

## Runesmith 87

### [Chapter 87 Great Reward?](#)

Bernir dropped down onto his butt after seeing the monster finally go down. The bloody battle was finally over and the monster had self detonated after getting its core cracked by the man wearing the crimson armor.

He thought back to how this day started. Bernir had just recently joined up with a fresh adventurer party. Not as a part of it, more as a freelancer that was doing odd jobs for them for money. There was a reason why he was here all alone and without his family.

This young man was close to 170 cm in height with red hair. He had a scruffy beard that was in the same color along with large brown eyes. His stature was a bit wide and his hands had some meat on them. He was wearing a cheap set of leather armor but most of it was just dark cloth.

Being a half-dwarf half human made his upbringing quite hard. The particular village that he grew up in didn't take too kindly to his father marrying a human woman. Then calamity struck, the village was attacked by monsters, and he and many others were left with no parents.

The people that were against him living as a half breed there took this chance to slowly shun him. In time it was too much and he decided to try hitting it off on his own. The news of the new dungeon city getting built caused him to dream of a new beginning. There was no work in the village he was in, none of the dwarven blacksmiths or artisans were willing to hire him, so it was time to leave.

It took some time to get here, the journey wasn't easy as he didn't have much money. He had to perform tasks for the caravan that he joined and sometimes sleep outside with nothing but the night sky above him. After about a month the new city was on the horizon and the dream of an easy life was close to being grasped.

At least that was his initial thought but reality tended to be different than a person imagined. He wasn't greeted with warmth but with spite as well. The smithies that he applied for didn't take him very seriously. At most, they would let him carry the materials around but never let him continue his craft of blacksmithing. He was left with only a promise that if he did his time they might allow him to work on some horseshoes in the future.

Thus his money problems started, he was forced to perform odd jobs again. He wasn't strong in any meaning of the term so the only thing worth the time was helping the adventurers carry their items.

This line of work wasn't what he had in mind when he came here and it barely paid the bills. He was left with a minuscule amount of what the adventurer's sold at the guild. His tasks were to pick apart the monster corpses and carry all the equipment that the adventurers couldn't be bothered with.

Bernir had seen Roland wandering town from time to time. He always had peculiar unmatching armor on which made him stand out. This half-dwarf was someone that was aching to work with his hammer. The only thing he could do was watching other craftsmen create.

Then came this fateful day, the armor that Roland was wearing today was different than usual. The craftsmanship had improved and the application of runes made Bernir's mouth water as he bumped into him when they were leaving for the dungeon.

The party he was a part of consisted mostly of steel ranked adventurers with the leader being a fresh silver rank. There were six of them and he was the seventh member. Bernir wasn't really considered as part of the group, he was always getting ordered around left and right. Left with only scraps at the end of the day after having his hands bloody.

Besides the leader, all the others were in their high 40s in levels. After the leader finally advanced it was decided to wander below the 10th level. Bernir felt that it was too soon with only one silver rank adventurer around but he didn't have a say in this. They told him to shut up and just hide in the back as always.

From his perspective things were actually looking good, the team was beating all the monsters quite easily. Even when they got to the 10th level the guards in front of the boss monster's chamber weren't all that tough to beat.

So finally the party ventured forth to battle the maze boss. They weren't even planning to do this, to begin with. The original plan was to go fight some tier 2 monsters at the starting point a bit past the boss monster chamber. Instead, they found the passage closed and with a fresh tier 2 monster waiting for them on the inside.

They all knew that this was risky but also that it could be very lucrative. Everyone knew that after defeating this monster there would be some kind of prize waiting at the end. This 10th level monster was hard to fight as a lot of adventurers were willing to set up camp before the entrance and farm for items.

For some reason, it was open this day. Greed got the better of Bernir's party and the rest was history. Roland arrived not long after to save his life. While his party members were trying to fight the golem he was shivering in the back while trying to distribute potions.

