

## Runesmith 65

### [Chapter 65 Time to sail away.](#)

Roland looked at the road beneath this caravan. It had changed from being one made from dirt to something better. It was a paved road instead which showed that he was really close to a larger city. This also indicated that they had probably gotten away from the lawless lands and monsters.

It had been over a day since the bandit encounter. Everyone here was still on edge and Roland could tell that people had a hard time sleeping. Surprisingly during the previous night, they weren't attacked by anything. Neither monster nor bandit had crossed their way, it looked like it was finally over.

'I should probably look over my things before we arrive.'

Roland started removing the various pouches along with his belt. He had gained more of them thanks to the encounter with the bandits. He was now in possession of some new weapons. They weren't well made, nor were they enchanted but the materials from which they were produced made him smile.

Deep Iron Mace [ Low ] [ Durability 64 % ]

Deep Steel Curved Dagger [ Intermediate ] [ Durability 49 % ]

Both of these weapons were made from deep iron. To produce deep steel you used a similar procedure as for getting regular steel.

To make regular everyday steel, iron ore was first mined from the ground. It was then smelted in a blast furnace to have the impurities removed. After this, a small amount of carbon would be added, usually, it was below 1%.

The smelting process with deep iron was practically the same. The biggest problem was that this mineral had a lot of mana in it. It was a lot harder to melt than plain iron ore and required special magical blast furnaces.

They had added enchantments or runes to increase the heat and also make them more resistant to it. The carbon added was also a special kind that had also absorbed mana before.

The finished product would produce an item that was a lot harder and resistant. Even a crude weapon made from deep steel would break a finely made steel one. It was just a tier above and it was also the metal of choice for tier 2 adventurers. It was the metal that runesmiths worked the most with as well, it was far more common than something like mithril or orichalcum.

Roland looked over these two items. The mace was just a club made from metal. The type of mace he was holding was a flanged mace. The flange on this one was slightly spiky and added a lot of weight. He could probably bash a lot of goblin heads in with this thing and it would be really proficient against opponents with heavier armor. If someone was going against a knight in full plate mail armor, he wouldn't get far while using a one-handed sword. Metallic armors were really good at protecting its user against slashing and piercing attacks. On the other hand, they weren't so good against blunt force, even less if the person in the armor got hit on the head. The force traveled through the armor and could even cause internal damage.

Roland looked over this mace, it was chipped here and there but it could be repaired. A weapon that was for bashing in skulls didn't need that much tending too. If it was a sword that lost its sharp blade, it would be another thing.

The dagger on the other hand looked a lot worse. The blade was dull, chipped and even part of the tip was missing. He would need to grind a lot of it down to make the edge uniform again. It was still repairable but the blade on it would have to be shortened.

'I can still add a rune on it, with it being deep steel it will last quite a bit more than those wands of mine...'

The mace was better as a weapon for now but it was still only made from deep iron and not deep steel. The dagger on the other hand was a finished product that went well with his runes. He just needed to get his rune condensation skill increased to fit a common one on it.

The ax that Golgrim had taken might have looked like the best weapon out of the bunch. For him that wasn't the case, he had already lifted the rune that was on the ax for himself. He had the schematic and could put that enchantment on any of these two weapons.

The two-handed ax was also a bit too big for his frame, he would rather use a shield weapon combo. A shield also had a lot of unused surface space that he could place mana stones in. Putting several defensive spells on it that would barely use any mana wouldn't be that hard.

Speaking of mana stones Roland was in possession of quite a few. Besides the ones he had amassed during the trek towards the small village, there were also a bunch in the bandit's possession.

He now had a large bag filled to the brim with common and lesser grade mana stones. If he got himself a working smithy he would be able to deck himself out with them from head to toe. The only problem was leaving the gem-like items outside the armor.

These stones weren't that resistant, the lesser ones could be broken down with a hard smack of a rock. The common ones were harder but a good direct smack with a metal weapon would put cracks in it.

