

# Lord of the Oasis

## Chapter 15: The Thick Stench of Blood

The news of an incoming enemy attack spread quickly. All those who had been fast asleep in the Oasis Lookout were now all wide awake. Their eyes might have still looked somewhat drowsy, but underneath that drowsiness was full readiness to fight.

They all hoped for a satisfying victory to prove their valiance.

...

Swadians never feared war.

The 10 Swadian Militia and 20 Swadian Recruits all stood ready with their spears as they gathered in the council hall.

Nothing seemed unusual in the tents. The 50 Swadian Peasants were standing ready for battle with their long scythes.

Everyone awaited Kant's orders.

"Stay quiet."

He did not give the order for them to emerge out of their buildings or tents.

He wanted them all to keep waiting.

He squatted on the Council Hall's roof, narrowing his eyes as he peered at the dunes far away. He wore a sarcastic smirk as he quipped, "Maybe those ugly bastards know of only one such tactic, eh."

Scattered shadows were seen moving on the dunes.

The bright moonlight shone all over the ground, which enabled them to vaguely see the beast-like heads and bodies of their would-be invaders.

Those were Jackalans.

“My Lord, we shall get to our horses.”

Six Desert Bandits were squatting right behind Kant.

The six of them wore harsh expressions as they eyed the approaching Jackalans.

“Be careful, and don’t alert anyone.”

Kant nodded, permitting them to leave.

He looked just as focused as everyone else. His eyes had nothing but seriousness in them. Not even he had expected just how tough the battle that night would be. The scale of victory weighing his odds did not seem to be in his favor.

There were simply too many Jackalans showing up at his door.

“Things don’t look good.”

As he stayed on guard, Kant calmed his breathing and kept his eyes focused on the faraway dunes.

While moonlight did not give them visibility like that of sunlight, everyone was still able to see what was over 300 feet away. Kant assessed that there were more than 300 Jackalans ready to attack them. He was even able to detect that there might be more Jackalans waiting to strike from behind the dunes.

At this point, things were not looking good.

The situation had taken a turn for the worse.

A militia member behind him seriously asked, “My Lord, what should we do?”

“We wait.”

Kant answered in a straightforward, affirmative manner.

He estimated that at least 500 Jackalans were sneaking up on them in the dark of night. The beasts outnumbered them at least five to one.

He only had 87 Swadians at his side, and 50 of them were peasants who did not specialize in combat. If he were to win this battle, he could not afford to rely on conventional strategies.

If all of his people took formations and fought the invaders head-on, he might have as well asked to be mowed down in a single charge.

Kant was not a fool.

So, he arranged for his troops to continue hiding.

He made it seem as if none of them had discovered anything.

“If only they were here now.”

Kant made a causal quip, seeking what bit of joy he could in the severe situation. He still ended sighing in exasperation.

The “They” he referred to meant Rowan’s men.

The 20 Dukedom of Leo knights working with six Desert Bandits and 80 infantry units would have enabled them to attack with the element of surprise on their side. It would have easily crushed the Jackalans sneakily coming at them.

They were cavalry units, so their formidable mobility would have brought a devastating force to bear in such a situation.

“Too bad none of them are here.”

He wiped his face and returned to his serious and alert state of mind.

Even without reinforcements, he and the Swadians still had to defend the oasis.

That oasis was now called Drondheim, which was the location of their village.

Just as Kant was about to raise his hand and give an order, a dialog box flickered on his retina.

A prompt from the system was heard.

[Ding... Main Quest assigned]

[Main Quest: Annihilate the enemy sneaking in the night.]

[Reward: Equipment for Swadian Militia: Hunting Crossbows]

[Introduction: It is late at night and cold winds blow across the sandy dunes. A massive number of enemies are gathering. All of them come with seething hatred. They intend to retake the oasis where their tribe once called home. For you, it will be a battle for survival.]

It was another quest from the system.

Kant was somewhat startled.

His pupils instantly contracted as he discovered that it was not the usual Side Quests that popped up now and again.

It was a Main Quest.

That was the second Main Quest Kant had encountered thus far.

The first was to build his village, which was accomplished the previous night.

Now, the system had assigned him another Main Quest just as he was about to deal with the ambush from the Jackalans in the dark of night.

You're forcing my hand.

Kant licked his lips. His eyes were filled with exasperation.

With the assignment being a Main Quest, it meant that he had to see through to its completion one way or another. A new Main Quest was only possible if he completed the one he had just been given. Everything in the system was done step by step and interconnected.

There was a possibility of failing that main quest altogether.

Kant had no idea of the consequences of such a failure.

A loss meant that a link in the chain was broken, so the next link would not be able to connect properly.

There was something even more important.

If Kant were to lose in the ambush from the Jackalans, every single last man would end up dead.

