

Runesmith 53

[Chapter 53 Packing up.](#)

Roland was now looking at an old man in a robe. The man had placed his hand on a dark looking shoulder. This was the stab wound that Roland had suffered tonight. There were abscesses with yellow pus that had formed and some of those yellow juices were even flowing out. The smell of it all would be truly something that Roland would remember.

This was inside the temple of Solaria and he was just getting his treatment for the curse. The worst part about this wasn't the pain from being cursed but the sheer number of gold coins he had to pay to get this fixed. If he hadn't been saving up for the past year and a half he would probably have to cut his arm along with his shoulder to survive instead.

The old man was a tier 3 High Priest and the treatment required Roland to fork over nine small golden coins. Normally he would need months of crafting and making runic equipment to get this back. Luckily he still was a part of a big company and would have them cover the costs. He also planned on getting a severance package as they had failed to keep their part of the contract.

He had specifically fought for adding a clause to his contract. It stated that he would get money if he ever got injured due to them ever again. This included him being collateral damage during an assassination attempt. The gnome probably only agreed to such a clause as the possibility of that becoming reality was meager.

Reality was different though, the company was attacked. He would now receive a large influx of gold coins and would be able to break off the contract entirely. This was something that he was planning to do as he had enough of this city. This was the second time this had happened, first was the incident with the thieves guild and now some strange cult was after him.

From the small amount of information that he had, he knew that this was some kind of assassination organization or guild. This guild of assassins were worshipers of some kind of demon or of an evil god. People were not sure who the being they were worshiping was.

Whenever a Warlock of any kind was involved it meant that some kind of higher being was behind it. Warlocks would gain their special class by forming pacts with demons or evil gods. The one that he saw that night was quite the powerful one. He was versed in shapeshifting magic and could take on a form of some kind of deformed monstrosity.

"Ahh..."

"Relax child, it is almost over."

He could see his flesh giving out black smoke. This was the curse leaving his body that slowly returned to its original shape. If he didn't get this treatment the priest told him that he wouldn't last till the next day. He would be turned into some kind of monster in the process and lose all of his reasoning.

'I hope that gnome didn't just die, I still need to get my money from him...'

Roland gritted his teeth while thinking, he had lost sight of the other people involved in this incident and he wasn't sure where they went. He had a written contract and this was a big company. If his old boss was dead he would probably be able to get his money at a different company store.

The old priest was finally finished with the treatment. Roland was still astonished by how healing magic worked. A person's wounds would just patch themselves up, he could even see the process of the healthy tissues forming in real-time. It was as if time was wound back to the previous healthy form.

Roland didn't know how healing magic was exactly different from regular magic. During the procedure, he tried activating various skills that he had like his mana sense and debugging. There were no runes involved so he couldn't copy it onto a diagram. The priest was still using mana to fuel the spell so maybe it would be possible to emulate these spells in the future.

For now, he removed himself from the temple of the sun goddess. While going through it he could see some other injured people getting treated.

The fight didn't end just with the destruction of Exeter's Magic Emporium. The unidentified assassins moved into the city and started battling with other high level people. One of them was Zilyana but there were others which Roland wasn't acquainted with. This in turn caused a lot of collateral damage, the horrible-looking shapeshifting Warlock was quite indiscriminate in his attacks.

The battle continued throughout the night and the two assailants were never apprehended. Roland managed to get his tired body to the temple before passing out. He was lucky enough to have brought money with him and they were very eager to take it off him while calling for a high priest.

On the outside, he was greeted with some sunny weather. The clouds had parted and the day was looking bright. It was still quite cold though and the sun did nothing about melting the white snow that covered most of the city.

Roland decided to walk towards Exeor's Magic Emporium or at least what was left of it. On his way there he could see collateral damage. Some of the buildings in the neighborhood had suffered during the scuffle that ensued. He could even see some red spots in the snow the closer he got to ground zero.

After he arrived he noticed that there were a lot of people around the store. They looked like battle-hardened soldiers but they weren't part of the city guards. These people were part of the company, they were a bunch of mercenaries contracted as hired muscle. Obviously, they were a bit late to the party as the battle was now over.

Maybe if more of them were here the night before the store wouldn't have been destroyed this much. Though the tier 3 magical device that was used would probably render them useless. He was fortunate enough that his debugging skill worked on the greater runes and he was able to get out of the world of illusions.

"Halt, identify yourself!"

