Payday in Tempest

The Opening festival had come to an end and the prosperous days continued. As part of it, Rigurdo was busy throughout the day. Although he was occupied with lots of work, these were all fulfilling and joyful days.

And all of this was thanks to Rigurdo’s master.

The glorious reward from his master—Demon Lord Rimuru.

Thinking back a few years’ time, Rigurdo was the elder of the original goblin tribe. They didn’t have names, and were also confronted with the disappearance of the Jura Forest’s guardian.

The age of unrest commenced.

We were just so lucky back then.

Rigurdo couldn’t forget it, deeply grateful in his heart. Had his Goblin underlings, under the dire circumstances accidentally done something to Rimuru-sama… If that had been the case, Rigurdo and his tribe would not be here today.

Having said that, Rimuru at the time already gave off immeasurable magicules, which dispelled any thoughts they had of attempting an attack on him. Rigurdo and his men weren’t planning on doing anything, and now knowing the outcome of it all, that was what saved them.

After all, with Rimuru-sama’s menacing display, we were able to clear out the direwolf threat. That smooth and shining fluid body that shouts aesthetic. Upon laying eyes on him in action, it’s simply stupid to even think about defying him. I bet whoever he may have encountered would also have expressed loyalty to him.

Rigurdo nodded to himself as he recalled the past. There exist such surprising outcomes in life. Rigurdo had made a wise choice. However, most people in this world wouldn’t have made the right choice. If Rimuru had shown up in a different place, it might just have ended up in tragedy. For instance, what if he encountered human adventurers instead? Those who are incapable of seeing the nature of monsters would probably make the judgement entirely based on the appearance of things. You could expect the encounter to turn violent within a matter of seconds. In other words, Rimuru’s first encounter with Rigurdo was, in a sense, a blessing to both parties.

Afterwards, Rimuru accepted Rigurdo’s request and became their leader—leading not only the goblins, but the ogres, orcs, lizardmen and forest spirits too. Eventually settling down within the forest and becoming the demon lord to command all races.

Rigurdo, who’d been reminiscing about the past in the midst of a busy day, was called back to reality.

“Oh-oh, there you are. Rigurdo-dono, I’ve been looking for you for some time now.”

“Myourmiles-dono? Is there a problem?”

“Well, it’s not exactly a problem—”

Myourmiles stopped for a moment.

He, a human, had been entrusted by Rimuru with the duty of managing the Finance Department of Tempest State. He had become an irreplaceable member of the country, who also worked very diligently like Rigurdo.

He responded to Myourmiles with a smile. Thanks to Myourmiles, Rigurdo was able to resolve his own concerns. He was burdened by self-doubts regarding what he and the rest of Rimuru-sama’s subordinates meant to him—a demon lord with immense power. Rigurdo sighed at his lack of strength, while being subjected to such a powerful existence.

Among Rimuru’s subordinates, there were many majin who were known for their combat abilities. For instance, the members of Kurenai. 11 These were strong individuals, far more powerful than Rigurdo, who didn’t put shame on the name of Rimuru-sama’s subordinates.

Apart from them, there were the orcs led by Geld. They were not only pivotal for their specialized role in the city’s development, but also tasked with defending and guarding it.

And then, we had Diablo. That Demon was extremely unusual. There was no doubt that he bears immeasurable strength. It gave Rigurdo a cold shiver simply imagining having to fight him as a foe. His loyalty towards Rimuru was unquestionable, yet in reality, there were many who feared Diablo. He was on good terms with Ranga, and also agreed to Rigurdo’s request with a smile… But even with that, anyone would subconsciously be scared in the face of an obviously higher existence compared to oneself.

And so it bore the seed of Rigurdo’s concern.

Given that at the moment, there were many powerful majins who had joined under Rimuru’s reign, he worried about what he could contribute as one of them. Despite such a thought, Rigurdo’s strength was easily above Rank A. It’s not that he was weak, it was simply the others outclassing him to an unreasonable degree. Or in other words, Rigurdo was still a rather strong member within Tempest State. But Rigurdo did not realize that and earnestly worked hard everyday in order to competently fulfill the role of Goblin King entrusted to him by Rimuru.

Myourmiles’s presence was like a saving grace to Rigurdo’s feelings of insecurity. The man who had no concern for strength and even crossed the racial boundary between human and monster. Myourmiles, the head of the Finance Department—Minister of Finance.

