

## Oasis 47

### Chapter 47: Current Data

Several days passed.

As dawn approached, a new week began.

The first piece of news that the system delivered was regarding his forces' salaries.

In an instant, 1,384 Denars disappeared.

Kant now only had 2,452 Denars left in his account. He recalled having a staggering sum of nearly 6,000 Denars just a few days ago. Now, more than half of that sum was already gone. He immediately felt exasperated at just how costly it was to maintain a fighting force.

The Oasis Lookout currently had only 300 troops to feed, yet about 1,500 Denars had to be spent every week just to keep all of them fed.

1

His main expenditure was undoubtedly the upkeep of his soldiers.

The amount of food consumed every week required more than 100 Denars.

He was in the Council Hall.

Kant was quite troubled by all the petty matters he had to take care of.

The dialog box on his retina was put away. He unconsciously rubbed his eyebrow.

For now, the threat of the Jackalans was gone.

Without enemies to fight, he needed to put the development of the Oasis Lookout back at the top of his priority list.

Dronnheim was still at the earliest stage of its development. Many of the buildings available had yet been built. Most of his peasants and troops were still sleeping in crude tents and sandpits at night.

"Open the datasheet."

Kant willed and connected with the system in his mind.

The system instantly appeared on his retina. It brought up the latest datasheet.

...

[Dronnheim]

[Lord: Kant]

[Balance: 2,452 Denars]

[General: Firentis]

[Type: Swadian Village]

[Current Population: 200]

[Buildings: Council Hall, House (5), Watchtower, Desert Bandit Lair, Grocery Store]

[Available for Construction: House, Wall, Mill, Well]

[Resources: Date Palm Jungle (2 acres), Wheatfield (7.5 acres)]

[Fighting Force Summary: Infantry, 95, Cavalry, 17]

[Current Forces: Swadian Militias (70), Swadian Footmen (25), Desert Bandit Elites (17)]

[Recruitable: Swadian Recruits (Council Hall), Desert Bandits (Desert Bandit Lair)]

[Comment: Drondheim looks to be in good shape. Cool, refreshing spring water flows in the rugged irrigation channels, nourishing the barren, dry land. High-spirited peasants work in the jungle and fields, looking very lively. The village still seems crude due to a shortage of buildings. It is worth noting that there are no women in the village.]

3

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That summed up the data regarding the current state of Drondheim.

Kant felt rather heavy. His village looked rather dilapidated.

The place was really just too crude.

Due to the threat from the Jackalans over a week ago, Kant had been putting all of his efforts into building his fighting force. It could have been said that he had completely neglected to develop his fief altogether, which in turn caused the delayed development of Drondheim.

However, there was nothing he had been able to do about it.

The threat from the Jackalans had been too great to be ignored.

If it had not been for Sir Hobson and Scholar Hank from the Dukedom of Leo offering their assistance, Kant probably would not have been able to defend his fief.

There was no way he could have defended his place against a threat posed by 2,000 strong Jackalans.

It's a good thing that everything turned out fine.

Kant sighed in exasperation and began putting his thoughts into developing his fief.

The evaluation of Drondheim by the system was correct. There was a severe shortage of buildings. At the very least, he needed to ensure that everyone was able to stay in houses instead of tents and sandpits.

1

He made his decision and connected to the system. "Construct houses."

[Ding... System Prompt]

[The construction of houses requires 100 Denars and seven days to complete.]

[Would you like to construct?]

A dialog box from the system appeared, asking the usual questions regarding construction.

"Construct." Kant made his choice without hesitation.

The crisp clanging sound of metal coins was heard as he confirmed his choice. It sounded rather pleasant. However, 100 Denars immediately disappeared from his account. That was the price paid for constructing the houses.

[100 Denars spent]

[House: Under construction]

2

[Completion: Seven days]

The system's dialog box refreshed as he finished making his choice.

A team of builders, which consisted of 10 workhorses and five carriages, was seen on a dune not far away.

More than 30 stout builders followed along the side of the convoy, helping to move the carriages in the soft sand. Since the carriages were filled with wooden and stone materials, it was easy to tell that the team was transporting materials needed for construction.