The monster was slow but its stamina was unending. One hit was enough to devastate anyone from this party. The party of adventurers gave it all but after their shield warrior was pounded to meat paste it was over. The rest started falling like flies going down mostly in one hit. This boss clearly out leveled their leader which was that shield warrior that fell first.

Bernir's chest was still pounding even though it was over. The rocky bridges that connected this room to the exit were now slowly rising back up. He had looked around if anyone survived even before the explosion but everyone was dead.

He was the only survivor and was lucky enough to have gotten away with it with only some minor bruising. At this moment he was looking at the man dressed in crimson armor that had saved him. This warrior was walking over to the spot that the Ruby Golem detonated, there wasn't really anything left besides some broken off gems.

"I might have to go back to the guild and report this..."

Bernir heard the man mumble to himself while kicking around the golem parts. Soon he turned around to face him which caused the half-dwarf to stand at attention. He didn't think that the man was hostile after he had already saved him but there was always a small possibility that he could end up dead.

It was possible for this armored man to see him as an eyesore. Some people would get rid of all witnesses and then rob the adventurer corpses of all their belongings. Though in this situation there wasn't much left of them.

The large detonation pushed almost everything into the lava below the boss chamber's platform. The only thing that was worth something was Bernir's backpack that he still had with him. It was a spatial item that was worth a lot but it wasn't his. It was an item that was given to him by the adventurer party but they were all gone now, so it would belong to him as the only one that survived. That is if this armored warrior didn't see a problem with that.

"Hey, you."

"Y-yes?"

He snapped back to reality after the man in the red armor called out to him. After poking around through the monster's remains and gathering some of the materials he finally focused his attention on Bernir.

"Can you walk?"

"Ah, y-yes."

Bernir quickly jumped up to his feet to show off that he was fine.

"Good, we'll have to make a report to the guild so you'll have to come along with me. The golem's core wasn't totally destroyed, it should be enough as proof..."

The other person in the armor started talking. It looked like he didn't have any ulterior motives and wanted him to report to the guild about this situation. Bernir let out a sigh of relief as it looked like he would be getting out of this in the end.

"Ah... also sorry for your loss."

The man was about to turn around but then slowly faced him again. Bernir just nodded while scratching his head.

"T-thank you, we weren't really that close though..."

He replied while the man turned around to look at the monster's remains, he picked up some of the crumbled rubies and started looking over them. Before he pocketed them, Bernir opened up his mouth.

"You shouldn't take that, without the golem's core those gems will turn into regular rocks soon."

He was in this business for some time now and had done some research. He knew that golem remains were slightly different, they might have looked like resources ready for plucking but that wasn't entirely true.

"It will?"

"Y-yes, golems with a large core like that need mana for some of their body parts to function. If it was a regular iron golem then the ores it was made from could be reused..."

“What about these volcanic rocks then?”

“T-they could be refined into special fire resistant metal, not as good as deep iron but better than regular iron.”

The man in the crimson armor looked at the ruby that he was holding to and tossed it to the side. He then picked up one of the larger rocks that was previously a part of the golem and started to examine it. After a moment it looked like he came to some conclusion as he started pushing the rock into one of his spatial bags. Bernir looked at this and could see that the bag that he had was a bit small.

“I-i could help you with that...”

His gratitude to the man that saved him was big, he wasn't really very invested in his old adventurer party. They never treated him like one of their own so finding a new job would be paramount. He was now looking at a powerful adventurer that was able to defeat a golem all alone. Maybe if he played his cards right he could come up big after this loss.

The man in the red armor turned around to look at Bernir again. He started looking through the entire room. There were pieces of this golem everywhere. Even though a lot of it was tossed in the lava, some raw materials still remained.

“If you want, go ahead.”

Bernir smiled before moving towards the monster's remains. He knew that maybe if he did a good job he could be hired by someone like this. This man was clearly someone that didn't speak often but he was already treating him better than his old co-workers.

Those guys would shout at him constantly and even sometimes force him to be monster bait. Though he wasn't so sure about this man but it didn't seem that he had an ulterior motive.

