

While the design process for my new wand bones was already complete, and I even managed to make the first parts of my new bones, the adamantine barrier, I quickly ran into an issue I probably should have expected.

Doing magic without hands was hard.

Using my spells to manipulate the molds I used to form the adamantine barriers had been relatively easy. I could cast most magic spells with no hands after all, and manipulating metal was pretty intuitive.

Feeding a finger bone the size of a half-dollar coin a half dozen enchantments, and two rituals, for just one piece, was incredibly time-consuming. And that was only the outer layer. Fifteen of the bones from each hand also needed an orichalcum interior hollow, as well as a spell storage crystal that fit in that hollow. I ended up having both Kali and Olivia help me out, with them doing most of the holding and moving, while I provided the mana and the knowledge.

It was far from efficient and ended up adding a significant chunk of time to each stage, but thankfully, I wasn't in much of a rush. At the end of the day, we did it, we had killed the unkillable force of nature, and we had earned our rest. Both Olivia and I needed time to recover, and working studiously to repair my injuries was about as good an excuse as one could have. The fact that Panacea could have fixed me in just a few minutes didn't even occur to most people.

That isn't to say we stayed cooped up and alone the entire time, nor did we focus completely on making my new hands.

We frequently visited New Wave, who invited us, along with Taylor and Danny, over to their homes almost every night. Apparently, they had an unspoken tradition of sorts, that, after the Endbringer battles, they would have family meals almost once a day, getting together to recover and mourn those they lost. Thankfully, the meals were much happier, since they hadn't lost anyone this time around.

While there was plenty of death, this attack had the lowest casualty count, both civilian and cape, of any recorded Endbringer battle before it.

We also had to keep up with our normal duties of healing at the hospital and helping out the Docks community. The Docks were a bit chaotic, as there were a bunch of reporters there, just waiting for me, but thankfully, the hospital was smart enough to keep them outside the building, meaning I could heal in peace.

I also switched over into a new charge cycle, gaining six new charges and unlocking a new free subject. I was very glad I had decided to hold off on buying the next level of dimensional partitioning until I needed it for my new bones, as my random subject filled in level three of the knowledge branch all by itself. The result was a solid increase in the amount of space I could create, and the amount of space I could affect for that increase. I could now control a whole square-foot section of space, just over doubling its size. I could, perhaps even

more importantly, also modify how much the mass inside interacts with the gravity outside, essentially decreasing its weight.

Combining the two means that I could now create actual bags of holding. Small ones, limited in how much weight they could actually reduce, but they were still bags of holding. Being able to open up interior spaces and reduce its internal weight was one of the quintessential moments in a lot of magical media, where the wizard started doing crazy bullshit. The idea of being able to stuff more material into smaller packages, just like I was doing with the spell crystals and my larger hand bones, was one of the more basic, but extremely potent aspects of it.

I was very excited to see what I could do with it, and its later levels.

With the need to spend charges on my storage issue now removed, I had nine charges to spend on whatever I wanted. Or, rather, I had nine points to spend on exactly the one thing that I wanted.

Now that my grand workings had proven themselves, both to the world and to myself, and I had filled out a good selection of crafting methods to support it, it was time to solve the next problem, and that was the actual construction of said grand workings themselves. At this point, I had the knowledge and the materials coming together rather quickly, but building these things still took time, especially the larger buildings. Sure, I could form stone and metal with my magic, but there were still harsh restrictions. Plus, if getting a fully maxed-out alchemy branch had taught me anything, it was that magical building materials could absolutely change the entire game. So, rather than just design some better spells to manipulate my basic materials, I dumped all nine spell charges into arcane construction and crafting.

And immediately regretted not doing it sooner.

Dozens of spells, rituals, enchantments, and more were dumped into my head, the branch of knowledge connecting to grand workings and my other crafting skills to a ridiculous degree. Not only that, but I could feel a whole host of minor materials, from a sort of magical concrete to refined glass, that would revolutionize the way I was building things.

Yes, some things did need specific attention, but the subject formed a whole spiderweb of connections with mass production, just as I had hoped. The result was ways to produce large-scale building materials even faster, as well as speed up the more detail-oriented aspects of construction.

But that wasn't all. While all of my crafting skills, including grand working, had opinions on the "best" way to do things, arcane construction showed me how to build economically, both material-wise and time-wise. It showed me ways to cut down on what I needed, or easily improve buildings and objects without massively bloating their material list.

For example, where I would once have used quite a few energy storage gems, I now use only seven, since their numerical strength would reinforce their power and efficiency, letting me do more with less.

I spent just over a week working on the barrier grabbing grand working that I had used to pick up Leviathan, and now I was pretty sure I could do it in three days, and do it significantly better.

While I was very tempted to put that knowledge to use immediately, I needed my hands first, so I focused on finishing the bones so I could get Panacea to finally rebuild them.

Thankfully, the third level had more than enough expansion to fit spell storage crystals into the bones. I would have fifteen spells in each hand, so thirty spells in total, which was honestly a lot to keep track of. So, rather than just jamming random spells into it, I made placeholder gems that could easily be filled with spells before putting them in place inside the bones. They could be removed with a specially made extractor, ready and waiting to be filled with spells I came up with later, or decided were important enough to always have with me.

As for the current loadout, I had three different healing spells, one powerful directed spell, one powerful general spell, and one weaker spell as a stabilizing backup should I use all the others. My left palm had a teleport spell, while the right had a potent annihilation spell. I also had a few spells to manipulate materials and a handful of utility spells, just in case. In the end, I used eleven of the slots, leaving nineteen more to fill whenever I was ready.