If every single unit died in combat, the Oasis Lookout would be retaken by the Jackalan Tribe. That meant Drondheim would be destroyed.

Even if there were Main Quests from there on out, they would have nothing to do with Kant.

Nothing else mattered if he ended up dead.

Some years later, people in the Dukedom of Leo would have learned of the tragedy. A few of them might have shed tears upon learning about it. In all likelihood, the tragedy would have turned into a topic discussed over dinner. After people raved about it for several days, everything would return to normal, with Kant eventually being forgotten.

To hell with that!

Kant clenched his fists and looked rather brutal.

This was a battle that he was unable to afford to lose. He had to win, even if the victory came with a high cost.

“Get ready.”

Kant retreated and left the roof for the first floor of the Council Hall.

The 10 Swadian Militia and 20 Swadian Recruits were waiting with their spears in hand. These people consisted of his main force. They were the key to winning the battle.

“My Lord.”

The soldiers looked determined. They were ready to die in battle if need be.

“Very well.” Kant nodded, finding the morale to be impressively high.

He asked, “How are things out there?”

A militia member in charge of scouting immediately reported, “The Jackalans are gathering at the dunes. So far, it is estimated that there are 500 of them.”

Kant frowned.

The reported was just as he expected, yet the weight on his shoulders felt even heavier than before.

There were 500 Jackalans. That was a number close to that of the previous tribe that took over the oasis.

“How could there be so many of them?”

Kant was feeling doubtful.

When 20 knights ambushed the tribe with 30 Swadians in tow, they had done severe damage to the Jackalan Tribe that had taken over the Oasis Lookout. There were about 300 Jackalans killed back then, and less than 100 had been able to escape.

However, the number of Jackalans appearing at the moment had reached 500.

That surprised Kant quite a bit. It also greatly angered him.

This meant that there was another Jackalan Tribe somewhere out there.

“They are attacking!”

Just when Kant was frowning and thinking, a militia member at the door made the announcement. His words made the air in the council hall instantly feel heavier.

Sounds of gulping and teeth gnashing were heard.

All of the Swadian soldiers held onto their spears and took deep breaths, awaiting Kant’s orders. They were willing to charge outside the hall and form tight formations to take on the enemies outside at a moment’s notice.

“Quiet! Stay quiet!”

However, Kant remained quiet. In a severe tone, he eventually said, “Don’t rush. Victory will be ours.”

He walked briskly to the wooden door.

Through the cracks of the door, Kant was able to clearly see the dark silhouettes of the Jackalans on the dunes bearing onto the oasis.

It was apparent that the Jackalans were unaware that the target of their ambush had discovered them.

The Jackalans continued to slowly sneak up on them.

It was just like how wolf packs snuck up on their prey. They laid low for a while before suddenly charging when they got close enough, attempting to kill their prey and reaping a tasty meal within the shortest amount of time possible.

However, if said prey were to discover them and retaliate, things turned out differently.

The soldiers in the Council Hall, the peasants in the tents, and the cavalry units in the lair were all waiting to strike.

The stalkers were discovered.

The ambush was no longer an ambush. It was now a quick retaliation.

Precisely put, it was a counter-ambush.

Bang.

Kant kicked the wooden door and charged outside the Council Hall with his light crossbow.

The 500 Jackalans, who were still laying low and approaching, looked very startled since they had gotten within 98 feet from the council hall. None of them expected someone would suddenly kick the door open.

Zoom.

The light crossbow fired. A sharp, heavy iron bolt shot through the air, appearing within the ranks of the Jackalans 98 feet away.

The tip of the bolt tore through the hide of a Jackalan and lodged in its abdomen, splitting up the internal organs within and causing massive internal bleeding. That Jackalan fell to the ground with its hands covering its abdominal wound while its eyes became bloodshot.

“For Swadia, charge!”

Kant’s voice was heard roaring throughout the Oasis Lookout. While he was not being overly loud, his voice still sounded thunderous.

“All hail Swadia!”

Massive responses were heard. The 30 soldiers with spears in their hands quickly emerged from the council hall. They extended their two 3-foot-long spears and formed neat formations, charging quickly at the stunned Jackalans.

There were also all of the 50 Swadian Peasants.

All of them raised their long scythes and followed at the flanks of the 30 infantry units.

The steps they took suggested that they were jogging. They turned into the ones initiating an ambush, slaughtering the Jackalans sneaking on them.

“Kill them all!”

Kant put the light crossbow behind his back and took out his short sword. He advanced along with the infantry units.

The 98 feet was not that big of a distance. Reloading his crossbow would have taken too much time. It was better to deal with the threat using his short sword. Besides, none of the Jackalans were wearing armor capable of withstanding hits from metal weapons.

The stench of blood instantly thickened.

The Swadians were already fighting up close and personal with the Jackalans.

It was a very bloody and brutal battle.