A fat guy was in the lead. While the man looked simple and honest, the unmistakable cunningness of a merchant was seen in his eyes.

Before long, they arrived at the Oasis Lookout.

The 10 Swadian Militia members holding heavy spears diligently inspected their cargo.

The builders seemed to have been used to all of that.

After all, rules were aplenty in the fiefs of nobles.

"Foreman, Lord Kant wishes to speak with you in the Council Hall."

A Swadian Footman quickly approached the caravan and glanced at the team of builders. He set his gaze on the foreman and said in a crass manner, "Come with me."

"Sure, sure."

The foreman did not look offended. He followed the soldier with a flattering grin on his face.

Surviving in the messed-up Continent of Caradia and being able to earn great profits required sacrifices. For instance, dignity and face were often overlooked as those were deemed near worthless in most cases.

The foreman quickly went into the Council Hall. He was rather familiar with the place.

Kant was sitting in the Council Hall, reading the parchment in his hand.

There was a packed list written on the parchment. It listed everything the Reyvadinian trade caravan had in its possession. He was thinking of making some last-minute purchases before the trade caravan left.

“Good morning, revered Lord Kant.”

The foreman bowed respectfully. He sounded rather pleased as he said, “Your humble servant hereby greets you.”

“Oh, it’s you again.” Kant put down the parchment on his hand and nodded to the foreman.

However, he still picked on the errors in the sentence blurted by the foreman, correcting the man in a plain tone. “Take note. I’m just your employer, and you’re not a servant of mine.”

“In my mind, you are of far greater nobility than King Harlaus.”

The foreman did not seem to care about what was said and took his buttering effort up a notch. “You are the light of dawn in all of Caradia.”

“Hehe.” Kant chuckled.

Kant never paid any heed to such obvious, typical bootlicking words.

Furthermore, Kant knew that the foreman was rather sly. While the man was no doubt able to finish his job in a timely manner, he was the type who would steal pieces of bread for supper during meal times, even if he were to be unable to finish them.

The foreman was no doubt a very tight-fisted hoarder of sorts.

Kant went on to warn the foreman in a rather stern expression, “Be just as serious with the construction of the houses.”

“Please rest assured. I and my team of builders live on our reputation.”

The foreman hung his head, seemingly aware that he had been overdoing his bootlicking act.

Kant nodded, feeling satisfied with the foreman’s attitude.

Kant traded a few words with the foreman, telling the foreman just how keen he was about the progress and workmanship of the buildings, before waving to dismiss him. It was crucial to develop his fief, so the foreman needed to know his priorities.

Besides, Kant still had other matters to look into.

He turned around and glanced at the Swadian Footman standing guard behind the door. He said, "Get me the leader of the trade caravan."

"Understood."

The Swadian Footman nodded and walked out of the Council Hall.

The foreman arrived shortly after.

"What do you need of me, Lord Kant?" His attitude remained respectful.

"Right."

Kant took out the parchment and pointed to the list of supplies on it. "I'm thinking of buying all of these before you leave."

The Reyvadinian trade caravan was only staying there for seven days.

This was the day they planned to leave. They had packed everything, which included more than 100 Jackalan prisoners with their hands tied behind their backs. They had been starved until they were able to barely stand. They looked miserable as they were tied behind the carriages.

"Two cans of oil and 10 sets of tools."

The leader took a look at the marked goods and muttered as he repeated the list, "Five rolls of linen cloth."

"Any problems with that?" Kant asked.

That was the goods he was thinking of purchasing. They were needed for further development of his place.

Kant, however, felt exasperated with the prices.

The prices of items were steep all over the Continent of Caradia, which was about 30 percent higher than that found back on Earth.

Considering that those were things only provided to him by the System, Kant had no choice but to bear with it. Besides, benefits would eventually come from the price he had to pay. As long as he grew strong and formidable enough, he could easily use the Jackalans to pay his bills.

Slave trade was indeed tempting.

#### **Chapter 48: A New Main Quest**

"No problem, Lord Kant."

The leader put down the parchment. He hesitantly said, "Oil, tools, and linen cloth. We have all of that in the caravan, but I'm afraid the price would be rather steep."

"How much would they cost?" Kant asked in a rather nonchalant tone.