So that’s the way it’s been all along, then there’s nothing to be worried about. Rimuru-sama has no prerequisite for our strength, moreover, our master is a majestic demon lord! This just can’t do it, I am still too close-minded and caused myself such worries. These are just unnecessary concerns. It is simply an instinct for monsters to judge one another based on strength.

Rigurdo made a wry laugh as he came to that conclusion, quickly abandoning his worries and refocusing on the town’s operations. Rigurdo was grateful towards Myourmiles in his heart for that very reason.

His lack of ability compared to Myourmiles still passed through his head occasionally, though he has long since treated him more like a friend. That was what gave Rigurdo’s tone a sense of intimacy when talking to Myourmiles.

“Well, what seems to be the issue?”

“Ay, I feel as though myself alone won’t think up an answer. Rimuru-sama’s thrusted another hard task down my throat again.”

Myourmiles put on an indignant attitude while “complaining”, albeit unable to conceal his joy. Rigurdo smiled upon hearing this. It was precisely the hard tasks he complained about that were proof of the trust Rimuru had in him. Rimuru would never hand an impossible task to his subordinates, this thus symbolized the expectations Rimuru had placed upon Myourmiles.

“Right now I’m also busy learning about how the separation of powers works. What comes first now is legislation. Rimuru-sama has ordered me to draft our nation’s constitution.”

“Another over-the-top idea, he’s always the same…”

Even though Rimuru acted as the king of the country, he seemed to have no intention of running it. Since if he had participated in politics, all of his free time would’ve been gone. Yet the authority lay not among the citizens, but with the leader, Rimuru.

Tempest State—or Jura Tempest Federation—was based on an alliance between multiple races. People of different personalities and ideologies all gathering under Rimuru’s protection is what made Tempest State a united nation. Bottom line being, if Rimuru was not around, there would be no nation to begin with.

Rigurdo had nothing to say against Rimuru holding the authority. As such, with hidden thoughts in his heart, he was handed complete political authority.

“Based on the current condition, we need to assemble key administration departments and establish a legislation department consisting of a thousand men alongside a judicial department to enforce the laws.” — That was his order.

Needless to say, it was an order given after diplomatic discussions with the western states. But thankfully, Rimuru didn’t just let go of all of his responsibilities, he still gave his opinions on the drafts…

This was a nasty can of worms he had tossed to Rigurdo, who undaunted was still happy to follow through with it.

“Hahaha, that’s precisely my intent. So Myourmiles-dono, what type of thing are we talking here?”

Rigurdo, such a nice guy. Even when he was having a hard time himself, he still wouldn’t turn down his friend. Myourmiles was able to see through Rigurdo’s personality within the short time he had spent with him, which is why his following request was tinged with remorse.

“Ya… I’m truly sorry for interrupting your busy schedule. I wanted to resolve it myself, but I do want to hear your opinion about this certain thing before making any decision. Also, this may require the consensus from every department.”

“Oh? What do you mean?”

“Hmm, as a matter of fact…”

Trying his best not to interrupt the busy Rigurdo—

Myourmiles thought to himself but regarding Rimuru’s order this time, it was very hard to make the decision himself. The subject at hand—“Construction of a salary system”.

“Sa-lary?”

“Yes. To quote Rimuru-sama, ‘I want to express gratitude towards everyone working in our country’.”

“I see. We are already satisfied with basic fulfillments in food, clothes and residence. On top of that, Rimuru-sama has granted us meaningful work. We’ll probably get struck by lightning if we ask for anything more. However, it would seem that humans have a different view on the subject.”

Rimuru, who Rigurdo respected and loved, was said to once have been human. For that reason, he granted them all rewards, due to his values that differed from those of monsters. Rigurdo nodded in agreement thinking so. Myourmiles agreed to that as well and added:

“I personally also understand Rimuru-sama’s intent. People tend to work extra hard upon receiving rewards for their work.”

“Hmm, I was thinking to shut the greedy ones up with my pair of fists… But I can’t really get in the way of Rimuru-sama’s idea. Then, how much would the appropriate salary be as a reward… hmm, this sure is a difficult question.”

“Honestly, we are rather sparing in finance right now. We can try to give out weekly funds as salary, but in the end, I’m skeptical about how much of the funds everyone could spend in the first place…”

Upon hearing Myourmiles’s words, Rigurdo finally realized how profound the issue really was. Handing out a salary was a trivial task, yet to the monsters who had always practiced “might makes right”, the concept of monetary value was something wholly unfamiliar. Whenever they desired something, they could simply take it with brute force. That had been their way of life. Another factor was that monsters aren’t as careful with and good at managing their money, as opposed to scheming merchants. At most a handful of them could even count their cash to begin with. At the time it was thanks to Rimuru’s instructions that the population of people educated in those fields had increased.

