

## Runesmith 287

### Chapter 287: Tactical Withdrawal.

“What’s that, it came from the direction of the forest... wait isn’t Wayland's workshop in that direction?”

“It is my lord... but we should focus, the monsters are acting strange, why did they all stop moving?”

A strange phenomenon was taking place outside of the city gates. The monsters that were moments before clamoring at the gate had stopped in their tracks. No one at first knew what could have garnered this response from them but soon enough the mushroom cloud in the distance told a tale. Each and every one of these skeletal beings looked at that explosion and soon enough started abandoning their posts.

“Something must have happened to the Lich... could it have died?”

“Close but that’s not it.”

“Master Aurdhan?”

Arthur, who moved closer to the edge of the guard tower noticed the Guild Master’s voice coming from behind him. The man didn’t look that tired but the large black skull that he was holding in his hand indicated a lot.

“If it was dead then the magic that is holding the monsters together would dissolve... but for a Lich to call its forces back like this...”

While Arduhan monologues about what transpired, Arthur’s eyes landed on the big black skull he was holding. It was clear that the man had finished off that one obsidian skeleton and didn’t look that injured. His body was covered in some faint scratch marks but they didn’t seem to have drawn out blood.

The man was built like a tank and wore light armor that didn’t really protect him from outside attacks. This didn’t mean that his skin couldn’t act like armor, Arthur knew that some classes offered passive buffs to defenses when certain conditions were met. For instance, barbarian-like classes would boost a person’s natural protection if they didn’t cover up their body too much or wore light armor.

“Nice one isn’t it? But you can’t have it, it’ll look good on my wall.”

Aurdhan laughed while arriving next to Arthur, both of them looked out into the distance where the skeletons started retreating to. Their forces had dwindled a bit but the black mage and the beast-type obsidian skeleton were still out there. In the beginning, there were five obsidian types and one of them was killed by the guild master.

Another one vanished from the map before the siege started and one went with the Lich toward the Runesmith’s home. The map wasn’t showing what was happening there as even before the explosion the signal died down for some reason. There was a high probability that something happened to the creator of this map and Arthur wasn’t sure what he should do.

“Isn’t that where our little Runesmith lives? Did that kid actually stay there? I thought he was the intelligent type.”

The guild master smirked while shaking his head before moving away. His work seemed to be done and he wasn't here just to show off the evil skeletal skull to the lord. As he was going away a group of five people appeared, these people were unknown to Arthur but by a platinum emblem that their leader was wearing their identity was exposed.

"Well then, I did my part and these guys will take over."

While walking away the large man passed next to the group of adventurers while waving his hand without turning around. It seemed that the backup that they were waiting for had arrived but even though the city was safe one of its citizens wasn't...

...

"This is the extent of what this creature was capable of?"

A beautiful woman with beastly eyes stood in an empty corridor covered in monster remains. It was well illuminated by blue flames that were even now sticking to the obsidian bones that were still moving. These belonged to a monster skeleton that had the appearance of a large monkey with horns. What was left of it was just its upper torso with one hand and even now it was trying to crawl away from the person that gave it the critical injury.

"Would it have been this easy if it didn't turn away for that moment? Were undead minions ever scared of dying?"

The person that defeated it was slowly fixing her black leathery clothes that covered her entire body. Within a moment the fox ears that were previously uncovered started vanishing as she activated her body-transforming skill. Without anyone else being here she could finally let loose to quickly take care of the problem inside the thieves guild tunnels.

However, even though she expected to easily win over the monsters here they acted rather strangely. The black skeleton wasn't the only one that was in this narrow corridor, the white ones were also there. Thanks to the cramped spot they were in she decided to use one of her wide-range abilities. The white skeletons were instantly incinerated by her special flames but the obsidian one survived with only a slither of its HP left.

"It wouldn't have been this easy if they didn't stop... oh well, my job is done."

The guild master of the thieves guild gave out a sigh while strutting forward. Her leather boot landed on the enlarged black head of the skeleton and after applying some force it was crushed. Within she could see a tiny flame that looked similar to a will-o'-the-wisp that quickly evaporated.

With this, her task of defending the guild was finished. She could already feel some of the hidden assassins approaching. They were quick on the uptake and probably eager to see their guild master in action from a safe location. Regretfully they would not be able to gain any information about her true appearance which she could not easily reveal.