“Two cans of oil is 1,000 Denars. The 10 sets of tools are 2,000 Denars, and the five rolls of linen cloth cost 1,000 Denars.”

The leader completed the calculations and looked at Kant. Continuing in the same hesitant tone, he said, “It would cost a 4,000 Denars, but I could give you a discount. You would only need to pay 3,800 Denars for all of these goods.”

“3,800 Denars?”

Kant rubbed his chin, thinking about how steep that price was.

However, he smiled and asked, “In that case, would it be possible for me to barter using the dates?”

“Of course, that would be no problem.”

The leader of the trade caravan was slightly startled. After doing the calculations, he nodded and said, “However, we would only take high-grade dates like those from before. We would only want 76 baskets.”

One Date Palm Tree produced two baskets of dates.

Kant currently had 120 Date Palm Trees in his fief, which meant that 240 baskets of dates could have been produced.

If each basket was worth 50 Denars each, the total amount of dates would have been worth 12,000 Denars. That was why Kant was confident enough to buy that many things in one go.

If the Reyvadinian trade caravan had ample Denars to spare, Kant would have even immediately asked for cash.

It was a pity that the trade caravan only had 3,000 Denars to spare.

As such, he had no choice but to resort to barter.

“Well, 76 baskets of dates will be no problem at all.”

Kant smiled as he nodded, agreeing to it right away. The 200 peasants had been busy the past two days harvesting all of the dates hanging from the 100 Date Palm Trees.

The 200 baskets of dates were dried under the sun on linen cloths, turning the fresh dates into dried dates.

There was no way they could have finished eating them all.

It was of the utmost importance to barter what they had in abundance for the items they lacked most in the Oasis Lookout.

The trade was sealed. The supplies Kant had asked for were carted off of the carriages.

The 76 baskets of dried dates were stacked next to the door of the grocery store. The amount was so staggering that they almost clogged the street. The baskets of dates were soon carted off to the carriages by the mercenaries, who were currently doubling as coolies.

One basket of dates after another was put onto the carriages.

Three carriages were filled with the 76 baskets of dates. This was something would have never been possible outside of the system.

When he saw how the way things were packed on the carriages hardly changed, Kant had thoughts running through his head. The system definitely had some sort of space-folding techniques. In reality, the 76 baskets of dates should have filled at least five carriages.

1

“Farewell.”

The leader of the trade caravan remained respectful as he talked to Kant before leaving. “Thank you, Lord Kant, for your generous hospitality throughout the week. If things go well, we will meet again next month. I shall bring you more of what you would need by then.”

“See you next month.” Kant nodded.

Both parties bode each other farewell. The Reyvadinian trade caravan embarked on its journey. The three carriages slowly moved toward the dunes.

1

The members of the trade caravan remained the same. It included one leader, six escorts, and 12 sentries.

They climbed over the dune and quickly disappeared like a mirage. They were returning to the Continent of Caradia through the system’s mystical powers, heading straight for Reyvadin, a city of Vaegir.

1

Kant was naturally used to it by now.

It was how the system had always worked.

“All of you, come here.”

Kant turned around and called the 10 Swadian Militia members to his side.

He pointed at the supplies on the street and ordered, “Put all of those back into the storage room of the Council Hall. Be careful not to break anything fragile.”

“Understood.” The 10 Swadian Militia members nodded.

They efficiently worked together to move the supplies left behind by the trade caravan.

The fragile items Kant had mentioned was the oil. Those two cans of oil were luxury items worth 500 Denars each. The oil was made of high-grade animal fat. Not only was the oil edible, but it was also used for maintaining weapons and making flames.

Since the oil was considered tactical supplies, commoners were not allowed to consume it. Oil was something that every lord needed a supply of in their storehouses.

Kant had many uses for the oil.

Since my father still hasn't completely cast me away, I might as well try getting in touch with the Dukedom of Leo.

He frowned slightly, making his calculations.

While the main part of his plan to strengthen his grip on the Nahrin Desert and secretly develop the place, it was impossible to just stay in the barren desert and sever the connection with the dukedom.

At the very least, there was the salt mine he planned to take in the future. He needed a way to sell the salt produced.

