

Lord of the Oasis

Chapter 26: New System Functions

“Huh?” Kant was slightly startled.

“Refugees?”

...

He felt rather puzzled.

However, he was quickly reminded of the introduction of the houses. Thus, he immediately realized what had happened.

[House: Civilian building of stone and wooden materials. Increases population and attracts an influx of citizens when the population in the village is low. Requires 100 Denars and seven days for construction.]

That explained the attributes of the building.

All five empty houses served to attract refugees, which was why the incident happened.

It was indeed a boon for Drondheim.

“Accept!”

Kant’s tone was affirmative.

He had no hesitation whatsoever.

[You have mercifully decided to accept the Swadians who have nowhere to go.]

[Acquired: Swadian Peasants x 50]

A prompt was heard from the system.

Another dialog box popped up before Kant knew what had happened.

[The Swadians are spreading the word of your deeds.]

[Reputation: +100 Honor: +1]

[Reputation System activated]

[Honor System activated]

[Current Reputation: 10 Current Honor: 1]

3

[Reputation can be used to accelerate construction]

[Honor can be used to draw packs]

3

Kant looked rather dumbfounded.

He was puzzled about what he had just read.

Did accepting those Swadian refugees actually open up new system functions?

Reputation.

Honor.

Kant knew those terms well. Both had been important stats in the game in his previous life.

They were tied to the player's evaluation and relations.

They were also tied to the number of forces the player could command.

They were even related to whether the player was able to get married and become a king.

Is something different here?

Kant realized that in that real world he was in, the system changed how those two stats worked.

This was not the Continent of Caradia that he knew.

2

He was not in a made-up game world.

1

There was also no specific data regarding much of anything, so the data did not limit the number of troops he was able to command.

As such, there was no need for evaluations and relations.

There was also no need to enhance the number of forces he was able to command.

He would not have had to mingle with noble ladies or become king of a certain nation.

“System, explain how those two stats work.”

Instead of speculating, Kant chose to ask. Besides, the system was able to explain everything.

[Reputation: Acquired through winning battles and improving civilian life. Specific reputation stats are dependent on the host. Specifically, 100 reputations could be spent on hastening construction by one day.]

Now, Kant was even more baffled.

He frowned and muttered, “Can things could actually work that way?”

Back in the game he played in his previous life, lacking advanced “engineering” attributes meant requiring constructions to take tens of days to complete. That rate of construction was utterly frustrating.

A high-tempo game was rather intolerant of such a sluggish rate of construction.

Even after coming to this world, Kant still had something to complain about regarding the rate of construction. While he knew the rate was several times higher than it would have actually been, no one wanted to wait for so many days. Most people liked to have things done swiftly.

However, what truly caught Kant's attention was the system's honor function.

The system showed a dialog box to provide further elaboration regarding it.

[Honor: Acquired through the "acquisition of epic victory" and "acquisition of legendary evaluation." Specifically, one honor could be spent to enter the mall for drawing prizes, acquiring mysterious packs. Remark: Mysterious packs are divided into troop class pack, military equipment pack, item pack, construction pack, and hero pack. Please explore on your own for further details.]

2

Kant's eyes lit up.

He seemed to be mulling something deep down.

The honor system seemed more powerful than the reputation system.

One only needed to look at the system's description of honor to tell that much.

Epic victory.

Legendary evaluation.

Those two terms looked like extraordinarily difficult feats to achieve.

At the very least, in all three victories he scored against the Jackalans since he came to the Nahrin Desert, the comments regarding his battles had never had terms like "epic" or "legendary" in them.

It seems rather difficult to acquire honor.

Kant shook his head.

In truth, even back in the game played in his previous life, acquiring honor was much more difficult than acquiring reputation.

4

However, Kant was unable to help but feel curious about these things.

He opened up the Reputation System section and found he had acquired one honor.

He looked at the prizes available for drawing in the mall, which required him to only spend that one honor to get something. Kant felt very tempted to try it out.

Maybe I could give it a try? he thought.

He planned to give it a try on the spot. While honor did not come easy, it was still something usable in the mall. It would have made little difference whether he used any honor he had now or later.

“My Lord.”

While he was still thinking about the mall, he heard a voice.

The System Page was turned off on his retina. Kant turned around and found a Swadian Militia member standing next to him. He frowned and asked the man, “What’s the matter?”

The Swadian Militia reported, “My Lord, we have discovered quite a large number of people heading here.”

“Yeah, that’s right.”

Kant nodded, knowing that the 50 Swadian refugees had arrived.

He turned around to look in the direction the Swadian Militia member pointed. Many people were seen dragging luggage, both huge and small, on the horizon. They were arduously making their way through the desert, heading for the oasis before their eyes.

“Is there anything you need us to do?” the militia member asked.