"The directions they were looking... wasn't it that troublemaker's home?"

She gave out a little smirk before slowly walking back toward her people. After giving them a piece of her mind it would be time to relax, it seemed that the fighting outside was coming to a close and a party

of capable people did arrive. It would be best to leave this up to them now that they were here but this didn't mean that her faction would stand by idle.

"Those bones should be enough to reimburse me for these destroyed tunnels, not like the adventurers can carry them all."

....

<table border="1"> **You have gained 1000 experience points** ;

Roland was too focused on the problem before him to notice the trouble coming from the outside or the message from the world's system. The cage that he prepared to kill the Lich had exploded before him as he overloaded the entire runic structure with various spells. It was all in the hopes of defeating the monster Lich inside.

A tier 3 monster had been defeated but it was not the one that he was aiming for. Just before the Lich's demise, an Obsidian Skeleton Beast Soldier made it inside the cage. It grabbed its creator and tossed him outside of this cage right before everything exploded. The minion died instead of its master that was now gathering itself. Roland had used a large chunk of his own mana to try and deliver a killing blow but it only caused him a headache.

"Grrrr..."

Agni started growling while standing next to Roland. Without being ordered to the Dire Ruby Wolf let out a tremendous howl. The gem that was starting to take the form of a horn started glowing. Red light bounced off the smoke coming from the area the trap exploded as a magic spell was formed.

Just like the Lich, Agni was a similar beast that was capable of silent casting. It took him a long time to create the spell effect but it seemed that the wolf had already been getting ready to blast away while the explosion was taking place. A small magical circle appeared around the ruby gem before a beam of heated energy shot out. It pushed the smoke away and revealed the target at the end, an injured white skeleton standing on one leg.

The gem-encrusted staff was used as a crutch to stand but the creature was very much alive. It was not a human nor a living organism of any kind, something like losing a leg would not diminish its fighting capabilities that much as it was still a magical casting monster.

Agni's beam of fire collided with the Lich dead on but the difference in stats and tiers was apparent. Even when the monster's mana mantle had been dispelled the fire resistance was still there. It was an attack that would turn anyone below level hundred into a pile of ashes but to this Lich, it was like a light slap to the face. The drop in health points was minuscule and it only made it angrier than it already was.

"Fuck..."

Roland noticed something, it wasn't a spell chant it was something else. Some type of hidden skill was activated and as the monster opened its boney mouth a massive amount of green mana formed inside of it. With his mana sense, he was able to notice it before it was too late.

Magical classes came in all shapes and sizes. Monsters and people that were part of the magic caster type didn't only rely on their spells, there were various skills that could augment their fighting style. One of those special skills was the Lich's tier 3 summoning skill that it could use without the need for a body.

There was one common skill that magic users usually came equipped with. One of these skills was called spell stockpiling. It allowed a magician to store a spell in a skill slot for later use. The quality of the stored spell depended on the type of stocking skill of the caster, sometimes the spell would have a drop in power and speed but one effect would be kept. The stored spell could be activated without the need of being cast and it couldn't be interrupted by normal means.

Either the Lich was using this type of skill or he had some type of racial ability. Nevertheless, it was generating a massive blast of magical energy from inside of its mouth that was being aimed at Agni who just fired off his own spell and was momentarily incapable of dodging.

A green energy beam flew forth in a straight line toward the ruby wolf. It was much faster than any beam spell attack that Roland had ever seen before or was able to produce. Even when he saw through it there was just not much time to react, even though he had ordered the leftover spider drones to attack the lich and put themselves in the line of fire they were not capable of performing this task in time.

Without much time to think could only react by swinging his oversized hammer into the line of the beam. The runic shield that would be probably the better option was still on his back. At this moment the only thing he could do was access a few lesser runic structures that would produce a shield around his forward side. With his mind racing, he tried accessing all of his runic knowledge to somehow augment the defensive capabilities of his hammer. Everything happened in a fraction of a second in his mind while causing a few bursts of capillaries and a nosebleed.

The hammerhead was surrounded by a layer of protective mana that was good at absorbing magical attacks. With sheer willpower, he managed to connect with the green beam of light right before it collided with Agni's face. The collision of these two energy types produced a large shockwave of mixed colors.

