

## Runesmith 333

### Chapter 333: Unhappy Nobleman.

“My Lord.”

“I told you that I didn’t want to be disturbed, Reginald. I hope for your sake that you have a good reason for this...”

“My sincere apologies but the black ravens have sent an emergency report.”

“An emergency? Could Julius be planning something? It can’t be Ivan so it should be, Tybalt?”

“It’s from the Fauland region, My Lord.”

“From that bastard? Did something happen to Emmerson? ... Just give me the report.”

“Yes, My Lord.”

The butler strutted in while holding a letter with a raven seal on it. This time around it was a tad different as instead of it being black, it was slightly crimson in coloring. Theodore Valerian the master of this place started going through the writing. His eyes traced the letters with haste as he couldn’t believe what the letter was saying. Soon enough the whole piece of paper was a crumbled-up mess which he threw into the nearby fireplace.

“How did he manage to fail? Was he this incompetent... Was there a variable? No, this doesn’t make sense... Who is this unknown Knight? Could that bastard be working with one of them...”

The man leaned back in his chair while thinking. A lot of things didn’t make sense to him, the main thing being that Arthur had acquired a Head Knight that was above Emmerson in strength. Even though he had failed his defeat should have not come that easy, a regular platinum adventurer would have not been able to achieve this task.

“Have the Ravens gathered more information, did that bastard say anything?”

“Not yet My Lord, we are waiting for their demands, many of our knights have been detained but no price has been presented to us.”

“It would be unsightly to contact them first, so wait...”

“Should I contact the accountant?”

“Do so.”

The man leaned back in his chair while continuously trying to figure out who was really behind all of this. It made no sense that his younger brother would be able to achieve something like this. There had to be someone backing him and his brothers were the obvious source of that.

His image of an honorable leader had to be kept. Even though he wanted to let every one of those knights rot, it would be a blemish on his name. After reading the report it seemed that the duel was justified but he could always attempt to deny those claims. Before he reached a decision he needed

more information, Theodore was not someone hasty, now that a variable appeared it was time to take a step back.

“Have the Ravens monitor Albrook, I want to know if any of my brothers came in contact with that Bastard, I don’t care if you have to search the main house for some proof, they could have been working together since the start!”

“Yes, My Lord.”

The butler nodded while hearing out the orders. His eyes glanced at the man before him that continued to throw out slow orders. Each time he took a little bit of time to think over his spoken words and remained calm. His build wasn’t too big nor too small and his facial features were considered quite handsome just like all of his brothers.

His nature of acting only within his means and if the information he gathered allowed him to, had brought him this far. Already the Butler could see him trying to predict a few moves ahead of the unknown opponent to figure out the puzzle that was presented to him. While the caution he displayed was the safest approach it sometimes prevented him from achieving a breakthrough.

Soon the man left with a list of orders to carry out. With a B-rank dungeon escaping their grasp this issue was becoming larger than any of them anticipated. Now with the threat of one of the other brothers getting involved, there was not much time to be wasted. However before a full report could be made, he did not see his master making an aggressive comeback.

...

‘That clears up things with Arthur but what now?’

Roland was on his way home after eviscerating Emmerson in the sanctioned duel. His talk with Arthur also ended and the only thing that he wanted to do now was to get back home. Even though the platinum adventurers were said to be coming soon, this wasn’t his concern anymore. He had left in a rush so now the only thing on his mind was the people at home. His old armor had been trashed in the fight not by his opponent but by his own runes.

Only now after the live battle test did he have enough data for his Rapid Machine Reassembly skill. It was now clear to him that it wasn’t limitless and the more it was used the more of the creation was lost. Each and every time he recreated his armor some of the materials were lost. At the end, there was nothing left to restore as the connections between the molecules holding the structures together were fully destroyed.

‘At least it leveled up a lot...’

Rapid Machine Reassembly had been the last skill he received from his Runic Engineer class. At this time it had reached level eight and was close to reaching the maximum. It was still a tier 2 skill that had been used multiple times on high-grade equipment such as the golems and his armor. Restoring so many complicated runic components while engaged in combat boosted the skill’s leveling potential.

‘I wonder if it’s going to upgrade into a new skill after level nine.’