“Thank you, sir! I'll be sure to do a good job”

The half-dwarf replied while moving his butt in gear. In his mind, it could be possible to land himself in a better position than when he entered this dungeon. The man before him looked to be a silver rank adventurer, maybe even a gold one. If he could become his helper then he might actually start earning some real money.

“Sir?... You don't need to call me that...”

“T-then how should I refer to you, sir?”

“Just call me Wayland...”

Bernir tried to recall where he heard that name and connected it to some rumors in town. There was supposedly some eccentric living out of the city in a farmhouse. This someone apparently didn't really like to interact with other people.

“Will do Mr. Wayland, you can call me Bernir!”

There were even rumors that people went missing around his house from time to time. Though he didn't really believe those as he was mostly interested in the fact that this Wayland person was

supposed to be some kind of smith. This only caused him to go into high gear as he was very much interested in getting to work at a proper forge.

While Bernir was thinking about what the future had in store for him Roland was walking through the cleared-out boss chamber. The bridges that were slowly rising were almost up so he would be able to leave in a moment. There was one last thing for him to do here.

He knew that after this boss fight there should have been some kind of reward waiting for him. From what he had heard there should be a chest with an item in it. How rare and valuable the treasure would be depended on how strong the boss was.

The whole place rumbled as the bridges were finally connecting to the platform. He could even see magma dripping down from them. It would probably be better to wait a few minutes before going through them. Luckily he was smart enough to get boots that were made from fire resistant leather as well.

Then it finally happened, a small compartment opened up right in the middle of this battle stage. It looked very game-like as the item that was there was a bronze chest. There only needed to be some catchy tune and it would look like something straight out of a game.

‘The golem was a rare monster variant, the rewards should reflect this.’

Roland walked over to the middle of this chamber and waited for the chest to show up. Before opening it up he examined everything around it with the help of his skills. Analyzing and scanning it with his Runic eyes didn’t show him much.

### **Bronze Chest [ Intermediate ]**

There were no enchantments that he could see and he couldn’t really feel any mana fluctuations either. Roland wasn’t sure about just opening it as there could be traps. There was also the possibility of this being a mimic, which was a monster that took on the form of chests. The probability was low but being the cautious type he gave it a few pokes with his sword.

“Um... want me to open it?”

Bernir called out to him from the side. Roland could see the young man’s surprised expression as if he was doing something silly. It looked like the half-dwarf didn’t see any danger in opening this chest. There was also no lock on it, a person just needed to lift it up to see the prize inside.

“It’s fine... I’ll do it myself...”

He replied while still being a bit apprehensive. He used the tip of his sword to wedge it inside before flipping the chest open. Even though it looked like it would be fine he still protected himself with his shield from any possible explosions or poisonous arrows shooting out of there.

“Huh?”

The chest was opened and there was no trap inside. There was also no weapon or armor piece in there either.

“Is that...”

Roland reached into the bronze chest and pulled out the item that was inside. Bernir that was picking up the remains from the Ruby Golem looked in with interest as well. He also was wondering what the prize for a strong boss monster like this would be.

“Is that a monster egg?”

Bernir called out from the side, Roland was holding a large egg. It was far larger than a regular chicken egg, close to what an ostrich egg would be. It was a darker shade of red with some black stripes that weren't uniform in length or width.

### **Monster Egg [ ??? ]**

Roland's Analyzing skill wasn't high enough to give him any specifics on this thing. It was clearly an egg from some kind of monster. If it was rare and would fetch him a good price on the market was unknown. He knew that there were Tamer and Summoner classes that could do things with eggs like this but he wasn't sure if he would have a use for it.

He looked to Bernir with the egg in hand. He knew that there was a living creature in this item so placing it in a spatial bag wouldn't really work. The half-dwarf picked up on his intention and was quick to walk over.

“Here, hold on to it for now.” The bridges that were raised were now cool enough to go through and the large doors that were previously locked were now opening. It was time to report to the guild, he could resume his silver adventurer quest later. The man that he saved was now his responsibility and he would see to it that he returned safely above ground.

