

The Caravan

Preparation time: 90 minutes,

Negotiation time: 60 minutes.

Let us take you back in time – to the ancient Egypt, where the Pharaohs ruled, and to Greece, where the democracy was shaping. Along with the development of the societies of that time the trade was gaining on importance.

The life of a merchant was giving an opportunity to build a stable fortune, however this profession was also carrying incredible risks alongside. Organizing the journey and managing to reach often a very faraway destination alone were huge challenges. Rough seas, deserts, mountains – all of these were almost insurmountable obstacles. On the other hand, every journey had to be properly secured. The trade routes were watched closely by numerous bandits. Only after overcoming all these obstacles the merchant was facing the problem which remains feasible up to this day – how to sell the product to the customer...

Getting into the atmosphere of those times let's focus on the Scorpion's Realm – it is a small, solitary country located nearby the rich land of Babylon. The only beaten tracks that lead from the Realm to Babylon are crossing a desert, high mountains and the Land of Red Sands – a politically unstable country, often tarnished by civil wars. The citizens of the Scorpion's Realm are producing and selling goods to the Babylon for a living, which forces them to cross these hostile paths frequently.

A lot of caravans have recently disappeared without a trace. Rumour has it that the bandits became much more active in the area. Allegedly someone from Scorpion's Realm is providing them detailed information about the route and the number of guards accompanying the caravans, which makes them an easy target, however this is still just a rumour without a confirmation, but the fact is that this situation is posing a threat to the whole trade.

An increasing frustration of the three leading merchants in the Realm – **Salazar The Rich, Ino The Great** and **Abdul The Brave** led to an agreement to organize a single trade expedition. Joining forces seems like a good way to ensure its success. On the other hand, a large caravan like this will be a tasty morsel for bandits prowling the area, so planning the journey carefully is crucial, and because of that the merchants have decided to meet in order to set all the details.

You have the following issues to discuss:

- Types of goods
- Size of caravan
- Types and quantity of draught animals
- Route
- Protection

1. Types of goods

The most popular goods exported from Scorpion's Realm to Babylon are:

- Spices
- Cloth
- Jewellery

One carriage of spices is worth **1100 Gold Pieces**, one carriage of cloth – **1600 GP** and one carriage of jewellery is **3000 GP**.

The decision about what goods are to be transported is significant in terms of caravan's protection. Spices are not that attractive to bandits, so only basic protection would be required. However, if you decide to transport cloth you will need 25% better protection than the basic one. Choosing jewellery will result in the need to secure the transport 3 times better than in the case of spices, and also you will have to pay for a permit to transport precious goods, which costs 500GP for a single carriage.

Only one type of goods can be transported in one carriage - there is no possibility, for example, to place both spices and cloth in a single carriage.

An analysis of increased protection – an example: if you decide to transport 4 carriages of spices, and you need 4 warriors per one carriage, then the total amount of warriors is 16. In the case of cloth, you need 5 warriors for one carriage, the total is 20, and with jewellery it's 12 warriors per one carriage, which amounts to 48. If due to rounding up the numbers it comes out that you need e.g. 36,3 warriors, you will have to hire 37.

2. Size of caravan

As you could have noticed in the previous section we were considering carriages, not the whole caravan. Every carriage can transport goods of one type, because of which it is possible to send a caravan consisting of two carriages of spices and one carriage of jewellery. Every carriage must be pulled by a specific number of animals (see section 3). Finally, every carriage must have a suitable protection – despite the fact, that protection is being judged taking the whole caravan into consideration, you have to fulfil all the requirements (resulting from, e.g. types of goods, which was described in the previous section) regarding every single carriage.

Now you're probably thinking – if the cost per carriage is fixed and probably lower than the income from the sold goods, then we should send a caravan that is as big as possible. Well, that's not the case due to diseconomies of scale – there are additional costs after exceeding the number of 4 carriages. Because of this for the fifth and every other carriage, the total costs will be increased according to the following formula:

Basic costs * 0,1 * (the number of carriages – 4)

*E.g. if the cost of 6 six carriages, resulting from the costs of protection and the kind of transported goods, is 6000, then the additional cost will amount to $6000 * 0,1 * (6-4) = 1200$. The total cost will be 7200.*

3. Types and quantity of draught animals

The most popular animal used in transport in Scorpion's Realm is an ox.
The cost of one ox is 3 GP per day.