This magical hammer was not designed for taking tier 3 spells like this. The runic spells inscribed to aid in shock absorption and dispersal almost instantly became overloaded. The shock traveled up to his hands which started cracking and only stopped at the forearm area. Yet he could not relent, if he decided to pull his weapon back then Agni's head would be blown right off.

Roland shouted out in a mix of indignation and pain while swinging forward. The green beam from Lich's mouth was pushed back and transformed into smaller rays while shooting to the sides. These thinner attacks connected with various items and structures around the whole smithing compound causing massive amounts of damage. The wind generators went up in flames and even his house was riddled with holes.

The destruction of his home was something that he wanted to avoid but it was not time for this. He had been successful at bouncing the attack away but this cost him dearly. Both of his hands were numb but one was certainly broken while the other probably had multiple cracked bones.

"G-grrrr."

“I’m fine...”

Agni started growling ferociously at the skeletal monster behind the destroyed gate. But before he could get in front of Roland to act as a guard dog he stopped. His master’s hammer dropped before him to halt his advance. The weapon that he worked to create had turned into a malformed blob of metal.

“Agni, I told you to get back, I didn’t save you just for you to die.”

The ruby wolf curled up his tail in shame while Roland started backing off in the direction of his home. While the Lich was still alive it was momentarily indisposed. It was missing a leg which would make it slower and was also injured greatly. The command that he sent to all the remaining golems in the compound and the turrets that were still operational were still in effect.

His plan of defeating the Lich with the holy rune trap literally went up in flames but this didn’t mean that it was over. While Roland was on the retreat he wasn’t considering this a loss just yet, this depended on what his monstrous opponent would do. Would it follow after him into the place he was retreating or would it withdraw? The monster was already enraged but it was also injured if its danger assessment capabilities were in working order, then it would have probably chosen to fight another day. For some reason, this monster really had it out for Roland and even now with one missing leg, it decided to float toward its target who was already running.

Before the monster could muster up another attack it found itself being pelted by some mana bolts from ranged turrets and spider drones. One of these golem creatures actually jumped straight at the monster in an attempt to grapple its chest. Before it could do that and explode it was pushed back by an invisible energy.

While casting powerful tier 3 spells would cost the monster some time, he could almost mimic runic casting speed if lower tier 1 spells like the mage hand he was using now were concerned. He was using this to push the blue golem away before it could overload its runic battery and produce a large explosion.

Everything here was just a distraction that couldn’t really halt its advance. Roland that it was after had been a point of interest for almost all of its life and it just couldn’t comprehend how he could escape each and every time. The monster's psychological state was deteriorating due to being poisoned by the holy energies. It couldn’t think straight anymore, its mind started to regress into something primal and it wanted to see the one that hurt it, pay.

It was missing a limb which was a momentary setback. Luckily there was a replacement bone nearby in the form of the obsidian skeleton remains. While most of those bones were charred by the holy energy and explosions there was enough bone matter to repair its limb. The monsters used the mage hand spell to pull in the bone chunks and with its special self-mending skill was able to produce a replacement.

Even with the strange mechanical contraptions trying to blow it up, the Lich continued to move forward. The mana mantle that was around its body started to slowly recover and it took a step toward its destination. The black leg that it produced wobbled a bit but after a few steps, it managed to get used to the new limb. Finally, it could give chase and it would not stop until completing its urge.

**Chapter 288: Bones breaking.**

'Me and my bright ideas should have just gone to the city and waited for those damn platinum adventurers instead...'

Roland was in a world of pain as he scoured down into his underground workshop. His right hand was broken in several places while his left had multiple cracked bones. When he tried to protect Agni from a certain death he had almost been the one to kick the can. He did not expect the beam attack from an injured Lich to be this devastating. If his class was not a prestige one with an advanced multiplier he might have just lost both of his arms in the process.

Normally what he would need to do now was to either have a priest heal his wounds or douse his hands with healing potions. While wearing this heavy armor this wasn't that easy, at most he could open his visor and try taking a sip which he was doing now. In his haste, he started splashing some of the potions he could get his hands between the joints of his armor in hopes of some of it reaching his hurting hands. Doing everything with a half-working left hand that hurt like hell was not making it easier either.

This event brought one thing to light at least. If he suffered any internal damage it was quite detrimental to have heavy armor that he couldn't just toss to the side on him. In a sense, it became a prison of his own making, if it were his legs that were broken he would probably not have been able to get out of there in time to get some healing potions. Even though they were some of the costlier ones they would not work in an instant. He needed to make some space between the monster and himself.