As Roland was getting closer he got the attention of one of the guards there. They had even fenced the area off with a makeshift wooden fence. He looked at the man, he was quite tall over 2 m, and was of the Goliath race. Before he could mention his affiliation with the company someone else called out from the side.

“It’s fine, let him through.”

It was Zilyana who looked different than usual. Mostly because she didn’t look like a sun elf anymore, her skin was dark caramel and her hair changed from gold to silver. There was no rule against moon elves in this city but they weren’t on good terms with the Church of Solaria as they worshiped opposing deities.

She was wearing some kind of black leather armor and had some weapons strapped to the side. She looked battle-ready, he didn’t see any wounds on her body. She went against those two psychos from yesterday, which made Roland reaffirm his notion about her hidden strength.

The large man just nodded and didn’t question the elven woman’s order. Apparently, the beautiful elf was someone in high regard to these company soldiers.

“This place has seen better days...”

He moved over to Zilyana while commenting on the store’s new looks. The top floor was missing chunks out of it and the whole building was riddled with holes. The Abyssal Warlock had really renovated the place during the late-night melee.

“Well, you seem chipper for someone that almost died Roland. Not even surprised about my new looks?”

The elven woman mentioned while chuckling.

“Why would I be surprised about that? Also, I’ll be more chipper after you give me back the money I’ve spent on that blasted high priest.”

Roland was unamused, he narrowed his eyes at the moon elf. Zilyana just shrugged while turning her head to the side, she did feel kind of bad about the whole predicament.

“Ah, I’m sure the boss will give you back the coins, you did save his ass and mine. I bet he will even give you a big fat bonus!”

The elf tried shifting the conversation to the monetary aspect. She knew that she was mostly to blame for that fiasco that happened yesterday. She had failed spectacularly as a bodyguard. If the boy hadn’t been there she and the manager would have been dead without a question.

She didn’t even see anything wrong in the illusion world. Zilyana had been affected by the magical device first after she opened the door to the gnomes office. Her mind was unable to paste it together and the manager in the illusion just shooed her out of his room.

The whole illusion world then broke down after a few hours when Roland destroyed the runic device. She found herself on the ground with a small headache. Only after that did she realize what occurred and that enemies were nearby.

Her boss had activated one of his magical items and went into hiding while she engaged the assailants in battle. Her co-workers like Zirion were alerted by her boss with a sort of panic button device that was there, the rest was now history.

“Hah, you think a bonus is enough?”

Roland clicked his tongue but he stopped himself. He didn't really wish to argue with this woman that could probably cut him up into thin slices in a matter of seconds. She was also just a guard and without her, he would have been dead. "That doesn't matter... where is that gnome anyway?"

He looked around, he could see that besides the group of guards there were other people here. He could even see his own halfling assistant moving stuff around. They were clearly carrying the goods outside, maybe they were even planning on relocating somewhere else.

"The Boss? Oh, he isn't here, he should be back at his mansion, probably calling the big boss himself. Hah, you should have seen him last night, he was ready to blow a gasket. Have never seen so many veins on someone's forehead before."

Roland eyed the moon elf while rising one of his eyebrows. She didn't look that distraught after facing off against a tentacle monster and a crazy cursed dagger-wielding assassin woman. It was as if she was used to things like this, though judging by the fact that she was uninjured. This might have indeed just been the usual for her.

"Back at his mansion?"

"Yeah, it's in Hightown."

Zilyana explained in a few words where exactly the gnome manager lived. Roland now had a place to go and complain. Before that he needed to get back to his workshop as he left his contract and some other things back there.

"I bet he will give you a big pay raise, you did save his ass~"

She gave him some reassuring words while Roland just stared at her without any emotions in his eyes.

"Yeah, I should probably ask him to give me part of your salary..."

Roland said while turning around, he didn't care about getting any raises in his wages. The only thing he wanted to do now was to get the promised severance package. Though maybe if he complained enough he could get even more than that.

Zilyana flinched at the mention of her pay getting cut. She started waving her hands around at Roland that had turned around.

"No don't do that, hey this big sis here saved your life. I really need that money!"

"I saved your life first."

Roland said while waving goodbye to her without turning around. He couldn't see the moon elf's expression too much but not like he cared that much. He was quite pissed that he had gotten involved in some quarrel between two overpowered factions.

He had come to this city to get away from the bloodshed. He just wanted to be left in peace and practice his craft, he hadn't even gone out to kill monsters in over a year. The only fighting he did was some sparring here and there.

