

## Runesmith 337

### Chapter 337: Small Payback.

"I bring some ill tidings."

"What happened? Weren't ye suppose to close that deal? what's th' hold-up?"

"Weel sir, it seems that th' City Laird decided to not sell us th' rights nor does he wantae rent it."

"How come he wouldn't, did ye offer him th' usual cost? Does he expect moar?"

"Na, he wouldn't even budge when ah showed him th' premium prices, Ah think he wants to keep th' exclusive rights to th' mines... or does he want somethin else?"

Dunan was having a conversation with one of the other dwarves that helped them manage the union branch here. Ever since the new part of the dungeon was discovered along with that mine, they wanted to get their hands on it. While the dungeon was a neutral zone where everything could happen, they didn't want to battle against adventurers while mining.

This neutrality could be taken away if the city lord sold them or rented out the mine. With them having the right papers they could send in the Valerian soldiers after anyone that attempted to take materials from this mine. Without them, they would have to establish a large protective force to keep their miners safe. Now on the other hand, it looked like they wouldn't even be able to do that.

"If he wants to keep th' rights fur his-self, does he intend to establish his ain mining company?"

"It does seem so... Ah bet that runesmith hud something to do wi' it. It can not be a coincidence."

"Wayland..."

Dunan recalled the recent events which involved this person. He had been announced to have been actually a Knight, the Head Knight even. This didn't make sense to the dwarf, how could a runesmith become a nobles knight, was he really a runesmith to begin with?

They had been dealing with him for years now and their attempts of cutting him off from the market had been unsuccessful. Someone had been supplying the man with materials for his shop that was able to survive. The magical weapons that he supplied were real though, so either he had some type of runesmithing class that was unique or someone else was making all of them.

Now that he was ousted as a Knight this all made more sense. It was possible for this ploy between the City Lord and the Runesmith to have been decided years ago. Perhaps the City Lord knew that he would arrive in this city and had his Head Knight establish a foothold before he arrived.

Dunan was aware of all the sales numbers and they were a bit behind the other cities. The Valerian house also had its own auction house that sometimes sold runic items that were seemingly produced by this runesmith. They lost some market share due to his involvement and the magic store outside the city had become quite an eyesore. Now they couldn't even stop him from directly getting their wares as he was part of the ruling faction.

"That mist be it, thay planned a' o' it 'n' wanto profit o' th' mines!"

The dwarven leader slammed his fist onto the nearby workbench while scowling. Without those papers, they couldn't do anything and how things were going, they probably would be pushed out even further. It was becoming clear that the lord of this city had taken Wayland's side. Their direct competitor here could not be touched. This wasn't even the worst part of it, if the man wanted he could make things really difficult for all of them.

"Sur, we have a problem... Th' human runesmith is 'ere..."

"What now?"

While Dunan was trying to think about who he could bribe to get this sorted out another member from the smithy burst into the room. It was one of the dwarves that worked in the nearby store that he decided to visit today. After hearing that Wayland was there, he started getting a foreboding feeling. Was he here to pay them back for what they did to him?

"Calm down, Ah will handle this."

Dunan was part of the upper echelon of craftsmen here. Previously he thought that this place had been a dead end but after the dungeon's rank increased to B there was hope again. The union was already talking about sending out a master craftsman to help with the infusion of platinum adventurers.

If there were enough of them in this region, then they needed to create equipment for them to buy. It was a chance for him to learn from a real master and then later advance to a master blacksmith himself. However, it would look like he was incompetent at managing the union branch for allowing the mine to slip from their hands. He might not care if it had been a long-lasting ruse thought up by the humans. Thus, he rushed to see what this human was planning, perhaps he could turn this whole thing around and everyone had their price.

After arriving at the shop he saw the man of the hour, Wayland the current Head Knight of Arthur Valerian. Dunan wasn't that well-versed in the ways of nobility but it was clear that this person carried a lot of prestige. Besides having the backing of the city lord he was also a tier 3 class holder that recently pummeled another strong Knight Commander almost to death. He was still just a regular blacksmith and a merchant, he knew that antagonizing this man was now out of the question.

"Whit does he want?"

At the moment he was just standing around the large store owned by the Union of Dwarves. Dunan was quick to pull one of the clerks to the side to get an answer.

