the beginning of his tier 2 journey were all at level 8. With each subsequent level, they became better and he was sure that he would be able to max them all out before reaching level 50 in his Runesmith Lord class.

Then there were some new skills that he had learned along the way. Some came via experimentation while others were given to him by just leveling up.

Lesser Rune Duplication L6

Skill

This skill allows the runesmith to copy lesser runes that he had previously created onto a given item. The rune copy's rank depends on the skill level as well as on the runesmiths abilities.

This was one of the skills that he received through leveling up. It was quite a useful skill as it allowed him to instantly create a copy of a rune that he had previously created.

He was now able to charge up his smithing hammer with mana. When the skill activated the hammer would infuse the piece of metal with the rune that he wished to copy. It was a peculiar sight to see as the runic traces slowly pushed themselves onto the item even after he was done with the implementation of this skill.

This skill only allowed him to produce lesser runes but this was a big-time saver already. The mana usage was about the same as when he did the runecrafting manually but the speed was far above it.

The grade of the rune was always somewhat worse than what he could do by himself. But the more he leveled up his skill the better it became. When it maxed out at 9 he would probably be able to copy any lesser rune and make it a highest rated one. The time saved on lower level gear that this gave him was immense.

Upgrade Rune L4

Skill

When this skill is used on any rune, there is a possibility of the rune gaining a higher rank, too much use of this skill will degrade the rune.

It seemed like he was gaining a lot of time-saving skills. This one gave the possibility of gaining a better version of a rune. It was a gamble which could also result in the rune degrading or even the item breaking. The chance of it working was heightened depending if he was able to personally make a higher version of the rune already.

Due to his debugging skill, it made upgrading runes a lot less consistent. The only real reason to use it would be to save some time or in tandem with some other skills. One of those skills was Rune Overload and Rune Mending.

It was possible to overload a runic component to make it produce a heightened spell effect. Then when it broke down, he could mend it back together and quickly use the upgrading skill to get it back to its original state, all this during the heat of battle was possible but at a large cost to his own mana. If he ever found a use for this combination was debatable but it was still there on the table.

Basic Empower Rune L4

Skill

The Runesmith can attempt to empower a previously created rune to push it over its limits, the possibility of the rune breaking is high.

This was one of the more troublesome skills that he received. While it might have sounded similar to the upgrading skill or even the overload skill it was different. If it was successful it would add a whole 'Empowered' prefix to any fully created runic item.

It would boost the runes capabilities even over what the highest rank gave it. After going through a few tests he discovered that the boost was about 5% when he started out. With each level he gained in this skill, the percentage would go up.

Probably at the end, it would be something between 15%-20% of what the original rune would be capable of. The effect also was lessened on common grade runes when he compared it to the lesser variants.

Besides these new crafting-related skills he also managed to level up his past skills like Rune Mastery and Runecraft to level 7 and his mana regulation-related skills were also gaining traction slowly.

His progress had slowed down quite a bit as even when he was close to maxing out his Runesmith Lord class level. The classes were clearly made with the intention of the person having enough time to level up the skills before they reached the 50th level in their given class. He still trailed a bit behind in skills as he had used the tier 3 schematics to level up quicker than he was intended to. His Runesmith Lord's Eyes eyes were also coming along nicely.

Now, what interested him the most was what kind of skill he would get when he achieved his 50th level. A rare ability was almost always assured when one maxed out a tier 2 class which made most people stick to two classes at this level.

"We are almost there."

Roland looked at this mapping device while looking at a certain hidden door. He was now at one of his shortcuts that had not yet been discovered by anyone else but him. Only when he saw that there were no people walking around did he decide to walk out.

His week-long expedition into the mines was now over as he walked through the corridors on the third level of the dungeon. Some new adventurers quickly moved to the side when they saw him strutting through with the large golem behind him.

Though most of them were just frightened by the large Mystical Ruby Wolf in the front, a monster that they would not be able to handle. Agni when seeing this just snorted while holding his head up high.

"You're really enjoying yourself aren't you..."

Agni just replied with an energetic howl which caused the nearby adventurers to flee. He wasn't sure if they were scared of the wolf or the large shiny runic knight that was walking behind it but they really knew how to bolt it.

After more time passed Roland was finally walking towards his own house. The path taking him there was somewhat more spacious as he together with Bernir had cleared some trees.

Now with a store there, he needed there to be enough space for a carriage to get through. There were some big spenders that came around to see some of the magical wares, so it was something that had to be done with profits in mind.

The fight with the bandits had been late in the night but as he just continued walking he ended up back home somewhere in the morning. It was just in time to see his girlfriend sweeping outside along with a bored guard that was not of the green skin variety.