### [Chapter 88 Unwanted sleepover.](#)

Roland's journey back up was mostly uneventful. The monsters at the lower levels were far too weak and his new 'partner' was actually being helpful. Any monster that he slew the young man was able to disassemble quite fast. He was also good at pointing out which monster parts would sell for the most coins.

There was only one downside to this as it took him more time to return. Which left Roland prompting him to hurry it up. When the two survivors were out it was already late at night. The adventurer's guild wasn't something that was open 24/7, mostly closing at about 10 pm. It seemed that he would have to return tomorrow to make his report.

The biggest problem was this half-dwarf that was following him around. He had a strange submissive look on his face whenever Roland looked his way. Whenever he praised him for giving him some valuable market information or about the monster parts he seemed ecstatic. It was as if the man had never been validated in his life before.

But now they were out of the dungeon he could just meet up with the guy on the next day. There wasn't really a need to have the half-dwarf testify with him. He was mostly doing it for peace of mind, the adventurers that died could have families. They might have wished to know what happened to their dead relatives.

Roland was unfamiliar with them so the explanation would be left up to the half-dwarf. There was also the info about the rare golem that could be actually sold for money which he was aiming for. This and him slaying it could help him get through the silver rank quest if his new friend confirmed his story.

“Bernie was it? I guess I’ll see you at the adventurer’s guild tomorrow.”

“It’s Bernir... but sure thing Sir. Wayland!”

“Stop calling me Sir, I’m not a knight...”

Roland continued walking as they passed the dungeon guards. They wouldn’t really care about the report as that wasn’t their part of the job. They were only there to keep untrained people with no adventurer cards from wandering into the dungeon below.

His house was between the dungeon and the city of Albrook. It took him about thirty minutes on foot to get there from this spot, then another half an hour to get to town. The walk directly from the city took about forty minutes, his house wasn’t directly between the two landmarks.

So it was time to head back. The path towards his home split off from the main road which made his bike a bit hard to use. This time around he didn’t have it with him, it needed a larger spatial bag that was more of a backpack for him to be able to remove it. He had gone down into the dungeon thinking that he would only need to defeat a couple of tier 2 monsters.

Without his bike, he would need to make the walk back home the old fashioned way. Roland was able to test his new armor extensively and it worked a lot better than he expected. There was a bit of a lag between the runic spells activations which he would need to work on. Other than that his mana stone armor was working just fine. He didn’t get to test out some of the inbuilt attacking spells as he was trying to save up on charges.

‘If I can lower the size of these wands further, maybe if I attach them to my gauntlet or vambrace. I could use them as disposable magic tools...’

This was one of the ideas that he thought up while fighting with this armor. He remembered when he was blasting the monster from afar while using his small scrolls. His rune shrinking skill was now leveling up further. If he managed to minimize the design even further he could start adding small rods or plates with disposable runic structures. Maybe even add a holster for disposable runic scrolls for one-time use.

He wanted to design them in such a way that during a prolonged fight he could just pop a used-up plate out and insert a new one. There wouldn’t even be a need to make these ammunition type spells from better metals, he could use plain steels that would hold a couple of charges.

‘This would be good for my armor’s longevity and would cut the costs significantly...’

Roland was walking towards his house while Bernir was behind him. The half-dwarf liked to talk but it seemed that he had given up on it after Roland started thinking about improving his gear design. In reality, this wasn’t why Bernir was being quiet, he started to slowly fall behind while walking. At first, he thought that the half-dwarf was just going his own way but then he heard a thud sound behind him.

“Hm?”

After turning around to see what the noise was about. He could then see Bernir face planted on the ground with the large backpack covering most of his body.

“Hey, Bernie... are you okay?”

He called out but after a moment of silence, it was clear that his new acquaintance was far from it.