"I don't know, He just came in and started snooping around the smithing tool section."

His appearance was also different, he was wearing some type of armored shirt with the Valerian crest over his heart. The face that he used to cover up with armor or a robe was out in the open. Some of the clients were constantly staring at it as the man's face was appealing to look at. Dunan didn't want to say it but he did fit the image of a knight which was probably his true identity from the beginning.

The dwarf tried remembering all the interactions that he had with this man. His mind couldn't recall anything pleasant as he usually just made snarky remarks whenever they interacted. There was nothing that he could recall that wasn't an attempt of aggravation and this was even without all the sanctions

they brought upon him. Nevertheless, if he had backing from the city lord from the beginning, then their resources spent on bribes were ill-spent.

He had been able to get resources through Arthur from the start, they had been getting played from the beginning. At least this was the scenario that played out in his head that made the most sense. Perhaps now that the cat was out of the bag they could remedy the situation.

“Dunan was it? Could you stop staring? It’s becoming uncomfortable, don’t worry I won’t stay here for more than I have to.”

“Aye?”

Before he could even utter the word to the man he was spotted eyeing him from behind a corner. Instantly he made himself noticeable to not seem like some type of common miscreant.

“A don’t ken whit ye mean, this is ma shop, why wouldn’t Ah look at th’ folk that comes ‘ere?”

“Is that so, then that’s fine.”

Even though he didn’t want to sound arrogant he instantly blurred out some words that sounded off. He was used to talking down to people thanks to all the backing and even nobles couldn’t look down on the power that the Union carried with it.

“I’ll take this.”

“That?”

“Yes, this.”

“That’s not fur sale...”

Dunan’s eyes become larger as he spotted the item that this fellow wanted to take. In hopes of getting on the master blacksmith’s good side, he was already assembling the right workshop. The tier 2 tools that they had gathered would be ill-equipped for such a prestigious craftsman’s hands. Thus he was sure to call up some favors and also emptied his purse to get a few things sent here.

One of those things was a large anvil that was made from mostly myhril a very resistant material. Yet this wasn’t all, this smithing tool had one more thing inside of it that made it special and this was orichalcum. Orichalcum was a very rare metal, much more than the myhril it was mostly composed of.

Thanks to the inclusion of this metal the anvil would not conduct mana as well. This meant that during the process of enchanting the deterioration factor would be lower by a substantial value. If the anvil was fully made from orichalcum it would not allow any mana to pass through it. This was the bane of any magic user as it had an almost full immunity to magical effects and attacks. It was a true anti-magic metal that even tier 4 mages would not stand a chance against.

Yet the biggest downside of this metal was the rarity. Assembling even one set of armor made out of orichalcum would empty the coffers of any noble. Dunan wasn’t sure if even one of these armor sets existed in the whole kingdom. While a suit of armor like this was resistant to all types of magic it also couldn’t be enchanted in any way. Thus it lacked uses besides anti-magical combat and when going against warrior types, it would lose much of its worth.

"It's not? Don't worry, I know what it's made of. I will pay the usual market price for this piece."

"Ah said that tis not fur sale! Ah ya want an anvil, then pick oot another one."

Dunan started getting annoyed. Even though he knew that he should not talk back to this person, he could not let himself get bullied. This store was connected to a workshop where a lot of craftsmen worked. They were all now peeking out to see what all the commotion was about. To someone as prideful as Dunan this was the worst possible situation.

"Oh, so you intend to continue? I see how it is but two can play this game."

Wayland replied while slowly walking closer. His stature was that of a blacksmith, even though he wasn't as stocky as a dwarf he was still quite muscular. When paired with his height of over one hundred ninety centimeters, he towered over Dunan.

"A rumor has been going around the city."

"A rumor?"

"Yes, my men told me that cursed weapons have made it inside the city gates."

"Cursed weapons? A dunno whit yer talking about. Ye will not fin' ony cursed items in mah shop."

"Are you sure about that? Can you vouch for everyone involved in the union? Do you really want my men to search through your wares? If we find any amount of necrosium anywhere near your union's workshop, then you know what will happen, right?"

"Are ye threatening me?"

"Threatening? I don't know, am I? Just giving a good friend some advice"

The human started whispering while getting closer. His palm landed on Dunan's shoulder and instantly he started feeling a strange pressure wash over his whole body. It was as if a pile of sandbags were weighing him down.