He would need to think about a good design for anything like that. From his perspective, it would be better to place the sockets on the inside of the armor pieces. On places that wouldn't get in the way that is. He needed some strategic places on the outside as well, some that wouldn't normally be aimed at.

While he was contemplating new crafting designs they finally arrived at the port city. He could see some of the villagers hugging each other and crying as if a weight had fallen from their shoulders. They had been walking for two days almost without sleeping, afraid of being attacked.

Roland wasn't sure what the authorities would do in this situation, this was the first time he was involved in a bandit attack. He didn't think that they would be questioning him much, the merchants that survived would be enough.

There was a bit of trouble with getting in through the gate at first but after giving an explanation they got in. The adventurers headed straight for their guild, probably to make a report and maybe to ask if some of their other companions survived.

After the man-made avalanche, the middle part of the caravan was taken out. The ones at the front were the ones here. The people that were in the back had to contend with a barricade of rocks though while the ones in front could mostly get through as Roland had made a large hole in that barricade with a fire blast spell.

Even if someone survived, they might still be somewhere down in the gorge or they might have backtracked into one of the villages on the other side. There would probably be a rescue party being formed, that is if the city officials here agreed on giving the adventurers money for it. If not, none of them would be going there for free.

He himself needed to get a few things taken care of as well. With the increase of his bags of holding there was a lot of clutter in there. He had taken a share of the bandit's armor and steel weapons. They were mostly in bad shape and served no purpose. He decided to sell most of these useless items while keeping the ones that were in the best shape for himself.

Roland didn't really want to hang around this caravan anymore. He wasn't with the adventurers so he wouldn't be making a report. It pained him that he wouldn't be able to get a reward for his troubles. He had gotten enough items to net him some golden coins though, it would be a good boost to his workshop budget.

He would probably need to order some stuff from the blacksmiths that lived there at first. This was fine as he wanted to do some dungeon dives before continuing with his craft. He wanted to gain some more battle experience and then figure out how his class could be utilized for it. Some designs and spell combinations were already floating in his head, if they would work out in the field would have to be tasted.

Roland arrived at an armorer's shop. He didn't beat around the bush for much and quickly went over to the shop owner. He was a rough-looking dwarf with the usual long red beard.

"I'd like to sell some items."

"Aye, Whit do ye have laddie?"

After the quick exchange, Roland started to pull out some of the crude bandit armors. Most of them were leather ones but they had some metallic parts like chain shirts, greaves, and pauldrons. He didn't think he would be getting much for them but he wasn't worried about that as any small amount of gold would help.

"Let me see... Ah, kin give ye about this much..."

The dwarf went through everything and examined it throughout. He could see the man taking some notes, he was quite professional about it.

"That's a bit... can't you go higher? How about ..."

He bartered with the dwarf for a few minutes. After some back and forth the two shook on it and Roland was several golden coins richer. The next destination was the weapon shop where he would get rid of most of the steel and iron blades.

He could keep them for himself but repairing all of them would take too much time. Adding runes on these rusty things was also a waste of time. He could earn more by just buying better blades and inscribing those and wouldn't waste time on repairs.

The next shop also had another dwarf in it. These guys really like crafting weapons and armor, he was probably the odd one out of the bunch as a human runesmith. After another bout of bartering, he had gained more funds. His next destination would be the port, he needed to find out when the next ship would be leaving.

After asking for some directions he headed out. They had arrived in the morning and he still had some time till sundown. He arrived there after another half an hour of walking.

When he arrived he could see two long piers with two large sail ships anchored to them. It looked like he was indeed lucky as the men of the sea were unloading their goods. He could even see a wooden crane helping them out by moving the larger boxes over.

The muscular sailors were carrying some bags over their shoulders. It was probably grain or something like rice. He could also see some minerals here and there, if this ship arrived from Dragnis island then it was possible. That volcanic island had a lot of magic-infused substances on it.

This was also one of the reasons he was going there. He would save on buying things like deep iron there, that island had the largest deposit of it. Some people even came across better metals like Mithril there. He was very much interested in getting his hands on that as it would allow him to make wands that don't need repairing after casting a few spells.

