

Chapter 6

I used my time at the celebration to ask people what their needs were and how I could improve their lives. There were many needs in Malcum, and most were not in my realm of addressing right now with the little coin I had. My road would probably not improve the quality of the village, but my inn might.

I decided to spend the next two weeks repairing homes for our new villagers who were in transit, repairing the smithy, and finishing the road. My hunting excursions would be put on hold. I didn't know how tall a giantkin was, but from my character design phase, I remembered that it was around eight feet, so I made the ceiling and furniture in her house for someone 10 feet just in case. The blacksmith family house was next to the smithy, and I made sure to make it as nice as possible for the family of four. I wanted the master blacksmith to be happy as he would be centrally important to the village.

The houses for the farmers were quick to repair jobs, and I also added basic furniture. I had a young female laborer hauling up stones for the road work. She was not very efficient but was getting stronger every day. Her mother did not want her to join the militia, but she was a bit of a tomboy and liked the work. I think she liked being close to me as well. Her name was Jaesmin, and she was pretty enough, if a bit shy.

I just replaced the stone furnaces and repaired the wooden structure for the smithy. The two new farmers arrived together with their families, and we had a celebration picnic to welcome them. They were surprised to have the housing gifted to them. I did notice they were all human, though, which made me a little nervous about our future catmen and giantkin.

I also finished the road in two weeks and underestimated just how many rocks it would take. Fortunately, the rocks along the river seemed to respawn slowly over time; otherwise, we might have an erosion issue! Jaesmin pulled almost a quarter of the stones by herself, but she could not match my strength and speed, and I was also splitting my time between paving and carpentry.

Also, by the end of the two weeks, my helper was starting to lay stones in the mortar without direction, so she was learning masonry skills! The fourteen days gave me one point for my woodcraft skill, four for my carpentry skill, two for my furniture skill, one for my nature magic skill, two for my nature magic skill, two for my masonry skill, three to my masonry: foundations skill, one to my laborer skill, one to my cooking skill and two in carving. I had made a large amount of Simbas to sell, and they were stacked in a single slot in my bag of holding.

Okay, I thought I had six days to improve my village. I could build the guard tower or build some docks on the river. Either project would utilize all my remaining lumber. Jaesmin joined me at my house that evening for dinner. I made some fried chicken and spinach. We were celebrating our completion of the road. She was very quiet and reserved.

“So Jaesmin, I am trying to decide what I should build next for the town. I was thinking of a guard tower by the river or building some docks.” I said, trying to draw her out so that she would be less shy.

“I don’t know how good a guard tower would be by the river, but the docks sound like a good idea. A few years ago, a trader came by on a ship. He was upset we didn’t have docks and has not come back since.” She replied while picking at her food.

“So docks may bring traders to our tiny village? That sounds like a good investment in labor. We will start on the stone footings tomorrow,” I said, committing. The rest of the evening passed awkwardly as I tried to get Jaesmin to open up more, but she answered in short responses, and eventually, I told her good night and escorted her out.

Instead of carving figurines, I carved out a small model of the docks I planned to build. It was going to have three fingers and slips for six boats. Each slip would be 30 feet long. I didn’t foresee any larger vessels traveling upriver. I was also told the river narrowed a half mile upstream when it got closer to the mountains.

I hoped we could finish it in six days and raise our village quality before the NPC auction. I moved the archers to where I planned to build the docks the next morning to watch the far shore while we worked. Stones were becoming a little harder to find as we used mortar to build out three supports for our finger’s anchors. One of the villagers did mention there was a quarry to the north. We would have to start utilizing that soon or build an oven to make bricks. We had plenty of harvestable clay materials for it.

I ended up working through the night. NPCs still needed to sleep regularly, so I worked alone. I continued this constant effort, completing the docks in just three days. I had to use some wood from one of the abandoned houses, but I was planning to demolish that house eventually anyway.

I was starting to do city planning in my head and planned to build a crossroad through the main road we had finished. This road would connect the docks, run through the city, and then out to the farms that were by the plains. The plan was for a half-mile road. We would be able to build a number of housing units off of it, and we could also start building businesses off the main road.

With the docks finished, I opened my interface and was disappointed to see that my village quality had not risen. I went to sleep for a few hours and tried to come up with a plan for the next 40 hours. I did get two points in masonry: foundations, two in carpentry, and one in woodcraft for the dock project.

The next morning, I woke and headed east toward the plains. Opening my map interface, I found an abandoned house on the edge of town just before the plains. There was a barn nearby and a second smaller house. I began planning in my head as I tore the barn down with my tools. I could build a two-story guard tower here using the frame of the house. It would not be my best work, but this was temporary anyway. I eventually wanted all guard towers to be stone.

My stamina ran out! Apparently, my constant food from the village stopped because no one knew where I was. I walked into town for lunch and informed everyone where I was working. I assigned Jaesmin to start preparing for the crossroad that was going to cut across town from the new docks to the guard tower I was building. I got a picnic basket and put my jerky in my bag of holding just in case.

It took almost 40 hours to finish the tower, but I was proud of the structure when it was done. It was 30 feet high with a flat roof accessed by a trap door. The roof had a waist-high wall to protect the guards as well. It was 20 feet to the side and boarded all the way up. A heavy wooden door that could be barred was on the ground level. I had built four makeshift beds and a small cooking area on the first floor as well. There was no second floor, just framing and stairs going up to the roof.

I got the increase in village quality! I was wicked excited. I went into the interface to check on my recruits. There were six other bids for NPCs, but no one overbid mine. I had 50 minutes before the final one-hour countdown.

I sat on one of the beds in the new tower and started searching. I checked out the other six bids, which were all warriors. I would wait till the final hour started before bidding on two new NPCs. I had already decided to get a quarryman and leatherworker. The village had a supply of hides from the plains, but our tanner was only a novice at the level. We needed someone who could make master-quality items for export!