'This bastard, even if he doesn't fin' anythin' a'm sure he'll just claim he did.'

The dwarf lived long enough in this world to know what this was about. Even if nothing was found it wouldn't be hard for Wayland or any of the Valerian soldiers to plant the necrosium in one of their warehouses. Dunan wasn't even sure if that would have been necessary as he had been turning a blind eye to some of his workers. It was possible that some of his people had some dirt on them and launching an investigation into all of their dealings would be devastating.

"A friend... y-yes, we ur guid friends, ye 'n' me. Ye kin tak' th' anvil."

"You've made the right decision, there should be enough in here to cover the cost."

"Aye...this should be enough."

Dunan didn't want to spend any more time arguing with this person. Losing the anvil would set him back for a small amount of time. He was also getting gold coins in return which he could just spend to order a

new one. Pushing back the creation of the new workshop was better than ending up in the city dungeon for smuggling cursed weapons and materials.

“Good, I’ll be taking the anvil with me then.”

“Ah, aye ah will have someone carry it over.”

“That’s fine, I can carry it myself.”

The onlookers along with Dunan were baffled by how easily he was able to pick up the heavy anvil. This smithing tool looked similar to any other anvil but it was much denser and heavier. Its weight was well over a hundred kilograms and was easily picked up as if it was a bag of groceries. It became clear that the strength of a tier 3 Knight was nothing to scoff at and his decision of selling it off was the correct one.

...

‘That relieved a lot of pent-up emotions, maybe I should have taken something else besides that anvil?’

Roland was on his way back home from attending a meeting with Arthur. He had tried explaining a few things about the runic city project but he wasn’t sure if he sold it well. Retaining the mine was something he hoped for and thus he came up with a way to move Arthur. The young man clearly needed money and a way to stand out so he expected him to think this matter through. There was a lot of money that could be made along with many new innovations. While there were magical cities out there they didn’t really push their innovations into the city’s infrastructure.

Mages tended to gather around in large academies to do magical research and practice their spells. Then later after gathering enough merits and money, they would attempt to establish something like a mage tower. One of such towers even existed back in Edelgard but it was out of reach of the commoner district that he was a part of. No one really wanted to bother making innovations like affordable magical heating or water purifiers. Instead, they continued to play around with spells just enamored in the pursuit of true power.

While all the things that he wanted to implement had already been created before, they had one big downside. They were costly to produce and also required a mage to work together with a competent craftsman. What ended up happening was usually a disaster with not much progress being made and both sides expecting to get reimbursed for their time.

Hiring such a dysfunctional worker force was quite a headache for any noble that wanted to invest in magical innovation. Thus instead of spending the money on new research, they just used older technology that had already been tried out. This was kind of where he wanted to put himself in. Creating affordable runic devices that increased the standard of living and generated taxes. It would be something that every noble would like to sink their teeth in and it would raise the happiness level of the citizens.

This was quite the endeavor though and he would probably not be able to do it alone. It made him think about potential help. With a large Dwarven Union presence in the city, he was even considering them for a moment. Yet after remembering what they did to him in the past, he decided to throw this notion away. There were other guilds that hired craftsmen that could perform the task, like the builder guild

that also helped him assemble his home. It was easy to work with them and as long as they got paid, they didn't ask many questions.

After his mind turned to the Union he remembered the lack of anvils in his workshop. Both his gauntlets had been already created. The sabaton element for his feet had also been assembled but the last anvil was broken before the creation of his grieves. There was one place selling anvils around where he was walking and thus he ended up at Dunan's workshop and store.

'Nah, better not push my luck, If I intimidate them too much they might do something drastic and I don't need more enemies before getting that armor set done. I did not expect to find orichalcum here, this must be my lucky day.'

The anvil was placed over his shoulder as he strutted through the city. The anti-magical component would disperse all of the energies from his runesmithing blows without damaging the metal. This thing would last him for quite some time and would have probably required a long waiting period if he attempted to buy it himself.

'The only downside was the money, I'm almost broke...'

All of the money he saved up had gone into restoring his home from the Lich attack and now into buying out the proper tools. If this continued he would start asking Arthur for a larger payout. The thing that could alleviate this problem was one proper dungeon run into the area filled with tier 3 monsters.