He was not sure if this was possible but if his Overlord class was prestigious enough, there was a possibility. It was a given that all of the skills he gained as a Runesmith Lord could be turned into higher tier 3 versions of them as the class was a direct upgrade of the old one.

Considering that the Overlord class was a prestige class above the likes of Master Runesmith, there was a possibility of it also being one above a tier 3 Master Rune Engineer. It would have been a blessing if this was the case as he could see himself using this skill in the future a lot.

“Awool!”

“Huh?”

While he was immersed in his thoughts he heard a familiar howl. His home was still out of view and covered by trees. This didn't stop his fateful companion from running out to greet him. The sight of the ruby wolf that had a brush with death brought a smile to his face.

“Agni, are you feeling better?”

“Woof!”

The ruby hound was quick to jump into his master's arms. Any regular person would have their body fly back in the opposite direction due to the weight and momentum. Roland with his current stats was like a brick wall but to make things easier on his injured wolf, he decided to roll with it and landed on his back.

“Hey, stop licking my face...”

“Worf!”

Roland responded to the barrage of licks coming his way. The helmet that he usually wore had become bent out of shape to the point of him removing it. This gave Agni the perfect opportunity to slobber all over his face. Normally he would have pushed him off by now but after seeing Agni almost die had softened him up.

“Okay... that's actually enough now...”

Yet after giving his wolf a bit of leeway his face had become drenched in slobber. Soon enough he found himself pushing the overzealous wolf away while also noticing that he didn't come alone. Right behind him was a person with elongated ears that was quick to give him a shout.

“Wayland is that you?”

“Lobelia? What are you doing here?”

“What do you mean? I heard what happened and rushed over! Now that I see your face, It does fit a Knight.”

“So, you know...”

“Of course!”

Lobelia smiled while giving Roland a thumbs up. She was part of the thieves guild so it wasn't strange that she already knew the news. Something like a Head Knight appearing out of nowhere would have spread quite fast. All the underground companies that sold information would be quick to inform their patrons of this event.

The name of Wayland the Runesmith would now be changed to Wayland the Head Knight. For a moment he considered giving himself a second secret identity. During the debacle, his face was covered by his helmet. It might have been possible to still be a craftsman at day and Knight at night as long as he didn't show his face.

He had to throw that idea out of the window fast though. First of all, there would be a problem in justifying the duel. The deed to the land was still in his original name. It was possible to falsify the records with Arthur's name but it was dangerous. If any spy managed to find out, Theodore would have an excuse to retaliate.

Then also as a Knight, he needed to follow certain standards. Sometimes removing his helmet before a noble was a must. Sooner or later his identity would be exposed so he gave up on that idea. Instead, he decided to focus on getting stronger along with figuring out his standing within this world.

'Now that I think about it, who can I really trust here...'

After going through more than a year of warfare his outlook on the world had changed. The trial showed him that when going into the world of nobility and leadership one had to know their allies. He would be going into a new world filled with subterfuge, schemes, and liars. This was the thing that he was hoping to avoid after having to spend five years as a child in the Arden Household. Even to this day he was convinced that someone had sent that soldier to kill him.

'I should make a list.'

Lobelia here started wrestling around with Agni as the two headed back to his home. Along the way, they started discussing the event that transpired.

"So not much is known yet, that's good. Can I ask you a question?"

"Oh? Ask away!"

"Have you ever thought of expanding into a different field of work?"

"Different field? What do you mean?"

"I mean, one not involving the underground, something that is more legitimate."

"If you're asking this, you must have something in mind?"

Roland nodded at Lobelia as he considered her somewhat trustworthy. At least as long as he was associated with her elder sister Elodia, the half-elf would probably never do anything rash. She was an experienced tracker and had some connections. This was an excellent set of skills to be part of a noble's intelligence network.

Mary, who was Arthur's maid, was probably the leader if such a group existed in Arthur's ranks. If he could get Lobelia to switch jobs and work together with the cat maid, then he would have someone on

the inside. Arthur was one thing but Mary seemed like the type of person that would push him over a ledge if it allowed her lord to achieve his mission.

His position came with a lot of responsibilities but also contained some boons. He was now in a similar position to Knight Commander Emmerson who had his own battalion of soldiers. It was even possible for him to lead thousands of men just like in the trial that he finished. Getting a few capable people on his side was paramount to his survival. It would be strange if some of the new soldiers that they recruit were planted spies. There was also a possibility of bribes already in the works or someone already being from the enemy camp.