Different races went at each other’s throats for a place to live.

...

Nearly 500 Jackalans gradually drew closer to them. Their beast-like heads had unmistakable anthropomorphic killing intent.



The Oasis Lookout was where the Jackalans had lived for generations. Humans taking over the oasis meant their home and lands had been robbed from them.

It was a conflict that would have no peaceful end.

Any race that wanted to survive in the desert either needed to drive away or kill the ones residing at any oasis found.

Kant wanted to live, so he had to annihilate the Jackalans.

Dronenheim needed to be developed. The deaths of the Jackalans had to pave the way for that development.

It was that simple.

The law of the jungle was that of assimilation. In a desert, it was annihilation.

1

One only needed to look at the Middle East of Earth, which had two riverine regions surrounded by deserts. Regardless of how many glorious civilizations had been built before, if they went into decline and ended up being conquered by other races or civilizations, they were eventually wiped out from the river of history. The lineage of such civilizations and people were broken, with only bits of historical ruins remaining behind to prove their bygone existence.

As such, Kant showed no mercy. Besides, he was the invader in this situation.

With things being as they were, there was no turning back.

Withdrawing was not an option.

The Jackalans sneakily moved forward. With more than 500 of them crowding the place, the oasis seemed to be overflowing with blackened beings, which inspired feverish confidence in those stupid yet brutal primitive beings.

1

Their confidence was backed by the advantage of sheer numbers. Their arrogance was fueled by the fact that they remained undiscovered throughout the ambush process.

However, none of the Jackalans expected that their cover had been blown. The humans, who had been soundly sleeping, were simply waiting for the Jackalans to show up. When the time came, they dropped their act and retaliated in an extremely ferocious manner.

The retaliation was efficient and effective.

The Jackalans were almost in a panic because of their failed plan.

The Jackalan warriors standing at the forefront were only able to have their green eyes grow wide as rows of pointy spears were thrust at them. Seething pain was felt in their abdomens before they were put to the ground by those weapons.

They were able to do little else but open their eyes and fang-filled mouths wide in vain.

1

The low-pitched noises they made were that of misery and despair as their lives were completely lost when they hit the ground.

The two 3-foot-long spears were lodged deep into their bodies, creating irreparable wounds. The spiked clubs they held were unable to do any damage to the humans holding the other end of the spears.

The cold sheen of the spearheads was stained red under the bright moonlight.

The Swadian infantry units, which were all armed with spears, served as the main force of the battle.

Their iron spearheads, which were meticulously forged by skilled blacksmiths, easily penetrated the bodies of the Jackalans. Further damage was done by the hands holding the spears. As they slightly twisted the sharp weapons, it caused internal organs to rupture and massively bleed. The spears were quickly pulled and thrust once again with full force.

2

Blood splattered all over the place. The thick stench of blood permeated throughout the cold desert.

The throng of spears had been an infantry tactic employed by the Kingdom of Swadia.

As the former strongest old kingdom found in the Continent of Caradia, before those in the mountains southwest of the Kingdom of Swadia revolted, the people of the Rhodok Mountains had been the best candidates to employ such formations.

However, even when the Rhodoks, who were known to be as stubborn as rocks, were lost, the Swadians were still capable of employing the legion of spears.

The adept skills gained from training enabled the soldiers to skewer the Jackalans inside out without breaking a sweat.

“All hail Swadia!”

Kant shouted as he brought his sharp blade down on the throat of a Jackalan who had fallen but was still alive.

He was boosting the morale of all the combatants on the field.

There was no voice comparable to that of a lord’s encouragement. It meant that everyone was still fighting alongside their lord and there were still ample compatriots left standing to fight.

It was also a sign that they had yet to lose.

“All hail Swadia!”

The Swadian Peasants shouted as well.

They closely followed by the sides of the infantry combatants. Their long scythes, which had been converted from farming tools, were being brought down left, right, and center like they were sabers and halberds. The left bloody wounds on the Jackalans that never wore armor.

More than 30 Jackalans died as soon as close-quarters fighting erupted.

However, Kant and his men never let that go to their heads. They remained determined as they advanced.

They also suffered casualties.

“No, save me... Ugh...”

The shrieks of Swadian Peasants were heard from the flanks.

Some of them were pounced on by Jackalans. Spiked clubs filled with iron nails were brought down hard on them. The peasants did not wear armor, so they were only able to rely on their bodies to resist the attacks.

The outcome was brutal.

“Huu... Help me...”

More of them were being brought down to the ground by spiked clubs of the Jackalans. Their wounds were rendered indistinguishable by the nails on the clubs.

However, most of the injuries were concussive damage dealt by the weight of the clubs, which went all the way into their bones. They no longer needed to worry about further damage. The Jackalans tore out their throats right after they were downed.

Seven Swadian Peasants fell and lost their lives.

