

## Chapter 2907 Paintaker's Challenges

The environment and geographical location within the mountains were similar to Basha's Sacred Mount, except that the seemingly ordinary residents on the Sacred Mount were all hidden warriors. In contrast, the villagers within the villages in the mountains, despite the area being countless times larger than Basha's Sacred Mount, were indeed ordinary people.

After the first group of merchants entered the mountains, they began distributing Night Vines for free under the pretext of support.

Initially, after taking the Night Vines, the person's vitality and spirit indeed became more vigorous. Whether it was in bed or in the fields, it was as if they had consumed a powerful tonic and were full of energy. Coupled with the fact that it was given away for free, people with a greedy nature started to consume more and more of it.

They soon discovered that after a period of not taking the substance, their bodies felt extremely uncomfortable, as if thousands of ants were gnawing at them. Their bodies instinctively urged them to continue taking the Night Vines.

At this time, the group of merchants suddenly changed their attitude and started charging for it. The price went from one hundred per pill at the beginning to three hundred and then five hundred. Many people noticed this abnormality, and of course, some villagers attempted to resist. However, faced with the menacing threats of firearms from the other side, they could only helplessly give up.

At this point, they were trapped in a quandary. Once they entered, it became difficult to get out.

After exhausting all their wealth, the unscrupulous businessmen began to deceive them. They offered them commissions for introducing new customers. The villagers, who had already fallen deep into the quagmire, had lost all rationality. They used every means possible to introduce others into the trap, further exacerbating the spread of the Night Vine.

In less than a month, the threat of the Night Vine spread like locusts through the mountains, causing countless families to break apart and leading to the loss of lives.

Even those who couldn't recruit new customers had no choice but to sell their blood and belongings. It was to the point where they ended up emaciated and dead.

As Paintaker described the tragic scenes he had witnessed, his mood became increasingly somber.

Upon hearing this news, Matthew's anger grew even stronger, especially when he learned that some deranged villagers, infatuated with the Night Vine, had led their wives and children into this abyss.

"How many people have been harmed? Do you know?" he asked, his tone icy cold.

Paintaker, with a heavy expression, replied with folded hands, "Preliminary estimates suggest several hundred thousand!"

Hearing this shocking number, Matthew clenched his fists tightly, a surge of killing intent welling up within him. "Do you know where the source is?" he asked.

Shaking his head helplessly, Paintaker replied, "I don't know much either. After learning about this, I could only try my best to research an elixir that could cure the addiction. Unfortunately, my medical skills are insufficient, and there has been no progress so far."

Taking a deep breath, Matthew forcefully suppressed the anger in his heart.

"Paintaker, you don't need to blame yourself. Once the addiction is developed, it is extremely difficult to cure. Alright, don't dwell on it too much. Go and rest. I will handle this matter."

This thing was highly contagious, and even Matthew would need to put in some effort to find a solution.

But before that, he needed to thoroughly investigate the situation in the mountains. If he didn't cut off the source, the idea of curing it was simply absurd.

Early the next morning, Matthew summoned Fitz.

The crown prince was still injured. Even with the elixir that Matthew provided for internal and external use, it would take some time for a complete recovery. This matter could only be entrusted to the clever-minded Fitz.

"For now, set aside the matters of the Martial League and the Commercial Union."

After briefly explaining the Night Vine situation to Fitz, Matthew assigned the task.

"Dispatch an investigative squad to look into the situation in the mountains! ASAP."