Yet for the time being, most monsters were still incapable of reading and writing. Distributing a salary to them would have been an ineffectual endeavour.

“If they are unable to utilize their salary, there would be no point in rewarding them.”

“That’s precisely the issue. Besides, if they simply save up their money without ever spending it, effectively taking it out of circulation, that may lead to stagnation in the economy. I would want to avoid that from happening.”

Regardless of the good intentions they had when setting up the system, it would have no value if it only hindered the progress of the nation — That Myourmiles had such concerns proved his worth as a prescient businessman.

Rigurdo was able to understand Myourmiles’s views, even on this complex subject. In fact, most people would likely save the salary out of appreciation. The wiser ones would consider what to do with the money. Realistically, most monsters were already satisfied with their current situation and wouldn’t know what else to buy. Besides, to them something given by Rimuru was already treasured beyond any sum of money. It would likely be more important to change their conceptions of things before we deliver the first paycheck.

Rigurdo was deep in thought.

“Hmm, this sure is a difficult question…” Rigurdo whispered to himself. It was also no easy job to consider the amount of payment for respective work loads, but before that, the educational issue must be resolved first.

Rigurdo considered himself a fast-thinker, yet faced with Myourmiles’s questions, his brain was running at full capacity. It would also be preposterous to go discuss the matter with Rimuru.

This is really jarring—

Rigurdo and Myourmiles looked at each other awkwardly and fell silent.

“Kufufufufu, this sounds like an interesting topic.”

Diablo showed up out of nowhere, gave both a bright smile and inserted himself into their discussion.

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That smile had immediately made Rigurdo suspicious.

Unlike Benimaru, who was straightforward with his thoughts and would spit out whatever he thought, Diablo was very different. He was always planning something and cunningly twisted situations in his favor. This was especially the case when it concerned his own interests. If Diablo showed that level of interest, he was definitely scheming something.

This look, he must have some devious idea on his mind! Diablo’s got a good head. I won’t give him a chance to trick me, I must stay focused!

Rigurdo steeled his resolve and turned to face Diablo.

“Well if it isn’t Diablo-dono? I thought you were away enjoying your holiday?”

“Indeed, I’ve been pursuing chess-pieces that are going to work in my place.”

“Oh. How did that go?” Myourmiles asked, and Diablo smoothly answered with a calm expression: “They, of course, accepted the offer in a heartbeat.”

This means I can focus entirely on being Rimuru-sama’s secretary now—his expression said it all.

Although the part of “in a heart-beat” was questionable, Diablo definitely found some subordinates.

“That’s great. Then, since you have overheard our conversation, Diablo-dono, what’s your opinion?”

Rigurdo delivered the line cautiously. He was determined to not be deceived. Handling Diablo wasn’t easy for him though, and the slightest misstep would land him in the palm of Diablo’s hand. Still, Diablo also showed much respect towards Rigurdo—solely because both of them served the same master, Rimuru.

If Rimuru ever disappears, Diablo would likely lose interest in this nation, right? But if it really comes down to that, the country would likely collapse on its own…

“Kufufufufu. This salary needs not to be in cash, does it?”

“Hmm?”

“Hmm. I’ve considered that point. However, even if we decide to pay in goods, it is time-consuming to learn everyone's preference. Issuing objects of no significance to the recipient would be meaningless. But it would also be unrealistic to hear everyone’s demands…”

Paying in goods removes the concern regarding them hoarding money, but this would be too costly. After all, every citizen already has a minimum welfare.

Myourmiles thusly dismissed the proposal as being unfeasible.

However, Diablo’s smile remained.

“No, no. You’ve got the wrong idea. Think about it, haven’t we already got a model? Right now, the canteen is using a point-system for ordering, right? What if we utilize the point-system again for this?”

He made his proposal, staring at the two.

“Speaking of points, do you mean the “effort point” that grants you access to the special menu?”

“If I recall, it is an accumulative point-system to represent the work one does. Actually… I see! It’s only a stamp issued by the department head, so it has nothing to do with money. Then there’s no need to consider the stashing of cash nor do we need to investigate their personal preference. Hmm, this might be a good plan!”

Before Rigurdo could understand, Myourmiles began to show interest in the proposal and excitedly threw out one idea after another. Diablo was happily smiling as he listened.

