Chapter 35 Brewery

That evening I started work on some brownstone style houses for the townsfolk. Jaesmin stayed up with me for quite a while giving me an ear full. She didn’t want the responsibility! She was too young! After a while I told her to go and talk with Kytalia tomorrow. Kytalia was the wife of the Kahn of the orcs and she should have a good management style. Kytalia had been my second choice to be Master of Guilds but the fact was I just didn’t know her well enough.

After my first draft was finished I reviewed the plans.

*Rare Apartment Building, Requires Masonry 23, Masonry Structures 23 (Bonus Morale +5% if all apartments are filled, +10% recovery to stamina)*

The three-story structure housed a family on each floor. It wasn’t overly impressive but I drew a lot from my past life and thought I would get better bonuses. I delved into town morale in my interface. It ranged from -500% to +500%. It had effects on village productivity, revenue and attracting new inhabitants. Wait…each brownstone apartment building gave +5% to morale…could I build 100 of them and get my morale to 500%? Maybe this was a cheat the admins hadn’t discovered yet. Best not to tell Simba…I actually missed the little feline and hoped to see him again soon. My current morale was 165%...I had lost 10% with the death of Gwen.

I went upstairs and tucked myself in next to Jaesmin. I had been hoping for a little sex but she was still upset with me for promoting her to Master of Guilds. I just lay there and paged through my screens…guess I could spend some time on looking at updates till morning.

I found two interesting things in the updates. Both items related to town management. The first item was the announcement that the final stage of sensory input would coincide with NPC complete bodily functionality. Basically the NPCs would need to eat, poop and piss. Thankfully I had already a semi-completed sewer system. A player could change their individual sensory settings to full or muffled. But even at the muffled setting they would still receive debuff effects. As for the need to shit and piss for players the update was listed as pending. I had 11 days before this massive new update hit – Day 114 of my day in the game, today was Day 103.

I had really been in the VR for 103 days? The game launch was on Day 181. I definitely hadn’t made enough progress. I had 77 days to build the town into something that could withstand the player migration to the game.

The second update I found useful to me was the streamlining of the diplomacy tab. It had been a very confusing prior and all I had was a simple trade agreement with Barrista, a town 15 miles to the south. Now I had three tabs, one for just trade agreements, one for faction relation and one for diplomacy. Under the faction relation I had three listed.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Relationship | Type |
| Barrista | 56 | Town |
| Stillwater | -5 | City |
| Cleardusk Orcs | -29 | Clan |

Relationship ranged from -100 to 100. At -100 the population center, kingdom or clan was likely to treat you as hostile on site. At 100 you were considered an ally and they would aide you if requested. It was very basic and the notes on the update said the interface would evolve with time. The programmers were just rushing to put structure for game mechanics in place. Mad Dog had mentioned they were being pressured by investors to launch the game. All this tweeking of the game did make it better but even in its current state it would be a world wide phenomenon.

When morning finally came I went with Sanso and Jaesmin to the site of the brewery. Manto was counting on the brewery being ready and functioning. He had been hard at work creating weather patterns over the crops to increase yields. It took most of the day to finish much longer than expected but the final building made it worth it.

*Uncommon stone brewery warehouse, 145,000 health, bonus +18 to brewery skill*

I didn’t get the +23 to the brewery still but +18 was still a massive boon. I checked my NPC auction and I had an expert brewer still there. No one had outbid me so far on my other NPCs either. Once I finished the town hall I would get two more bids in the NPC auction. I checked and didn’t get any new additions to my masonry skills.

Jaesmin spoke, “Well Tallis I have about a thousand things to do today. I don’t think I can build anymore.” Her tone was irritable. With her new role as Master of Guilds she planned to talk with each guild master every day. She even planned to talk with shipwright, alchemist and enchanter today. Kytalia, as I had suggested, would join her. She told me outright that she planned to add all three guilds. I think she wanted me to object and then throw a hissy fit but I just said that was a fantastic idea. It only got her more angry and she stormed off.

Sanso told me why, “Lord Tallis you have put her in a role she is not suited for. All of her skills are related to building. She has no free skill slots so can not grow into the role.” Oh, I hadn’t thought of that.

“Who should I appoint then?” I asked, seeking advice.

“I do not know. Your village doesn’t have a large population…you may have acted too rashly in naming a Master of Guilds. Oh Gwen did a marvelous job but your village really didn’t need it. Maybe if you had ten or more guild masters… I am sorry I over step. I am not well versed in administration.” He finished and stepped back.

“No, thank you Sanso. Never be afraid to offer advice. I think you should work on the sewers today.” I said and was about to head out with Titan.

“The sewers are mostly completed for all the buildings in town. The main outlet still needs the enchanting work by Persephone. That waste sluice to the river needs the water purification enchantments.” Sanso said. “I had planned to spend my day making copper coins for the village. My golems have been mined a surplus.” I nodded, thank him and he retreated to his tower two miles to the north. Sanso really was a godsend.. He was by far the more compliant NPC I had interacted with in the game.

The elvish sisters saddled up Titan and I was off to spend my evening hunting. I made best speed to the Azul desert to hunt scorpions. There was a monster update. They no longer chased me endlessly while I cast my spells. Once they were about 100 yards from their spawn location they just returned to it. It meant I needed to do smaller circles and not get as large packs of the scorpions as I grinded from Titan’s back. When the sun was setting I was 70% of the way to level 19. I hadn’t harvested as much today from the scorpions as I was hoping to rack up the kills to level. At least I was certain that tomorrow I could achieve level 19.

