Chapter 17

The human air mage would be here in two days. Excellent!

The human shipwright would be here in three days, good. Once we had a ship trading would be much easier. But did I need sailors for the river?

The ETA for the gnome cook was six days. This was going to be tricky. She was a grand master cook and I needed something to keep her here. My thought was I would give her 50% ownership in the inn and hopefully access to the expansive and varied garden behind my house would be enough. I was fairly confident the inn could be completed in time except we were still short on some lumber for furniture and finishing touches on the building. Another problem that needed solving. Guess my scorpion expeditions needed to be put on hold for now.

The giantkin archer was also six days away. When he arrived I would feel much better about our defenses. I was assuming he would be at least level 40 since he had at least three master level skills. Maybe between him and Galena we could start harvesting the lumber in the forest on the other side of the river?

The elementalkin alchemist was due in ten days. That was unfortunately a long wait but maybe it was good. It would give me time to build an alchemy shop. I would sketch out a nice shop with a residence above on the second level tonight. And hopefully the alchemist could make use of the scorpion tails I had collected.

My enchanter was 13 days away. The female sun elf was the most important recruit. If she could work with Sanso and make the translocation stone it would make my life a lot easier. I would need to make sure she had an excellent house ready to try to persuade her to stay. I reread the sun elf race description in the wiki and sun elves were the nobles of the elven race. I hoped our backwater town appealed to her. I decided I would build her a small tower adjacent to the plot of land I was planning on for the library.

I returned my attention back to the auction. I went to the town store to get six gold coins so I could place my bids. After retrieving the coins I went home and settled in at my drafting table and opened the auction interface.

Damn, already 232 bids! Other players were getting active out there! There were 47,945 NPCs available though so no shortage yet.

I thought for a bit and perhaps I was overreaching a bit. Once my new NPCs came I would have to pay them and I didn’t really have a stable income. Maybe this time I should focus more on trade skills to build income? Maybe one more soldier and the rest trade skills? OK one soldier, three trade skills and one farmer. I would save one slot in case something came up and I was also hoping the Inn would raise the quality of the village, giving me more slots.

First the soldier. I already had two high level ranged warriors but I also had a ton of horses. I wanted someone with riding, armor and a melee weapon. Basically, a knight. I selected the skill sorter and then temperament. Only seven options. Well, seven options that had those three skills as their top three. I couldn’t view any skills they might have beyond their ‘top 3’. Let’s see, one undead, one kobold, one goblin, two humans, one elf and one dwarf. I discounted the first three due to race. Not because I was worried if they would fit into the town but more so if they had to travel here they probably wouldn’t reach Malcum safely. Then I deselected the dwarf as I just couldn’t see I dwarf riding one of massive mounts, how would he even get in the saddle? That left the two humans and the elf. Hmmm, the humans had the same last name and were the same age, 28. Possibly twins? They both had the same skills obviously but one had Armor: Heavy as his primary and Blade: Medium as his secondary. The other had it reversed. One also had a family of four. I decided to bid on both, so much for plans of one warrior.

I steeled myself away from combat NPCs to crafting. The bids for combat NPCs was fierce and I already had my first two. I stopped after two filter attempts and seeing the brewer skill. Well, I had an inn. I needed ale. There were only four experts and only one with the temperament I was seeking. He was a beastman: bull, basically a minotaur. There was a dwarf expert with an unpleasant temperament, choleric. I spent a few minutes trying to imagine both in my village before deciding on the beastman. I guess my subconscious didn’t want an irritable dwarf around. The minotaur did have 5 family so at least he wouldn’t be lonely.

My next crafting skill was woodcraft. My time was starting to be consumed by governing and building and fighting. I wanted someone to build furniture and do the repairs around town and possibly help with building. I had a long list to select from with the proper temperament so I started to sort by secondary skills. I found a beast: wolf with expert rank in the secondary skill of fishing and his tertiary skill was novice lumberjack. Perfect! He also had 2 family members.

OK I needed one more selection for now. I should probably get a farmer. I searched for a bit based on family size and race until settling on a halfling female with a massive family of 21! Her other two skills were also master level, animal husbandry and butcher.

I spent another hour searching and sorting but resisted using my final bid. I turned to setting my priorities. I wrote out a list:

* *Finish the Inn*
* *Build a house for the air mage*
* *Build a house for the shipwright*
* *Design and build an alchemy shop*
* *Build a house for the giantkin next to Galana’s*
* *Design and build an enchanter’s shop*
* *Train up Jaesmin*

Top priority was the inn and I needed lumber for this…next was the air mage arriving in two days. The air mage was human so I thought a simple three-story tower on the river bank. I drafted the 25’ round tower in the morning. Then I went about building it myself. As I was casting a global alert came up.