Kant shook his head lightly and said, “No, those people are all poor refugees from Swadia.”

“They’re Swadians?” The militia was slightly baffled.

There were 35 Swadian Militia members, who carried hunting crossbows in their hands, around him. All of them gathered around with the intention of getting into formation. After hearing what Kant said, they all slowly put down their weapons.

1

No one wanted to fight their own countrymen.

“Yeah, they’re all Swadians.”

Kant nodded and said at the same time, “Get food and water ready. They all look exhausted.”

“Understood.” The Swadian Militia members all nodded. Several of them left the group.

However, the remaining Swadian Militia members did not immediately disperse. They were still all lined up with their hunting crossbows in hand. They all narrowed their gaze on all the refugees, who were getting increasingly closer to the oasis.

Although they knew those people were their countrymen, they still saw protecting their lord and the village as their topmost priorities.

Despite being of the same nation, Swadians fought among each other time and again.

As opposed to their expressions, it went without saying that Kant looked calm.

Before too long, all 50 Swadian refugees arrived in front of Kant and the soldiers.

1

They all wore ragged, dirty linen clothing that made them look like beggars. Their faces were filled with grime as if it had been a long time since they last showered. All of them had a stink about them, making anyone else who got near them frown.

“Welcome to Drondheim.”

Kant stepped forward and nodded, saying, "You shall all have food, water, and hope for the future."

"Thank you, Merciful Lord."

All of the refugees stood still. Their gazes were locked on Kant.

After hearing Kant welcoming them, they all merrily cheered. Many of them even shed tears.

The Continent of Caradia was far from being a peaceful place. All five nations warred against each other. In the end, it was not the nobles who suffered. The ones who suffered were those commoners at the bottom rung of society.

1

Bandits were everywhere. Acts of plunder from enemy forces posed a severe threat to their lives.

"Take them to shower and get them some food."

1

Kant turned around and said to the militia members behind him, "I'll leave you all in charge. When they're done resting, get them some simple menial work to do so they can get used to the place. Everyone has to pull their own weight in this Oasis Lookout."

"Understood." The Swadian Militia members nodded.

The soldiers gathered the refugees around and led them to the Council Hall and newly constructed houses.

The food was ready.

It was time for the Oasis Lookout troops to have lunch.

"System Mall."

Kant remained standing where he was. A dialog box appeared on his retina.

A treasure chest-like image was on the dialog box.

Kant instantly realized something.

If there was some prize to be drawn, it was probably the chest doing the work. That meant the draw was definitely random.

“System, activate prize drawing in the mall,” Kant quietly muttered to himself.

[Ding... System Mall activated]

[Due to this being your first time using the System Mall, you get an extra chance at drawing x 1]

A dialog box from the system appeared on his retina.

However, it gave Kant a surprise.

An extra chance at drawing? Does that mean I can draw twice?

“Begin the drawing.”

Kant had no hesitation in making the decision.

The image of the treasure chest on his retina began to slowly open.

The treasure chest gradually opened. Mysterious colors were visible. At that moment, Kant heard a prompt.

[Ding... You have acquired troop class pack]

[Your troop class attracted a small group of Desert Bandits to join your forces.]

[Acquired: Desert Bandit x 10]

2

A System Prompt was heard. Kant was dumbfounded.

1

“What a prize.” As he gulped, his eyes showed obvious surprise in them.

That one draw gave him 10 Desert Bandits.

5

Recruiting in the lair required at least seven weeks to complete. That meant recruiting 10 Desert Bandits to serve him would have taken approximately two months. Instead, that feat was easily completed with just one simple draw.

1

Chapter 27: Special Reward from the System

He gained 10 Desert Bandits without having to do anything, which made him incredibly happy.

With the six Desert Bandits resting in the lair added to the fray, as well as the building's trait allowing him to recruit one Desert Bandit every week, he only needed to wait for a month to gather 20 Desert Bandits. At that time, he would have the ability to build a cavalry platoon.

...

He would have a platoon of cavalry units created with bandits, who were known for their ferocity.

All of them were armed with spears and pilums.

As such, when the group of Desert Bandits grew to a certain size, he could use them to shock troops crashing down onto enemy lines. As auxiliary units added to the mix, they could harass enemy formations.

For those bandits used to living in the desert, they were all familiar with these tactics.

"Very nice."

Kant smiled.

Anticipation was seen in his eyes.

His first draw gave him a lofty reward. He wondered what he would come from his second draw.

He quietly muttered, "Continue drawing."

The system confirmed the command.

The dialog box refreshed on his retina. A new treasure chest appeared.

It slowly opened.

The rainbow lights gradually turned golden.

[Ding... You have acquired item pack.]

[You opened the item pack and found Intimidation (Banner).]