“Hold the line! Hold the line!”

Kant’s eyes were bloodshot. Those peasants were an important part of his workforce. It was quite a waste to see them lost in the battle.

2

Then again, the casualties thus far were still considered tolerable.

Kant gritted his teeth and shouted, “Maintain tight formations and press on!”

“Aye!” The infantry units by his side responded loudly.

While there had been peasants lost, the main force of the battle still had firm control of the battlefield situation.

None of them had been injured.

On the contrary, the Jackalans no longer dared to press forward head-on at the advancing army formations. They began to scatter at the flanks, leaving behind more than 20 bodies.

Those Jackalans knew that without armor and shields, they had no chance of getting past the throng of spears.

Even if the Jackalans managed to make it to the flanks, the peasants still gritted their teeth as they brought their long scythes down onto the beasts.

They were doing it for their home.

They were doing it for their village.

They were doing it for their kingdom.

The Swadian Peasants were just as willing to put their lives on the line to defend what they held dear.

They had to put their lives on the line.

The brutal retaliation threw the Jackalans off guard. This was the opportunity Kant had anticipated. He planned to shock the Jackalans into fear by causing massive casualties in a short amount of time. It would cause the Jackalans to lose morale, which served as the key to their victory.

The courage of a single individual was not necessarily constant.

The Jackalans, being of creatures of flesh and blood, were not actually fearless.

They were very capable of fear.

The sudden retaliation did not give the stunned Jackalans any time to recover. Seeing their skewered compatriots lying on the ground, the lucky ones, who managed to escape the purge of the tribe before, seemed to have recalled all the fear they experienced the previous night.

There had been the sounds of horses galloping, shouting, killing, swords cutting through necks, and blood spraying.

All of that served to inspire massive fear.

Gallop... Gallop... Gallop...

The Jackalans retreated in fear, subconsciously dropping their crudely made spiked clubs, which were cobbled together with wood and nails. However, they remained oblivious to the terror that was about to appear.

The sound of horses galloping could be heard.

That was the sound they feared most when they escaped in the night before.

“Kill them all!”

Shouts were heard as six cavalry units seemingly emerged out of nowhere in the night.

Shortly after, heavy javelins appeared.

Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh...

Sounds of things tearing through the air were heard right before the pointy javelins, which traveled over 40 feet, nailed six Jackalans, who had not managed to escape, onto the ground.

All six of those riders held their spears out and crashed into the flanks of the messy formation of the Jackalans like meteors. Their massive inertia sent several unlucky ones flying while the pointy spears penetrated several Jackalans. The weapons put them to the ground writhing in pain, and they were unable to do anything about it.

Those were the only cavalry units who served Kant—the Desert Bandits.

“All hail Swadia!”

The appearance of those six Desert Bandits boosted the morale of the infantry units around Kant. They quickly cheered, feeling their spirits rise.

The spears in their hands were covered in blood. The bodies of Jackalans were sprawled all over the place before them.

1

“Do it now!”

Kant looked at the fettered Jackalans, which all wore fearful expressions.

He realized that the Jackalans had recalled the appearance of the knights from the previous night, as well as their tribe members dropping off left and right around them. All of that caused them to lose morale, so much so that they wanted to immediately escape.

Forces dealt a crushing blow saw their morale quickly dissipate when met with the same trauma in a short period of time.

That was what the Jackalans were experiencing.

More than 100 Jackalans retreated in fear. Although they had been sneaking about in the dark of night, they did not know if other cavalry units were lurking about. They quickly retreated. In their haste to retreat, they were fully willing to drop the spiked clubs they were holding. They all succumbed to mass panic. None of them had an ounce of courage left for fighting.

The mass panic was so severe that the other Jackalans began to flee in fear.

Fear and low morale quickly spread.

More than 100 Jackalan bodies were left behind in the desert, but more Jackalans chose to flee in terror.

The battle ended very quickly.

“Stop pursuing them and come back.”

Kant gave his orders. He denied the Desert Bandits’ request to give chase on their horses.

He only had six Desert Bandits at his disposal.

Losing even one of them was too great a loss. Furthermore, the Desert Bandits only served as light cavalry units specializing in shock tactics. Their defenses paled significantly when compared to the dukedom knights, who were all well-trained and wore mail armor.

Kant stood at the edge of the oasis, watching the Jackalans disappear into the dunes. His expression became somewhat less harsh.

He had won the battle.

He shook his head and said, "Clean the battlefield up."

He looked at the peasants to the side, whom all wore sorrowful faces. He sighed heavily and said, "Calculate the casualties. Report to me once you're done."

"Understood." A Desert Bandit nodded, which meant that he took the assignment.

Kant stood where he was. A dialog box suddenly appeared on his retina.

However, his expression soon turned to one of worry. He was unable to help but clench his fists as he muttered, "We were lucky to have won this one."