Roland now thought that he had been too naive. There was no way someone like him could make it on his own like this. It didn't matter if a person could earn money, what was that good for if anyone could just waltz into your home and murder you. Even the gnome that was loaded and had an experienced bodyguard couldn't protect himself.

'I need strength...'

He stopped in front of his workshop while thinking. He had already made a decision on leaving this city. In his mind personal power would be the way to go, he wouldn't be able to achieve this here. He needed to take things into his own hands and get stronger.

He opened up the door to his workshop, before that he deactivated some of the runic traps he had set up. The doors and windows were now rigged to electrocute anyone that tried getting in here without him around.

Roland had figured out ways to activate and deactivate some of the runes made for traps. He could even directly inscribe them on things like metallic doors. He was even thinking of improving on the designs with the sockets and mana stones. For now, they only had one charge, but with a mana stone that filtered and stored some of that mana, they could recharge themselves.

He looked through his workshop, it was a place that he stayed for over a year. Again he would be unable to live in one place for long. He lasted a couple of years in this city but the easy life was now over. He needed to set out into the world and get stronger, only then would he feel confident enough to settle down.

The biggest problem was his class and how it worked. He could see himself doing fine against monsters but at a price. His class only shined when he was using runic equipment and that wouldn't last forever.

He already knew that steel weapons and armor wouldn't hold much of the runic charges. He could get around that by repairing it but that required a place to do it. This meant that he needed to find a new workshop, buy new equipment along with finding a dungeon to gain more experience.

For now, he went to his bedroom and lifted up his bed. He poked the floor slightly and it began to shine. The ground rippled for a moment before showing a compartment. He had placed a chest with some of his belongings behind an illusion rune. This rune caused most people to see a regular floor without showing the hidden latch under the bed.

He pulled out the chest, in it were some spatial bags with gold and materials. In one of them was also the contract that he made with Exeor's manager. It stated that he would be given money depending on the severity of the attack.

"Bet that gnome didn't think that this would ever be used against him..."

The number he would be getting is 100 small gold coins or 10 regular sized gold coins. This was quite a staggering number, this would let a regular family life for over five years. That is if they didn't spend it on anything other than taxes and food. For him that needed to buy costly crafting materials and a working workshop, it wasn't that much.

He took out everything that he needed and started to even place all of the tools that he used from the smithy into his bags of holding. He even tossed the anvil inside but would be leaving the smelter there as it was connected to the wall.

Roland wished that he could just toss his entire workshop into his bag and just go but that would be a pipe dream. He heard there were magical devices that could support a small pocket dimension. The cost of something like that would be what a country like this earns in a year or more.

The easier option was creating a hidden workshop somewhere and placing a teleportation runic array in it. Things like this existed in the magic towers that powerful mages used and were a lot cheaper to manufacture. Still, he would probably need to wait till he was at least tier 3 for something like that.

He had stuffed all of the items he could take into his bags and had them all around his belt. He couldn't put spatial bags in one another as the magics in them repelled each other.

He took one last glance at the place that he lived and gave out a sigh. Roland didn't want to leave but he didn't see a good reason to stay here.

He took out a map of the whole kingdom and glanced at it. He had marked a couple of places that fit his requirements.

They were all close to a dungeon and were growing cities with a lot of opportunities. He had researched them by things like taxation, population, and even by what noble was running it. He couldn't go into any lands owned by his own family or to people that his family was serving.

This only left a couple of places for him, he would need to decide on them after his talk with the manager. He placed his coat back on and didn't bother to activate the trap runes in the building, he wouldn't be returning here anymore.

[Chapter 54 Getting the name.](#)

A tall youth was walking towards a certain destination. He was wearing a long coat and hiding a lot of spatial bags that were hanging around his belt. He glanced around the city that he had spent years in and was getting slightly nostalgic.

This was the city where his blacksmithing career took off. He had learned all the basics here and he did it on his own. It was also where he finally learned to use and create runes. After all these years Roland was feeling like he was finally getting how they actually worked. He could even combine various schematics to create new spells.

He would now need to postpone his future research and get out of this city. It was getting too dangerous and he didn't trust the company to protect him. If he didn't have his debugging skills he would have died along with them.

From his point of view, Zilyana had failed miraculously by not reacting in the correct way. The manager was at fault too for not getting some enchanted devices that could block out illusion magic of that caliber.

It looked like they got lazy after years of stability, the business was booming and everyone was earning money. Then someone decided that it was time for a change by killing almost all of the council members.