1

[Acquired: Intimidation' (Banner)]

At the same time, Kant saw a card with a banner-like image appear in the dialog box on his retina.

His pupils slightly contracted.

"Well... Umm..." Kant mumbled.

He quickly realized something and said, "System, open introductions of the item."

[Intimidation (Banner)]

1

[Attribute: 1. Reduce enemy morale within a 500-yard radius. 2. Put enemy forces in mass panic when killing enemy leaders. 3. Disperse enemy forces easily due to panic and fear. 4. Boost your forces' morale when the enemy suffers casualties.]

5

[Introduction: This is a legendary banner. Victory belongs to you with the banner by your side.]

2

He was dumbfounded.

He was truly dumbfounded.

If the first draw surprised him, the second draw nearly terrified him.

That was because of the attributes of the item he had drawn.

It was capable of reducing enemy morale, which meant tearing down the will of the enemy to fight and making the bravest of warriors into scared recruits. It even allowed him to cause them to suffer mental breakdowns, forcing them to leave the battlefield in fear.

There was more to it than that.

The banner also enabled the death of enemy forces, which would boost his forces' morale.

This is some goddamn sacred tool of the battlefield!

The banner's effects meant that even the weakest and most timid of sissies would be effected. It enabled his forces to fight the enemy while roaring at the top of their lungs.

1

Intimidation, eh...

He gulped.

Kant's pupils contracted as he considered what it all meant.

He quickly recovered from the dazed state, which had been caused by the shock of learning about such an item being in his possession.

The card with the image of the banner was still on his retina.

Kant felt his throat become rather parched.

By then, he had recognized the origins of that item. It, of course, had a lot to do with the system.

"Light and Darkness."

Kant's eyes brightened as he muttered, "The name of the mod—Intimidation."

2

The Intimidation banner was actually from one of the system's mods, Light and Darkness. It was a title acquired when the player fulfilled some strict and unforgiving requirements.

The effects were also similar.

However, that intangible title had become a real banner.

Its effects were modified to affect the entire battlefield with that specific radius from the flag.

1

"Materialize."

Kant linked his mind to the system. The data started flowing about.

When the data streams dispersed, the banner fell onto his hand.

It was the Intimidation banner.

Its staff was made from a yew tree, and its thickness felt exactly right. It enabled a grown adult to firmly clinch it.

2

The top of the staff had a banner, which was woven using the finest of linen, hanging from it. It was dyed in crimson colors that resembled blood. A majestic lion was sewn onto the middle of the banner.

The banner swayed even when there was no wind as if to intimidate anyone who was up to no good.

So, this is Intimidation.

Kant felt his mouth become dry.

However, his eyes had gotten increasingly bright as he looked on with passion and surprise.

It was not just because he had acquired an item that could have been considered sacred.

Kant's thoughts went further than that.

He had discovered that the system, which had come into the world with him, was not a regular version. It had carried a mod that came with mystical items and powerful troop classes.

It was just like the Light and Darkness mod.

There was more than just Intimidation. There was also Commanding Power and Supreme Commander's Might.

There were also all manners of truly sacred items.

Well, well, well...

Kant held the banner firmly and asked the system, "If I acquire ample honor and draw in the System Mall, would I be able to summon these sacred items from the mod?"

The System gave him a short, concise answer. "You could."

"This is great!"

Kant nodded slowly. His eyes were filled with excitement.

He had been in that world for 16 years. He knew that in a world of swords and magic, everything was not what it seemed to be on the surface.

Mysterious mages.

Ferocious alien races.

None were the same as that on Earth from his previous life.

Due to the system providing troops that only used cold weapons, from Kant's perspective, he was bound to meet unusual powers that would be difficult to resist.

That problem was now solved.

The prize drawings had given him sacred items with special attributes. They were on par with those unusual powers.

It was just as Kant knew the place to be.

The Dukedom of Leo worshipped Edmund the God of War, who bestowed his worshippers with divine spells related to war. However, divine spells like Intimidation were only accessible to top-class priests of the Warrior Faith.

At the moment, Kant was able to easily get his hands on items that equaled high-level divine spells in terms of power.

I sure look forward to the future.

He lowered his head and snickered.

Jackalans? So what?

I could get rid of them using zero-level peasants working with a small group of first- and second-level low-class troop classes.

With Kant coming into possession of Intimidation, which worked like a sacred item, he saw no need to fear threats from the primitive race.

2

The power he had come to possess was even more powerful.

Kant held onto the banner and headed into the Oasis Lookout.

The smell of food in the air immediately hit his nose. It was lunchtime in Drondheim.

The refugees, who were done showering and neatly dressed in new clothes, gathered to enjoy a simple lunch. All of them had smiles on their faces. They had all become subjects of Kant's fief. They planned to live a good life there as Swadian Peasants.

