

Lord of the Oasis

Chapter 11: Desert Bandit Lair

1

The 10 Swadian Peasants had their work cut out for them.

One went to the Council Hall to fetch the wooden ladder. Another peasant steadily climbed up to the roof to fetch the baskets, as well as shears for cutting the clusters of dates hanging on the branches of the trees, to make plucking and drying the dates easier.

...

The dates were ripe and fresh, so they required careful handling.

There was no doubt that the peasants knew that well.

They were all experienced farmhands who had long been working in the fields. None of this posed much of a problem for them as long as they were careful and attentive.

12

Kant felt at ease handing off these duties to the peasants.

At present, he had other matters that required his attention.

Among the said matters, there was the Desert Bandit Lair.

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That quest reward had come the previous evening. It was acquired when Kant and the Dukedom of Leo knights put their lives on the line to annihilate the Jackalans who had taken over the Oasis Lookout.

According to the system's judgment, quests that came with the risk of having entire forces wiped out came with high-level rewards.

This is rather curious.

Kant's mind was immediately connected to the system.

When the data card of that item appeared on his retina, he was able to see that it was a house constructed using sand and stone. Horses were tied at the door. Soldiers carrying spears and wearing leather armor walked by.

There was no doubt that they were units per the name of the reward—Desert Bandits.

1

However, Kant was still somewhat stunned.

Desert Bandits?

He was unable to help but frown as if he had recalled something.

In the system from his past life, there were monster units in the territories of the Sarrand Sultanate that went by that name. They appeared in groups in the sea of sand, plundering trade caravans and villagers. As such, they were considered robbers who were out to do no good.

These units were so notorious that sensible players in the early stages of the game learned to steer away from the deserts that were known to be filled with Desert Bandits.

1

Are they really who I think they are? Kant gulped.

His eyes were filled with joy.

If they were the criminals who roamed the desert like a storm, as recorded in the system, they would be an absolute boon to the present Oasis Lookout. To him, they were considered more precious than the 20 Date Palm Trees that provided extra food to the village.

4

His mind was filled with excitement, yet his expression remained calm, as usual.

1

His life as a young noble enabled him to learn how to conceal his true emotions with calmness.

1

He walked briskly to the southern side of the Oasis Lookout.

He circled the pond of spring water, which was where the council hall was located. He decided to make that area the residential and crafts section of Drondheim from then on out. That was the region he had thoughtfully divided. If different trades were to grow and prosper in the future, there could be a commercial area developed there.

The northern side, which was where the six Desert Poplar Trees and 20 Date Palm Trees were found, would serve purely as an agricultural area.

Although the Oasis Lookout did not currently have half a hectare of farmable lands, he still had to take the development of his fief from then on out into consideration. If his place were to be one incapable of producing food, it would be tantamount to being choked by others.

There was no way Kant could give up agriculture altogether, even though the production of crops might be minimal.

He even had thoughts of sending people to the Dukedom of Leo on the other side of the Senwaya Range to dig up huge amounts of soil. Such a crude, foolish-looking method would have allowed him to enhance the number of farmable lands at the Oasis Lookout.

The journey from the Oasis Lookout to the Senwaya Range took the knights about three days to cover. It would take carriages and infantry units seven days at most.

The distance, which required a week to cover, was still what Kant, who was desperate to have the oasis developed, considered to be within tolerable limits.

1

“My Lord.”

The 10 Swadian Militia members were on standby near the Council Hall.

They lowered their heads and greeted him respectfully to show respect for their lord.

“Yeah.”

Kant nodded. He did not arrange for them to do anything else. He simply replied, “Stay sharp.”

The threat of the Jackalans was still lurking out there somewhere. These 10 militia members were not the only ones who were on standby. The 20 Swadian Recruits were patrolling the dunes nearby. They could quickly retreat and report to the council if they found something, while would allow them time to prepare to deal with enemy threats with the 50 Swadian Peasants.

While there were only 80 of them, given how all of them would defend their homes courageously, not even a force of 200 Jackalans would be able to defeat them if they were to form tight formations with their polearms outstretched.

Furthermore, Kant was about to add a new troop class to his roster.

It was the Desert Bandits.

He went to the side of the Council Hall and began to seriously look at the surrounding terrain.

Confirming the construction of the Desert Bandit Lair would add a second building to the Oasis Lookout. At the same time, the building was crucial for allowing Kant to gain another class of combatants.

“System, construct the building at the eastern side of the council hall.”

Kant made his final decision.

A large number of data streams appeared on his retina as he gave the order.