The whole city was now in disarray. Almost all of the businesses lost their owners in one day. The person that caused this would probably show themselves now. Who was doing it was a mystery but they were probably doing it to get the biggest market share in the city. With the council heads gone there would be a big hole in the city's finances.

The perpetrator could be the sole survivor that hadn't been attacked during the meeting. The gnome was proven innocent as he had almost kicked the bucket.

The next option was that it was a third party either moving in to take over or doing it for another reason. There were cult members involved in this assassination and where they were demons weren't far off.

The man was an Abyssal Warlock, a person that made a contract with a higher being. Most of the time this would be achieved by selling their soul or by performing some kind of ritual. In this ritual, other people's lives would be used as payment.

The woman that was with him was similar. She was an abyssal class holder but closer to the rouge route. She seemed to have a screw loose which he noticed during the time that she stabbed him through the shoulder.

Roland continued walking while trying to figure out the true perpetrator. The reason for this attack seemed obvious as a lot of money was involved. He wanted to know the reason for getting almost killed, maybe the manager would have this answer.

This whole predicament reminded him about the first city he had to leave. There he also left at a moment's notice with his only plan being a city with crafting resources. He then stumbled around with some leftover cash for half a year before finally having some luck in selling his runic scrolls at the auction house.

'A city with an auction house is a must...'

He already knew that his scrolls would sell, be it at a regular store or an auction house. Without an establishment as that, he would probably need to sign another contract. This was something that he wanted to avoid this time around.

He didn't think he would get a good deal without revealing his special class either. Trusting someone to keep it a secret again was something that he wasn't willing to do.

Roland had a map with some notes. There were a couple of cities that he had researched some larger than others.

He wanted one that met some criteria. One was having an auction house where he could buy and sell items. The other thing that needed to be there was a dungeon, this was the most important requirement.

Roland realized that having personal strength was paramount in this world. He just needed to look at the two assassins. They could just enter the city, kill people, and then get away without anyone being

able to stop them. This was the strength of a tier 3 elite, something that wasn't often seen in this world he was in.

Most people that had battle classes ended their journey at tier 2. Crafting professions could go higher as it was easier to constantly produce items than to constantly fight monsters. The raw stats a crafting profession had were also lower. The lack of battle skills was another minus for said crafting classes.

With lower stats received and fewer skills, they wouldn't even be able to defeat a tier 2 veteran. You could see this mostly by looking at Roland's scribe class that didn't give much besides intelligence and dexterity. The other physical stats were almost nonexistent and it hardly increased his vitality.

This was the case with most of the crafting professions besides a blacksmith. That was a class that actually required high strength and endurance to produce items. Yet someone like a leatherworker or goldsmith wouldn't get much besides dexterity and then meager numbers in the rest.

Roland felt like he needed to increase all of his battle-related skills before his advancement into tier 2. Luckily his runic blacksmith class increased his battle-related stats. Though they looked to be stats for a stationary tank with high magic usage.

High strength, endurance, and willpower but with low agility. Roland felt like he would have to either mitigate his weakness with some enchanted gear or strengthen the things he was good at. So either increase his agility with some mana stones or focus on his defenses and magic power.

This he would decide after seeing his tier 2 class options. He knew that there were some hybrid classes out there but if he could nab one was unknown.

'Dungeon, Auction house, relatively new city... would be nice if I could get some cheap real estate there...'

Another thing that he needed was a place to stay. He couldn't just live in an inn again as the need for repairing and crafting new equipment would be there. His class was reliant on it and he didn't think switching to a more battle oriented one would give him as much flexibility. He would still need to make that decision after capping out his blacksmith class.

Roland didn't think that he would be able to research information about the land he could buy here. Not like he could pull up an internet page with the information, the most he could do was to pay an information guild that sold things like that. The info wouldn't be fresh though and when he arrived the house could be already sold. He would probably have to risk the journey and hope for the best.

'Maybe I should try going someplace owned by the Aristocats instead of the royalists this time around...'

Roland thought as he was close to arriving in Hightown where the manager lived.

There were two main factions in this kingdom, the aristocrats and the royalists. The former consisted of the most influential nobles of the country. The latter were part of the royal family mostly related to the king and the nobles sworn to them.

There were also many smaller factions sprinkled here and there but they didn't possess as much power. These two factions were more or less close in power with the royal family winning out slightly.

Roland was someone from a noble house himself. He had studied the basics of how this country worked. His own house of Arden was part of the royalists. His father had recently achieved the title of baron after a successful campaign against one of the countries that his kingdom had less than stellar relationships with.