When I was finally done with the last replacement bone, I headed back to the Dallon's home, where Amy was waiting and ready. When I arrived, she was sitting at the dining room table with a few pounds of raw steak, most without their bones, defrosted and sitting in a pile. The table itself was covered in plastic to keep the soft, warm meat from making a mess.

"Okay, so this should be all that we need," Panacea said, gesturing to the pile. "It's going to be an interesting process, because normally I would form the bones as I go, but since you already have them, I'm going to have to go inch by inch, paying attention to each one. This is going to take some time."

"That's fine, good work is worth the wait," I said, sitting at the corner of the table, with her sitting on the other side. "What do you need me to do?"

"I want you to pass me your bones," she explained. "One by one, starting from the bottom, moving left, finishing a layer before moving on. I'm going to be pretty focused, so I need you to take each one and put it in the right general spot, and I will take care of the rest."

"Anything we need to be worried about?" I asked, as we started preparing the enchanted replacement bones.

"A few months ago, yeah," She admitted. "I would have been terrified of my power getting away from me and doing something horrible with how long I'm staying connected to you. But since I've started experimenting, my power is a lot more stable."

"I'm glad that's helped you so much," I commented.

"Me too," She responded, pausing for a moment to fix me with a happy, but still intense look. "I owe you a lot for stepping in when you did, Arcanum. I was in a bad place, and in denial about a lot of things, but I can see now how bad it was."

"I'm happy to have helped," I assured her.

For the next two hours, we slowly rebuilt my right hand and arm, starting at the stump, just below my elbow, all the way to my fingertips. The forearm only took a minute or so, and most of that was prep work, as she was just regrowing that portion, not replacing my bones. The hand was where most of our time was spent, with me pressing the bones into place while she took control of them and sealed them in the proper location.

At first, I was riveted to the process. Watching her slowly regrow my arm, then my hand at a much slower pace, was such an interesting process, especially since my medical knowledge was helping me keep up with what exactly she was doing. I had seen a whole lot of healing, especially with my shifts at the hospital, but watching Panacea regrow a whole limb was another thing completely.

Unfortunately, by the forty-five-minute mark, it was significantly less thrilling to watch. My whole arm was numb as she worked on it, and save for the occasional phantom sensation, by the time she was rebuilding my fingers, I could have likely taken a nap, at least I could if I wasn't actively helping her.

When we were done with my right hand, we took a break for lunch, both of us going for the vegetarian option since both of us were understandably not interested in eating meat at the moment. While we were sitting there, we discussed some of Amy's ideas for her custom-made guardian.

"I could make the bones considerably stronger than steel," I explained, swallowing a bite of my salad. "But I think I could do considerably further than that as well."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, I have a lot of things I can play with," I assured her. "With a day or so, I could basically do whatever you wanted."

"What about giving them powers?" She asked, raising an eyebrow. "I mean, almost all your stuff does that, right?"

"It can, and it wouldn't be overly difficult," I admitted, tapping on the table with my newly returned fingers. "Honestly, it has more to do with what you're looking to do than what I'm capable of. Whatever your goal is, I can pretty much guarantee I have *something* to help."

"What do you mean by a goal?"

"Well... are you trying to make a tank? Something quick? Something weird? Or are you just looking for an allrounder you can tinker with?"

"... Well... The main point is to give me something to tinker with, but...something to tank for me, to keep me safe if I ever get attacked without support would be nice."

"In that case... giving them some sort of self-healing ability would help," I said, tapping my chin with my right hand. "On top of making them as tough as possible, of course. Some sort of vibration absorption would be interesting in combating pure brutes.... Either way, the bottom line is coming up with a base design, and pre-planning would let me fill in some gaps and even add some interesting features."

"Fair, I was kind of planning to make a dog and then see what I can do, but coming up with a base idea and thinking things out might help," She admitted, nodding in agreement. "I'll make some notes, see what I can think of."

"Good. Oh, and I also have a way to expand a dimensional space to allow more matter inside something than it should technically allow," I explained. "There are some limitations, like how I need to make the actual object, but it's something to keep in mind. Imagine having double the bone marrow, or offsetting most of the internal organs into a bag half the size of what it should be."

Unsurprisingly, that immediately got the healer's head spinning, and we quickly spiraled into more ideas for her guardian. When we finally recovered enough to work, we settled in to finish the operation. Another two hours or so, and we were finally finished, my arms no longer ending in stumps.

"I gotta say, Amy, what you can do is pretty incredible," I said, looking down at my palm before turning my hand to look at my knuckles.

"I'm sure you would have figured out something eventually," she said with a shrug.

"Maybe, but it would have likely taken a long time, and multiple iterations," I assured her. "And it probably would have still just been replacements, not a restoration."

I smiled and stuck out my hand, which got a chuckle from Amy as she returned the handshake.

After saying goodbye and promising to return soon to check out her ideas for her guardian, I teleported home. Olivia had already returned for the day and greeted me with a smile, taking my hands in hers.

"She does good work," she admitted, turning my hands over. "If I didn't know, I would never guess. Have you tried it out?"

"A few small spells," I responded with a shrug. "I didn't want to make a mess of their back yard."

"In that case... maybe some testing is in order."

Her smile took on a mischievous glint as she led me away by my newly returned hands. It took me a moment to realize it was towards our bedroom, not any of the clearings around the compound.