

Runesmith 37

[Chapter 37 Testing new items.](#)

A group of gray goblins was just standing around the remains of some kind of deer looking creature. This creature was at least twice the size of what a regular deer would be and it had razor-sharp antlers to go with it. It seemed to not have gone down without a fight as four dead goblins were right next to its corpse.

One of the humanoid monsters was a head taller than the rest and was holding on to a rusty longsword. It was apparent that it was the leader of this group with one glance. He shouted something in the goblin language at the other members of its tribe. It looked quite angry and the other started backing away from the monster's remains. He obviously wanted first dibs on the juicy meat, his mouth was already salivating and the drool was running down the monster's chin.

Before it could sink its yellowy teeth into the moist meat it noticed something. It quickly turned around and swung its longsword upwards. This was just in time to smack a blue bolt of magic energy to the side. The evolved goblin's muscular hand trembled a bit and the longsword shook violently as it successfully defended itself.

The other goblins started shouting while swinging their own rusty weapons around. This wasn't the end of the magical attacks, soon another bolt of energy flew towards the monsters now hitting one of the regular goblins. Its head exploded into chunks of meat as it fell down to the ground. The assault continued and bolts of blue energy rained from above while the monsters panicked.

The evolved variant was smart enough to take cover behind some trees. It peeked out while looking for one of the magical attacks. Soon he saw it going through one of its tribe members. Through one of its abilities, it was able to pinpoint the position that this attack came from by its flight path. It gave out a warcry and charged forward, the rest of the scared goblins quickly recovered and followed after.

With the enemy position getting closer and closer it gave chase. It had fought many ranged opponents before, it knew that it needed to close the distance before it could gain victory. It used the trees and the other goblins as shields and pushed towards from where these blue orbs of light were shooting from.

Soon enough it finally spotted its prey. It was a single person in a black robe standing up on a ledge that was looking down into the forest. The being looked human and it had two strange items in its hand. The goblin leader saw the human point one of the things he was holding towards him. The moment he did it gave off blue light and one of those energy missiles flew out. He quickly dodged to the side to evade it but it grazed past his shoulder and produced a wound.

The goblin monster's eyes turned red after it felt pain and it gave out a massive warcry. The human moved his other hand forward and shot off another spell. The magic bolt connected with the rusty sword yet again causing it to finally snap but it couldn't stop the goblin's rage-filled charge.

It bolted forward activating some kind of skill that increased its speed and turned its skin blood red. The human in the robe above the ledge flinched slightly before firing off another magic spell that connected with the enraged monster. It didn't manage to slow it down at all as it bounced off its now red skin.

The goblin bolted forward with large strides, the steep ledge didn't seem like it would be able to stop its approach. The moment it started climbing the human started moving back into the forest. The goblin wouldn't let this enemy flee, it felt like it had it cornered and just needed to get closer for the kill.

It arrived on the top of the ledge in a matter of seconds, the skill it used had boosted its stats by a staggering amount. When it got to the top it could see the human backing away against a tree. It had him cornered, there was no escape for its prey! The human brought out some other item and while the goblin was charging created some kind of barrier. The monster didn't care, it would rip a flimsy magic shield like that with its bare hands.

At least that's what was supposed to happen. Instead while charging forward, it stepped onto something. It felt like recently dug up ground with something soft underneath it. Soon after an explosion occurred, the blast shot upwards while concentrating mostly on the creature's foot. It was blown clean off while the monster tumbled, the shield that the human put up was enough to protect him from the blast.

The monster was missing a foot along with the part of its leg. It couldn't move and its skin returned to the usual gray color. The human without approaching took out some kind of parchment and pointed it at the monster. It couldn't react or move with the missing leg as a sizzling hot arrow of fire energy connected with its body. The mage continued using the scrolls on the evolved monster till it drew its last breath.

Roland looked at the dead monster in front of him while panting. He came to this goblin-infested forest yet again to test out his new weapons. He didn't expect to find a tier 2 monster here though. After killing the hobgoblin his goblin killing title evolved into 'Goblin Slaughterer'

This forest was still dangerous and left alone by the city lord and his army. There weren't any farms in these mountains so people didn't bother with clearing up the goblin infestation unless someone complained. This mostly came from traveling merchants that sometimes got attacked while traveling towards the city. Most of the time the monsters didn't leave the forest and just hunted other monsters or animals for food.