The city of Edelgard was further into the country and closer to the royalists. The owner of it wasn't directly connected to his father but maybe the other faction ran their cities better. The noble that was responsible here certainly didn't give a damn about his citizens.

When the first assassination attempt happened the guards were really late to arrive. He was also taken into custody without having the option of explaining himself.

'If I take all of that into consideration there is just one place I can go to...'

He looked at the map that he was holding and looked down at the south part of the kingdom. There was a certain large island there, it was ruled by a Marquess that was part of the aristocrat faction.

That wasn't the main reason for going there, there was a certain new dungeon that had risen recently.

Things like new dungeons appeared from time to time. No one knew exactly how they came to be but each of those lairs had a dungeon core. People theorized that if the mana density was just right a dungeon core would come to be.

This dungeon core could appear anywhere, down in a lake, buried deep underground, or even in the sky. Where the dungeon core appeared would mostly dictate how the dungeon looked and what kind of monsters appeared in it.

This peculiar one that he was willing to risk going towards appeared in a volcanic region. The spot he would be going was rich in minerals, the monsters were fire types or rocky ones.

The closest settlement to this dungeon was but a small village before this occurred. Now apparently people were flocking to it, quickly building up the infrastructure. If he hurried he too could end up nabbing himself a part in this.

Before that could happen he needed to get out of here. For that, he also needed a lot of funds and the broken contract that he was bringing with him would be for that.

He finally stood in front of the gnome's supposed house. The number and street name was correct so he went over and gave the door a couple of knocks.

"Who is it?"

The door didn't open but he could hear a woman's voice behind it. Someone opened up a small latch through which they looked at him.

"My name is Roland, I need to speak with the manager..."

Roland felt strange for not knowing the gnome's name after all these years. Was the small guy also trying to run away from his old life or something?

"Ah...yes, wait a minute."

The small latch closed and he could hear the locks being unlocked. The person on the other side revealed herself to him. The woman looked to be about forty and a human, she was also wearing a maid uniform similar to the ones that the maids back at the Arden estate used to wear.

“Please follow me, the master is expecting you.”

Roland nodded, at least the working staff weren't calling the gnome by his manager title.

The house was quite large and reminded him of old victorian era brick houses. The inside was quite spacious and he could see other people working. There was a butler looking at some maids that were packing up some silverware.

Obviously, the gnome wasn't going to stay here for much longer and they were packing up. When Roland arrived upstairs he saw another moon elf in similar black leather clothing as Zilyana's. He was standing next to a partly opened door and he looked to be guarding it.

“This is Mr. Roland, he wishes to see the master.”

“Well, if it isn't the fabled master craftsman!”

When Roland got closer he could see that something was wrong with this man. He looked quite relaxed and the odor of alcohol was quite strong.

“Fabled craftsman?”

He narrowed his eyes slightly, did the gnome give out his secret to other people? That shouldn't be the case as it was stated in the contract. There were other ways of getting information out, this was one more reason for him to leave this place. This again proved the limitations of contracts to him.

“Mr. Ziron you shouldn't bother the guest.”

The moon elf gave out a chuckle before pushing the door open. He peeked inside the room afterward and announced Roland's arrival.

“Hey, you got a guest!”

Roland just remained there without saying anything. The moon elf had a strange grin plastered all over his face.

“A guest? Who is it?”

He heard a familiar voice from that room, the gnome sounded quite alive but there was something off.

“Master, Mr. Roland has come to see you.”

“Ah, let the boy in.”

When he peeked inside the room he noticed what the problem was. The gnome was sitting in a chair and to the side were some crutches. He was missing his left foot, it was gone a bit below the knee.

“Manager?...”

“Ah, this? That fucker got me good, don’t worry about it, it can be healed later. Wounds from Warlocks like that don’t heal that easily, I need to make a special elixir.”

The foot looked to be wrapped in some kind of strange bandages that had peculiar symbols on them. They didn’t seem to be runes but they were exuding some kind of mystical power.

“Is that so... I see that you are packing up, skipping town?”

Roland asked after closing the door behind him. He could see that most of the shelves in this room were cleared out and just a few scrolls remained here and there.

“I underestimated that bastard... “

Roland quickly raised a brow and cut the gnome off before he could continue.

“That bastard?”

“There is no reason to hide it from you now...”

The gnome took out his old pipe and puffed out some smoke.

“First I have to thank you for saving my life, if you weren’t there I’d probably be coming out of that Warlock’s ass right about now.”