The builders also stopped working. They gathered around the watchtower, which was more than half-finished, and ate with their heads hung low.

All of them enjoyed protection.

Swadian Recruits and Swadian Militia took turns eating and standing guard on both ends of the street and the roofs.

At the top of the dunes, on both the northern and eastern sides, militia members were carrying hunting crossbows. They served as guards, vigilantly eyeing the desert before them and guarding their home against possible Jackalan forces.

Many people appeared in the Desert Bandit Lair.

Suddenly, 16 fierce-looking Desert Bandits emerged. All of them were well-armed and looked like manifestations of the term “ferocious.”

They were all true ruffians.

“This is my village, Drondheim.”

1

Kant smiled.

Many stood and bowed to him respectfully.

It was a gesture of respect paid to their lord.

Kant nodded to all of them one after another. He did not look arrogant. He simply remained quiet and composed.

A militia member offered to hold the banner for him.

Kant arranged for the Intimidation banner to be erected at the door of the Council Hall. With its ability to extend 500 yards, it was just about enough to cover the entire Oasis Lookout. The banner itself was able to be moved at a moment’s notice as well.

The smell of food had grown increasingly thick.

Food that had been prepared specifically for Kant was brought to him.

Kant took a deep breath. He looked very contented.

“Let’s eat.”

Chapter 28: A New Week

The early morning sun rose on the eastern side of the desert.

The temperature gradually rose. Despite not having been freed of the chill of dawn just yet, the morning sun still brought warmth to the place.

...

It was a new day.

At the same time, it was also a new week for everyone at the Oasis Lookout.

Sunlight shone on the wooden window of the Council Hall. Several birds of unknown names chirped and flapped their wings. They were seemingly happy at the arrival of dawn as well.

Everything looked peaceful.

“It’s morning, eh?” Kant woke up.

He rubbed his face a little, gradually clearing his head of the dazed state of being half-asleep.

He lifted the woolen blanket. He grabbed the clothes at the top of his bed and put them on. He was no longer able to continue sleeping.

The system had given him a prompt.

[Ding... As the morning sun rises, a new week begins.]

[Income: Your Drondheim (village) collected 50 Denars in taxes.]

[Expenditure: You have paid 360 Denars to your forces as salary.]

All the sleepiness he had was immediately dispelled.

This really is a heavy blow. Kant was dumbfounded.

The System closed the account once a week. Kant did not have villages or regular forces before, so he had no taxes to collect or payments of any kind to settle.

As such, he had forgotten all about it.

He looked at the expenditure column. He frowned at the high amount of 360 Denars.

This isn't just paying a lot...

It's paying a hell of a lot!

Kant looked troubled and gritted his teeth. "This is terrible."

Then again, there was nothing he could have done about it.

According to the size of his current forces, the weekly expenditure was important and hefty. It was so much so that it far exceeded the amount he had spent building the village's buildings.

Swadian Recruit, one Denar per week.

Swadian Militia, four Denars per week.

Desert Bandit, 12 Denars per week.

1

Those were the weekly individual payouts.

With the number of troops thrown in, it had grown to be:

30 Denars for 30 Swadian Recruits

140 Denars for 35 Swadian Militias

192 Denars for 16 Desert Bandits

The total was 360 Denars.

6

The expenditure incurred by the weekly maintenance of his forces gave Kant quite a headache.

The numbers looked almost terrifying.

“System.” Kant sighed. “Display the remaining amount.”

[Capital: 20 Denars]

2

The system plainly listed the requested data.

Kant was unable to do anything but allow a bitter smirk to form. “I knew it.”

A week ago, Kant, who just arrived at the Oasis Lookout, had acquired 1000 Denars as a reward.

Seven days had quickly passed.

Now, 20 Denars were left in his account.

That bit of money left in the game in his previous life would have meant bankruptcy. Worse still, Kant was in a real world. Without Denars, the currency recognized by the system, getting around in the world was nearly impossible.

1

He was not able to maintain his forces, let alone develop the village.

At present, he sorely lacked the 360 Denars required to pay his forces for the upcoming week.

There was an option to disband his forces.

However, that meant digging his own grave.

The threat of the Jackalans loomed over him like the Sword of Damocles hanging over one’s head. If he disbanded his forces, the next time the ferocious primitive race hit, the Oasis Lookout would likely end up razed altogether.

2

The end of the line, eh.

Kant shook his head. He felt a surge of exhaustion overwhelm him.

He walked out of his room and went downstairs. He headed outside the Council Hall.

Many peasants were working by the side of the pond. They were digging up sand and mud.

“Good morning, My Lord.

“Good morning, Our Revered Lord.”

“My Lord, good morning.”

When they saw him, all of them greeted Kant.