“Yes, I know that you dislike nobles but I think you’ll be a good fit.”

“You want me to work for that noble? But I’m not a knight.”

“There is no need for you to be a knight, you’d be part of the hidden unit.”

“Oh, an assassin!”

“Well close but not quite...”

Lobelia seemed interested for a moment but her imagination was flying all over the place. She must have heard all sorts of rumors of nobles having assassination squads ready to slice the throats of their competition. While this wasn’t that much off he wasn’t planning to put her in that kind of position unless she actually chose that life.

“We should discuss the details later, maybe bring that idiot along too, I might be able to find him a spot somewhere.”

“Even him? What are you planning?”

“I’m not sure yet...”

Roland paused for a moment as they finally arrived at his home and were greeted by both Elodia and Bernir. The two looked well but worried, the information about his duel had probably reached this place if Lobelia was here so he wouldn’t need to explain that much to them.

“Heh, does this make me a squire now?”

“It actually might... Maybe I should make you a proper sword and armor...”

“Woah, slow down boss, I was only joking... I can’t even ride a horse!”

Bernir started sweating after Roland went along with the joke. In actuality, he would need to hire a squire so having Bernir do the job instead wouldn’t be such a bad idea. Forcing him to go along into noble homes and parties would have probably been amusing but it was probably better to let him stay at the workshop as his right-hand man. Now that he was part of Arthur’s entourage, some trips outside the city were a possibility. Just like Emmerson had ventured outside to take care of things, he could be ordered to do the same.

“I’m sure we could teach you eventually.”

“I feel stupid for worrying about you.”

While he was making fun of Bernir a finger made its way toward his side. Elodia was there shaking her head at Roland who was acting like a teenager. Soon all of them made their way into his home to discuss a few things. Now that he had become the Head Knight he needed to explain how things would change.

“Sorry about that but we need to talk about what is going to happen. As you already heard, I’ve become a Knight.”

After some small talk, he gathered everyone that was around for a little strategic meeting. While he had decided to go along with the Head Knight position this didn’t mean that everyone here had to go along with it. Even the job offer he handed to Lobelia was a shot in the dark as he wasn’t really sure if she would even consider it.

“This was a decision that I made, I’ll understand if you’d wish to avoid anything that involves nobles.”

“What are you trying to say?”

Elodia asked while seeming a bit mad at what Roland was insinuating.

“I’m saying that something like what happened today could happen later and I’d understand if you’d wish to leave.”

The room only contained Bernir, Lobelia, Elodia, and Agni. There weren’t really that many people that he knew or cherished that much. Bernir and Elodia were the two that were the closest to him and if they decided that it had become too dangerous for them he would be fine with it.

“What are you even saying.”

“Woah...”

Not even a second passed as he received a kick to his shin from Elodia. Yet the only thing that had suffered damage was the same foot that kicked him as his body had become too sturdy.

“That’s a stupid question to ask, If I wanted to leave then I would have already gone.”

She wiggled around a bit after her big toe got the brunt of the attack. Bernir was the second one to speak up while laughing joyfully.

“I never liked nobles but if it’s you Boss, then I can make an exception! I also want to see the look on the faces of those union bastards... Hehe.”

He could see his assistant laughing and plotting something involving the other dwarves. Considering that he was now a Knight Commander, the dwarves would have to fear him. Previously they could have easily boycotted someone like him as he was seen as a commoner. Now they would be directly spitting on the Valerian household if they attempted the same.

“Well, you can count me in too... I might even give that offer a thought.”

Lobelia on the other hand shrugged as she didn’t feel strongly about the whole thing. Her involvement was quite small as her only concern was her sister that got hit by a Valerian Knight. Now that this knight was already dead there was not really much to do for her.

Roland nodded while discussing a few other things with the group. One of them involved bringing over a better-looking Valerian Crest and hanging it outside. With it there everyone would think twice before causing any more trouble.

'I need everyone to get stronger, that area can still be used for power leveling...'He already had a plan in his head to get a few of his new associates more power. The first one would be Mary who would probably become a good asset in the future. With some of the old tools that he needed to revisit it wouldn't be hard to get her to level hundred fifty. However, before that started his next move would involve drawing up a schematic for his newest creation.