He was quite far on the ledge before he fired off his spell. He thought that it might have been just an evolved tier 1 variant of the goblin from way over here. Instead, it turned out to be a hobgoblin. Luckily it was still low leveled for a tier 2 so he managed to somehow defeat it. He did this by preparing traps around his casting area as he was afraid that some other monsters might try sneaking upon him.

He placed spell scrolls on the ground and covered them with a small amount of dirt. This special scroll when activated laid dormant until pressure was applied to it. This was an improved version of his explosion rune that he used to detonate the mine wall back when he was stuck in it. There were peculiar spells that could be triggered like this. He just needed to isolate the components responsible and then add it to other runes. He couldn't actually pre-program them yet.

This wasn't the item he was here to test though. The hobgoblin saw those items as he was using them from afar. This 'weapon' looked a bit peculiar, it had a regular looking handle with a flat almost rectangular shaft above it. It looked similar to a hand paddle.

Yes, this was a sort of 'wand' that Roland had created. It more or less looked like a paddle meant for spanking with intricate rune designs on the shaft part. He had inscribed the mana bolt spell on two of these weapons to test how much they would last. They were made from bronze as it was easier to work with.

He had fired tens of mana bolts towards the goblins and he was now down to about 30% of his mana. The makeshift bronze magic wands worked but at a price. This was the easiest attacking spell that was out there but it needed a massive amount of mana to be cast.

He needed 75 mana points to perform this spell through this wand he made. The spell couldn't be spammed too fast but if he had two wands he could use them interchangeably. He had fired off about 10 mana bolts with each wand and killed over 10 of the normal goblins along with this hobgoblin.

For the leader, he needed some of his runic scrolls. This new weapon already saved him a lot of money. He would need to use up 20 scrolls to get a similar effect. Thanks to this he saved a lot of money and resources. Bronze was also quite cheap compared to magic ink and special scroll paper.

The remaining goblins had run away after their leader had been slain and none of them even tried climbing up to where Roland was standing now. He used this time to examine one of his mana bolt weapons. He could see some deterioration to the runic inscriptions already and he knew that after 10 more the wand would stop working.

This was normal for runic equipment made from regular metal. If he made them from iron he would only slightly increase the uses up to a 30. A weapon like this could be repaired and the runecrafting process would use up less mana.

'I need to lower the mana usage on these...'

Roland rubbed his chin and then attached both of the paddle wands to his belt. He was still in the forest so he needed to be vigilant. He went through the hobgoblin and took the broken longsword hilt from its remains, he could smelt it down for parts. He also removed quite a large marble-sized mana stone, it would fetch a nice price if he sold it.

There was also another use for it. He held the shiny gem between his thumb and pointing finger. He could see the mana crystal slowly absorbing the ambient mana in the surroundings even now.

He knew that there was some kind of way of embedding these mana stones into runic or enchanted weapons. An item with a mana crystal in it would be far stronger than one without it. It would also act as a battery allowing people with low mana to activate any inscribed spells more and at a lower cost. The problem was that he had no idea how to do this. He would need to either find an instruction manual or get a weapon with a monster core in it and examine it.

He peeked to the forest where the other goblins were. Their small bloodied bodies were everywhere. Soon some other monsters would probably smell all this fresh meat and come on over. He didn't feel like going down there to take a couple of mana stones was worth the hassle. His agility wasn't that high and he didn't think he could outrun a pack of monster hounds either. The goblins weren't the only creatures living in this forest and he had other ways of earning money.

Roland had already activated the detonating scrolls and he couldn't defuse them. They would stop working after an hour but he couldn't just leave them there. He stepped away and grabbed a couple of rocks. He just threw them at the spots the mines were in and detonated each one of them before finally leaving the forest.

The hobgoblin body was tossed into his spatial bag that was now large enough to hold it. There were several parts of this body that could be used as medicine or alchemy ingredients. He could just sell it to his gnome boss and they would take care of the rest.

He departed back to the city and was back before dawn. He was really on the fence about being in a city with no Dungeon. He thought that he would be done with hunting monsters after getting his blacksmith class. But there he was, making weapons and killing monsters with them himself.

