Chapter 5

The return trip to Avalon took 6 days as we travelled during the day as well. I snuck the loot into my tower at night. In the morning I caught up with the foremen. Not a lot was done as the golems were gone. That was fine. I said I would be taking 4 golems east to extend the road. I wanted to get the woods cleared to the coast and establish a place for a future coastal city and also the road would help get better quality sand for glass. As I walked east we had only finished 1 bridge and I had to wade through the other 5 streams. We got to work with the golems using their massive axes cutting trees and pulling up smaller bushes and trees. We cleared between 1 and 2 miles a day. The golems worked 24 hours and I scouted ahead choosing the direction, mostly due east. The road passed by a large Indian village about 50 miles from Avalon and I told them they could trade with the citizens of Avalon. We used trees we cut down to line the roads and split them to create make shift bridges across water. It was very sloppy but we were moving fast. By the end of May we had made it about 120 miles and the heat was getting to me so we returned to Avalon. Next spring I would hopefully have more golems and we could get further.

We welcomed six babies in the spring, all healthy. The town was happy to have my magic back. The medicine women asked me to teach her magic and I explained it was hereditary and only my children could learn magic. A week later the Indian elders approached me. They wanted me to wed one of the Indian widows. I declined and then they asked if I could at least give her a child. The conversation went on for a bit until I finally said the young women could come and ask me and I would consider it. All six Indian women asked me for child. After considering I took each of them. It was weird, I was aroused but my sex drive wasn’t what I expected, it was more like a job. I did pay attention to their needs and they all found it more pleasurable than me. Amelia was very upset and became angry with me. I found I was able to tell when the women were with child. It took one to three attempts for all of them and 12 nights total.

I spent a night in deep meditation to see if I could find something new to invest my two spell points in. I came up with two good options. Light Stone and cold stone. Light stone had two castings, for 10 magic I could cast light on a stone that was 8 ounces. The light would ‘burn’ the rock lasting 50 years or so. The light was about 2000 lumens, so very bright. No heat would be dispersed as well. The other casting would cost 0.1 magic and last 24 hours per spell level at 500 lumens. The cold stone was the opposite of my thermal stone. All light would cost 2 points, the cold stone was 3. I decided the long term light source was my best path.

* Light Stone I (Stone Spell – tier 2) – creates a bright light source (2000 lumens) on 8 ounces of stone burning the stone over time 50 years, each level increases affected mass and time, COST: 10

I created twenty spherical balls and cast the spell on the first one. I had a magic light bulb! I made two more. Then I spent an hour getting fifty balls of stone next to my bed. I would make light stones when I could at night. I also needed to make more Avalon coins. I had two skilled women who could press 40 coins in the molds every cast of soften stone. We would spend a night making 600 to 720 coins. About 15% of the coins would be tossed due to defects allowing me to average 500 coins for an hours work. A few casts of harden stone and the glossy black coins were done. I found that limestone gave me a glossy whitish coin. I could use this for larger denominations in the future.

It was August when the next trouble came. It was a Spanish expeditionary force who found my road. Twenty men and five Indian guides. Amelia was my Spanish translator and I learned a few things. The English had landed 2,000 soldiers in the north and were clearing out the Indians for 5,000 expected settlers and slaves this summer. The new governor was a cousin to the king and was pushing the borders to create land for cash crops. There was no info on my Duke friend. My two ships the Enterprise and Endeavor were still afloat but the Dutch had sworn vengeance after I sold their ship. I brought the Spaniards to our town and they were impressed. It was touch and go as even though I had hidden the golems they were mesmerized by the light stones in the common dining area. Eventually I gave them one to take with them and told the cost was two ounces of gold if they wanted to trade in the future. They were impressed with the farms and orchards. They were flabbergasted with the olive trees since they were producing. I wanted to trade with the Spanish to the south and made it clear I was not beholden to the English. We needed livestock and to help with that I decided to go with the Spanish south. I brought a large bag of emeralds and rubies that were Amelia’s imperfect cuts but still valuable. I had two golems follow us as we moved South.