'I don't think I'll be able to sleep well for a while...'

Roland shook his head while going through the main gate. There he was saluted by all the guards which he would need some time to get used to. Things were looking good for him but how long this would stay like this depended on his skills and was a truth that he was aware of.

### **Chapter 338: Named Set.**

"This material really isn't bad, didn't know the dwarves were hiding on to it..."

"See Boss, I told you this would be much better than using a chain-mail. Luckily those bastards can't deny us anymore but they seemed even more docile than usual, did you say something to them?"

"I just gave them a small pep talk while picking up the anvil."

Roland shrugged a bit at Bernir's inquiry as he didn't want to let it slip that he was already abusing his new position. While they were talking about the Union of Dwarves, it was still a slippery slope. If he let his new position get to his head then he would not be any better than the people that wrong him. While he didn't want to be petty, he did like the payback he got by threatening one of the Union branch leaders when he grabbed the anvil from the shop.

"If you say so... but how is it?"

"It allows for better finger movement without decreasing the bulk at all, won't need to make any other adjustments."

His hand was inside of his new gauntlet and thanks to a new innovation it was pretty good for gripping. Some space between the finger joints would always be uncovered to allow for a person to move their fingers in their full range of motion. The more metal put in place the worse this range got.

The simpler gauntlets were usually just metallic on the upper portion with a leather glove fitted underneath. The same was for his early armor designs but now he wished to encase everything in his alloy. However, this was not such an easy task if he decided to go with the old technology but there was a way out and this was liquid metal.

The Dwarven Union was stocking up on rare materials lately and this became apparent after he encountered the orichalcum anvil. With it, he was able to finish up the other foot and now could start connecting the pieces. The original plan was to use a chain shirt to go under it but now thanks to this strange liquid alloy, there was no need for it.

Roland had heard about the technology before but it was not something readily available to him. This combination of alchemical techniques along with smelting metals was not something that he could do himself. Thanks to Bernir hanging around the union stores in search of better tools this topic came up. Then it was just as simple as taking enough to cover his body parts in it.

“This is pretty ingenious, it just hardens around my body and keeps the elasticity of a leather glove.”

“Yeah, good that we caught on before everything was finished.”

“Remember to remind me to give you a raise later.”

Bernis started grinning after hearing that and considering what the two were through he needed a little bonus. His wife was also in a bit of a problematic situation due to her belly recently expanding in size to the point of it affecting her work. For the time being she was to remain in the city. Normally no one would give her any coin for not working as in this world people expected the man of the house to cover this part. Luckily, their boss was a person from modern times that believed in maternity leave.

The alchemical alloy they were using was called Silvergrace alloy. The name stemmed from the silver coloring and how gracefully it allowed people to move in it. Its weight was slightly above a chain vest which added even more weight to the current design.

How it worked was very simple. First, a mold needed to be formed and filled with the concoction, after sticking his hand through and using some mana the alloy would start to harden to create an elastic shell. This shell would be similar to leather but more resistant to outside shocks. It could be made relatively thick to boost the defensive ranking without losing that much elasticity.

It was the perfect material to make use of his repairing skill. It was an alloy so it could even allow him to integrate some lesser runes or more traces. However, it wasn't the best material for rune crafting as it would start melting and losing its properties rather quickly when coming in contact with runic enchantments. It did its job as a filler material to keep the joint areas protected.

‘Should I make a whole suit from this instead of splitting it up into parts...’

When interacting with this new material he remembered things from the modern world, in particular wetsuits. It was possible to create something that would fit over his whole body and would integrate him into the new armor much better than any separate part could.

'I'll just need to create simple runic traces over the whole structure and it won't hinder my mana from going into the armor. For now, it'll be easier to make it separate from the armor but later on integrating it fully into it might be the better solution.'

To cut corners he decided to go with the wetsuit idea and leave a part in the back open for him to slip in. With a large backplate protecting his rear, this small weak point wouldn't really matter. He would be fully surrounded by metal from all sides and perhaps in the future a sturdier version of this silvery suit could be made. He might even be able to integrate thinner armor onto it so even if the outer shell was destroyed, he would have some semblance of runic spells to work with.