In the case of choosing desert (see section 4) as your route you would have to pick camels as your draught animals – **the cost of one camel is 5 GP per day.** And this is your only option on the desert, as oxes cannot move in such a difficult terrain.

The optimal choice is to have 4 animals pulling one carriage. There are no carriages that can be pulled by more than 4 animals, however there is a possibility to save some money by using fewer of them, but it comes at a price – doing so will result in prolonging the journey. Having only 2 animals pulling a single carriage would make the journey twice as long, and having fewer than two animals would make it impossible to reach your destination.

Note that in the case of choosing mountains as your route there is no possibility to limit the number of animals because of numerous elevations which require maximum pulling power.

4. Route

As it was mentioned in the introduction to the scenario there are 3 ways to get to the land of Babylon.

The most predictable and dependable one is the route that goes through the desert. The threat posed by bandits is the lowest of all three options, which means that you don't need lots of protection. Having 2 warriors protecting a single carriage would be enough, however there is a downside to this route. First of all, you have to have camels as your draught animals and they cost more than oxes. The second flaw is the time needed for this journey. This toilsome and arduous route leads through dunes and desert storms, and weaving your way from one oasis to another makes the journey last for 40 days.

The second option is making your way across the mountains. This route is the shortest of all three – it takes only 20 days to reach your destination. On the other hand the caravan's journey through narrow and winding mountain paths is a perfect opportunity for the bandits along the way. Because of this, to ensure your caravan is safe, you would have to hire at least 8 warriors for a single carriage, and also you can't limit the number of draught animals.

The last route available is the journey through the Land of Red Sands. It used to be very dangerous for the caravans passing through, as they were frequently attacked by bandits. Due to this fact the journey often lasted about 30 days, however, as experienced merchants you assume that it is possible to make it 10 days shorter, provided that you are sure of the state of matters in the region. Supposedly the political situation in the Red Sands has recently stabilised and some King Saul is at rule now. You don't know much about this persona, so in the case of choosing this route you would have to answer the following questions – what are going to be King Saul's expectations towards you? What protection should you have? All of you have but scraps of information, but if you share it honestly your caravan will be able to reach the destination faster and successfully.

5. Protection

Last but not least – protection is the most important factor. It's not only a cost – ensuring a suitable level of security will keep the bandits away from the caravan. If your caravan gets robbed all the other arrangements will become unimportant, and you will lose your chance of winning the Round.

As it was mentioned in the previous section, so as to be certain of a safe journey it is required to hire:

- **2 warriors per carriage** in the case of choosing the route through desert
- **8 warriors per carriage** in the case of choosing the route through mountains

Unfortunately it is not yet known what protection would be needed if you decide to go through the Land of Red Sands. Don't forget about requirements mentioned in the first section (increased number of guards required while transporting expensive goods).

As it was mentioned previously, rounding up the numbers is valid, and the final result is calculated basing on the total amount of guards for the whole caravan, for example, if your calculation shows that you need more than 35 warriors (e.g. 35,2) then you would have to hire 36.

The cost of hiring one warrior is 5 GP per day.

Your common objectives are:

- I. Ensuring suitable protection, that will allow the caravan to reach its final destination without getting into the hands of bandits. This is crucial – if you don't achieve this objective, then all of the other criteria, both group and individual ones will not be relevant.
- II. Earning as much gold as possible:
 - i. The income results from the sales of certain goods (section 1)
 - ii. The costs are related to journey's organization (protection, draught animals etc.)

Achieving your common objectives makes up 70% of your final points. You earn 30% of points from your individual goals described in the next part of the scenario.

Finally one last issue. It's very unlikely, but you cannot be sure of anything. Could it be possible that there is a traitor among the Three Great Merchants? No... probably not... or maybe? Be careful! A ground-breaking information doesn't have to be true!

SIDE A: Salazar The Rich

In the Scorpion's Realm you are known as a person, that got the most out of trade, hence your nickname. Unfortunately, after a few recent attacks on your caravans it has nothing to do with the reality. Due to those losses your financial status is just pitiful right now. Because of this your main goal is to minimize the costs of this whole expedition. You have to do your best and negotiate the terms that would bring the highest profit to all of you, but also would require the least amount of investment.

The second issue is the type of transported goods. Given that you specialise in the trade of spices, try to negotiate transporting as many carriages of spices as you can.

You obtain points for the total share of carriages with spices in the whole caravan, regardless of whether the spices are in 3 out of 4 carriages, or in 6 out of 8, the amount of points will be the same.