"Shit..."

He cursed out at his own powerlessness, taking care of one tier 3 monster should have been something that he should have been capable of. His armor made him a lot stronger than a regular tier 2 class holder and he was over level hundred sixty, this coupled with an advanced stat multiplier should have leveled the playing fields but in the end, it didn't. Even after the monster was weakened he still couldn't take even one magical attack without being critically injured. The only things he could rely on were his traps and the divine crystals, one of which he was already running towards.

His steps were erratic and he was out of breath. Overloading the trap the skeleton was in and then saving Agni had taken a toll on his mind. His mana had dropped tremendously and the only reason that he didn't pass out was thanks to his Resilience skill and pain resistance. This was only a bandaid as those skills would only allow him to power through the uncomfortable pain but wouldn't actually heal him.

If he decided to punch the Lich with his broken hand it could turn into a stump. Even though this world had things like healing magic and potions they weren't omnipotent. If his fingers were broken, muscles and ligaments torn, then even high-level potions would have trouble restoring the injuries to the previous state.

A craftsman's hands were his lifeblood, if he couldn't move his fingers in a dexterous way then creating high-quality products would be impossible. Directing mana to form runic traces was also done through the hands. Mana flowed out of a person's fingers in a specific way and if this was disrupted it could be disastrous.

Perhaps implementing some type of self-healing protocol into his armor was in order. Roland had pondered on including small packets of healing potion in various locations within the armor. By triggering small spells through the runes these could be opened to douse the affected areas.

However, this was easier said than done, during combat such a packet would usually come undone by itself due to outside shocks and be wasted in the process. Attaching them was also a problem and would produce weak spots in the armoring.

“Fuck... it hurts, are these potions really the best I could afford?”

His mind was snapped back to reality as he pressed a button to close down the metal door to the workshop. Even pressing it with his somewhat good hand was a problem. The healing concoctions were slowly working but it would take at least fifteen minutes for him to regain feeling in his injured hands. Powering through the pain was his only option if he wanted to get out of here alive.

‘Will that thing even continue chasing?’

Roland was backing off and for a moment he stopped in his tracks. The previous explosion coupled with the Lich going berserk sent his monitoring system ballistic. Whenever a lot of mana particles from spells were in the air it produced some interference. In this case, however, he didn’t need to rely on the signal magnifiers and could use himself as the radar basis. There he could see a lone monster dot moving towards his home without being held back by the golems all too much.

‘I guess it’s really mad now, probably moved on from an enraged state to being totally berserk... but this could be what I needed.’

There was some time before the monster reached him but it seemed that it was dead set on following after him. This hate that the monster felt for him could still be used against it just like it did during the first trap. His escape tunnel was still there, this one wasn’t as long or sturdy as the one that he made leading to the dungeon but he did make some preparations there.

‘I have one chance...’

The yellow crystal in his hand was the only one that he had left. The monster already proved itself to be too much to handle for regular runic spells but holy ones were extremely effective. It was like poison to the undead and even though the Lich made it out of the entrapment it would still continue to receive some damage over time. This coupled with the berserk state could be just the thing that he needed to end all of this.

But there was also another option, just leaving everything be and getting out of here as fast as he could. What he was hoping to protect was already partially destroyed, the monster was running rampart above ground. After tearing through his defenses it would probably find the entrance here. The inside of his workshop wasn’t as well protected as well as the path leading to it.

He could just not have potential explosive hazards underground where he could be buried alive. There was an option of blowing the place up which would make following him a lot harder. Overloading some of the magical items that were here could produce a potentially deadly reaction. This could be enough to kill the already injured Lich or at least keep it from finding the escape route. This plan was probably the safest bet and while the monster was confused about his location he could make his escape.

The only thing that could thwart his escape were the unwelcome guests that started gathering above ground. While the mana particles in the air were jamming some of the mapping feed not everything had been lost. During his use of the Parallel Thinking trait, he was able to go through multiple problems at

once and also watch the map like a hawk. On it he saw many small dots approaching the forest and going toward his home.

'It must have called for backup...'

During the Lich's near-death experience it wouldn't be strange for it to call for help. Perhaps there was some inbuilt assistance switch into the monster when it suffered critical damage that would call back all of its minions. The black one that saved him was just closely following behind it as a backup plan but now all the rest had been called back.

