

Runesmith 99

[Chapter 99 Getting emotional.](#)

Roland stood alone in the wide-open area surrounded by old buildings. Some of them had even caught on fire due to him swinging his fire whips around. Thus he needed to douse them with some water magic, luckily in his bag, he did have the wand he used for cleaning his house with water pressure.

‘I need to report this to the guild... along with that guy...’

He thought back to what happened today. Following Bernir’s beating, he went to the city to disperse some street justice. There he met Armand who attacked him, his reason was probably the test at the guild.

There were a couple of choices here. He could just forget about it, return home with the backpack and that would be it. With the lack of a police force fights like this mostly went unattended unless someone reported them. The party of thugs would probably do no such thing as they were the ones that started this whole predicament.

This left him or Bernir as the witnesses that would need to go to the guards to seek justice. Though after he beat up the other party already they might not even bother in following through. The city guards might even apprehend him for causing damage to the city or performing spells out in the open.

Dropping the case with those ruffians was probably the best choice considering that he did get back his items. That left the guild and Armand who was trying to defend the perpetrators. This was something that he couldn’t just look past anymore. It was clear to him that this person was not thinking straight, just tossing his weight around like he owned the place.

Armand’s level was past the 90’s, which brought him close to the next class change. Past tier 2 a person could change their classes every 25 levels just as with the tier 1 classes. The tier 2 classes could be leveled up to the 50th level. Which most people followed through as there was a certain bonus and special skills if you maxed out.

Some did switch every 25 levels though. For instance, the tier 3 Elementalist mage class required 4 classes of Fire, Wind, Earth, Ice mage to be all leveled up to at least the 25th level. There were other class combinations if a person chose to raise two of those elemental mages to level 50.

Frostfire mage, for instance, there was also supposedly a stronger ‘true’ version of the elemental mage if they managed to max out on all those tier 2 classes before the change. It would take a lot longer but the bonuses a caster would get by maxing out their levels with all the classes allowed for a prestige class. Due to how hard something like this was almost no one actually went through with it.

“Woof!”

“Yeah, I’m coming.”

Roland grasped Bernir’s large backpack and carried it over his right shoulder. It was time to return home and sleep this whole thing off. His trip back home was luckily not as eventful as his way into the city. He evaded the pub where he fought the party of tier 2 adventurers. While moving he had to look at his armor, he had gone through quite a bit of spells in this fight.

'Everything seems fine... the armor seems more used out in the dungeon, but the flame whips on the other hand...'

The experimental part that he used against Armand had dug through the steel prototype that he made. He had made it as a reusable part which he could replace later, the spell was on the stronger side as it pushed the capabilities of tier 2 spells to their limit. He also discovered the biggest weakness of this type of design, it was hard to replace during combat.

It was fine in a one-on-one battle but not if it continued for a long time. When the second party member arrived he needed to go back to his sword and shield. The whips would only function if he used his rune mending skill but this would bring the rank down after activation. It was a skill mostly suited for a worst-case scenario and not in day-to-day combat.

'Unless I can implement some kind of reloading mechanism this approach might prove fatal if I rely on it too much...'

With Agni riding on his shoulder he left the city, the night had already come. With a little jolt to his helmet, he activated his night vision rune. Thanks to it he could comfortably walk without needing to carry a torch. This had the boon of people not being able to spot him from afar as he wasn't giving off any light.

When they were close to the house Agni was placed on the ground. The little guy quickly ran out to the entry gate and started to scratch against it. He then promptly bolted inside after Roland opened it up.

"Ugh...Gahhh..."

After closing everything tight Roland heard Bernir's screams. Concerned with his wounds he rushed inside the house only to spot Agni sitting on his chest and licking his face. The half-dwarf was trying to shove the puppy off him but was unable to escape from the long tongue and slobber.

"I see that you are awake."

Agni finally jumped off Bernir and ran into the kitchen, from it he brought back the wooden bowl that was made for him. He tossed it on the ground and then started barking.

"Sure sure, you've earned your reward."