“Woof!”

“Agni?”

Elodia called out the moment she heard a certain wolf howling towards her. The moment she did, a red blur appeared out of nowhere, she never stood a chance.

“Hey... g-get off me...s-stop licking my face!”

She started squirming on the ground while being totally overpowered by the large ruby wolf. Roland just smiled while taking off his helmet as he approached the scene. It seemed that tamed beasts showed favor to people their master liked. Thus Agni was always fine around people like Bernir or Elodia that he had bonded with through the years.

“Wayland, h-help!”

After giving Agni some time to slobber Elodia’s face he finally decided to grab him by the collar and yank him back. Roland was strong enough to hold his wolf by one hand and as he did he could only chuckle at Agni’s derpy panting expression.

“That’s enough, go play around but don’t scare the customers.”

While he still employed a guard for the store Agni was also responsible for defending everything that was inside. He would normally spend his days close to Elodia as a guard dog while Roland continued his experiments down in his workshop.

“Are you all right?”

“Do I look alright to you?”

Elodia showed a scowl when looking up to Roland that evaded her angry gaze. It was clear that Agni’s slobber was still stuck to her face, she clearly needed to get that washed out.

“Oh, you look more than alright to me...”

On the other hand, even though Elodia seemed angered this was the best opportunity to do his duty as a boyfriend and tease her. The moment the compliment was given Elodia’s face turned a bit rosier.

After some help, she was back to her feet. Before they spoke more she gave him that look that she always gave him when he returned from his dungeon runs.

“I’m fine, also this blood doesn’t belong to me...”

He turned his face to the side as he didn't really want to come clean about clearing out some rogue adventurers in the dungeon. Luckily Elodia wasn't someone that asked too many questions.

"I have to commend you for returning on time for once, you should get cleaned up... oh you probably don't know this but there has been a big change."

Roland perked up at the last part.

"Big change?"

"Yes, our city has gained enough recognition to attract a proper noble to govern it, isn't that great?"

"A proper noble?"

Roland almost tripped over his own legs while approaching Elodia when nobles were mentioned. He clearly had an opinion about anything related to nobles but not all of them were the same. Before he could make the decision if he was in any danger, he needed to gather more information...

[Chapter 172 The noble.](#)

"A noble from the duke household?"

After getting back from the week-long expedition to the dungeon Roland wanted to relax and sleep it off. Before that could happen Elodia dropped a bombshell on his head. Apparently, a very important noble house had taken interest in their little growing city.

This entire island was somewhat a separate entity from the rest of the kingdom and was owned by a strong Duke. The house name was Valerian and they were the undisputed powerhouses of the south of this kingdom.

A duke household was second only to the royal families in this kingdom. Their noble name carried a lot of weight. Even if some just generally related to this family appeared anywhere they would kick up quite the storm.

"Yes, I was surprised too. Isn't it great? This means that more people will be coming to the city."

"Ah yeah sure..."

For Elodia this was a good thing as she knew what power nobles carried with them. Only cities that were governed by someone from a noble family could be called proper big cities. If Albrook managed to attract one of them, to the commoners it meant that the city was approved by the people in charge.

This could cause more merchants to arrive depending on how the new lord handled things. Sometimes it could go the opposite way, if the noble was incompetent they could ruin a city from reaching its full potential.

Roland knew of a few reasons why a noble would be sent to a yet developing city like this. The most obvious reason would be that their parents were giving them some kind of test to see if they can manage people. Another reason could be punishment or even banishment.

Albrook was somewhat far away from the main city of Isgard where the Valerian Duke had his main castle. From what Roland knew he had some of his sons tend to some of the larger cities that were more

militaristic in nature. A town like Albrook didn't seem like something that would be run by someone from the direct line.

"Do you know the name of the lord that is going to govern Albrook?"

"No, he arrived a few days ago but they didn't give any

Announcement

yet... Come to think of it..."

As Elodia was about to reveal something interesting she stopped and looked at the clock that he had constructed.

"Oh no, look at the time, I need to get back to the shop!"

Before he could get more information out of her she vanished through the door.

"Wait... what were you trying to tell me..."

Roland trailed off at the end there, when nobles were involved he was very interested in what was happening. He didn't think that he was in any danger but with a new boss in town, things could be changing. The biggest danger would be to his own shop that a noble could find an eyesore.

After living in Edelgard for a few years he knew how some nobles operated. Even if they couldn't legally go against the contract that he made with the city, there were other ways to make him capitulate. It would be best to get into the good graces of this new wild card that came into the city.

'I bet all the other merchants and those dwarves are already sending him gifts... should I do the same?'