When I returned home I found Jaesmin buried in paperwork. She gave me an unhappy look. Ok I was probably losing points with her and needed to make a change. I sat next to her and put my arm around her. “Jaesmin this job is only temporary. Just eight more days and I will have a replacement for you.” A hopeful look in her eyes sparked and I kissed her. I didn’t want to use one of the two slots I would gain in the NPC auction house on an NPC for the position but it was obviously necessary.

Jaesmin gave me an amazing reward that evening. As we were laying together after the passionate sex she started to tell me about how miserable her day had been. Numerous requests for buildings, village funds for research, requests for pay raises, and it went on and on. Just listening to her made me want to shoot myself. Eventually I quieted her by kissing her and brining her to arousal for another round.

The next morning Mad Dag and company had returned. I found them in the inn eating. I told them about the updates for NPCs and the sewer system. I was a bit smug as none of the had read that update information yet. I finally knew something they didn’t.

“Tallis we got your soul gems but couldn’t find auction house plans. The gems cost a bit more than planned but the sale of your loot and plans covered it,” he said as he shoved a mouthful of spicy chicken and rice into his mouth. When he swallowed he continued, “Your plans went for 128 gold and 152 gold,” he said nonchalantly. He smiled when my reaction was a look of stunned bewilderment.

Grinder added in, “Yeah the building buffs on your plans were better than the plans found from dungeon rewards. Only common plans can currently be found in city shops. So right now you can sell your plans for what the market will bear. Only three parties were bidding on your plans so you can probably sell at least two more plans of each. Once the game launches you will be in an ideal position to make thousands of gold! That is until the player population catches up to you with their drafting skills. Also we expect the higher level dungeons will have exceptional building plans as well.” He nodded over to Black Beauty.

She spoke, “We had our friends start the process of getting you legally alive again. It is not going to be simple. It is going to cost more than $100,000 you have. Probably two to three times as much. Lawyers are sharks,” she muttered. “Well the paperwork is being prepared anyway. The firm we are paying wants full payment before acting though, $250,000.” She said with sadness on her face. “They said additional fees would be around $20,000 but may be higher…”

So I needed to make another $200,000 just to get my rights to my body back? And then I had to pay millions of dollars on top of that to pay back the company for keeping me alive? Now I know what it felt like to be under an avalanche of debt.

Mad Dog broke my consternation, “I suggest stockpiling your building plans Tallis. When the big dogs join the game you should be able to sell your plans for thousands of gold each. They will throw around coins like there is no tomorrow.”

Black Beauty spoke next and it seemed she was the one who always gave the worse news, “We have you medical profile from before you were transferred custody. It is not good. Burns on half of your body, both eyes…unusable, your right leg was shattered in the fire as well. The good news is that modern medicine had come a long way and everything can be repaired or replaced!”

My aged body was a piece of mangled burnt toast…don’t think like that I scolded myself. I forced a smile, “That is good news. I hope to return to it and meet you all in the real world one day.” At least I had goals…maybe impossible goals.

“So Tallis,” Mad Dog started, “We have all decided to help you. Not just us but our entire guild. We are here for you mate. We don’t have the money but you can profit from this village. Hell if you grow it enough there might be a whale out there to buy it for a few million mate!” They were all nodding. This seemed a little too good to be true and Mad Dog continued, “We will benefit as well. Not just from selling information but also streaming our game POV when the game launches. We are altruistic, just not that altruistic mate.” He patted me lightly on the shoulder reassuringly.

After a few more minutes of supportive talk from the group they left to go hunt goblins. I went with my soul gems to complete my guard house. I found out quickly that I needed an enchanter to finish the work. I wasn’t sure why the plans didn’t have that in the requirements. I asked Persephone and she said you just needed an enchanting skill of 7 to embed the soul gems…so no big deal. Yeah no big deal…what if I didn’t have an enchanter at hand?

I talked with the enchanter for a while about her projects in town. She was working on setting up an alert system on the earthen walls for the guards. This was more to alert if players crossed them as monsters naturally stayed away. She was working on the sewage purification as well but was waiting on supplies. Other than that she was going to individual homes and installing ‘modern magic’ enchantments to improve the life of the citizens. It all sounded good to me.

With Sanso on copper and Jaesmin doing admin work I was free to go hunting again. I started my morning with Galana and six militia. Apparently either Tanguin or Galana now stayed in town. One weird thing I noticed is I still received experience from kills even if Galana was close… Apparently NPCs didn’t have the same restriction as players for experience. So could I get Galana or Tanguin to power level me in the dungeon? Only one NPC could join a party and it was currently more important to level up the militia so I would experiment later.

The remainder of my day was hunting scorpions. I managed to get level 19 and about 40% to level 20. I was so close! When I returned to town I talked for a long time with townsfolk in the inn while eating dinner. Jaesmin was in a foul mood according to the townsfolk so I was hiding here. I had mostly positive feedback from the townsfolk and Manto even was excited since the brewery was finished. I told him just seven more days and our brewer would arrive!

I returned home late and thankfully found Jaesmin asleep. I decided to quietly draft tonight. I was going to take Mad Dog’s advice and start stockpiling building plans to sell. At least I was not going to have to worry about financing my village…that is until the administrators started increasing upkeep costs to ridiculous amounts. Maybe they wouldn’t do that…

I left before Jaesmin awoke. Getting on Titan it took till late afternoon before I finally reached the level I wanted…level 20! The stat points went straight into magic and the skill points went to finally get my masonry skill to the level I had been chasing for so long!

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| --- | --- |
| *Masonry* | *41* |
| *Masonry: Foundations* | *34* |
| *Masonry: Structures* | *43* |

I even had one extra skill point. I could now finish the town hall. But first I wanted to select my level 20 trait…