Roland chuckled as he tossed Bernir's backpack to the side. His tracking wolf had done quite the good job. The monster wolf's nose was quite a miraculous thing, with his pet around he would be able to counter one of his biggest weaknesses. This was of course tracking and spotting hidden enemies.

Bernir rubbed his face that was now covered in wolf slobber. The first thing he did was to look around, after being beaten he was still surprised that he made it back to Roland's house. He then looked at his body, his broken leg was numb from the healing potion but it was well enough for him to stand on it.

"Boss what did you..."

"Oh, yeah. I brought it back from your 'friends'. I was sure to return the favor, they won't be walking straight for a while. You should probably rest for the night, you can sleep on the couch if you're too tired."

From the way those thugs were talking about Bernir it was clear that they knew him. Roland moved to the kitchen while Bernir slowly stood up from the ground. The half-dwarf started at his backpack with intent without saying a word.

Roland on the other hand was placing some meat on Agni's bowl. Thanks to his runic refrigerator it was easy to store. He even constructed an oven for cooking and baking that was powered by his runic engine. After returning to the living room he spotted Bernir, the young man was holding the backpack and looking his way.

"Is something wrong? Do you need another healing potion?"

Before Roland could ask more questions Bernir's face started contorting in strange ways. It all started with a single tear that ran down his cheek. The floodgates opened up soon after as Bernir started bawling his eyes out. Snot was not far behind as his incoherent wails filled Roland's room.

"Wait... what..."

He started moving his hands around in a random fashion as he clearly didn't expect to get this kind of reaction. Bernir was a young man but he didn't expect him to cry like a child. Even Agni peeked out from the side with a large piece of meat in his mouth. He started running around the crying half-dwarf while mumbling something.

"Uhh... does it hurt that bad?"

"N-no it's not about that... this is the first time someone has done something like this for me..."

"Ahh..."

Roland scratched the back of his neck while staring at his assistant crying his heart out. He had heard some stories from Bernir's youth, how his parents died, and how he ended up here with no money, job or friends.

It was respectful that he was able to keep it together for so long while still having a smile on his face. He was also not someone that would blame others for the dark turn his life took. Still, he was a young man that was entering his twenties and alone in this world.

Without no one to lean on, life was tough. Not many people were like Roland that was fine with living alone. He was in the minority as people were social creatures, without others around they would find it hard to live.

This was quite an awkward situation for a socially inept person like Roland. Without knowing what to do he moved over and placed his hand on Bernir's shoulder. Soon an awkward patting on the shoulder commenced as he tried to cheer his assistant up. His lack of interaction with other people had caused him to not really know what to do in such an occasion.

The reaction he got was a sharp gaze from this half-dwarf. It made him flinch and take a step back while Bernir used his hand to wipe away some of that snoot.

"I'll be sure to work even harder from now on, I'll repay you for this one day Boss!"

"Ah, sure..."

“No you don’t understand, I will be forever grateful! I’ll be your trusted follower for the rest of my life!”

It looked like Bernir was pledging his life to Roland in a sort of vow. The recipient wasn’t really looking for anything in particular in return for his act of revenge. He mostly did it to not look weak and to send a message to anyone that would ever try to bully his workers.

“You’re being too melodramatic... think you should go to sleep before you pass out again.”

Bernir’s wounds were closed due to the potions but that didn’t mean that he was fully healed. He had many broken ribs and cut-up flesh that needed to be mended. These potions that Roland was using weren’t magical elixirs. They mostly kicked the body’s regenerative capabilities into overdrive to mend it.

The materials required for the healing process had to be taken from the body as well as from the potion. This would leave the healed person weakened depending on the type of wound they had suffered. Of course with higher quality potions the strain on the body was lessened and with a high vitality stat, this could also be counteracted.

Bernir’s had a fire in his eyes but after crying his heart out and then getting pumped up he started wobbling around. Roland had to support him with one hand onto the nearby couch.

“Sorry boss, I’ll go to my workshop...”

“It’s fine just rest here, for now, you’ve been through a lot today.”

“Boss...”

Bernir looked like he was about to cry again after being helped to the couch. Roland on the other hand was trying to avoid this show of affection from the bearded half-dwarf. Luckily Bernir was still quite tired so after leaving him on the couch for a few minutes he was dead asleep and snoring like a bear.