While in his old world bribing was frowned upon, here on the other hand it was part of the course. Sending the nobles 'presents' was something any respectable merchants with deep pockets would do. It was more a show of respect and would most of the time keep the noble happy.

'What would I even make ... a nice durasteel sword?'

With the new resources in hand, he could probably make something eye-catching. The problem there was that he didn't even begin reworking his old tools that were ill-fit for the more exotic metals.

The forge needed to be remade to handle the higher melting temperatures of the other metals. He also needed to produce better tools for this job which would take him quite some time to finish.

'It will probably take me at least a month to work out the kinks... probably longer, It would be better to go with something I already made...'

Roland thought some of his older prototypes would still be somewhat adequate to a noble's tastes. Before he could make a decision he needed more information, was this noble a battle maniac or maybe more of a brainy type?

He at least expected it to be a man as women weren't really ordered out to govern cities or large territories. There were a couple of families that utilized everyone, so it still could be the case here.

Without the proper information, he decided to rest for the time being. After spending so much time in the deep dungeon he needed a break. After he had recharged his batteries he would tackle this problem with a fresh mind. With that thought in mind, he headed to the bathroom to clean himself first...

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Two days ago.

"If it isn't young master Arthur, on behalf of the citizens of Albrook I welcome you."

A young man dressed in a militarized uniform stepped out of a lavish-looking carriage. His hair was pure white and it contrasted well with his deep green eyes. His height was slightly above average just like his frame.

"Ah yes, you were the old attendant, your name is?"

"It's Ferdinand my liege."

An old man was bowing towards this youth that didn't look past twenty. Roland would recognize his face as this was the city mayor. To him this young man was someone that he needed to show his respect, even though on the inside he was feeling a bit adamant about it.

"You can raise your head."

"Yes my lord, let me show you to your quarters, I'll have someone carry your luggage inside. We have also prepared lodgings for the Valerian knights that have accompanied you but I'm not sure if we have enough space for all of them in the mansion..."

As the mayor that was relegated to butler duties tried to have some of the servants carry the new lord's belongings. He had arrived in a lush-looking carriage and was well protected. To this old man, it seemed that his life could be at stake if he was foolish enough to anger this young lad.

"Luggage? There won't be much of it and the knights, they won't be staying"

"My lord?"

Ferdinand was confused at what the new lord had said but soon he would realize the truth. The man in charge of the knights who was an older-looking fellow with a grand stature and a big gash on his forehead approached with heavy steps.

"Young lord, we have fulfilled our duties of bringing you here, as the Duke ordered we will now depart."

"Is that so captain? I guess if it was a direct order from father, you should move along."

Arthur Valerian smirked a bit as the knight captain did the kingdom salute and departed. The large force that consisted of fifty heavy armored knights on horseback slowly removed itself from the inside of this compound. What was left was the young lord, his personal maid, and two young-looking knights.

"T-this is?"

"As you can see Ferdinand, you don't need to worry about me too much... now be so kind as to show me around the mansion."

The old man was perplexed as he saw the large man in the shiny armor take his leave. It was kind of strange at the beginning as no one dismounted their horses beside the captain. Now it was clear that they intended to leave the moment they got here.

Ferdinand, who had spent a part of his life working as a butler for the Valerian estate quickly realized what this was about. The young lad that he was interacting with was clearly not someone favorably looked at by the Duke.

At least that would be the most obvious reason for such a predicament. It could also have been some strange test that the young lord was meant to pass, one without the help of any retainers lent from the main house. He was left with two bodyguards and one maid, not really much considering he was the son of one of the most powerful men in the kingdom.

The old man wanted to ask for the reason but he knew that he could not. For the time being, he decided to wait while getting in contact with some people from the main house.

“Yes my lord, please walk this way.”

Soon the small group of people walked into the large mansion that was previously occupied by the city mayor. Since someone from the main house was now here it would belong to him. Ferdinand the old mayor would be relegated into a smaller room in the same house as he was still the head butler.

As the main butler of this Albrook estate he still had many duties that he had to adhere to. Normally he would be responsible for the estate expenses and for disputes between the citizens.

Now with the lord being here, it would be up to him, but if he was somewhat lazy he could delegate everything to the current servants. This was a rather common occurrence as many nobles saw it beneath them to tend to commoner problems.

If the young lord turned out to be on the lazier side he might very well abandon all his duties and just relax. The city was already operating by itself and the people living there were not ones that liked changes. The power struggles had all been finished which made this young lord’s appearance an eyesore to the winners.

“These are your bed chambers, my lord.”