Roland moved over with haste and flopped the young man onto his back. His eyes shone with some light as he used his identification skill on him. This was the fastest way to see if something was wrong. With the new levels in this skill and after it advanced to the higher tier he was now able to see people's MP and SP numbers.

It was clear after one glance, that Bernir had no stamina points left. He had remained silent and never asked him to take a break during the whole journey back from the dungeon.

‘Was he just being stubborn?’

Why did this guy not tell him that he was close to passing out was unclear. He might have been afraid that he would be left alone to fend for himself or he was just trying to be tough. The reason wasn't really important, now Roland had another problem on his hands.

‘I... I can't just leave him here... some stray monsters could get to him. I don't have any stamina potions either...’

Bernir passed out after they walked for 15 minutes from the dungeon location. They were still close to the main road leading to the city but it was very late. Other adventurers might run into the sleeping half-dwarf but that didn't mean that they would help him.

There were also monsters living out in these lands, the forests were dense in these parts so some of them hid there. He even ran into some low level creatures from time to time but they mostly fled from people above their level like him. They would certainly not flee from a juicy passed-out half-dwarf though.

‘Do I need to carry him back to the city?’

Roland had the strength to carry this guy around and the backpack with no problem but going to the city like that would take some time. His own house on the other hand was fifteen minutes away from this spot. The more logical thing to do would be to take him along to his home and let him stay there for the night. But then Roland's trust issues sprung into action once more which made him question that option.

‘Well... I could dump him into my shed ... don't think he will steal any of those old tools from it...’

After going through some options he decided to take him along towards his own house. He didn't need to allow him to sleep in it directly as his shed was a good option. Thanks to this being a volcanic area the weather was warm, he wouldn't freeze even when sleeping in a tool shed. The same shed that he used as a dummy workshop.

With a small nod, he decided on taking the half-dwarf with him. Normally he would sling him over his shoulder but there was still the backpack that would be in the way. He wound up putting it on his back



while carrying Bernir in his hands in the front. The monster egg was in one of the side pockets of this large backpack. Roland was sure to check if it didn't shatter during the fall and it was just fine.

'I picked up quite the ugly princess...'

Roland groaned inwardly while walking forward. The young man that he was carrying wasn't the prettiest and also needed a bath after what happened in that dungeon. Though he wasn't sure if this was just Bernir natural fragrance. He was in the minority of the common people that washed themselves every day. Not everyone could fashion themselves a runic bathtub with clear magical water.

Finally after about fifteen minutes, he was back home. There were no street lights but he had a night vision rune inscribed in his helmet to help him out with that. After entering through the main gate he flopped Bernir down on the ground.

Roland moved into his house first to get some things. He had an old straw mattress that he didn't use at all as later he fashioned a large bed for himself with a softer finish. He fetched a blanket that he carried with the straw bed to his log shed.

'I think I'll just burn it after this guy is gone...'

He placed the smell half-dwarf onto the makeshift bedding and placed the blanket over him. He didn't have any spare pillows to give and didn't want to have that unkempt red mop on any of his good pillows either.

The shed that he was using as a backup plan for thieves looked a bit dusty and unkempt. He didn't really like to clean it and only worked there to make some basic things like nails or hinges for doors. It had been visited by some intruders before but they didn't really take much as all these tools were of low quality.

'That should be it... normally someone that runs out of stamina will be out for a good six to eight hours, I'll check upon him in the morning.'

He closed the shed but didn't lock it from the outside. There wasn't anything useful in it and if Bernir woke up and found it locked he could have a panic attack. Maybe even use it as a toilet if he woke up in the middle of the night. There was nothing in it that he considered valuable so even if he ran off back to the city it would be fine. His own hose was tightly protected so there was no fear of someone like this even getting in there.

'What was a guy like this doing down in the dungeon anyway? His jobs are blacksmith and carpenter... he is level 45, shouldn't he be in some smithy working?'