*Game Mechanics Update: A player can only memorize one spell per their magic + intellect stats divided by 10. This is base stats and buff and item enhancements have no effect. Also there is a now a leveling system for spells. At each rank you can choose an improvement to a spell you know. You can now also unlearn spells. When you unlearn a spell the knowledge and all advancement in the spell will be lost. See your spell interface for more details. Also combat abilities can know also be leveled up. There is no limit to the number of combat abilities a player can learn.*

I immediately opened my interface and checked my stats.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Strength** | **39** | **(9)** |
| **Constitution** | **52** | **(15)** |
| **Stamina** | **44** | **(11)** |
| **Agility** | **42** | **(11)** |
| **Speed** | **6** | **(4)** |
| **Intellect** | **39** |  |
| **Magic** | **118** | **(10)** |
| **Channeling** | **36** | **(15)** |
| **Charisma** | **27** | **(5)** |
| **Luck** | **14** |  |
| **Hit Points** | **1365** |  |
| **Stamina** | **950** |  |
| **Magic** | **2198** |  |

I was wearing all my gear except my bear hide cloak. The parentheses showed what amount of each stat I was gaining from items and buffs. So I had 147 magic plus intellect. This meant I could learn 14 spells. I currently only knew eight spells. I thought about the message and the change to spells. The developers probably did this for one of two reasons. The first being that spells leveling up was a planned mechanic and they needed to balance caster power. My second thought was maybe there were fighter oriented players out there learning a whole bunch of spells. It would also make dividing loot in a group much easier. Why would a fighter waste two levels of stat points to level up magic or intelligence just to learn a new spell? I liked the balance this introduced. Next I looked at my spells.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Spells*** | ***Tier*** | ***Level*** | ***Sphere*** | ***CT*** | ***Magic Cost*** |
| *Meld Wood* | *1* | *1* | *Nature: Plant* | *10 secs* | *25* |
| *Stone Bullet* | *1* | *1* | *Earth: Stone* | *1 sec* | *25* |
| *Summon Earth* | *1* | *1* | *Earth* | *5 min* | *27+* |
| *Summon Stone* | *5* | *1* | *Earth: Stone* | *1 min* | *200* |
| *Summon Boulder* | *5* | *1* | Earth: Stone | *1 min* | *200* |
| *Hail of Stones* | *5* | *1* | Earth: Stone | *5 secs* | *50* |
| *Vine Growth* | *3* | *1* | Nature | *3 secs* | *25* |
| *Summon Wood Elemental* | *5* | *1* | *Nature: Plant* | *10 min* | *500* |

Well it looked like all my efforts to date were lost. All my spells were level one. I selected Stone Bullet and looked at the new interface.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Stone Bullet** |  |  |
| Sphere | Earth: Stone | Verbal, Somatic |
| Level | 1 | 0% advancement to next level |
| Level Bonus | +1% Damage per level |  |
| Magic Cost | 25 |  |
| Range | 120 Yards |  |
| Casting Time | 1 second |  |
| Damage | 20.2 + 16 |  |
| Effect | This spell creates a golf ball size projectile that is hurled at your target. | |
|  | Hitting the target relies on your marksmanship skill. | |

YOU HAVE 1 SPELL IMPROVEMENT POINT

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1st Point** | **2nd Point** | **3rd Point** | **4th Point** | **5th+ plus points** |  |
| **Casting Time Reduction** | +1% | +2% | +3% | +4% | +5% | (max 50%) |
| **Damage Bonus** | +2% | +3% | +5% | +5% | +5% | (no max) |
| **Range Bonus** | +5 yards | +10 yards | +15 yards | +20 yards | +25 yards | (500 yard max) |
| **Accuracy Bonus** | +1% | +2% | +3% | +4% | +5% | (max 50%) |
| **Magic Cost Reduction** | 5% | 5% | 5% | 5% | 5% | (max 50%) |
| **Quicker Advancement** | +5% | +10% | +15% | +20% | +25% | (no max) |
| **Eliminate Sematic Component** | o | NA | NA | NA | NA |  |
| **Eliminate Verbal Component** | o | NA | NA | NA | NA |  |
| **Cast While Moving** | 25% speed | 50% speed | 75% speed | 100% speed | while riding |  |
| **Visual Effect** | Rock has dim light spell on it for 5 minutes | | |  |  |  |
| **Visual Effect** | Change color of rock, choose one | | |  |  |  |
| **Visual Effect** | Change shape, choose square, pyramid or egg | | | |  |  |

Well this just a whole lot more interesting. The plus 16 was from my 80% bonus for having earth magic at level 40. I cast the spell and checked my advancement. A 5% increase, so 20 casts out of combat to raise the spell to level 2. I went searching for a target and found a squirrel and cast the spell again at the unfortunate victim. Hit and kill. I checked again 16% advancement, so 11% for attacking the squirrel. I had Opheela mount up Titan and went to the plains. I found a plains cat and started casting.

*Casting has failed, you cannot cast this spell while mounted*

*Casting has failed, you cannot cast this spell while mounted*

What the fuck?