These wands that he made wouldn't be that great for mages or other classes. The trained magic casters gained skills to lower casting times and even forgo spoken incantations. Why would they want to use an item that used up their precious mana two or three times faster? They also worked in parties, the people in them were always protecting them. They also needed to save their mana to cast the more powerful spells which were what they were there for in the first place.

Before going back to his workshop he went towards the adventurer guild. The gambeson that he was wearing under his robe kept his body warm. He had grown close to 170 cm in height now and due to working out in the smithy, his muscles were growing as well. He felt like he was on the taller side compared to kids his age, when his growth spurt would stop he didn't know. His larger body size allowed him to appear older than he actually was so that was a bonus.

He arrived at the adventurer guild and made his way to one of the receptionists.

"I'd like to have a monster's remains processed."

"What kind of monster?"

The lady receptionist asked while looking at Roland.

"It's a Hobgoblin Berserker."

The receptionist lady raised an eyebrow while glancing at the youth that was covering his face. By the card that he gave her he seemed like a steel grade adventurer and not a silver one. She speculated that he must have just found the body somewhere. The guild wouldn't go into too many details when it came to that. Other adventurers sometimes left untouched bodies behind and others were free to pick up the scraps.

"One Hobgoblin Berserker, are you familiar with our rates? After the body is processed by our employee you will receive your coin. It shouldn't take more than three days."

"Yes, that's fine. I'll come back later."

Roland nodded and the receptionist told him to go into one of the back rooms. She also gave him a small metal plaque with a number along with a tag with the same number on it. On the inside, there was a corridor that led to a certain door. When he entered he felt the temperature drop by several degrees. He could see some frozen cut up bodies of monsters hanging off hooks.

“Got a body? Just drop it there.”

He heard a man’s voice. It belonged to a bearded man that seemed to be human, he was working on some kind of spider looking monster. He was just in time to see him pull out its fangs with some large dentist looking, pliers.

He didn’t remain here for long, he just dropped the hobgoblin on the ground. The man just gave it a side glance while continuing his work.

“Here is the tag number.”

Roland dropped the item that the receptionist gave him on the body while the man just nodded. The man would attach the tag to this monster and when Roland came back he just needed to show the plaque to receive his money.

This was a common thing around here. You could process the monster remains on your own to save some money or give it to a professional. He would cut up the body and the guild would sell the parts for profit. Roland would get 70% from this transaction which was fine as he didn’t really want to play around with the monster bodies himself.

Even though the man looked disinterested Roland knew that the guild wouldn’t try to play him. He left the cold room soon after and went back to his workshop. He wanted to repair his paddle wands as he did get experience from it. The more destroyed the item was the more he got.

While the sun was starting to go down another scene was playing out in a different location. A group of people was standing in a dimly lit room while talking. They looked like your average riff-raff. They seemed quite shady, all of them were wearing hoods and some even had masks to cover their mouths.

“Listen up we have a new job.”

One of the men said while the others listened in.

“New job? Hope the pay is good.”

Another man chimed in while the others nodded.

“Don’t worry, the client has deep pockets.”

The man grinned while tossing a full sack of coins on the table. The other men in the room looked at it with greed in their eyes. They started grinning and laughing while at the same having a hard time keeping their hands from the silver coins.

“This is just a down payment, we will get more after the job is done.”

“Just a down payment? Are we robbing or killing someone?”

One of the ruffians asked as this was far too much money for a simple job of thievery.

“That’s the thing, we don’t really need to do much. There is an old warehouse that reopened in Southtown, we just need to trash the place...”

“What of the people working there?”

The man looked up to one of the thugs that asked and pulled out a knife. There was a map on a table with the position of this warehouse. He plunged this bent dagger into the location of their target before replying.

“What do you think?”

All of them nodded as they started to prepare for the night. When the moon reached the zenith they would strike.

[Chapter 38 Home invasion.](#)

Roland closed the door behind him after he entered his workshop. On the inside, there were many tools hung up on the walls. Using his new class he had cleaned up the place and even set up some shelves.

He started segregating every resource he had like iron, bronze, and copper. Even during his work, he was sure to even pick up the metal shavings. He had a working smelter which he could use to melt these leftover metals into ingots. He also was thinking about making clay molds. With them, he was planning to make his first sword from bronze.