2

The only route he had within his grasp was the Dukedom of Leo.

Furthermore, in the process of making white salt, charcoal played a crucial role, both as fuel and a filter. Wood was only found in the Senwaya Range, which separated the dukedom from the desert. Kant had no way of securing such supplies elsewhere.

The tools he had bought were actually 10 high-grade woodcutting axes made of iron.

Kant had his own plans for those axes.

He planned on sending Swadian Peasants to a secluded spot in the range. They would build a logging camp there.

By then, he hoped to have the Elite Desert Bandits collect the crude raw salts at the alkali soil.

While the cost for sending two different teams to two different locations was quite high, if the operations proved sustainable and the finest of white salt was produced, the trade sealed with the dukedom basically created a beneficial cycle. The returns had the potential to be unimaginably high.

Gallop, gallop, gallop...

The rushed galloping noises of horses were heard.

Kant looked up at the northeastern dune. More than a dozen riders were seen approaching.

Kant's expression remained unchanged.

It was not the enemy. Those were the 17 Elite Desert Bandits led by Firentis, who were returning after making their patrols.

The patrols were made three times a day—once in the morning, once in the afternoon, and once at night.

While the Oasis Lookout had a watchtower, the view was still somewhat limited.

As such, he had the light cavalry units ride out and scout the deeper parts of the desert to see if there had been any unusual footprints found in the sand. They were to deal with any anomalies as soon as possible.



“Halt.”

Firentis led the cavalry units back and slowed his horse down.

He saw Kant inspecting the place at one end of the street. He immediately got off his horse and respectfully bowed before saying, “Good morning, Lord Kant.”

“Good morning, Firentis.”

Kant nodded and took a glance at the 17 stout Elite Desert Bandits and asked, “Did you find anything out of the ordinary?”

“Nothing at all. Everything is safe.”

Firentis grinned and added in a relieved tone, “That is the best.”

“Of course.” Kant nodded at the same time.

They were at the developmental stage of things. If the Jackalans continued to harass them, it would have caused Kant quite a headache.

As the victor of the previous battle, Kant still had the initiative for the time being.

Time was one of the spoils of victory.

If Kant sped up Dronnheim’s development within a short time, becoming strong enough to resist that Jackalan Tribe, everything was bound to take a turn for the better.

Kant whole-heartedly believed that.

He knew he would have the final victory.

Besides, I still have three volleys of arrows left unused.

Kant exhaled and felt more confident than usual.

Three volleys of arrows from 500 Vaegir Marksmen were no joke. They had the ability to create a rain of arrows that enveloped quite a large area.

They were the strongest archers available. The arrows they used were also the best barreled arrows. If such a rain of arrows fell onto the Jackalans, which wore no armor and held no shields, it would have resulted in huge losses on their side.

If Kant put all three volleys to good use, the effects would have been comparable to that from a charge of 50 highly skilled retainer knights.

1

“Firentis.”

Kant felt rather anxious at that thought.

“Please speak, Lord Kant,” Firentis immediately replied.

Kant, however, stayed silent for several seconds. He looked at Firentis and asked, "In your opinion, what are the odds of us winning if we were to take on the Jackalan Tribe with the number of troops we have at the moment?"

"Umm..." Firentis was quite surprised by the question.

It was obvious that he had no ideas to offer regarding those wild, unrealistic thoughts Kant had.

To put it precisely, Firentis had a good grasp of the size of Kant's current forces. There were less than 100 dedicated combatants. Even with the peasants added as auxiliary troops, they only had a force consisting of nearly 300 units. It was utterly ridiculous to think that such a force was able to attack a large tribe that had more than 2,000 Jackalans in it.

However, a system prompt suddenly appeared on Kant's retina.

[Ding... Main Quest Assigned]

[Main Quest: The first powerful enemy]

[Quest Reward: 10,000 Denars, 1,000 Reputation, 10 Honor]

[Introduction: The first powerful enemy encountered in one's life will forever remain unforgettable. The enemy symbolizes power and invincibility, just like how giants left a lasting impression in one's heart when one was young. It is but the first obstacle one faces in life. While the impression is a lasting one, it actually symbolizes the fear before one becomes powerful.]