The second ship on the other hand was doing the exact opposite thing. They were loading up on items. Most things were packed into wooden crates, some of them were badly made so you can see what was inside of them.

He noticed that most of the things getting packed was food, which made a lot of sense. The island he was going toward had some tropical forests and warm weather but it was still mostly a volcanic island filled with monsters.

It was a lot easier to produce food on the mainland than there. The farmers here that lived by the larger cities were well protected by adventurers and the army. While on Dragnis island where sometimes earthquakes and small volcanic discharges occurred it was a lot less safe. Thus it was probably best if they focused on what they were good at, which was gathering mineral ores and other resources they pulled out of the super dungeon. There weren't many dungeons like that in any country, thanks to the high mana density in such dungeons it was easy to find precious minerals.

At first, he wanted to go towards the first ship that was unloading their cargo. Now after seeing the one that was packing up, he decided against it. He had already sold everything that he could so there was no reason to stay here, the faster he got off the mainland and got to the island the better.

He walked over to one of the sailors that was holding two large sacks of grain over each shoulder and asked him a question.

"Excuse me, are you taking in travelers? I'd like to go to Dragnis Island and then to the city of Albrook. Was looking for a ship to take me there."

The man came to a stop. He was quite large and muscular and was wearing a plain brown shirt. Though it looked like it wasn't its original color and just got dirtied, it probably hasn't been washed for quite some time as well.

"Traveler? Talk to the Captain or the 1st Mate, that's not my job."

The large man shrugged and moved forward while pointing with his chin to the side. Roland looked to where the sailor was looking and tried to spot the person in question. He didn't have to search long as he saw someone unusual.

It was a large dark-skinned woman with dreadlocks, on which she had a lot of strange accessories and even gems. On her head, she had a red bandana with some kind of strange pattern. Her clothes were more akin to swashbucklers from the movies.

She had it all, boots the coat, and even a baldric over her shoulder with a saber strapped to it. She was only missing a sash with a pistol to her side. Those haven't been invented in this world though, probably as magic was far more deadly.

Besides those, the most noticeable part about her was the cross-shaped scar on her chest and what a chest it was. Roland had to do a double check with his eyes as the size was quite dramatic. He couldn't recall anyone with assets of this size, at least not anyone that was in shape as this woman.

He decided to stop gawking and go over, she looked quite characteristic and was probably some kind of officer. Even now she was shouting at some of the sailors that weren't doing their job properly.

"Move yer arse, we don't 'ave all day, we needs t' leave before sundown."

He approached and noticed that she had a funny way of speaking. He wouldn't be one to point that out as he was still looking for a ride.

"Excuse me, are you in charge here? I'm looking for a ship to take me to Dragnis Island."

The woman glanced at him while raising her eyebrow before speaking out.

"Ye wants t' hitch a ride on me ship? How about ye show me yer face first?"

Roland was as always covering his head up with a black robe that he was wearing over his brigandine armor. He wasn't sure what it was about but he had no reason to decline, not like his face should be known. He also didn't think that the cult was already on to him, they should have other things to contend with.

"There?"

He moved his hood down to reveal his face. He looked a bit unkempt after the time spent traveling and getting himself almost killed.

"Oh? Nah bad, why are ye hidin' that face if 'tis that lovely?"

"Huh? Pardon?"

He didn't expect to get a compliment about his face in this place. The woman was grinning quite widely as well. It looked like she was making fun of him for some reason but he was kind of confused as to why. Before he could come up with a rebuttal the dark-skinned beauty continued.

"1 wee gold coin' fer a one way trip, grub will cost extra. Ye'll 'ave t' sleep wit' th' other lads below deck... Or ye can come t' me cabin instead."

She ended the sentence with a wink, luckily another person showed up

"Isabela, stop fooling around."

It was a rough-looking man with a large feathered hat and in similar swashbuckling gear. It looked like he was this woman's superior and had that captain vibe. He looked to be about fifty but he could have been older, his face made him look like an experienced sailor.