Ferdinand gave a quick tour to the Duke’s son. This house might have looked big from a commoner’s standpoint but it was a rather low budget compared to some of the more lavish-looking abodes. The Duke for instance lived in a grand castle with thousands of soldiers defending it. In comparison, this looked like a mansion used for vocational purposes.

It still had all the facilities that were needed to govern the land here. A large dining area, a kitchen with several servants and chefs that possessed expert culinary skills. There was a training area for the knights and soldiers in the back and also a proper library to keep all the notes.

There was enough space for a large family and servants to live here but this was still considered minuscule for a Duke’s son.

“You may leave.”

“As you wish my lord.”

Ferdinand finally left and Arthur was left in this new room with his maid.

“Young master, is everything alright?”

“I would be lying if I said it was, did you see the look on their faces when the knights left? I bet the rumors of the incompetent young lord will soon spread through the city.”

The maid lowered her head a bit along with her ears. At first glance, she seemed to be a normal human maid but after a second look, her cat ears could be spotted.

“It’s fine Mary, I’m used to it, not like I intend this to be the end, no this is only going to be the beginning. You should go visit the other maids, we’ll be spending some time here.”

The cat maid nodded weakly at what her lord said and promptly removed herself from the room. She needed to prepare the young lord’s wardrobe for the next day while making sure that the other servants didn’t mess something up. As she left the young man that went by Arthur was left alone in the large room.

“This is it huh?”

He moved towards one of the windows that gave him a good look at the city landscape. There he saw smoking chimneys that indicated people working and going on with their lives.

Arthur gave out a sigh before sitting down on a somewhat uncomfortable chair. This would be the place that he either rose up to the challenge or was left forgotten. While sitting there many thoughts went through his head but soon he just gave up as the stress of the long journey was getting to him.

“I could never get used to sleeping in that carriage...”

His eyes were red from staying up most of the night during the bumpy ride. The journey here was long as they constantly stopped at other cities to stay for the night. Now he would need to get used to another new bed that he might throw out later.

“They don’t expect me to do much here, it would be best if I just stayed here forever...”

The locket that he had previously looked at was open again. Inside of it he could see a small picture of a beautiful woman with long silver hair. Her ears were a bit longer than what a human’s should be. Next to her was a child of about the age of five with the same hair color just with a different set of eyes that were green instead of sky blue.

Arthur moved his gaze towards a small mirror that was on the desk. There he moved his hair out of the way to look at his ears that were also slightly pointier than they should be. Due to his long flowy locks, they were hard to spot but they would certainly be an eye raiser if they were seen by other people.

“I should get some sleep, there is a lot of work ahead of me...”

....

Back to the present.

“So they just left?”

“Yes, it was a sight to behold, I haven’t seen so many shiny knights before in my life, they were also all high quality and that one the leader was wearing was clearly runic in nature!”

Roland was back into the world of the living after sleeping through most of the day. It was close to night time and he was having a conversation with Bernir that had been lucky enough to see a small battalion of knights leaving the city.

“So this Arthur Valerian, know anything about him?”

“Hm, I think he is the 6th? or maybe the 7th son? What was that Duke’s name again... ah right Alexander Valerian. I heard a rumor about that guy, apparently, he had gained a certain nickname...”

“A nickname?”

Roland asked while gulping down a warmed-up sausage that had been gotten fresh from the butcher. Elodia had closed down the shop and already left to tend to the orphans, now wanting to wake the tired Roland up she decided to have Bernir fill him in on the noble situation.

“Haha, get this, he is called the Duke of the Bastards, he just can’t keep it in his pants!”

Bernir started laughing while describing the Duke’s legendary escapades. As the conversation continued Roland also started recalling some long-forgotten information about this man.

As a Duke, he had to have a certain amount of personal power, at least a high level tier 3 class holder of some kind. The battle for attaining a Duke’s position was most of the time quite bloody.

This man in particular apparently had sired a lot of offspring that made his own father look like a beginner. The person that came to this city was supposedly one of them. It was probably someone that didn’t have a lot of pull in the family but still was part of it.

“Well I wouldn’t worry too much boss, your secret should be safe.”

While Bernir didn’t ask many questions, after the Robert debacle he had figured out that Roland was probably in a similar position as this new noble named Arthur.

“A bastard son of a Duke... I wonder what the others will think of it...”

While finishing up his food he began contemplating on that present. With the new knowledge, he wasn’t sure if investing in this new person would bring him any profits. Still, he was a noble and could make his life living hell if he got under his skin. That is if the current officials actually listened to his orders.

“You’re right, there is no time to waste.”

Bernir nodded while gulping beer straight from the bottle. With Roland back home with new materials, it was time for an upgrade.