

Chapter 8: This is no time to be standing around....

"This is no time to be standing around..."

Hiroshi Matsuyama said this to himself while standing in an elevator.

In one corner of Tokyo's bay area, there is a large CC Corp skyscraper. A building so tall that it dared to touch the heavens, like Babel's Tower. To reach its innermost recesses, long elevator rides were a necessary evil.

Just lean against the wall and adjust your breathing.

Before long it'll stop again.

In a matter of moments, the elevator stops and a chime signals the door's opening, revealing a battlefield. People's sleeping bodies lay behind partitions like corpses. Hiroshi was careful not to step on anyone as he made his way further in. A series of gunshots could be heard. It was before working hours, but someone was firing away. Probably an all-nighter.

They called it the Chicago Typewriter, the sound of someone typing away so intensely that it was like a machine gun. The keyboards were their firearms.

Gatagatagatagatagata.

Chakachakachakachakachaka.

Boom!

Work technically started at 9am. However, if no one was around to manage it, then even The World would fall from its throne as the world's most successful online game.

The machine guns were interrupted for a team meeting. A missing graphics correction had been detected within the team.

"I don't know if we'll be able to fix it in time."

"Then re-schedule immediately. Find someone who's got free time and relocate them."

In the neighbouring sound team's room Wavemaster explosion spells were being tested and could be heard through the wall.

Pew! Bambambam! Boom!

Pew! Bambambam! Boom!

"Also, there's some discrepancies between the voice work and the lip sync."

"Have the scenario writer fix the dialogue to better fit it."

"He's currently MIA. The seat's empty. Can't find him anywhere."

"Then stop talking and find him!"

The sub-leader who had just finished conducting job interviews had returned.

"How'd it go?"

"Bad. The guy's no good. We really need a good planner, but they seemed to lack confidence or motivation. It was like they just needed an excuse to join CC Corp to aim for another position."

Gagagagagagaga. Bang!

Pew! Pewpewpew! Boom!

"We got the QA results from above about the One Sin event. We might need to make some changes to the third phase."

"What?! That's impossible!"

"They tell us this now?! Are they insane?!"

"Calm down. We need to be extra careful about The One Sin's development," he said just as carefully.

"It's a major seller. I get it."

"But there's just not enough people to do it right. We would need two boss monsters' development's worth of manpower just to design this single one."

"Get some help from the background artists."

"If we do that the dungeon graphics will be late."

"I'll do the dungeon myself."

The meeting room was always noisy like this. Hiroshi used to be a background artist himself, and had gotten a lot more busy since becoming section leader. All sorts of problems presented themselves daily, and he was constantly coming up with new compromises and calculations to make sure they were dealt with properly.

The meeting was over and he returned to his seat to find a request that he proofread the overview of the new event for The World R:2. It was to be submitted to a gaming news website as a teaser.

Until about a year ago, Hiroshi had been the lead graphic artist for The World R:2 until being put on board as the project leader for The World R:X. To manage all the work, he had been subordinating his R:2 graphics work to various other members.

He checked the article down to each letter, and then sent it back to the organizer.

Purururu, rang the office phone on his desk.

The bug list had just come in. He gave his thanks, and then cut the line.

Time to check the animations of new Arts. Wait, the sound team is calling--he needed to check the explosion effects which had just been finished. He looked down the hall again. Corpses were still lying along the floor, but their faces had changed.

He checked everything and then sat down at his desk. The phone rang again.

Purururu.

Click.

"What?"

"I've found the scenario writer. He was hiding in the basement level bathroom."

"Bring him to the torture chamber. Don't let him escape again."

"Understood."

Click.

The "torture chamber," as he called it, was the small room they used for editing videos. Because it was soundproofed, he would often use it to yell at other team members without his voice being heard. Also, because sound from outside couldn't get in, those in the company who were dangerously close to deadlines would close themselves in to work without distractions.

God, he was busy. It wasn't even noon yet. The three hours from 9am to lunch were always like this. Afternoons were like this too, though. Today was nothing special--this was the everyday life of CC Corp.

Ever since becoming the project leader of R:X, his life had become so noisy. The World R:X was more akin to an upgrade to R:2 than a completely new game. Because of this, they should've been able to reuse a bunch of assets to save time, but... are you kidding?! The World was so complex that there were no easy shortcuts in its development to save time.

Anyway, lunch time.

His beloved wife's homemade bento was calling him, and he was already late--the lunch break started half an hour ago, leaving about only another 30 minutes to relax. As he ate his bento, he stared at the photograph on his desk.

It was a commemorative screenshot of all the friends he had made on his adventures in The World.

Hiroshi had created various characters in The World: Piros, Piros Act 2, and Piros the 3rd. He had used these characters to check how his graphics looked in-game. Since taking on his new position it had been difficult to see those friends again, but at least he had this photograph to look at.

I'll keep on creating and maintaining that world, he thought. For his friends. For he of fair eyes. This was the sad predicament of being a creator--unable to partake purely in your own creations.

Purururu. Click.

"Representatives from our partner company have arrived. I've directed them to the meeting room."

"Got it."

Click.



He looked at the clock: 12:50pm. He shoved the remainder of the bento into his mouth and washed it down with tea. The break was over, and it was time to return to the battlefield. Always the entertainer! Wahahaha! In times like these, a real man must come up with a tough and cool line to spit out like a badass:

"Even at the end of the journey, the stars above us will guide our way!"

.hack//G.U. RAGTIME

THE END

Translated by: Falions (<https://falions.net>)

**People. The world itself. All connected by some
ineffable, invisible force. Hearts and minds intertwine.
And another new world comes into being.**

OTHER FANTRANSLATIONS:

[.hack//Link](#)

[.hack//Bullet](#)

[.hack//Sora: Beyond the World](#)

[.hack//Archive 05 THE SECRET FILE](#)

[The Duplicate Phenomenon](#)

.hack//Versus -- COMING SOON!