Normally introducing changes to the design so late into the build wasn't advised. Yet he could not deny the advancement this new suit could bring to his fighting capabilities. It also opened a new field of research that he needed to look into and presented something that he was lacking.

The methods that he was using now were above others in certain places but in others, he was trailing behind. While he didn't think that any Master Runesmith was above him in crafting runes, he was still inexperienced in the basic constructing methods of this world. There were still things that he could learn and perhaps more research was in order.

Thus hours continued to wind down as he along with his assistant resumed their work. Some time was spent to make the human-sized mold to fit Roland's whole body but it was a necessity for this procedure. After being encased by it, Bernir just needed to pour the silvery liquid inside while he focused mana around his body.

The alloy would react to this veil of mana and begin to harden while the rest remained liquified. This allowed for the creation of a much less precise mold and would even work if he just submerged his entire body in this magical liquid metal. The end product fit around his body quite nicely but there were some parts that needed to be smoothed down. Yet the result was something that he could work with.

Soon more days passed and the assembly of the other parts could continue. With the platinum adventures around the burden on his shoulders could be lessened. He was aware that potential spies had already started going through everything. Just like those knights were informed of the defenses at his shop without him knowing of it, it would probably be the same a second time. There was already one solution to this problem but first came the armor.

The parts to protect his shoulders, thighs, and then chest were all made soon after. The limited amount of myhril alloy that he created was all spent until almost none of it remained. The last element to fashion was the helmet which would be larger than the previous iteration. With the increase in bulk of all the other parts, there was a bit more space to work with.

The visor was expanded to cover more of his eyes and to also allow the implementation of a better-integrated monitor. Through it, he would be able to use his radar and take better advantage of the enhanced sensors. For a moment he considered ditching an outer visor and encasing his whole helmet in metal. Golemic eyes could be placed in strategic locations instead to act as live cameras. This idea had to be ditched due to the lack of picture clarity. Before he acquired some tier 3 golem monster eyes to remedy this issue the regular visor design would need to be implemented instead.

"We did it!"



“Kind of...”

“Uh... what do you mean boss?”

“It’s just an empty armor, before the operating system gets fully integrated it won’t be much better than regular enchanted armor.”

“Ugh...”

“It’s fine, you can go home, I don’t need you for that, you did enough already.”

Roland glanced at Bernir who was down on the ground. The fact that he was able to work through all of the craftings with a workaholic like him told a lot about his tenacity. He didn’t sleep much and had to use several stamina potions to get himself through all of this. His body was probably exhausted but he lasted through all of it.

“Are you sure boss, I can at least stay to help you get into this bulky thing.”

“It’s fine, as you can see I don’t really need more hands as I already have multiple ones.”

Ever since using the mage hand spell in the recent fight he had become proficient in using them. With a small enhanced runic version that he could integrate into this new silver armor suit, he could generate very dexterous mana hands. With their and his multiple minds skill he could act as his own assistant and putting on this new armor wouldn’t be an issue.

“I see... but could you stop doing that, it looks eerie...”

Bernir was looking at a bunch of floating armor parts that Roland lifted up in the air. Due to his lack of mana sense and basic crafting profession, he was not good at seeing low-cost mana spells like this. It looked like vague, flashing, and transparent blue hands were creepily holding up all the items in the vicinity.

“You’ll get used to it, now go home and call me if you need any help but you’ll need to wait for that raise, we’re a bit in the red this month...”

“Aye, Boss I know.”

Finally, it was time to get into the nitty-gritty of it all. While the shell of his new product had been constructed there was still more work to be done. All of the runes were in place but they still needed a functioning system to run it all. The old one could be used as a base but needed to be modified to fit the greater runes. Being able to switch through the various spells fast wasn’t the only thing he wanted to implement. With something like the levitation spell becoming possible a lot more calculations were in order.

‘At least I have something to work with now. Things outside had become quiet but I don’t have that much time left before Theodore’s people arrive.’

While tinkering through the system he reminded himself of the issue with the other Valerian brother. After Emerson’s defeat, he was given off for ransom and his master Theodore decided to pay up. This meant that a company of knights would be arriving to pick him up. This of course meant trouble for him and anyone involved in the incident.

'It would be stupid for them to attempt another open duel but I can't discount it.'