'Why do I keep running into strange women...and why is she talking like a pirate?'

Roland gave out a sigh while thinking about hitting the stores again to get some food. It looked that he would be at least getting a ship ride and it would be sooner than expected. Before that he also needed to ask around, he wouldn't just go on a ship and be stuck out at sea without getting confirmation about the owners.

If everything went well then within the next week he should be at his new home. The future was uncertain but it also brought many new possibilities. He only needed to reach out and grasp them.

#### [Chapter 66 Out at sea.](#)

"Raise th' anchor lads!"

"Aye, raise th' anchor!"

Following the shout of Isabela, the sailors started raising the ship's anchor. The sounds of large thick chains bumping against the side of the ship were heard as it was ready to set sail.

This ship was your regular large sail ship with a lot of space for cargo. Thanks to the spatial magic technology in this world a ship like this could carry a staggering number of items. This reduced the weight and saved up space for the crew members and travelers. Due to this, there were quite a number of people riding along, Roland being one of them.

He was now standing on the main deck with a group of travelers just like him. He was the only one going solo, the rest either had some friends, business partners, or other kinds of companions.

This was a merchant ship which also meant that it had a lot of protection. He could see various adventurers battle-ready and in gear. If not for the destruction of his card he could have also saved some money on traveling as last time. He at least hoped that he could spend this trip without anything going horribly wrong.

Roland didn't really have anything to do now. There was no one that he knew and talking to strangers was something that he wouldn't do. He wished that he could repair some of his items. He also wanted to scribe some new scrolls as he had gone through the bulk of them during the bandit attack.

There was just no privacy here though. He had glanced down into the lower deck where everyone was supposed to sleep. It didn't look too good, a person was supposed to either sleep on the wooden floor or in a hammock. It also smelled like seawater and sweat down there, the lack of ventilation also made breathing hard.

'This is it huh?'

He looked out into the distance. The people that had come to wave at them as they departed were already out of view. He looked at the port town getting smaller and smaller with each passing moment. There were some other ships near them for the time being but with time the distances became larger.

He thought back to his adventures on the main continent. There weren't many treasured moments that he could think back to. His stay at the Arden estate was already buried deep and something that he liked to forget about.

There weren't that many people that he remembered fondly there beside his maid. He also had some fleeting encounters with a couple of adventurers but years had already passed since those times. He didn't think that they would remember him that much for the couple of months he spent with them.

Life moved forward and so he would also have to. He wanted to leave the past behind and move on. After gaining a good amount of personal strength he would be able to relax. He knew that it wouldn't be easy but if he took precautions and bettered himself slowly he would reach his goal.

He knew of the existence of hybrid classes. Ones that combined crafting professions with more battle focused classes. He just needed to see if he could nab one after his next class change.

If there wasn't anything available he was also considering taking something like a runic weaponsmith. With the added proficiencies in crafting weapons, he might be able to somehow make it work.

A weaponsmith class lacked any active or passive skills that increased his battle strength directly though. The runic variant would probably be the same but he should be able to circumvent that with his high mana pool that allowed him to use magic runes more proficiently. He would just need to procure the runic version of skills of other battle classes. Just like he did with the mana slash and mana thrust runes.

'Wait, maybe the runic armorsmith would be a better choice. I will be able to fit more runes on a suit of armor than a sword...'

He rubbed his chin while contemplating, there were a couple of possibilities with his class options. He could also take one that focused on runes only. Then he could just order armor and weapons from a regular blacksmith instead. That would lower the customization options and also probably give away his runecrafting profession sooner or later.

"Well looky here, wha' are ye doin' here all alone, wants big sis t' keep ye company?"

Roland looked behind him after hearing a woman's voice. After turning around he noticed that it was the woman that he previously met. This was this ship's first mate, she went by Isabela and for some reason, she was interested in him.

"Uh, no thanks I'm fine..."

He wasn't used to something like this so he wasn't really sure how to react. The woman gave him a somewhat seductive look. To Roland, it felt as if she was some kind of predator looking at a juicy piece of meat.