But what if you can't make an agreement? What is your alternative? Well... you surely would be better off breaking off negotiations, than if the caravan fell into the hands of bandits. However this scenario would be much worse than any case of the caravan making it safely to Babylon.

One final thing. It is not a goal, but a valuable piece of information. The last caravan you have lost was crossing the Land of Red Sands. At that time you secured it with 4 warriors per one carriage. Your informants assured you that it would be enough, but somehow bandits managed to break your rants. That's why if you decide to choose this path you could inform your partners, that you would need at least 5 warriors per one carriage.

Good luck!

SIDE B: Ino The Great

What can we say – you are the traitor! You used to be an honest merchant as any other, but collaborating with bandits turned out to be much more lucrative. In return for information about the routes taken by caravans and their protection you have your fair share in bandits' profits.

Because of this the common objective no. 1, which is ensuring adequate protection for the caravan does not apply to you. It's the contrary! Your goal is to set the caravan off with smaller protection than needed. Of course it won't be easy – your opponents know the requirements. Then where can you look for opportunities?

- I. In the Land of Red Sands – many of your bandits are there. If Ino and Salazar don't know exactly how much protection you would need choosing this path, then you have the upper hand, as this information was not mentioned in the introduction. 5 warriors per one carriage are required in order to protect the caravan from your bandits.
- II. In the case of choosing mountains as your route, you could suggest using a shortcut, saying it would make the journey 5 days shorter. In fact, this would lead to the caravan getting into the hands of bandits no matter the protection.

Your second goal is to make sure that the caravan transports the most valuable goods – jewellery. Try to negotiate the highest number of carriages with jewellery as you can.

You obtain points for the total share of carriages with jewellery in the whole caravan, regardless of whether the jewellery is in 3 out of 4 carriages, or in 6 out of 8, the amount of points will be same.

If the bandits won't take the caravan over (meaning that you don't achieve your first goal), then the second common objective – earning as much gold as possible – is still valid.

But what if you can't make an agreement? What is your alternative? Well... you won't profit neither from your arrangement with bandits nor from trade if the caravan does not set off after all. Breaking off the arrangement doesn't suit your needs. Any deal would be better than no deal.

Good Luck!

SIDE C: Abdul The Brave

Your caravans are known for having the best protection in the whole Scorpion's Realm. Because of this you were not afraid to set them off on the most dangerous of paths. Unfortunately you listened to an advice from some other merchants, and your last transport used a shortcut through the mountains. An excellent unit of warriors accompanied it, and you were very surprised to hear that your caravan was lost. That's why your goal is to avenge the fallen. You want to choose the route through mountains once again so that this time your warriors got rid of those bandits once and for all. This time however you should stick to the usual path, as you don't know what the hell could possibly be hidden in the caves along the shortcut.

You obtain points if the caravan will go through mountains. It doesn't matter whether it's a shortcut or not in terms of punctation. But remember – no information in the scenario is given randomly.

Your alternative is the route through the Land of Red Sands, as it is only 10 days longer than the mountain path. It just happens that a local guide is working for you, and he could show you the way through the Land of Red Sands that would take as long as crossing the mountains. However you wouldn't like other merchants to get to know about it, as this man is your advantage over them. That's why your second goal is to do not take the guide with you. The question is – won't the route as short as crossing the mountains but less expensive because of the protection required turn out to be the best for all of you? Is it better to achieve common objectives or individual goals? You will have to decide about that yourself...

But what if you can't make an agreement? What is your alternative? Well... you surely would be better off breaking off negotiations than if the caravan fell into the hands of bandits. However this scenario would be much worse than any case of the caravan making it safely to Babylon.

Good luck!

PROTOCOL

I. Route (pick one)

- a) Desert
- b) Land of Red Sands
- c) Mountains

In the case of choosing option c) Mountains pick one of the following:

- a) Shortcut
- b) Usual path

II. The number of carriages in your caravan (fill in the gaps with adequate numbers):

carriages with spices

carriages with cloth

carriages with jewellery

III. Protection (Fill in the gap below with the total number of warriors that will escort the caravan):

IV. Draught animals (Fill in the gap below with the total number of animals included in the caravan):

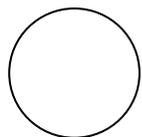
V. Additional info, statements:

Signatures:

Salazar The Rich (A)

Ino The Great (B)

Abdul The Brave (C)



NUMBER OF THE TABLE