This would hasten the process by quite a bit as he wouldn't need to hammer it into shape that much. He already had spent some time practicing his craft but he had only reached the second level of his Blacksmith class. This was already showing him that he would be spending a lot more time with this third one.

Only after this, he would finally be getting into the tier 2 smith territory. He wasn't sure if there would be a prestige class waiting for him then. He had to level up his runecrafting and all the smithing related skills to the maximum before the job class quest, to be sure.

All of those smithing skills that he received, runecraft included were at level 2 now. He could already feel that he was getting better at his new craft. The strain that runecrafting put on him was slightly lower now. He still needed to go through all of his mana to finish a lesser rune within a day though.

This was when working with a soft material like bronze. Iron would double or triple the time spent and one of the rare metals would make it impossible. The basic runecrafting skill had its limit and the larger the size of the metal the longer it took. Inscribing the traces wasn't that easy and they had to be placed through most of the weapon.

He placed the two paddle-like wands on his workbench and glanced at them. There was a reason he made them like this. Due to his runecraft skill being so low he couldn't compress the runes as much. His creations had to be large just for the entire rune to fit in. He had decided on the mana bolt spell as it was the smallest one from his repertoire.

With his high mana pool and his Runic mastery that was lowering the casting costs, this weapon was very usable. He wanted to move on to the next step and inscribe a common rune but there was a problem. First, a common rune was many times harder to make, he would probably need from four days to a week for it.

The second problem was the size. He barely got the lesser mana bolt on this large paddle shape mass of bronze. He calculated that if he wanted to create a similar weapon while keeping the shape he would end up with something like a tennis racket instead. It would be made from bronze or iron and the

balance would be a real problem. He could try to make the handle from wood but then another problem arose.

Mixing two different materials with each other and connecting runic pathways through those. It was somewhat easy to scribe a rune on one large piece of metal. The traces flowed into each other without a hitch. But even adding a wooden handle or cloth on top would make things difficult. There just needed to be direct contact, the mana a person injected into the item dissipated really fast unless you had the runic pathways close by.

The only way he had to go around this was somehow riveting the parts together while not using the wood as part of the rune. Wood was also a lot worse for runecrafting as it just didn't cope with the mana pathways well. You needed certain magical wood for something like that, which made runic bows a lot more costly and harder to make.

Roland thought that there had to be some kind of way to connect armor and weapon parts with each other. Even some swords had a hilt, pommel, and guard that were inserted separately. There had to be some kind of way to connect these parts without them having to be one solid piece of metal.

There might have been a skill that a tier 2 runesmith achieved or one that could be learned from a skill book. He would need to go ask around or buy some information later. For now, he had to repair his magical paddles. He started up the forge with the help of his ember spell and some coal.

This coal had a high enough temperature to work with bronze and iron. If he wanted to move over to the better magical metals he would need a better fuel source. This also meant that he could work with regular steel in the future with this basic forging equipment.

There was a version of iron ore that had absorbed mana called 'Deep Iron'. It was found deep inside the earth closer to its core and gave runic equipment more spell usage. You could make 'Black Steel' from it that improved upon its qualities even more. This was one of the better metals that wasn't all that pricey. It was cheaper than Mirthil, that material was mostly used by people of tier 3 and above. They were mostly the only ones rich enough to afford something like that.

There was also a limit on the materials. Common bronze wouldn't be able to contain a grand rune structure. The mana required to craft it would burn through the metal making the pathways unusable. Even if a runesmith inscribed them, a weapon like that would probably only last once before melting. This was also a reason why he decided to go with lesser runes for now.

He used tongs to slowly heat up the metal before placing it back onto the anvil. He grasped one of the hammers and infused his mana into it. He then started slowly hammering the magical weapon, with each hit parts of the runic inscriptions were reconstructed back into their previous shape.

Before going to the other paddle he looked at the blacksmith's hammer that he was using. There was a frown on his face as this item was also wearing down really fast. Rune smithing worked by forcing mana into the smith's hammer. This would slowly damage the integrity of the tool and with time the metal would start crumbling.