Kant nodded and said, “Morning.”

He turned around and looked at the side of the Council Hall. The 26-foot-tall watchtower was finished.

The tower was completed the day before. The builders from Suno had all left the Oasis Lookout through the system.

1

There was little to nitpick about their construction skills.

The base was constructed from stone. The main body was constructed with wooden materials nailed together. The roof looked like that of a small house. All aspects of the structure looked as sturdy and reliable as they could have been. It looked finer than the usual workmanship of watchtowers found in common villages.

There was one Swadian Militia currently standing guard above. Holding his hunting crossbow, he was on high alert.

Four Swadian Recruits, who were armed with spears, stood at the base of the watchtower. They served as messengers. They relayed any news received from the tower to every corner of the oasis.

The 26-foot-tall watchtower had a great view.

Even if the Jackalans gathered and attacked again, the Swadian Militia was prepared. As long as there was ample light in their surroundings, their good view from the watchtower allowed them to detect anything before an attack.

It provided them enough time to get their defenses ready and give the Jackalans a run for their money.

“My Lord, good morning.”

The Desert Bandits had returned. They were still on their horses.

1

They currently served as scouts. They patrolled around the Oasis Lookout. They had found nothing unusual during their patrol.

That was good news.

However, the leading Desert Bandit frowned and looked at Kant before saying, “Please forgive the forthcoming tone, My Lord, but I seem to find you looking rather displeased.”

It was more than just being displeased. Everyone throughout the oasis noted Kant’s upset face.

It was all due to problems with capital.

Kant nodded slightly and did not bother denying. “Yeah, I’m not quite in the mood.”

The Desert Bandits were unable to do anything to solve that.

It was such that in that world. Solutions for certain problems were few and far between.

At the very least, Kant still had no idea of how to use the world’s currencies to exchange for the Denars required by the system.

1

Currencies like Great Silver and Gold did not elicit any reaction from the system. Kant experimented back in the Dukedom of Leo. He had asked the system if the exchange was possible.

The system had given him a short, concise answer. "It is not possible."

The acquisition of Denars was only possibly by finishing quests from the system.

Oh well. Kant sighed. It's like I have System Quests to do every day.

It seemed as if the system realized what Kant was thinking.

A dialog box immediately appeared on his retina.

[Ding... Main Quest Assigned]

[Main Quest: Value of Denar]

1

[Reward: grocery store x 1]

1

[Introduction: Denar is the only currency, but it is not something that cannot be exchanged. Find an area and deposit all of your current Denars. You will acquire the only building that can solve your current predicament.]

Huh? Kant read the message on the retina and frowned.

This is a main quest...

It looks rather simple.

No. It isn't just simple. It looks almost free!

A grocery store?

Kant gulped. He was reminded of the game from his previous life. There were four types of shops in the markets of cities and towns.

A grocery store was one of them.

He turned his eyes toward the Council Hall.

To the east, there was the watchtower and Desert Bandit Lair, but there was nothing to the west.

“System, build the place there.”

Kant had made a quick decision.

Data streams instantly surged. On the western side of the Council Hall, where he had just had his eyes on, a typical Swadian building of stone and wood appeared within mere seconds.

3

Chapter 29: Trade Caravan from Reyvadin

A new building instantly appeared.

It stood right on the western side of the Council Hall, which was more than 2,142 square feet, and was level with the five Swadian houses.

...

It was like two parallel lines.

Kant had planned this layout of the buildings and streets.

When Kant took a good look at the grocery store, he found the place to look rather rough compared to the other meticulously built buildings.

The base was constructed from stone while its main body was formed with wood tied with ropes. The window also served as an open counter. It was built with thick wooden planks that supported the window on both sides from the ground up. It also provided shade from the sun.

However, there was nothing on the counter.

The entire grocery store was empty. Merchants notwithstanding, there was not even a single piece of merchandise found within it.

A prompt came from the system.

[Ding... Your new building was finished thanks to your hard work.]

1

[Main Quest: Value of Denar completed]

[Reward: Grocery Store x 1]

[Introduction: You now own a grocery store capable of exchanging items for Denar. Of course, you are required to possess items of “value” to the system before you can exchange them for Denar.]

Kant frowned.

He looked around the empty store and saw the introduction on the dialog box.

His gaze lingered on the word that was being emphasized.

Kant repeated the line, “Items of ‘value,’ eh?”

1

The line looked simple.

It looked so simple that it felt impossible to comprehend.

However, Kant remained puzzled as to what the items of value meant.

Great Silver?

Precious jewelry?

He had tried trading with the system using such items back at the castle in the Dukedom of Leo but to no avail.

“System, I don’t understand.”

Kant frowned.

He needed to ask about anything that puzzled him. As such, he contacted the system in his mind and asked, "What do you mean by 'value' in this case?"