It wasn't probable but there was a chance that things could go wrong. What if three Knight Commanders appear to grab Emerson and then decide to team up? Without this armor being fully functional he would probably not stand a chance. If they actually figured out that Arthur lacked any trump cards, it could be over.

'There shouldn't have been enough time to go through everything though and the Platinum adventurers will be there too, it should be fine.'

Roland tried to lessen the burden on himself by remembering the backup that he now had. Outright fighting between the forces that belonged to the Valerian household inside of the city was not something probable. Arthur's father would probably not let them be for making his family look like savages. Theodore or the other brothers wouldn't do anything hastily.

'They won't do anything out in the open but this just complicates things...'

Now that he exposed himself he had become a target. It was possible for a lot of trouble to come his way. He was the Head Knight and a hurdle for the other Valerian successors. Taking him out would be one of the main moves that Arthur's siblings could go after.

'I'm sure someone will try to make contact with me, I need to prepare for that occasion. If this thing explodes on me, then I'm done for...'

While thinking about the future he placed his hands on the chest piece of his new crimson creation. The metal had a dark red tint and right in the middle housed a crystal. Instead of the replaceable magic gems that he used with the previous model he now had an integrated concentration point. There was a tradeoff as after firing once the ray of magical energy would need some time to cool down.

To the side, he had two of the square cubes that he designed to replace his shoulder cannons. His naming sense wasn't the best so he decided to take things from his memory and call them bits for the time being. With the dawn of spatial magic, they could be stored inside a cavity in the backplate. With a simple spell, he could then allow them to escape for a surprise attack. For the time being he was limited to the size of his armor, thus storing a whole spider golem within a spatial space at their current size wasn't quite possible.

The rush to finish this product before visitors arrived intensified. He continued to work tirelessly through the night as always and finally, it was finished. The first real creation that he made after ascending to this new level of power. Due to his inexperience, he was aware that this was only the best item that he could make at the moment. The silvergrace alloy made him realize that there were things outside that needed to be researched. This gave him hope for continuous growth and an ability to tackle difficult tasks that could arise in the future.

'I just need to connect these traces and it should be complete...'

Roland performed runecrafting on all the separate parts beforehand. At the end he just needed to connect a few runic traces and fiddle with the integrated operating system to finish the product. After getting the basics going he finally connected all the missing parts to let the mana structure function

correctly. Yet just as he was about to get inside this new suit of armor, he was surprised by a strange prompt that he never expected.

**Congratulations on creating a unique armor set, please give it a name.**

“Huh?”

At first, he wasn't sure what to make of it, he had never seen something like this before. After the message was over he was greeted with an empty screen. It remained there without moving as if it wanted him to do something with it.

“It wants me to name the armor set? Has this happened before?”

In truth, Roland didn't really have much experience with high-level equipment. Emmerson's suit of armor was the first true tier 3 item that he ever got his hands on. Everything else that he interacted with was either on another person like the platinum adventurers, locked away in the store, or used against him by the abyssal cult.

“Wait, aren't there some named legendary items in the kingdom somewhere? Or like the church, think the robe the pope wears is supposed to have a name...”

When thinking about it he realized that there were certain legendary named weapons and armor in certain places. He read about them when he was younger and didn't really think much of it after getting integrated into this world. Perhaps his assumption that these people just liked giving cool names to swords was wrong. Considering that a system existed here that gave things titles and for performing certain tasks then naming stuff was a possibility.

‘A name for this armor set? I'm not good with names...’

When glancing at the crimson armor parts on the table some names started flashing through his head.

‘Crimson Armor? No that doesn't sound right... The Bulky Red? Runic Avenger? Wait, if I make a new set, would I have to name it again? If that's the case then how about...’

“Rune Mark I?”

**Registering the name 'Rune Mark I'**

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

After blurring out the name he realized his mistake. The system was just waiting for him to speak out some words before instantly applying them to his suit of armor. Yet he didn't really mind, the simplicity behind the name would allow him to keep track of all the named iterations of his wares if they actually continued to pile up. Without thinking much about that part he activated his advanced analyzing skill. To his surprise, there was a purpose for the naming.

“It gives the set a bonus if all parts are worn together?”

Thus Roland's first greater set was created and finally, he could truly take a step into the realm of tier 3 class holders.