The hammer he was using was a new one that he created himself. Making your own smithing tools was good training but the products that he was making were barely passable. This was a lot harder than scribing that mostly only required good mana control. His high dexterity aided him slightly with the

creation process but his low strength was holding him back. He ran out of stamina fast and his hands began shaking if he hammered for too long.

Just like now, his stamina was drained but he managed to repair his magical weapon. Luckily stamina recovered a lot faster than mana did so after five or ten minutes he was ready to go. The clinging sounds continued into the night and Roland had to speed this up as his neighbors would come complaining again if he continued for much longer.

While the youth was working on his weapons and items the rest of the city was silent. After dark, most of the people were either drinking in a tavern or back home resting. There was another type of person out now though, the type that a regular citizen feared to cross paths with.

They were all wearing cloth armor along with some hardened leather here and there. Their faces were covered by hoods and they had masks hiding their mouths. Everyone here had the class of thief and could move silently in the night. They moved quietly while evading the guards that weren't really paying that much attention to their tasks.

The city was large and there weren't that many soldiers. The city lord mostly used his men to protect the richer districts, this left places like Southtown unprotected. This district was where the lower-income commoners lived and also where the city slums were. Most city guards didn't wonder here much unless they got ordered by the higher-ups.

These four men were slowly making their way there, they were members of the thieves guild. This was a hidden organization that most of the larger cities had. The people that were members of it took on jobs that the adventurer's guild deemed unethical or just too dangerous. Some members were even adventurers themselves, working in both guilds at the same time.

There were various requirements for getting into this guild but one of the main ones was having a thievery-related class. This was either a thief or a bandit class which showed the guild masters that you were one of them.

They arrived just in time to hear Roland hammering on some metal. It was about 9 pm at night, the four spread out to examine the warehouse while keeping themselves hidden. They had to see all the entrance and escape points that this old building had before deciding on the course of action.

After they were finished they moved back into the shadows to discuss further actions.

"Large door at the front, locked from the inside. Probably won't just go down easy."

"Windows behind are closed but just wood and flimsy locks..."

"One door leading probably into the office or bedroom of whoever is living here..."

The thieves started formulating a plan. They could either burst through the front door and destroy the whole place or sneak in. They decided on the latter, the windows that were at the back of this warehouse looked the easiest. They could just climb through them and then slit the throat of whoever lived here.

"We will wait for the target to go to sleep, remember what the job said."

The thieves nodded while slowly moving to their own hiding places. The request stated that they should take whatever the person on the inside was working on. They would receive a bonus if they brought something worthwhile. After ransacking the warehouse they were planning on burning the place with the owner's body inside. They just needed to wait until he went to bed.

With time the hitting of metal against metal stopped and the chimney that was connected to the furnace went out. They could see movement on the inside and after a few hours of waiting the person on the inside finally went to bed at 12 am. The thieves were slightly angry that it took him so long, this was quite late for this world's standards.

They waited another 30 or so minutes before deciding to strike. Two people stayed outside to keep watch and would alert their companions if something happened. The other two sneaked around to the back of the warehouse. Each one of them decided to use a different window to sneak in. They would not use any of the windows that placed them directly in Roland's living quarters. The possibility of him waking up was too high if they tried that.

The windows were wooden and thick and the glass was mat. The locks were simple hooked latches that could be easily opened by these thieves from the outside. They just needed to insert something thin between them to lift the lock-up before climbing inside.

This appeared to be quite the easy job for the burglars, the owner was supposedly just a thirteen-year-old brat. Such a young person couldn't be high leveled either so even if he woke up they would easily overpower him.

The man slowly opened up the windows and climbed into the building. He found himself on a narrow catwalk that was above the main storage area. The wood was old but thanks to his advanced sneaking skill he wasn't making a sound. The other thief managed to make it on the inside as well and the two met up.

They could see iron tools and items everywhere but they were all crude and unusable to them. They thought that maybe there would be something worth stealing but the craftsman on the inside was apparently a newbie. They nodded to themselves and moved towards the smaller living space together.

The man in charge of this small band of thieves was here. He gave his party member a sign indicating that he should go in first. The man just nodded and went towards the room that their target was staying at. The door wasn't locked so he just grabbed the handle and gently opened it up. The thieving skills that they had somehow made things like doors and windows produce less sound while their sneaking was activated.