“I haven’t used that sound-canceling spell in a while...”

He placed a blanket over his assistant and went away to get undressed and cleaned. Soon it was morning again and the two men had a conversation with each other. Bernir explained in full detail about what this whole thing was about.

“So, they were nothing more than small-time gangsters?”

Roland commented after hearing the explanations. It looked like this group of adventurers used their tier 2 status to strongarm weak people into giving them money. They even did it to weaker adventurer parties like the one that Bernir was in before.

It seemed like the guild was really not being managed well. On one end there were people like Armand that liked to toss their weight around due to being slightly stronger than the regular adventurers. Then we had even worse elements like the party of thugs that exhorted other adventurers for money.

This reveal made Roland worried, something like this could only take place for a couple of reasons. One, the guild master was either incompetent or didn’t care enough to bother with people below a certain tier. It looked like the people being abused were mostly below tier 2 or at the start of this tier.

The test that he went through started looking more as a show of force to keep him in line. Luckily he was able to turn the tables on the person performing the trial. Now another problem arose as he wanted to report this blatant abuse of power to the guild master.

“Boss, are you really going to bring this up with the guild? I think you have done enough...”

Bernir was clearly against it, he was probably afraid that Roland could be putting himself in more trouble than he could handle.

“Of course, that party that attacked you needs to be banned from the guild.”

This was what Roland would like to happen but if a full team of tier 2 adventurers would be outright banned from the adventurer’s guild was to be seen. It was easy to remove tier 1 adventurers from the picture as the materials that they brought to the guild were of low quality. On the other hand, people like these were already able to kill monsters below the 10th level in the dungeon which would bring a lot of coin to the guild in return.

“But what if you get in trouble boss? You don’t need to go to this extent for someone like me...”

“It’s not all about you Bernir, don’t want trash loitering around the adventurer’s guild. If we leave people like that be, they will only get worse. They need to be punished!”

Roland didn’t want to be living in a city that just let adventurers like that roam uncontested. They would only grow big heads and become more unhinged the longer something like this continued. Sooner or later a fatality would happen, Bernir could have easily died yesterday if he wasn’t treated by Roland. Bleeding out in the middle of nowhere.

“We’ll go to the guild today but first I need to check my armor.”

Bernir looked a bit apprehensive about going to the guild. This was of course a normal reaction and Roland knew it. Who would want to face their old bullies right after being beaten half to death?

“What are you waiting for?”

“Huh?”

Roland opened up his secret chamber while Bernir was deep in thought. After this experience, he thought that Bernir required some cheering up. What would be better than showing him some of his runic items that he was working on?

“Ah yes, coming boss!”

He didn’t need to tell his half-dwarf assistant again as he sprinted down the stairs into the secret runic lair. Inside were all sorts of runic schematics, diagrams, and designs for Roland’s inventions. The biggest one was in the back which depicted his work in progress on the new and improved runic armor.

“After we are done with the guild, I’ll need to make you some runic equipment. I’ll need to get you something to increase that meager amount of mana you have...”

Roland couldn’t just give Bernir his own mana increasing skill. It required mana sense to be used, something that he didn’t have. The only way of increasing mana capacity for people that didn’t have

that skill was through potions or enchanted items. With a big enough mana stone and high-quality runes he would be able to fashion something like this for his assistant. He would also need to fashion a communication device for him if something like this ever happened again.

“Pass me the hammer Bernir, I need to do some repairs.”

“Aye, Boss!”

[Chapter 100 Filling out some paperwork.](#)

“Why did you stop me? We could have easily taken him down, he was probably out of mana.”

“You have never been good at judging others Armand...”

An elf with golden hair was walking with a large muscular man. The man’s arm guards looked to have been melted by some heat and he was also panting. The heavy breathing was caused by the backlash of a skill that he previously used.

“What do you mean by that?”

“If I didn’t step in you would have died, you big idiot.”

The elven woman delivered a swift kick to Armand’s shin but due to him having shin guards on the one that felt pain was her instead.

“How could I lose to someone relying on enchanted items?”