This put Roland in a dangerous situation, if he went with the self-destruct option for his workshop, he would find himself exposed to the monster army. The explosion would probably give him a big enough smoke screen to sneak away from the Lich but it would certainly find him quite fast with so many eyes out there.

While the monster was not in a state to probably produce that tracking spell it used before, it didn't need to. As long as it was close to its many minions it would be able to feel what they were feeling. Roland already had a unique mana pattern that the monster was attuned to so if he was spotted then the Lich would give chase.

For the time being, he had two exit routes. One was a shorter pathway in which he left his last surprise for the monster and then there was the tunnel to the dungeon. Heading toward the dungeon wasn't such a great idea. It wasn't much different than using the other exit and he would still need to blast a hole through it to escape.

Either he would blast a hole with his magic and get out of there which would still put him somewhere where the monsters could spot him. Going inside the dungeon would require him to dig a hole through the wall there. Perhaps he could hide out in one of the hidden rooms he discovered but the Lich might find him at some point with that mana sense that it possessed.

One way or the other he needed to expose himself to the skeletal army, the question was which exit put him in a better position of survival. This might have actually been the dungeon tunnel as it was a lot longer and the skeletons would first group around his home before going towards the explosion he produced. However, there was a different way for him to get out of this and it was by killing the Lich. The shorter tunnel had been prepared beforehand for this possibility but for this to work he would need to put himself in danger.

'I'll need that thing to come to me...'

Roland was already walking towards the shorter escape tunnel that was prepared for abandoning his workshop. It was constructed with a few charges placed at the entrance, when an assailant crossed the threshold these would explode. The person running through the tunnel would not be affected and after getting to the other side they could collapse everything to not allow anyone that survived the explosion to pursue further.

The tunnel was also dug further underground than the one leading to the dungeon. The amount of earth that would cave in wouldn't be that easily blasted through even for something like this Lich. Even if the Lich somehow disabled the trap he could manually collapse the whole thing while going through it.



The runic structures for this to happen were already set there but he could also alter them to produce a different effect. This was his backup plan for when the monster got through the exploding workshop along with the divine trap. It was a hastily produced plan that he wasn't really intending to use as running away was a better option. Now that there was an army of angry skeletons on the outside coming for him, perhaps he didn't have any other choice.

It was either to face the Lich here or get massacred outside. With two tier 3 underlings of the skeletal overlord coming this way, it was a truth he needed to accept. Perhaps it would be more probable to face the injured Lich that was burning through its mana. Beings that used mana were almost defenseless without it. If it actually ran out of it, then he might be even able to take it in a head-on confrontation.

Luckily for him, monsters didn't use things like mana potions. They usually had some passive skills that were above what a person could have for mana regeneration but those also had a limit. With this in mind, he decided to give it a try, if the leader was defeated so would the army fall and he had no chance of going against a swarm of skeletons. If he didn't take this chance then the Lich would have enough time to recover.

Thus while going through his workshop he laid a trail of breadcrumbs for the berserk skeleton. It was in the process of melting down his reinforced metallic door and hopefully burning through a lot of its mana reserves while doing so. His hands were slowly healing up but his right one wasn't quite there yet.

'It went through all the golems and traps fast, it can't have that much energy left, if I can just tire it out a bit more...'

"Agni, wait for me in the tunnel, I'll be right there with you..."

"Woof..."

Agni didn't want it but after Roland was forced to break his hands and the hammer he made. Without wanting to cause any more trouble he curled up his tail and walked towards the tunnel where he was supposed to have already been. At around the same time, the reinforced door into the workshop had been broken into by the maddened Lich. Before the monster was able to take another step in though strange blocky devices flew toward its face.

These were two runic batteries that Roland had thrown there to produce a more concentrated explosion. The monster buckled a bit under the pressure but it didn't stop. This was only a distraction, right as the batteries were exploding against the monster's mana mantle a ray of light flew forward. It originated from Roland's mana cannon which was his previous way of defeating tier 3 monsters.

Even with the mana pattern being altered it couldn't get through the monster's defenses. Instead, the Lich charged forward while focusing a large portion of its energy on the defenses and some other on a large spear of bones that shot out from under where the mana blast was coming from. The walls started shaking and a lot of dust came down from the ceiling but somehow the whole place didn't collapse.