'I might not have much time for this but I don't have to make all the parts at once...'

### **Chapter 334: Mithril Smelting.**

"It's never easy..."

"If something comes easy then it never lasts long, that's what my Ma' used to say."

"I guess she was right."

"Well, I'll go get the things from the list Boss, see you later."

Roland nodded at Bernir while staring at a schematic that he hung up on a wooden board. It was mostly a sketch of the end product that would be his armor. He stayed up half the night yesterday just to make it. After his battle with Emmerson, he discovered a few flaws in the initial design that he came up with before the battle. After activating both his Overlord's Might and Mana Overflow skills he recognized a problem.

'Even the red Mithril has a limit, I didn't account for the chaotic mana that skill gives me, then if I combine both of them at once this happens...'

On the table before him was a thin plate made of red metal. It was the alloy that he intended to use for his new creation. It was mostly made from the red mithril ore that he slowly mined from the dungeon area. Another additive was etherium which lowered the durability against physical attacks but would allow for it to be more resistant to runes.

On the plate, there was a tier 3 rune inscribed which contained the levitation spell that he previously studied. When he activated it the small rectangular plate started to slowly move up into the air while the rune glowed. When examining the process he could see that the metal was letting the mana flow exceptionally well, there was almost no deteriorative effect to speak off.

It looked to be fine when taking in his mana through his Runic Region skill which allowed him to activate runes from afar. The next part of the test was to activate the Mana Overflow skill which generated a blue hue over his body and added arcs of blue lightning. This jolted the plate slightly and he could see that the metal was having a harder time containing the charge.

Then for the last part of this test to confirm his fear he activated the Overlord's Might skill. It produced a red aura that together with the blue light of the Mana Overflow skill turned everything purple. If the flashy color of combining these two skills was the only downside then it would be fine but that wasn't the main problem.

The plate that was previously gently floating in the air started twitching around while glowing purple. This was not something it was supposed to do, the chaotic mana pattern that came from his Overlord skill was interfering with the runic components. When looking over everything with all the skills and senses he developed he could see the problem.

'This red mana is very unstable, the mana pattern is constantly changing slightly and making all the components go haywire. Even if it's just jittering slightly it could create a bigger problem in a more complicated structure.'

This new skill was hard to control and could cause havoc on his new armor which would be composed of greater runes. If during a battle he attempted to create a defensive shield and this chaotic mana caused an error, he could very well die. Mana Overflow, on the other hand, was a lot more stable by itself but when the two skills were combined it also enhanced the deteriorative effect.

The thin plate of red mithril was slowly starting to give out some smoke the longer the purple haze continued. This was the second test that he conducted now using both of the skills. Overlord's Might used by itself was slightly less damaging to the structure but it would be a shame if he couldn't use them at once.

'I might have to make the armor a lot thicker than I expected.'

The easiest way to alleviate this problem was adding some bulk to the situation. Below the floating plate, there was another metallic item that looked like a cube. It had some thickness to it and was also equipped with the same levitation spell. Before his skills ran out he activated this piece to float up. Thanks to the thickness some of that chaotic red mana was being contained better and the jittering had been halted.

"But is this the only way out..."

After finishing up with the test he glanced at the armor set on the board. If his calculations were correct then the thing would weigh more than triple that of his older creation. This could be alleviated by the heightened stats he received from his tier 3 ascension. He would still lose some speed but the added mass would make him also harder to knock down. Considering that he was still more of a ranged combatant this was fine.

"The weight aspect shouldn't really be a problem if I can use those skills, all my stats will be boosted even further and then there is also the levitation spell..."

If it was someone else then the weight might be considered an issue. It would slowly tire anyone down and affect the person's stamina that was wearing it. Roland on the other hand had some magical means to alleviate this problem. That spell in particular could be used to lessen the weight and could be used similarly to a buffing spell. With a few alterations, it could lessen the weight by fifty percent without affecting the metal at all.

"A suit custom-made for me and trash for everyone else, think this is probably the best I can come up with..."



No one else would probably be willing to use this type of armor. It was too heavy for mages that could actually utilize the runic spells and the warrior types would quickly get a migraine after using even one of those spells. It was something that only he would be able to control and this put a smile on his face.