Roland might have looked young to her but he was mentally older than the woman that looked to be in her late-twenties. It was true that with a high enough vitality stat her real age might have been higher.

He realized what she was after but he didn't feel comfortable with going through with something like that. This was a ship filled with people and he barely knew this woman. Maybe letting off some steam after the bandit attack would feel enjoyable but he just wasn't the type to jump into any stranger's bed.

"Don't be like that sugar, 'tis goin' t' be a long trip 'n thar ain't much t' do around here. Jus' relax 'n 'ave sum rum."

The lady came prepared, she had a big bottle of rum in one hand and was actually already drinking. The moment she came closer the stretch of alcohol washed over Roland and made him cringe.

"No it's fine, I really don't need a drink."

He just shook his head while moving to the side. Isabela was just about to lean on him but instead tumbled forward and had to grasp herself on the ship railing.

"Look lads, Isabela got dumped again!"

They were all on a boat so this exchange was noticed by the sailors. They started pointing fingers at their first mate and laughing out loud.

"She be losin' her touch, must be gettin' old."

Roland started to move away while noticing a large vein appearing on Isabela's forehead. She even pulled out her saber from the side and started pointing it at her crew member.

"Ye wants me t' cut o' yer pegleg, Emmett?"

She pointed the sharp tool at the sailor's nether region and he instantly backed away. This didn't stop the other men from laughing as they chuckled away whilst their first mate cursed at them. The whole scene only stopped after the captain came. After some shouting, everyone was back working and he was now free to think in peace.

The day flew by and it was night. This he spent in the company of some hairy men on a hammock right above them. The smell was quite something but thanks to his sleeping resistance he would be fine with only a couple of hours of it. It looked like the trip would be uneventful and that he would arrive at his new home soon.

But on the second day, the sailor that was atop of the main mast started shouting. Roland looked out into the distance but couldn't see anything. The person above had a specialized sea fairing scout-like class and he could tell that something was approaching.

"A monster off the starboard bow, incomin' fast!"

'Starboard bow? that should be front right, 1 or 2 o'clock...'



Roland was curious about what was coming so he tried looking. It was the middle of the next day but the sea was dark and murky. He couldn't see anything, he could try to activate his detection device but with its limited range, he decided otherwise. For now, he decided to move back and let the specialized crew do their thing while he examined it from a distance.

Back in his mind, he was quite worried if something brought this ship down here survival would be difficult. He had no underwater breathing spells on him and they had already been sailing for more than one day. Returning back without a boat would probably be impossible and not like this world had something like a coast guard to rescue people from shipwrecks.

He could see the ship turning from its original course. It looked like they were running away but that wasn't it. Some of the sailors rushed below deck to man the cannons while others occupied the ones on the main deck. He could see what was the point of the maneuver as the ship just faced the approaching enemy with its side to get a better shot on it.

"Wait fer it..."

Isabela was at the forefront of it. She was grasping one of the ropes attached to the sail while leaning out from the ship. After a moment even he could see some kind of dark shadow coming for them. He was surprised that the lookout was able to spot something like this in the distance.

Soon the monster emerged from below. Its color was sea-green, a little bit back from its head were four long tentacles. Two sprouting from across each other on the top, and two more of the same on the underbelly which couldn't be seen yet.

The monster's head was somehow triangular-shaped, with a spherical, somewhat beak-like nose. Above the nose were three eyes, each one set atop the other and red in color. There were also tendrils and a few shorter tentacles dangling from the bottom of its head.

The monster emerged from the deep sea and gave out a large roar. It had quite a large mouth with long sharp sword-like teeth. Its size was roughly half of this ship, it was possible that if it took a bite of it they would go under. Even a full slam from this giant thing could cause irreparable damage to this vessel.

The creature's body shape was similar to a shark's but it was a bit more elongated and had all of those tentacles. At first, Roland thought that they were up against the fabled Kraken but instead, this was some kind of freaky looking fish.

"Fire!"