The monster was at the large cannon but it couldn't find its owner. Instead, it only saw some broken cables connected to it that were giving off mana that didn't belong to Roland. This cannon was just placed here without its creator waiting to be skewered by sharp bones. It wasn't that hard to prepare a targeting system to shoot at a Lich while he escaped and the massive amount of energy it had to produce to take care of the weapon was worth it.

While traveling through the underground lair of the runesmith the monster kept running into small traps. Scrolls with spells stuck on the walls, ground, and ceilings. Magical weapons pointed towards passages and entranceways leading it all the way towards the escape tunnel where Roland and Agni had run to.

It didn't seem that the monster was convinced that it could be stopped in any way and the continuous traps only proved its point. Soon it was blasting through the hastily closed door where it even saw a part of the armored one going through. The monster in its current state was unwilling to stop anymore. If it took some time to strategize it would have probably waited for its army to arrive but at this point, it was too far gone.

But behind that passage victory didn't await. Instead, it was another trap that this mad monster was walking in. While it was previously able to breeze through all the others it didn't realize what kind of predicament it was getting itself into. After charging in behind the next corner it found him, the target that it was after for all these months.

"You really did follow me all the way here but I'll have to disappoint you, I'm not the one that is going to die here."

Roland's left hand was holding something that was too short to be a proper weapon. Instead, it was his blacksmithing hammer that he created himself. At the moment the Lich came into view he initiated the main plan. The hammer was used on the wall to activate the runic construct that he had created. With this last hit, it finally became operational, a trick to fool the monster's mana sense.

The moment his hammer collided with the wall all the runic traces lit up in a golden-yellow glow. It was very similar to the one the monster witnessed in the cage and it instantly flipped a switch in its brain. Instead of charging forward like a mad beast, its survival had become more important but at this point, it was too late. The second trap wasn't as powerful but it filled out this corridor and could only be used after fulfilling many requirements. This included bringing down the monster to a weak enough level for it to still be affected by it.

"This last crystal isn't that powerful but it should be enough..."

Even though the monster tried turning away, its knees started to wobble. The poisonous holy energy coupled with mana depletion had taken a toll on it. The mana mantle that had reformed instantly vanished and Roland could tell that this was the endpoint for the monster. There was not much time for him either nor could he use any of his runic spells in this narrow area. Instead, the hammer that he used to activate the trap flew forward and collided with the monster's ugly skull.

Roland charged forward while trying to keep the mana around this place stable. One misstep and it would be over. He did not expect that this whole incident would end with a brawl but here he was landing a left hook on the skeleton's ribcage. With its mana gone, it was now just a regular skeleton, the bones that it was made from were strong but the holy poisoning took its toll on them.

The cracking of bones was heard by him but the monster wasn't the only one in pain. His own fists which had not been able to fully heal up were beginning to break. This momentary flinch that the pain produced was used by the Lich to lunge forward. Its body was about the same height as Rolands and its physical stats weren't that far behind as it was a high-level tier 3 enemy. Luckily for the runesmith he

was not actually fighting alone, before the monster could grapple or hit him with those boney fingers, something grabbed onto it.

Agni used his speed to run to the side of the wall and propelled himself to grab onto one of the monster's limbs. The momentum was enough to not allow it to hit Roland and instead open itself up to a counter. That one hammer wasn't the only one that he was carrying as another one was held with his already broken hand. Through magic, he had fused it tightly to allow him to clobber the monster's head with it.

So he did, his hammer rained down on the monster while Agni continued to leverage his weight on the monster. The holy energies were quickly dying down but so was the skeletal being. With a final blow that contained a mix of force mana and runic skills, the monster was finally dropped down to its knees. The golden glow around the area vanished in an instant and before going down himself Roland heard those wonderful words.

<table border="1">;

**Purgatory Lich L 176 has been slain.**

;

<table border="1">;

**Congratulations you have leveled up!**

; <table border="1">;

**Congratulations you have gained a new title!**

;

Finally, it had been done and his body flopped against the wall while sliding down. He did his utmost not to pass out in fear of the monster's body suddenly coming back to life. Even the prompt that he received didn't ease his worries but while his gaze was focused on the monster's remains he noticed something slightly shiny peeking out of the crushed skull...