“Won’t really need the shoulder cannons anymore which will save some space but I can also make them detachable...”

Previously when he was fighting Emmerson he decided to rip away the shoulder-mounted firearms. They did their job well but now that he had figured out the floating spell he would upgrade them into something else. The prototype that he had developed could be made with the help of lesser metals and easily replaced.

Just like before it had a cube as its base. On each flat side of this cube, there existed a propulsion rune that shot out a funnel of air and flames. At the corners of the cube, there was an iron wire going up at a forty-five-degree angle which then straightened out forward. There were four of these rods sticking out on one side which represented the front of the cube.

Roland had hoped to mirror these points to the backside but that would only complicate the operating system. As things stood now, he needed to minimize the design and cut corners. The enemies that were on the horizon could come at any moment and he had no working armor yet.

As a base for the flight system for this floating cube, he used a golem core. It was buried inside of it and had been copied from a peculiar golem monster. This type had been a floating rock with one giant eye in the front. From within this eye, it would fire beams of heated energy, very similar to what he was going with his design.

This core had been one that he examined throughout the years and now with his tier 3 abilities, copying the base system and making alterations to them wouldn’t be that hard. What would have taken him months previously now could be solved in a few days. Thanks to his multiple minds he could go through the math while going through the crafting procedure.

These things would replace the shoulder-mounted cannons and be controlled without the need for the mage hand spell. By automatically firing at his enemies and evading attacks at the same time, they were like small golem companions.

“The more of them I can make the better...”

He wasn’t quite sure what his limit would be for controlling them. Even though they would be fully functioning golems he would need his multiple mind skill to keep feeding them information. The more of them were made the more brain power he needed to relinquish.

With his current skills, it was better to make many smaller golems to augment his fighting style. Other golem makers usually concentrated on creating the best golemic creation they could. This mostly translated into huge metallic monstrosities that were almost impossible to damage. While they were tough and hit hard, they needed a lot of materials to make.

The armor that he was making was hollow inside but a golem of the same size wouldn’t. The cost of making a human-sized golem was astronomical and it also required a gigantic power source to move that type of giant body. However, even with those downsides he couldn’t say that there was no reason

for making something like that. A huge golem like that had its uses and after this was over he wouldn't be against making something larger.

Just like in the bank he visited once, a big bulky golem would be the perfect visual deterrent for potential future threats. If there was a group of three-meter-tall metal monsters guarding his shop, even those knights that appeared from the Valerian house would have probably withdrawn before attacking.

"Let's see... this should be enough but barely..."

After looking over a few other things Roland was finally ready to get the show on the road. In his hands, he was holding a dented shield with the Valerian family crest in the front. To the side, there was also a similar-looking armor that had the imprints of his fists on it. Both of these would be turned into filler for his red mithril base as he was lacking enough for the bulkier variant of his new suit of armor.

"Luckily this thing has a lot of mithril inside of it too."

What Emmerson was wearing was an expensive suit of armor made mostly out of regular mithril. It would blend well enough with the red one just affecting the fire resistance properties slightly. The rest were filler metals that he could do without and luckily there was an easy way of separating them from what he wanted.

For this occasion, he would utilize his new Forgefire Control skill. Without a proper smelter that could handle these enhanced metals, he would need to use up a lot of mana. Luckily with his current stats, this wouldn't be that bad and with the help of the Mana Overflow, skill things would be even easier.

Mithril was a staple tier 3 metal that made up the bulk of weapons at this level. It was a well-rounded material that boasted high defenses in all fields. The elemental variants also showed off how well it worked with mana. Many mages of tier 3 usually included a little bit of it into their wands and staffs. It was finally time for him to join this group of elite mithril users and cover his entire body with it.

"Luckily I won't need that sword, I'll just erase the enchantments and use it for now."

The sword that Emmerson used was also here. For the time being, it was on the side as it was still in working order. The enchantments weren't that great but after most of his gear was destroyed it was better than nothing. Even the hammer he was using had burned through a lot of its runes and would probably not last more than one other duel.

This sword had the largest quantity of mithril compared to the armor and the shield. Only due to the thinner plates was he actually able to dent it with the help of his fists. Yet even with those dents the structure was never destroyed and it never broke. It seemed that the alloy that all of this was composed of made the armor a lot softer than what he was looking for.