Ah, the developers must have corrected my scorpion cheat. I would need to invest 5 points into the spell to be cast while riding. I dismounted and cast again. Titan in the meantime attacked the insolent lion and killed it in short order. I checked advancement again, 25%, so this time I gained 14% for attacking a level 6 creature. Just as I thought. The more dangerous the creature the quicker the advancement, just like skills. On foot I travelled the plains and leveled the spell up to level 5, giving me 4 points to invest. Then I began to think how unfortunate mages were. At low level they would be spending time leveling up these low tier spells only to unlock a better spell at a higher tier which could be leveled up. I selected the 5 minute light option. My thought was it could be useful in a dungeon or as a signal at night by firing it into the air. Then I spent 3 points on magic reduction cost. Reducing the cost from 25 to 22. I spent the next five hours leveling up hail of stones to level 7. All 5 points went into movement, allowing me to cast while moving and mounted. Ha, take that developers, my cheat would be intact!

I returned to the stables and turned care of Titan over to my elven horse masters. Patting him on the neck, letting him know he did a good job today. There was not much light left but I went over to the inn and worked into the night. Around midnight I went home and to the drafting board. Jaesmin had a meat pie warm and ready for me with some cider. I folded up the library plans. Almost done with those, just a few more days. The air mage tower would take me two days of magic to cast. I checked the summon stone spell.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Summon Stone** | |  |
| Sphere | Earth: Stone | Verbal, Somatic, Material: Stone Dust |
| Level | 1 | 0% advancement to next level |
| Level Bonus | +1% + 80% Volume |  |
| Magic Cost | 200 |  |
| Casting Time | 60 seconds |  |
| Range | 5 yards |  |
| Damage | NA |  |
| Effect | This spell creates a stone with a volume 1 cu yard. | |
|  | The stone can be made into simple shapes by visualization. | |

YOU HAVE 1 SPELL IMPROVEMENT POINT

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1st Point** | **2nd Point** | **3rd Point** | **4th Point** | **5th+ plus points** |  |
| **Casting Time Reduction** | +1% | +2% | +3% | +4% | +5% | (max 50%) |
| **Volume Bonus** | +2% | +3% | +5% | +5% | +5% | (no max) |
| **Range Bonus** | +5 yards | +5 yards | +5 yards | +5 yards | +5 yards | (100 yard max) |
| **Shaping Bonus** | +1% | +2% | +3% | +4% | +5% | (max 50%) |
| **Magic Cost Reduction** | 5% | 5% | 5% | 5% | 5% | (max 50%) |
| **Quicker Advancement** | +5% | +10% | +15% | +20% | +25% | (no max) |
| **Eliminate Sematic Component** | o | NA | NA | NA | NA |  |
| **Eliminate Verbal Component** | o | NA | NA | NA | NA |  |
| **Eliminate Material Component** | o | NA | NA | NA | NA |  |
| **Cast While Moving** | 25% speed | 50% speed | 75% speed | 100% speed | while riding |  |
| **Visual Effect** | Rock has veins of color in it, choose color | | | |  |  |
| **Visual Effect** | Change color of summoned rock, choose one | | | |  |  |

I selected the magic reduction for my first point. The color visual effect sounded cool. Making black stone with silver veins would be an awesome visual. But priorities, max out the magic reduction cost first to speed building.

Good. When the sun came up I would be able to finish the air mage tower. In the meantime I drafted a simple stone house for the shipwright. I left a note that Jaesmin was to build it near the docks. The alchemy shop was next. I decided on stone. A full basement for storage, a large open ground floor plan on the first floor, the second floor would be the lab area, and the third floor would be living quarters, and finally the roof would have an area for a garden. The building was 40 feet by 25 feet. I hoped it would be attractive enough for our incoming alchemist.

The sun was just coming up and I heard Jaesmin coming down the stairs. I pulled my gear on and went to finish the air mage’s tower. It only took seven hours to finish the tower and I leveled my summon stone twice, both times using the points to reduce magic cost for the spell. Also of note my skill in carving allowed me more freedom in summon stone, letting me make stairs as well! I tried a medium size statue and it was not too good but did resemble a larger Simba. I had the wood elementals carry it to the garden behind my house.

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1 bid left

Build alchemy shop

6 scorpion tails

*Ivory Ring of Deep Magic, +8 Magic, +2% total magic pool increase*

*Steel Ring of Fire Resistance, 30 Armor vs. Fire*

*Black and White Leather Belt of Channeling, +15 channeling*

*Blue Dragon Hide Belt, +50% damage with lightning spells*

*Cherry Wand of Fire, +25% damage with fire*

*Black Oak Wand of Focus, 10% magic reduction for all spells*

*Kahn’s Black Dragon Leather Saddle, +6 Riding Skill, +20% speed of mount, +20% damage with melee weapons, 50% less stamina drain on mount*

Earth elementals….

*Meld Wood Nature: Plant Tier 1, Magic Cost: 25, Effect: Integrate two pieces of wood that are in contact with each other, Casting Time: 10 seconds*

Build school/library, barracks, inn, stables

*Destroying gear*

*Entrance to Crypt of the Phoenix King, Level 20, Floors 5, \*Scaling Dungeon\**

*Black Mountain Steed, Level ??, Health ??, Experience ??, Attack ??, Defense ??*

*Masonry 1 Tier 1 unlocked, +1 Strength, +2% health to structures*