The system was quiet for a bit.

A reply came seconds later. "Items with mystical powers."

"Items with mystical powers?" Kant frowned even harder.

1

The term sounded rather complex.

"Indeed."

The system swiftly provided an example. "Peculiar items with effects like those of Intimidation could be used to exchange for Denar."

It was Kant's turn to stay silent.

He turned around and looked at the Intimidation banner erected at the door of the Council Hall.

Even though there was no wind around, it slightly billowed.

A golden lion baring its fangs and claws was sewn on the red background, giving it a shock factor.

It was as if the lion were about to eat someone alive.

"Peculiar items, eh."

Kant muttered.

He now had an idea of what kinds of things the system considered as being of value.

He lowered his head for a moment and slowly asked, "Do you mean magical items?"

"Indeed." The reply from the system was short and concise.

Kant's face displayed a bitter smirk. "I knew it."

In this world, one of swords and magic, there were the likes of the Jackalans, Dwarves, Elves, Beastmen, and other races. There were also professions, such as mages, priests, and the likes, which possessed items of mystical powers.

Examples of which included magical items.

Then again, due to those items being of mystical powers, they were also especially precious.

Kant read a lot about them in the books from the scholars, but the only piece that he had truly seen with his own eyes was in the room of his cheapskate father, the Duke of Cameron.

It was a set of armor.

The armor was comprised of two layers of fine mail armor that were covered by a layer of scales on the outside.

The palace mages of the Dukedom of Leo infused the set of armor with mysterious magical powers. It enabled its defense to be reinforced while its weight was reduced. The magical spells infused also prevented it from rusting, making the set of armor one of the most precious pieces of treasure owned by the line of dukes of the dukedom.

It was so precious that Kant, the youngest son of the duke, was deemed unqualified to touch it.

That alone spoke volumes of the extreme rarity of such magical items.

Buying something like that, from what Kant remembered, was as difficult as reaching heaven.

“Hell, what’s even the point then?”

He continued wearing that bitter smirk and grumbled at the system.

Such items served as anchors and heirlooms of clans. At the very least, Kant had never seen any noble clans selling such items before.

Even if those nobles fell into decline, the ones who sold such items had been limited to a very small handful in history. Those magical items still served to lift

the fallen clans up again one day. If they were sold, those clan would have been done for through and through.

Furthermore, even if there were to be people selling such items...

Kant had no money to buy them.

“System, would you be able to provide some more substantial advice?”

He continued to smirk as he shook his head.

“Yes.”

The system actually answered, which was something unexpected.

Kant was stunned. He asked, “What would that be?”

The system did not answer.

Instead, a quest was given.

[Ding... Special Quest assigned]

[Special Quest: Explore the Mysterious]

[Reward: 5,000 Denars]

[Introduction: The Jackalan Tribe deep in the desert seems to have hidden some sort of mystical power. Maybe you should take a look and seek the source of said power.]

From what he was able to tell from the introduction, the quest seemed simple.

It was a scouting quest.

However, Kant quickly frowned soon after. “Explore the mysterious?”

He was proficient in deductive reasoning.

8

As such, he was easily able to discover the hidden meaning of the quest.

It was not possible that it was anything else.

It was definitely a scouting quest.

1

Based on what he was told in the introduction, if he was unable to find out what the source of that mysterious power was, there was no way for him to finish the quest.

It was a special quest.

1

The last time he had this type of quest, he was told to look into the military organizations of that world.

1

The reward had been the light crossbow currently on his back.

Things will be difficult this time though. He slowly sighed.

It was not just difficult.

It was extremely difficult.

1

After all, he was tasked to look into the Jackalan Tribe deep in the desert.

That tribe was huge. From what he was able to find out so far, it had a population of over 2,500.

Look into that place?

That is like saying I have a death wish!

If those Jackalans all rushed out from their tribe, they were capable of engulfing the entire Oasis Lookout. If he told his forces, which were fewer than 80 strong, to fight an enemy force of 2,500, it was like having them dig their own graves.

Sheer numbers alone were more than enough to overwhelm the difference in quality.

Besides, the quality of Kant's forces had yet to reach the ability to fight 10 at a time and still come out on top.

"The special quest does not have a set completion date."

1

The system replied, "It also will not clash with other quests. You're free to think about how to deal with it."

Kant nodded. "That's more like it."

If it were something that clashed with other quests, he would have had to finish it first. It would have been something beyond Kant's current abilities. At this juncture, he still had no way of acquiring more Denar.

Even with the path assigned, it was still something beyond him to accomplish.

His near-empty remaining capital meant that he would not have had enough funds to pay his forces the following week.

He also had run out of developmental funds at the same time.