Roland had peeked at Bernir status. He couldn't see his pure stats so he couldn't compare his old runic blacksmith class to the regular one but he could see that this man was a pure crafter. From his perspective, there was no reason to endanger himself to go down into the dungeons. With his skill set, he should have joined the construction company or one of the many smithies in town.

Roland shrugged as he hoped to be rid of this half-dwarf in the morning. After dumping him off at the adventurer's guild he would have a clear conscience. It was already late and he was still wearing his crimson armor.

Even though he was complaining about Bernir's smell he wasn't much better off. Spending a whole day in this type of armor had made him sweat. How he was able to last this long was thanks to his heat resistance skill along with a little rune that lowered the temperature on the inside.

First, he made a trip to his secret workshop where he started to remove his armor. This was a bit easier to do than putting it on so he was done with it faster. He had made a rack from some wooden logs beforehand, it was quite basic but was enough for hanging this crimson armor.

After being done with that it was time to take a bath. He was tired after a full day of work but not enough to not clean himself. While on the way here he noticed the backpack that belonged to Bernir. The red color brought his attention back to the egg that he received from the boss battle.

For some reason, he felt like playing around with it. After taking it out from the large backpack side pocket he carried it over to his bathroom. While the magic water was filling up his tub and while the magic runes heated it up he was looking over this ostrich sized egg.

'I wonder if this thing is edible...'

It looked like a giant egg just with a strange pattern, it could be some kind of rare delicacy. The monster inside wasn't like the other dungeon monsters or the ones living out in the wild. This thing worked on some different laws, he could even find a goblin inside of it. There wasn't really a limit on what could be hiding inside and it defied the regular monster breeding and birthing norm.

'Read that you could even get vampire babies from these things...'

He moved into his large tub of water while still holding onto the egg. This tub was quite large to fit his own large frame that was getting more muscular with time passing. He could easily submerge his whole body while being in it. For now, he left the egg floating in the warm water while he washed himself. All the sweat and dirt started to mix together with the sope that formed bubbles around the water surface.

It was already midnight at this point so Roland found himself leaning back in his hot tub while closing his eyes. The monster egg continued floating between his legs without a care in the world. While thinking about the plans for tomorrow he found himself closing his eyes.

Due to his heat resistance skill, he now needed to increase the temperature of this water by a few degrees to feel comfortable. It was probably well beyond what a normal person would be able to stomach but for him, it was just right. The egg was taken from a volcanic dungeon so he also didn't think that hot water would cause any long-lasting damage.

'Ten more minutes and then I'll go to bed...'

He thought to himself while relaxing but like times before Roland found himself dozing off in the warm water. This happened from time to time whenever he overworked himself. The previous day he also didn't get much sleep as he was giving his new crimson armor the finishing touches.

"....."

"....."

"....bork..."

“...bork bork... boof...”

“...GAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH”

“What the?”

Roland shot up awake only to realize that the sun had already set. The water had gotten cold just like last time when he spent the night in this tub. He was awoken by a strange shout that sounded like his new half-dwarven acquaintance.

“Did he activate one of the traps? Did he not read the note on the door?”

Before standing out he heard another thing, a sort of whining noise hit his ears. He looked down to see something red floating around in the tub along with him.

“Huh?”

It took him some time to notice that the egg had cracked and that something had popped out from it. This something was now floating in the tub and looking up to him. It was quite fuzzy and its fur was quite red. It had a large black nose and its face was covered with some black stripes here and there.

Before he could take another look the ‘monster’ started barking again. It was clear that this was some kind of canine monster similar to the hell hounds he faced off during his class change quest. It was quite small, no more than a puppy.

Roland quickly removed himself from the cold water while also grabbing the puppy that seemed to have just hatched from the large egg. He held it up with both his hand and used his identification skill to get the name.

Ruby Wolf Puppy [ L1 ]

“Can I still sell this thing?”

He could hear the puppy whimper the moment he uttered those words, as if it knew what they meant. Roland was left now with another problem but first, he would need to put on some clothes and see what the idiot outside was up to. It seemed like he had activated the electrical trap that gave him quite a jolt.