It was a three week trek. The only spells I could use were stone bullet, plant snare, and plant growth on the journey. The Spanish village was on the coast. I was impressed there were fifty plus buildings and three ships anchored in the small bay. I was brought to the mayors house and the architecture was excellent. It was just the two of us. Wine, flat crackers, fruit and two cheeses. He spoke English and we discussed trade. I brought out a small bag of cut emeralds and rubies. He got a monocle and looked at them. He professed to not being an expert but said he was very interested in them and the light stone his men showed him. What did I want? For the gems I needed a variety of seeds, chickens, male goats and limestone. Then silver for any value past the materials. He called for a butler and they talked in Spanish for twenty minutes. He had 23 variety of seeds and could get me a cup of each. He could get me 28 chickens and two roosters. Only two male goats though. For limestone they could get me a lot but transport was a problem. I just wanted twenty bricks for experimentation and got it. Then he made the offer of 24 lbs of silver on top. I wandered the town and found the goods store. They had some ceramic jars of foodstuffs, bolts of heavy cloth, soap, cooking tools, dining ware and some bedding. I took out a second bag of gemstones and got to bartering. I got all the goods in the store for that bag and half of another. For transport I ordered a 12’ x 20’ platform. I could get everything from the mayor and the store on it. I had cages made for the goats and chickens. It was going to take two days. I went into the woods and made 4 more golems. I had to harden the local limestone a few extra times. I hoped 6 golems could carry my loaded platform. In town I got sail canvas and wrapped up all the goods that couldn’t get wet. I also found some orphans. Three sisters, age 5,7 and 8. Talking to the mayor they were basically beggars after their parents died and no one wanted them. They were skinny and I asked someone to translate for me asking if they wanted to come with me. They agreed.

The platform was stacked with strapped down goods. I had a long covered bench in the front and had the girls sit there next to me. The town was out to see my fool hardiness. Then my golems exited the brush and picked up the platform and off we went. Six golems were doing ok on flat terrain but I would have to add two more as I got further north. The girls were wide eyed as well as the townfolk who watched us head away. We made 40 miles during the day and I made an effort to teach the girls English and made them responsible for feeding the animals and collecting the eggs. I used my thermal stone to cook a thick stew which they enjoyed. They curled up into some blankets as the sun set. We traveled overnight and in the morning I heated the stew for us. Around noon we were far enough north west that I found some rock deposits. We set the platform down and the girls watched as I built two more golems. I had to wait to animate them after my magic recharged so I made lunch. I made sandwiches from day old bread, salted beef and cheese. The girls ate like they had bottomless stomachs. The girls fed the chickens and goats and we were off again.

Dinner was toast with scrambled eggs and cheese. It rained overnight so we bundled up under the covered bench. With 8 golems the trip was pretty smooth. It took just under 6 days to get back to the tower. When I got back I checked the progress and found it wasn’t great. Everyone was happy with what they had. I needed to get them motivated. I stored and disconnected the new golems from my magic pool. They became statues I could animate in an emergency but I needed magic to cast spells.

 Three days after returning we had our first hurricane. It rained a few inches in two days. The stream increased to a river and got much too close to the town center, maybe 3’ from cresting the banks. Most of the western road was gone, including the narrow stone bridge over the stream. Checking on the dam upstream there was no damage to our progress. I checked the road 50 miles to the east, some washout but the bridges there held. In a meeting we decided we needed to increase the depth and width of the stream from the future dam to 10 miles downstream as well as 5’ tall stone wall breaker from the dam . The excavated rock and soil could be used for building roads and fertilizing the fields. We also lost 50% of our non-tree crops. It was not going to cause our small town any major issues but we wouldn’t have enough spare to start brewing beer and whisky.

It took 3 weeks to make repairs. I also started on three new buildings: a common store, a tavern/inn, and bakery. The decision for these was to have an economy in town. Currently I was paying the people, feeding them, and housing them. It was not sustainable. The bakery would sell fresh bread and the smell of fresh bread downtown was awesome. The tavern/inn was a large building 40’x70’ with an attached stone stable for 28 horses. A quarter of the first floor was the kitchen, the rest was a bar and dining room that could seat 150 people. The ceiling was 14’ high and the builders put a lot of effort to make it beautiful. The second floor had access from both ends of the tavern hall and had 14 rooms that were 15’x9’. All the rooms were going to be used as storage until the town grew. The common store was another big building, 80’x70’. The second floor was for textiles only. The first floor was divided, half was walled off for storage, quarter was for general goods and quarter was for perishables. We added a fourth building halfway through the construction, a bank/sheriff. It was a 30’x40’ building. The sheriff had a room with four desks and two jail cells that were 10’x10’. The bank had three teller windows and a hardened stone vault that was 15’x20’. The second floor had an office for the bank manager and two small apartments for deputies. Our sheriff ended up being the one Indian warrior in town. He had a good grasp of English and seemed a decent human. He had permission to hire two deputies in the future…when we had more people in town.