[Ding... A trade caravan from Reyvadin is here.]

A prompt was heard from the system.

Kant slightly frowned.

"A trade caravan from Reyvadin?" He felt rather confused.

At the northern dune, not far away, a Swadian Militia member quickly came waving at them, shouting, "Unknown figures incoming! Unknown figures incoming!"

Are they here?

Kant frowned and thought about that so-called trade caravan.

However, he still told the Desert Bandits, who were standing by at his side, "Go and check them out!"

"Understood."

The 16 Desert Bandits nodded and got onto their horses. They rode straight for the northern dune.

It was the Nahrin Desert, after all, so letting one's guard down was a bad idea.

However, all Desert Bandits returned with three carriages. Several riders and walking servants followed at a leisurely pace. These foreign people seemed to be having a good time chatting among themselves.

It was obvious that they were not the enemy.

They gradually arrived at his place.

The Swadian Militia members, who were in charge of defense on the rooftops of Drondheim, eyed them vigilantly with their hunting crossbows lifted.

"My Lord, they're here."

The Desert Bandits rode their horses to where Kant was and respectfully reported, "They are a trade caravan from Reyvadin."

"Right." Kant nodded.

He eyed the three carriages. There was one leader and six escorts, as well as 12 mercenary troops. All of them were members of the trade caravan. He calmed considerably, even though these people wore their weapons out in the open.

He knew that they were a trade caravan from the game.

The leader of the trade caravan was eloquent.

Seeing how all the Desert Bandits paid respects to Kant, he knew right away that the man before him was the lord.

He quickly shot a look at the six escorts, who were riding on their horses. All of them got off their horses and bowed respectfully, saying, "Revered Lord of

Swadia, we are a trade caravan from Reyvadin. We hereby offer our sincerest respect to you.”

Chapter 30: Dates Traded for Wheat

The trade caravan members behaved rather respectfully toward Kant. Not the slightest hint of rudeness was seen in them.

In their subconscious, Kant was like a greater noble from the Continent of Caradia, even if he was a Swadian. That status demanded respect even from Swadian nobles, so it went without saying with nobles like those of the trade caravan.

...

“Yeah.” Kant only nodded. His expression remained unchanged.

His noble status had been assigned by the system.

He turned his gaze behind the caravan. Their goods were all neatly packaged on the three carriages. One was easily able to tell that they were packed with items to sell.

It’s a pity.

Kant sighed deep down.

He had no funds to make any purchases.

“My Lord, these are all specialties brought all the way from Reyvadin.”

The trade caravan leader smiled and explained, “Our trade caravan sells very affordable wool. We also offer tools, raw iron, and linen cloth, as well as food, such as dried meat, smoked fish, and wheat.”

He paused and said, “Of course, we buy specialties as well.”

“You buy specialties?”

Kant frowned and asked, “How?”

That piqued his interest.

Before this caravan arrived, he had no idea that he was able to sell goods to trade caravans.

“Yes, we do purchase certain items.”

The trade caravan leader took a look at the side of the Council Hall. He eyed the grocery store and said with an interesting expression, “I see that you have an empty store, My Lord. If you do not mind, I’m thinking of having my team move the goods over there. We would like to stay here for a week.”

“Alright.” Kant nodded. “You have one week to do whatever you need to do.”

He swiftly agreed to it.

He had no funds at the moment, so he was unable to buy anything.

“Many thanks, My Lord.”

The leader was grateful. He immediately bowed to express his gratitude.

The mercenary troops behind him led their carriages over to the grocery store, leaving deep tracks in the sand. It was obvious that all three carriages were fully packed.

Kant knew that fact deep down.

Trade caravans throughout the Continent of Caradia followed certain trade routes.

Purchases were made in cities along the route at low prices and then sold at high prices, or said goods were accumulated to be ferried back to their cities of origin.

That was the basic conduct of commerce.

There’s nothing I can sell from this place of mine though.

Kant bitterly chuckled to himself.

While his place was named Drondheim, it paled in comparison to the real Drondheim on the Continent of Caradia.

His tiny village was not even self-sufficient. Even if he had help from the system, developing commerce at this stage was an absurd notion.

However, he still let the trade caravan do as they pleased.

After all, it was a good thing to have more people around the Oasis Lookout.

Kant shrugged and said in a self-depreciative manner, "At least I now feel less like an outcast in the world."

1

Afterward, he quickly recomposed himself.

He walked toward Council Hall. He had some plans regarding that special mission.

He soon arrived outside the Council Hall's door and went inside.

The Swadian Militia member, who stood guard at the door of the Council Hall with his heavy spear in hand, came over to Kant just as he sat down. The militia member respectfully said, "My Lord, the trade caravan leader wishes to see you."

The Council Hall was not a place that just anyone could enter

"Let him in."