'I need to separate the other metals from the mithril or my armor could end up the same.'

Mithril had a high melting point, it would take quite a lot of heat to soften up before treatment. It was actually really hard to get to this melting point that turned it to liquid and made it very difficult for molds. This was a stark contrast to something like Adamantium which was one of the strongest metals that this world could offer.

That one was many more times resistant than Mithril but also sometimes simpler to work with. A craftsman only got one chance to work with it as after the ore was brought to a melting point it was impossible to repeat the process. After hardening once, Adamantium would become unable to be worked on in a regular way. It was practically indestructible after the process was done correctly but it had to be all done in one go.

To get what he wanted out of the suit of armor and the shield he decided to put it through a Liquation process. Thanks to his identification skill he was aware of what the alloy was made of and the melting temperatures that he needed to apply. The Mithril that he desired had the highest resistance to heat and would be the last to melt away. Thus he just needed to heat all of it up below the melting point of mithril to receive a pure ingot afterward.

This process was quite simple and known to him as he had used the same way to purify the red mithril ingots previously. Thus he just needed to repeat it with the suit of armor and shield. Similar to Adamantium, after the initial ore was processed mithril was harder to work on. Thus to enhance the old smelter that he previously used he needed to add some of his own heat with the Forgefire Control skill.

Finally, he got to work by first stripping all of the plate armor from things like straps and rivets. Some of the parts that didn't cover critical locations weren't made of the metal that he wanted so they could just be tossed away from the get-go. What remained was then placed onto a slope that was under a large furnace. The angle would push the liquified ore down into an ingot mold that he could use later.

Thus he initiated the process and added his mana to the mix to get things going. The armor pieces started glowing red and slowly but surely liquifying before his eyes. This entire workshop quickly became filled with immense levels of heat that was then quickly suctioned outside by runic fans installed in the walls. All the heat was removed from this main workshop and then utilized elsewhere.

Using steam was a valid way of generating some extra energy. While he mostly used wind turbines now, he fixed up the place to generate a small amount of extra charge through a steam generator. All the heat that was generated during smelting could be used to boil water and make steam.

Due to the slant on which the metals were resting the liquified parts started pouring down. It started out with small red droplets but soon enough the ingot mold was becoming filled out. The process was slow and grueling but it was necessary for the creation of his armor.

With time all of the impurities were removed and he could turn up the heat. Now that almost nothing but mithril was left inside he could create separate ingots for his initial purpose. Luckily these fantasy metals were different from regular iron and steel. Even if they went through multiple melting sessions they would retain their qualities.

"Oh, are you finished Boss?"

"Bernir? Did you get them?"

"Hehe, yes I did, you should have seen their faces when they saw the letter!"

"Would have been nice if I could have been there."

After spending several hours down in the workshop Roland was able to create the mithril ingots from Emerson's armor. Bernir on the other hand returned with a few useful tools. They were placed by him

on the workbench and spread out for him to see. The first tool that he grabbed was a regular smithing hammer.

“Luckily our dwarven friends had some mithril tools out for sale.”

“Yes, very lucky, for us!”

What Bernir had done was taken an official letter to one of the dwarven workshops in the city. Now that Roland was a Head Knight he could use the Valerian seal for various reasons. This day he decided to strongarm the Union dwarves into selling mithril tools to him. To save on time and resources he decided to not make his own set just yet. His new position made it impossible for the dwarves to refuse if he asked for it now.

“These aren’t bad, they had to have been made by a good Master Blacksmith.”

“Aye.”

“Well then, grab the tongs and help me out.”

“Aye, Boss!”

Bernir’s eyes were sparkling like mad. Ever since he found out that they would be making a runic suit of armor made of mithril his assistant was restless. He was truly a craftsman at heart. Being able to assist in the creation of something this grand was an honor for the half-dwarf. Roland could already see him rubbing it in during one of his visits to the pub.

“We will focus on the gauntlets first...”

With an unknown amount of time remaining he decided to focus on his hands. At least with a set of gauntlets, he would be able to cast a few devastating spells. Afterward, it would be either the breastplate component of boots. Soon after a little break the forge was turned back on and the time for hammering was upon him.