The moment the monster roared Isabela swung her saber down. This prompted the sailors to discharge the cannons they were manning. He could see them making a nice arc towards the beast, some of them hit the mark while others missed by a wide margin. Aiming the cannons was quite difficult while steering a ship like this.

Roland expected the creature to put up a better fight but it couldn't even get in range of the ship. The cannons made quick work of it and soon enough the monster was floating belly up while its blood tainted the water.

The sailors cheered out loud while the people on the ship clapped. It looked like there would not be any shipwrecking happening any time soon.

“Helmsman take us out o’ here, activate th’ wind magic if ye ’ave t’!”

Roland was a bit surprised at the crew’s next action. He was expecting them to actually go up to the monster’s crops and fish out its mana stone. A creature this big would probably have a huge one.

Instead, they released all the sails and even activated some wind runes to get out of there as quickly as it was possible. He got the answer to why after a few moments. The creature’s motionless body got attacked from the side by a massive set of chompers.

Another sea monster decided to make a meal out of this fresh body. It was smaller than this one but it wasn’t alone as many other sea creatures started fighting over the food. The sailors knew this and quickly escaped as the creature’s blood would attract other predators to the scene quite fast.

After the whole thing was over Roland moved over to one of these cannons. He activated his debugging skill while examining it. He could see that it was clearly a runic weapon, from the runic structure he could tell that it was composed of common runes.

It looked like it was similar to some of the detonation runes he worked on before. The magic item probably simulated gunpowder to propel the metallic cannonballs outside. He could also see that there were mana stones involved in this construction. Probably thanks to that even these sailors with low mana could fire these off.

He didn’t think there was a problem with him sketching a diagram of this cannon. He was stuck on this ship with nothing else to do. He just sat down close to it and started scribbling, he didn’t think that anyone here would have extensive knowledge of what he was doing. Even then he could just say that he got inspired by the cannon design.

The trip continued with more monsters and more cannon fire. Sometimes he could see the sailors throwing some kind of pouches filled with something into the water. After listening in he discovered that it was some kind of monster repellent. It was apparently enough to scare off the smaller monsters but not the larger ones. It was utilized whenever too many of the smaller ones decided to swim around them.

Surprisingly the voyage continued into the last day without a hitch. He expected to be caught up in some kind of pirate attack or a large squid monster appearing out of nowhere. Now they were close to Dragnis island and apparently, the larger monsters didn’t intrude too close to it.

There was a large party the day before their arrival. Everyone got drunk including the adventurers and the traveling guests. He had enough sense to take it slow, the other people on the other hand were loud and obnoxious. Isabela landed herself another boy toy who he saw leaving her cabin in the morning. He had a strange look on his face, he could only speculate on what happened that night.

Soon from high above a voice of a man hollered.

“Land ahoy!”

Roland walked over while narrowing his eyes and glanced into the distance. He could faintly see some land after a couple of minutes of the man shouting. Soon a city port could be seen by everyone and the people got ready to disembark.

“Everyone get ready, we shall be goin’ ashore soon.”

Isabela came out of her cabin with disheveled hair and smelling like cheap spirit. She was showing a bit more skin than usual probably due to the previous night’s encounter.

‘I guess this is it, I should restock at the port and find transport towards the town of Albrook.’

This was his final destination. He hoped that he had made the right decision and that the town wouldn’t turn out to be a dud. The quality of the dungeon was also unknown, it could be too new for adventuring or training.

‘Well, anything is better than staying back in that city...’

He recalled Edelgard and how it was probably going through turmoil at this very moment. With that noble son’s assassinations going through some people might decide to leave. There was no concrete proof that the noble did it but rumors were enough to cause potential business partners to turn away.

Roland shrugged as that wasn’t his problem anymore. Nobles and their problems weren’t on his agenda, what he now had to do was to gain more levels and craft better weapons for himself.

‘First thing I’m going to craft is a hot tub... I haven’t taken a bath in weeks...’

He chuckled while looking into the distance, the large landmass constantly getting bigger as he waited with anticipation to disembark.