“Just look at yourself, you probably haven’t realized it yet...”

Armand looked at Lobelia, who was part of his adventurer’s party. He wasn’t sure what she meant by that statement but soon he found himself leaning up against the alleyway.

“See, you’re barely standing upright and that armored man wasn’t even tired. You know my skills, I could tell.”

“But he was using those magic items constantly?”

Armand replied while wiping some sweat from his brow. He finally realized that his body was feeling weak. In his anger he forgot to pace himself, he chased after Roland for a long time even while activating his body enhancement skill. Then he was forced to be on the defensive against those fire whip attacks.

He thought he would be able to outlast an avid magic item user as everyone knew that they burned through a person’s MP and sometimes even SP. Roland that he was facing on the other hand had truckloads of magic in reserve along with a high speed of mana recovery. This was also paired with his Runic Mastery skill that lowered the mana requirements on all runic items and also his class-specific traits lowered it even further.

“That man must have a special class, his mana was comparable to a mage and that was even after fighting you for so long.”

“It can’t be...”

“We’re lucky that he didn’t chase you down, why were you even fighting him in the first place?”

“Well, you see...”

The two walked down the alley while talking, Armand said how the fight started.

“So he was assaulting people on the streets and you gracefully, from the bottom of your heart decided to help them out?”

Lobelia squinted while looking at Armand’s explanation. It was clear that she knew this man long enough to recognize that this was a lie. Before she could continue with the cross-examination two ladies with animal ears arrived at the scene.

“How could you leave us behind.”

“You didn’t even pay us yet!”

The two women looked quite annoyed, even more as they spotted Lobelia to Armand’s side. As an elf she was quite the looker, thus another misconception occurred.

“Who is this hussy?”

“Listen here, we saw him first... Hm, haven’t seen you around here, are you a new girl? Which parlor do you belong to? Are you trying to weasel in on our turf?”

“What are you talking about, I’m not part of any parlor!”

Lobelia looked at Armand that was looking to the side and whistling as if nothing was happening. It looked like he was caught red-handed but this female party member and it was clear that she didn’t appreciate this fact.

“So this is where you spend your coin! I’m going to tell Big Sis about this, you just wait!”

“Wait, what?”

Armand started panicking and moved towards the elven girl that was about to leave. But before he could do that, the two ladies he was previously with blocked his path.

“Wait right there lady killer, we aren’t through with you, pay up!”

“Yes, pay up. You wouldn’t want us to tell the Madame about this, now would you?”

The large man’s face changed into one of fear as he backed away. He quickly moved his hand into his coin purse and gave the women the money. The two girls with the animal ears smiled at each other and backed off.

“You know, we could go to a private place. There is enough coin here for a little bonus session~”

Armand started sweating even more as he looked at the two ladies winking at him now. He managed to snap out of it to chase after his party member. The two ladies looked at each other and just shrugged.

“Easy money~”

The two pocketed their payout that they didn't need to work too hard for and moved back into the city. There were other clients they could 'service' through this day.

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A day had passed since then and Roland along with Bernir were moving towards the guild building. The half-dwarf was looking a bit skittish today, this was brought on by his unwillingness to cause trouble for himself and his boss. Roland was adamant about this issue as he feared being seen as weak if he didn't follow through till the end. In this world built on strength and connections, he could only rely on himself.

"Boss, are you sure about this. I fear that this might just bring more trouble."

Bernir stopped in his tracks but then quickly flinched forward as something ferocious started nibbling on his ankle.

"See, even Agni wants you to go. It's just the adventurer's guild, they won't do anything drastic."

Roland wasn't sure about the outcome of this situation but he was curious about what the guild would do about such an incident. Would they try to sweep it under the rug like nothing happened or would they punish everyone included, with him included?

He himself didn't feel like he was in the wrong but he was prepared to pay a fine for wrecking things in the city. Only if the others didn't walk out of this without any repercussions of course. Soon the two were right next to the guild building, it was quite noticeable by the smell of sweaty adventurers.