A simple building, which was constructed with stone and wooden materials, was quickly erected right beside the council hall. The process took about two seconds. The building, which previously only existed in data-card form, was instantly brought into the world.

1

A Desert Bandit Lair was given by the system.

Kant eyed the place, finding it to be a simple single-story house that was constructed using stone and wooden materials as the foundation.

The lair seemed to have an area of 1,080 square feet and was about 9 feet high, which was noticeably lower than the 19-foot-tall Council Hall next to it. However, there was a stable made of wood next to the house, which was about 215 square feet.

Sniff.

Light snorting sounds were heard, which startled Kant.

Is someone in there?

Kant eyed the place. He knew that his ears were not playing tricks on him.

Those were obvious snorting sounds, which sounded just like those commonly heard from horses. That meant there were horses in the stable. It also meant that there were people in the building.

1

The narrow wooden door was pushed open from the inside.

Five stout men wearing linen robes walked outside. They were holding spears. Their faces, which had a dark complexion from prolonged exposure to the sun, looked fierce and unyielding, yet they appeared incredibly respectful.

1

“We bow to you, Lord, as your humble servants,” the five greeted him respectfully.

“Right, very well.”

Kant nodded slightly. There was a smile on his smile.

8

The joy in his eyes was unmistakable. It was just as he guessed. These five stout men were Desert Bandits of the Sarrand Sultanate who roamed in groups and took on the desert like a sandstorm.

1

Underneath their simple, crude linen robes was fine leather armor.

While they all held 6-foot-long spears, they still carried round shields and flanged maces for close-quarter combat right behind their backs. Four javelins were arranged neatly on the sacks on their backs as well.

Along with the desert horses in the stables, the equipment became the combination of tools that made them fearsome entities in the desert.

The Desert Bandits were equally as good at initiating cavalry charges with their horses or surrounding their enemies and throwing their heavy, lethal javelins.

In close-quarters combat, their round shields effectively blocked enemy attacks. Their flanged maces, which were blunt trauma weapons that excelled in armor penetration, served as a lethal threat to even the most well-armed enemies.

“Splendid, splendid indeed.”

The smile on Kant’s face was unmistakable. He asked, “Are there only five of you in the lair?”

“Indeed, My Lord.” The five Desert Bandits nodded.

One of them quickly said, “If you are willing to pay 30 Denars per member, there will be one Desert Bandit who will willingly join your ranks every week. From then on out, weekly maintenance for each member will be 12 Denars per week.”

3

“Seems nice.” Kant nodded.

While the 30 Denars to recruit seemed steep, and 12 Denars per week for maintenance seemed hefty, Kant saw all of that to be acceptable. The value of these ferocious bandits was soon to be laid bare for all to see.

5

They were excellent units among second-level troop classes.

For instance, the second-level troop class that Kant currently possessed, the 10 Swadian Militia, paled in comparison to the Desert Bandits.

It could be said that with sound tactics employed, the five Desert Bandits could easily take out all of the Swadian Militia without losing a single member, even if all of those Swadian Militia were armed with heavy spears.

Their ferocious skills had been developed and honed by the harsh, unforgiving desert.

Kant asked, “Can I begin recruitment right now?”

2

The Desert Bandits did not answer. They became quiet after giving their previous explanation. The system immediately answered him in their stead.

“You may begin recruitment.”

A prompt from the system was heard in his ear. “Do you want to recruit now?”

“Recruit.” Kant nodded.

[Recruitment: Desert Bandit x 1]

[30 Denars spent]

A dialog box popped up. The wooden door of the lair, which was constructed using stone and wooden materials, opened again.

Another Desert Bandit in near-identical attire appeared. He briskly walked and stood with the other five, looking fierce and unyielding. While he looked respectfully at Kant’s face, his eyes remained fixed on other areas, which was typical of a bandit.

It was as if he was out to rob the place at any given moment.

4

This place is now a lot safer with six Desert Bandits around.

5

As he looked at them, Kant felt pleased with the situation.

The six Desert Bandits were not regular infantry units. They were cavalry units. Armed with spears, they could easily be used as fierce shock troops. They were capable of tearing through enemy formations and easily crushing enemy forces.

1

Dealing with primitive Jackalans would be considered a piece of cake to them.

“My Lord, My Lord!”

Just as Kant was still feeling pleased with himself, a desperate call could be heard from behind.

Kant turned around and saw a Swadian Peasant. He was carrying a tattered urn in his hand and walking quickly toward his lord. He shouted, “We seem to have found something!”