The gnome chuckled slightly while Roland cringed at the image that popped into his head.

“About the man responsible... It’s the second son of the count, the bastard contacted the blasted Abyssal Cult! The idiot is crazy!

He knew that the noble house that this land belonged to was the House of Dreux, and the noble that resided here was called Louis Dreux.

“Louis Dreux? Why would he aim for your life?”

“I’m not sure, it was either just greed or another fight for succession. You know Louis has an older brother, Armand. Armand is the true heir and this land is under his supervision but he had to leave towards the border...”

The gnome gave him his best theory. Armand the first son had left for the border to aid in the war effort. There were some skirmishes the kingdom and the Hatfordian Empire were involved in but they didn’t escalate into a full-scale war yet.

“The idiot tried buying us out a couple of years ago, for an atrocious price. If he owned all the businesses in the city he probably could somehow contend with his brother. Maybe he wanted to try buying his way back into his father’s heart?”

The gnome blew out some of the smoke through his mouth again while grimacing.

“Unfortunately we won’t be able to pin this on him, those abyssal cult bastards got away. Even if we caught them they wouldn’t talk, they would just commit suicide.”

Roland had to take a second to process this. Apparently, he had gotten himself into the middle of some petty squabble between two noble sons. While one was away the other was trying to buy out the city from under him.

When the other came back he would actually own all of the money-making businesses. Roland wasn't really sure about the laws around here but even nobles couldn't just take over stores without getting the right papers from the current owners.

Even they couldn't go against the law of the land and needed to have the owners sell their property. The only way to go around this was if the owner died without an heir. Then the noble would get ownership of whatever that person owned.

The noble by killing the current owners wanted to get the stores for free. That or get them from their next of kin that would probably sell it instantly after seeing their deaths. The abyssal cult's involvement would have been difficult to prove. Even though everyone knew who the perpetrator was with no hard proof it would be impossible to pin something on a noble.

"Don't worry kid, you can come with me, I'll be leaving towards the capital. I'll get you a nice workshop there, you did save my life."

The gnome changed the subject after everything was clear. He and his people were leaving, even though the assassination had failed there was still danger. Most of the council was dead and their business associates probably knew why.

Every one would either sell what they had or leave, the noble in question would probably get most of the establishments. If that was enough for him to take this city over before his brother returned was unknown.

"Yes about that..."

Roland didn't beat around the bush for much longer. He got his answer to his question and now knew that nobles were involved. He quickly pulled out his contract and placed it on the table before speaking out.

"I will be leaving but not with you, now give me my money, you broke the contract."

The gnome blew out some smoke through his nostrils and looked at the piece of parchment, he didn't look that surprised.

"I thought so..., you sure you won't reconsider? You'll need a better workshop in the future, this is something I can provide you with. The capital is a lot safer than wherever you are planning to go, you should think it over again."

Roland just shook his head while declining the gnome's offer. Having a workshop was fine and all, but hanging around people that attracted tier 3 monsters left and right was too stressful.

"I thought about it but I'd rather try things my way..."

The gnome pointed to the side with his pipe, on one shelf there was a lone bag and next to it a book.

“Figured you’d say that. The money is in there with a little bonus for your troubles. Should cover the healing fees.”

Roland moved over and looked inside the bag, he was greeted by quite a bit of golden coins. 150 small gold coins to be exact and next to the bag was a book. This was a skill book and had the ‘Mana Reinforcement’ skill knowledge in it. He had asked the company to procure it before this whole fiasco happened.

“150... that’s 50 above the contract sum and this book...”

“Just take it, most of it came out of Zilyana’s and that idiots pay.”

The gnome grumbled while Roland placed the gold pouch into one of his spatial bags along with the skill book.

“So, don’t think you’ll tell me where you are headed?”

Roland just blankly stared at the gnome as if that was a stupid question to ask. He didn’t really have a deep connection with this man but he did at least pay him well.

“I’d rather not...”

“I don’t know what you are running away from kid...but take care of yourself, if you’re ever in the capital be sure to find me, I’ll give you a good deal. Just say that Marlo Grimboodle sent ya.”

“Marlo?”

Roland looked at the gnome that was smiling, his pipe was placed to the side while he grasped one of his crutches.

“The one and only, don’t be spreading my name to just anyone!”

Roland finally had his money and had even gotten more than he anticipated. The only thing left now was to get to the train station. This journey would take longer than before as he would be traveling a lot farther than last time. Maybe if he got stronger he might take Marlo up on his offer.