People noticed the characteristic crimson armor that Roland was wearing but by this point, they were used to it. Both of the craftsmen entered through the door and arrived in the busy building. As always people were sticking to the notice board while others were waiting in line. This time around Roland decided to go towards the other receptionist lady that looked like a librarian. The line moved fast enough as most people were just there to get rewards for completed contracts.

"Good morning, how can I help you?"

The woman did a little bow which after she fixed her glasses afterward. She glanced both at Roland and then her eyes fell on Bernir. The half-dwarf flinched a bit. This office-looking lady had the air of no-nonsense around her.

"I would like to file a complaint, could you give me the form?"

Roland on the other hand saw this as a big bonus. The woman wouldn't ask any silly questions or beat around the bush. With the helmet on top of his head, he was also immune to anyone staring at him.

"A complaint about the guild, other adventurers?"

"Both actually, one for an official guild member and another for an adventurer party."

During his time here Roland had informed himself about how this establishment worked. The guild loved contracts and paperwork. Every quest would be written down as a contract. The people hiring adventurers could then file a complaint if the adventurers stepped out of line.

The guild had people that would then determine if the claims were true or not. Depending on the proceeding the adventurer could be fined but that also could happen to the job giver if they lied and didn't keep their side of the promise.

Without filing the correct paperwork nothing would happen but after it was done there was no stopping the bureaucratic machine. The guild workers would need to go through the motions of asking the people in the city and also the people involved in this incident. Most would try to avoid such a hassle and just leave it be.

Not Roland though, he wanted to see how this guild would make things right. Depending on the results he would know how to proceed in the future and if he could trust the people here to be just in their reasoning.

"Here, fill out these documents. Please list all the involved parties in the correct brackets..."

The receptionist lady explained everything thoroughly while pointing Roland to a small booth at the side. There he found a quill with some ink, he was very quick to write a small essay on what transpired that day.

There was also a spot to include what he wanted as collateral for the scene that played out yesterday. He went with banning both Armand and the whole tier 2 party of thugs from the guild, revoking their adventurer cards. He knew that this was a bit unrealistic but when bartering it was best to list the highest price and then slowly go down to where both parties could agree on something.

"Here Bernir, you need to sign your name here and here..."

Bernir moved closer and wrote his name haphazardly while also smearing the ink on the completed form. The half-dwarf's handwriting was an eyebrow-raiser for Roland, he made a mental note to give his assistant some writing classes. Increasing his dexterity through scribing-type skills could actually work for a crafting class like Bernir.

Roland returned to the guild receptionist and handed her the papers. The woman looked through it and for a moment he could tell that her poker face changed. It was a minor switch but he could spot a slight twitch to the eyes when she was reading through his writing.

"You wish to file this complaint against this adventurer party and our Instructor?"

"Yes, is there a problem?"

This woman was mostly known for not asking that many questions so it was odd that she started questioning him about the incident. He had heard the names of two of the thugs that he faced so he had listed them down. Armand was well known around here and looked to be treated as some rising star. He was quite young while being close to level 100 already if not for Roland coming along to clip his wings a bit he would have probably been still cruising along.

'Is she somehow connected to that party or that muscle brain?'

It wasn't really his place to ask about personal things but it would be a problem if the woman decided to sweep things under the rug for some reason.

"No sir, I'll deliver these forms to the proper department."

Similar to the police from his own world, there was a section of the guild that was responsible for internal affairs. The people from it would need to get to the bottom of this.

“Is this all?”

“Yes, this might take some time, you can either wait for further questioning or we will give you an appointment for later.”

“I’ll return later, you can send the notice to my address. How long will it take to clear this up?”

Roland knew that things like this could take a while, waiting around and twiddling their thumbs around wouldn’t help with anything. They could return the next day to see if there was a set date or even wait for a letter to be sent to his house.

“We should be able to set up a hearing within the week, the letter will cost extra, Mr. Wayland.”

As always bonus features like having a courier deliver a letter cost extra. Even when filing these documents he needed to drop a few small silver coins to get things going. This was fine as payment was seen as confirmation that something was wrong. Most people would not bother going through with things like this just by the fact that it cost money. If he lost the case he would also need to pay a fine for using up everyone’s precious time.

“See, told you that today will just be some formalities, you can stop sweating.”