On the inside, they spotted a bed and what looked like to be a sleeping person. The thief that was in the front took out a dagger that had a slight curve to it. The leader just waited by the door in case somehow his companion didn't land a killing blow and the target tried fleeing. He didn't feel like that would be the case as the person was already in striking distance.

The burglar didn't hesitate at all, his dagger moved down and embedded itself in the target's body. The moment it did, the thief felt that something was off, he quickly pulled the bedsheets to the side to discover a bunch of pillows tied together in the form of a human body. There was another thing out of place, a strange-looking piece of paper that was glowing red.

Before the hired thug could react to it though an explosion occurred. He was hit by a wave of heated energy and tossed like a rag doll against the wall. The thief leader that was watching everything play out quickly ducked back inside the warehouse to evade the rest of the blast.

He didn't know what was happening, how could an explosion have occurred? Before he could think about the reason he felt something. His body jerked to the side but he wasn't fast enough as he felt something going through his shoulder. He heard someone clicking their tongue behind him, he wanted to turn around and retaliate but before he could do that, his whole shoulder exploded.

The man grasped the gushing wound, his body had suffered a crippling blow and he was going into shock. From the shadows he saw someone walk out, it was a young man with a heavy rapier in his hand. His blood was running down the tip that was slightly glowing red.

The man didn't want to believe this. How could a tier 2 rogue not have noticed someone behind him, this didn't make any sense. He was losing a lot of blood and he decided to make a run for it. The room in which the explosion happened also had a window so with much pain he stood up and took off.

He covered his head with his good arm as he charged. The window was closed but he knew that he could force his way through it while not suffering too much damage. He needed to get outside to where his two other companions were. With their help he could probably make a getaway or even kill this brat.

Things wouldn't be going his way though as the moment he jumped he felt something moving behind him. He was already jumping through the window at this moment so evading the attack from behind was difficult. It was even more difficult as it was a very fast traveling gale arrow that could reach astonishing speeds.

It went through his chest while he was jumping out and bending his body to the side in hopes of evading. With the added momentum the rogue's body traveled even further than he expected. His body smacked into the hard pavement. One of the thieves that was waiting outside arrived to watch the spectacle.

He was shocked, their team leader was a tier 2 class holder. He was even over level 60 and now he was a mangled mess on the ground. Even without checking he knew that he was dead, there was a decision to be made. He did what any thief in this situation would do and abandoned this mission. The second lookout had the same idea after seeing their dead leader.

On the inside of the warehouse was Roland. He was sweating and his heart was pounding furiously. The person that had received the blast from his rune was still in his workshop. He wasn't dead quite yet so Roland decided to incapacitate him. Not killing him would probably be the better option as he might get some answers.

He also saw some movement outside. The other thieves luckily decided to flee and the explosion was loud enough so the guards would be coming. He sat down on one of the wooden chairs while calming down.

He had made some preparations for a thing like this. He knew that this was a dangerous neighborhood he was living in. He didn't expect to be part of a home invasion so soon though.

Roland had other spells besides the attacking ones. After noticing that he was really bad at detecting danger he asked the manager to help him find an item with such a spell. He had acquired a 'detect life' spell. It allowed him to see life signatures outside his house and he used it every day before going to bed.

He always went to bed late which allowed him to notice the burglars that were staking out this warehouse. The other spell that he used was a 'shadow veil' spell. This was a common grade spell that allowed him to fade into the shadows. As long as he stayed in them he was practically invisible. Only a person with high perception could see him, which would have to be at least a tier 2 advanced scout.

After the explosion, he plunged his enchanted rapier into the man's shoulder. He was aiming for the head but the tier 2 rogue was fast to react. He was lucky enough that his weapon had this function. He activated it instantly to produce the internal explosion, the rest was history.

'Was this just a normal robbery or something else?'

He thought to himself, this felt a bit excessive for a simple thief attack. Did they really have to kill him, they managed to sneak into the building and they didn't even search it. He watched them move towards his room almost instantly, they were clearly trying to kill him first before doing anything else.

Soon enough more people arrived. The explosion caused quite the commotion so word of this event would be spreading through the city. The thieves guild would also look into this as they lost one of their rogues in what seemed to be an easy mission. The seemingly peaceful city wasn't looking that safe anymore.