 Well we were halfway through building the new buildings when a small refugee group of Indians came through town. A large force of English troops were clearing Indians from lands to the east for settlers. They estimated the soldiers were 5 days walk to the east. I gathered 4 golems and headed east after showing the town folk the musket armory. It took me 5 days to find the army. I scouted the camp at night in panther form and killed six soldiers who had gone out to shit. In the morning the mauled corpses caused the camp to stir. The leader gathered the group together and I was able to count them, maybe 300. There were also a dozen or so captured Indian women. This was not something in the history books but I guessed all armies were like this. The soldiers were skittish as they marched south. They had 23 mounted men and 3 mules pulling small wagons. They had twenty men serving to scout in a wide arc. I switched to my wolf form and ambushed the scouts one at a time. I killed six before I got shoot in the ass in wolf form. I took off into the woods. Using the stationary golems I ambushed the ten men who came after the white wolf. I made sure to leave claw and bite marks on them to scare the soldiers more. After they found the 10 soldiers brutalized the captain decided to head due east to the coast. That night after they camped I used the golems to go into camp and grab 4 soldiers at a time. I added claw and bite marks in the woods. We killed 40 men before the camp lit fires in a circle and circled together in the center. They even released the Indian women into the woods hoping to satiate the beasts. The next day I got ahead of the group of 241 remaining men. I had the golems in a deep stream crossing and managed to drown 9 men as they crossed which freaked out the soldiers. Forty-one men refused to cross the stream. So I had 41 men on my side and 190 or so on the other side. They decided to find a better crossing to the south. That was a mistake. I brought the golems to me and as soon as the armies were out of sight of each other I sent the golems in and I followed in wolf form. It was hard to aim my stone bullet spell in that form but after the first volley of musket fire I moved in close with the golems. We seized the 3 supply wagons and mules. I brought the wagons with looted muskets and swords to two of the Indian women and told them in their language to head to the road and follow it to Avalon. I wasn’t sure how much more I would terrorize the English. Maybe one more time. Crossing the water I quickly found the path they took. The idiots ran into a swamp and were struggling to get through thigh deep mud. I circled north around the swamp with my golems. The army was in terrible condition, 19 horses remained so the other four must have not made it through the swamp. I decided to wait till dark. The men huddled close with four fires in a clearing. I decided to climb a tree about 40 yards away. Then I started firing my stone bullet spell, practicing my aim at a distance. Since the spell was silent it took a few screams before they started firing their muskets. I was 40 feet off the ground so I doubted they would hit me as they started firing into the dark. After watching men fall around them for a good five minutes the camp broke and scattered into the night. My golems were below me and only a few men rushed my direction. Those men were as good as dead. I held position and let them run. In the morning there were 37 dead and 5 dying soldiers. The golems ended those lives. The golems swept a mile arc from camp and found 11 more men who soon lost their lives and I got two horses. I had the golems collect as much loot as they could carry loaded the horses as well. I hoped the fleeing soldiers would bring news of the nightmares in the woods of the Carolinas back to the British forts.

 We caught up to the mules and returned to Avalon with 5 Indian women, 2 horses, 3 mules and a lot of loot. It started raining but we got to the road after two days and the journey wasn’t difficult.

 I spent the rest of the summer and fall casting spells. My light stones now lit all buildings and they were on sale in the common store which was starting to sell goods from my expeditions. We had a trade caravan from the Spanish visit at the end of the fall. They brought 27 chickens, 12 goats, 3 cows, sugar and flour. The whole lot cost me 5 light stones! I gave them 5 more light stones to bring another similar trade caravan next spring. The nine Spanish men and three guide Indians guiding the trade caravan stayed two nights in the inn.