Roland commented at Bernir as the two were walking out from the adventurer’s guild.

“Sorry, I’m not that good with this kind of stuff...”

“You’ll have to get used to it, we’ll have to go through the hearing, you’ll probably have to look at those idiots that did that to you.”

Unless the party of thugs admitted everything or skipped town they would need to meet them once more. It was similar to a court case with two parties accusing each other. He was sure that those guys will try to put the blame on him in one way or another. It didn’t look that good after walking into the pub and beating all of them up.

Luckily violent exchanges like that weren’t that looked down upon in this world. If he managed to prove to some degree that he had a reason for it, the guild would see it his way.

“D-do I have to?”

“Yes you do, don’t worry I’ll be there, and not like they would do anything drastic during the hearing.”

Both of them left to go home, there were still wind turbines to be built and more cables to be placed. With the influx of enemies, Roland felt like he needed to move along with his defensive measures. For this reason, he was also heading towards the city and auction house.

It was the time to pick up the gold that he made as well as see if there was something he could get. There was a certain rumor that there would be golem parts this time around. Roland wanted to get the full item but a part with the operating system would be enough. He had enough know-how to connect the rest of the runic structures in working order.

“It would be best if you didn’t drink before it though, also don’t forget to wash up. Now let’s go to the auction house.”

“Alright boss!”

The pair of craftsmen soon left the adventurer guild and wandered deeper into the city. They left a certain glasses-wearing woman staring at a stack of papers.

“Hey Elodia, you look more angry than usual, was that Mr. Wayland and his new friend?”

The elven receptionist peeked out of the corner while bringing over some large cups of warm tea. Before the stern-looking receptionist could notice the elf was already looking through the forms out of the corner of her eye.

“Oh? Isn’t that a complaint form? What would Mr. Wayland complain about? It’s not me, is it? Hey, can I look at that?”

“No, Solana you can’t.”

Elodia replied while hiding the rest of the papers, she glared at her co-worker. She knew well that she wouldn’t be able to hide any of this but she still didn’t like the nosy loudmouth elf and how she acted.

“Don’t be a cheapskate, let me see!”

The scene soon changed to Elodia trying to hide the papers by hugging them against her chest and Solana trying to peek without spilling the tea.

“Hey you two, get back to work!”

An old man called out from afar, the very same one that explained tamed monsters to Roland. The two receptionist ladies straightened out and soon returned to their regular tasks.

Time continued to pass by and it was time to close up the guild. Elodia like the other workers were now finally able to return to their homes after a hard day of work. Solana waved her goodbye while escaping into the city to have a good time.

Elodia on the other hand had other things to take care of. First, she headed towards the market, picking out various food items. After scouring and haggling down the prices she headed into one of the more regular city districts. She arrived at a large wooden house but before she could enter the door swung open.

“Big sis is back.”

“Yay!”

A group of four children burst out to give this stern-looking lady a big hug. Two of the smaller children started clinging to her legs while the older ones helped her out with the groceries.

Soon she was inside and cooking. The home was large but there were many young children running inside. There was a clear lack of adults here, it looked as if she was the oldest.

While the food was being made the kids started shouting again as another person arrived.

“It’s big brother and sister, they are back too!”

Another pair of young adults arrived and waltzed through the door. These two looked more rough around the edges and were wearing adventurer gear.

“Did you hear how much that stupid blacksmith wanted for the repair?”

“It’s your fault for damaging them in the first place...”

Elodia stepped out from the kitchen to see a rather muscular young man carrying two kids on his shoulders. Next to him was a cute elf that was actually only a half-elf.

“I told you to take off your boots before you come in, you’re bringing dirt in. Wash your hands, the food will be ready soon”

“Sure big sis Elodia!”

The elf replied but quieted down after noticing that her big sis was looking at the man next to her with scorn.

“Armand... we need to have a talk... “

Elodia soon ducked back into the kitchen while leaving Armand and Lobelia to think about what she meant by that.

“Hey, you swore that you wouldn’t tell her anything, I even gave you a big silver coin!”

“I didn’t! Maybe she found it out some other way!”

The large building soon filled with loud young voices while the sun began to set.