Kant nodded. It was obvious that he saw the leader waiting right outside the door.

The leader of the trade caravan looked like he was in his 40s. There were some silver hairs by the side of his head, but he still looked rather sprightly. There was no doubt that someone capable of leading a caravan from a city alone was anything but ordinary.

In truth, such positions were usually taken by top-class retired soldiers.

While the leader was equipped only with a sword and wore scale armor, his proficiency with his weapon and skill on the back of a horse was on par with that of a Swadian Knight.

However, he behaved unusually meek before Kant.

He bowed and hung his head low. "My Lord, forgive the intrusion."

"It's alright. I'm not busy right now."

Kant looked at the leader and asked, "Is there anything you need to discuss?"

The leader respectfully replied, "My Lord, I see that your village seems to have Date Palm Trees planted. If you have ample stock, we would like to purchase some of the dates."

"You want to buy dates?" Kant was dumbfounded.

The leader nodded affirmatively and continued, "Indeed, My Lord. Dates are a specialty of the Sarrand Sultanate, and they are delicious. They sell quite well in other countries."

"Of course, sure." Kant nodded right away.

He had collected over a dozen baskets of the dates the previous week. While they had eaten some since then, there were enough to fill 10 baskets.

Kant frowned and asked in return, "Denars?"

The currency of the trade was, of course, Denars.

It was the only currency recognized by the system.

"Of course."

The leader nodded and looked rather curious. He asked, "My Lord, would you like to trade those dates for some of our goods? We could barter as well. Of course, the prices of the goods trade would still need to be equal."

Kant was slightly puzzled.

However, he quickly returned to his senses and said, "No, there is no need for that. Denars will do fine."

"As you wish." The leader felt rather puzzled himself.

The leader had no idea that Kant wanted Denars so bad that he was almost unable to think of anything else. He was so desperate that he actually thought

of charging into the tribe filled with ferocious primitive creatures and fighting his way through those beasts.

He was unable to do anything without Denars.

“I need someone around.”

Kant said to the militia member guarding the door, “Take our friend here to our stores and let them have a look at our freshly dried dates.”

The militia member nodded. “Understood.”

The leader excused himself and headed to the storage room at the side of the Council Hall with the militia member. More than a dozen baskets of dates were stacked there. All of them had just finished being dried under the sun.

The dates people usually talked about were the dried end products.

Freshly plucked dates had little shelf life to speak of. Sun-dried dates were more well-suited to be stored and carried around in a desert climate.

Furthermore, dried dates tasted even sweeter.

The leader soon emerged. He was chewing on a date that he carried in his hand. His face had a mesmerized expression. He said, “My Lord, these dates are good.”

“They are high-grade stuff.” Kant nodded and smiled.

He knew that very well.

These dates were produced by the system, so they were definitely fine products.

“Very good indeed.”

That leader gulped down the rest of the date. He looked at Kant and respectfully said, “If you are willing, I would like to offer 50 Denars per basket for the dates.”

“50 Denars?” Kant frowned.

That meant 10 baskets of dates only equaled 500 Denars.

Those baskets contained most of the fruits plucked from 20 Date Palm Trees, and they totaled thousands of pounds.

The leader shrugged slightly and wore an exasperated expression. "My Lord, while the dates do taste good, they are not necessary items. It is actually due to many eating these things in the desert that they are able to fetch a slightly high price."

He paused for a bit and continued, "If the dates were to be of bad quality, we wouldn't be offering 50 Denars per basket in the first place."

1

"Will do. We'll sell them according to the price you offered."

Kant wore a calm expression. He looked as if nothing was wrong.

He was actually feeling very bitter deep down. He thought that merchants were indeed sly people.

If he had any other choice, he would not have wanted to sell those dates.

They served as food reserves for his people.

"You have made a wise decision," the leader said, sucking up to Kant.

Kant wore a faint smile and replied, "Maybe I did."

A Denar shortage was his biggest headache at the moment. He had no choice but to sell those dates to maintain his forces. Compared to bread, dates were not that filling despite being very nutritious.

Kant suddenly seemed to have realized something. He asked the leader, "Do you have wheat among your goods?"

"Yes, we do."

The leader said, "It is 50 Denars for one bag of wheat. You could choose to plant them or grind them down to flour."

"I want a bag." Kant nodded and said, "I'm thinking of planting them."

"In that case, I shall find you the best bag among the bunch."

The leader smiled and said, “If you plant them in an oasis, you need to make that the wheat gets enough water. Otherwise, the scorching weather will burn the wheat seedlings.”

“Thank you for the reminder,” Kant replied with a smile.

The Swadian Peasants already knew that.

All the mud they dredged up from the pond was to serve as fertilizer for the wheat.

It was an act of killing two birds with one stone.