Oya, have I been too cautious around Diablo-dono? I thought he wasn’t interested in anything other than Rimuru-sama. It would seem he’s also willing to lend a helping hand to others. I really shouldn’t have judged others with prejudice.

Rigurdo reflected on himself—a really easily manipulated man.

And so Rigurdo was tossed aside while Myourmiles and Diablo entered deeper into discussion.

“But the question being, how can we effectively utilize the point-system?”

“Hmm. Let’s not limit the available rewards to the special food menu, shall we?”

“That’s most true. After all, there are monsters who are not particularly interested in food. Under Rimuru-sama’s influence, there are also quite a few who have developed a sweet tooth. We should also consider those who don’t require food at all.”

“That’s most likely a blind-spot. Just as Diablo-dono said, there are ones uninterested in food. If we are to effectively apply the point-system, we should also compensate these members. What an amazing plan!”

“No, no, it’s really nothing. Rather, what should we prepare for the point exchange? That would be an important question, right?”

“Indeed, then what should we do…”

Rigurdo gradually caught up listening to their conversation. He was also amazed at Diablo’s clever suggestion.

Bravo Diablo-dono. No wonder he has the wisdom to fill the role of Rimuru’s secretary. Aiya, it’s my own short-comings that led me to question his intent. I’ve got to improve on how I read others—Rigurdo expressed his admiration.

Then he began to weigh in on the discussion himself.

“Hmm, I believe some may be amused by Kurobee-dono’s weapons and Shuna-sama’s newly produced clothes.”

“Yeah, that’s for sure. If we are to sell the products to the public, how about we consider applying point based priority for purchases.”

“I see. In that sense, Gobta’s fishing rod may be a surprisingly popular item. After all, it’s hand-made by Rimuru-sama. Then let Dold-dono make some similar gadgets with his crew.”

“That sounds great, I’ve also fallen in love with the joy of fishing and wanted one.”

“Hahaha, then I should get you a test rod when the time comes.”

“No, no, we should sell that as well. Please leave the matter to me.”

“That’s more than I could wish for. In that way, there’s one more item on the list of specialties offered by our country.”

Hahaha, Whaha; Rigurdo and Myourmiles gleefully exchanged their ideas. The two seemed highly motivated now that they seemingly found a solution to the headaching question. Diablo’s smile didn’t leave his face while observing the two. And suddenly, out of nowhere—

“The right to serve Rimuru-sama for a day, how about it?”

Like a drop of poison, he nonchalantly slipped his opinion into their conversation.

“Ha?”

“Eh?”

Rigurdo couldn’t utter a word while Myourmiles was so shocked that he suspected he had misheard Diablo. Diablo on the other hand calmly carried on with an explanation as if nothing happened.

“No, it’s really not that big a deal. Similar to how Rimuru-sama wishes to appreciate us, we’d also like to be grateful to Rimuru-sama, wouldn’t we?”

“O-of course that’s the case…”

“I-I also feel deeply grateful for being trusted and employed by Rimuru-sama…”

“Isn’t that right? That’s why we should allow everyone to compete fairly for the opportunity to express their heartfelt gratitude. But that’s just my opinion.”

Indeed—Diablo exclaimed confidently. Myourmiles expression was frozen and Rigurdo couldn’t begin to agree.

“No, but shouldn’t Rimuru-sama consent to this as well?”

“Of course! That’s without saying and only natural. However, if someone is to occupy Rimuru-sama’s time, there should only be one person for a day per month to be given such an honor. In this way, the rarity of this reward will go up with fiercer competition. These high-point rewards will surely ignite everyone's motivation.”

Hmm, Rigurdo whispered to himself. There was merit to Diablo’s suggestion. However, there were still some unacceptable points.

“H-however…to have Rimuru-sama greet us would be most disrespectful. And would it really be a reward if we are to serve Rimuru-sama?”

Rigurdo expressed his doubts. Diablo, however, sighed in response.

“Rigurdo-dono, please think it over. To serve Rimuru—wouldn’t that imply spending a day with him where it’s just the two of you?”

“EH, HMMM?”

“In other words, you get to see operas together, serve drinks to Rimuru-sama while he reads, dine together, and spend the day together!”

“NA-NANI!?”

“We get to serve Rimuru-sama while simultaneously accepting Rimuru-sama’s gratitude. How about it, isn’t it a wonderful idea?”

The demon conveyed his explanation smoothly. Rigurdo reached a sudden realization—forced to being enlightened.

It was Rigurdo’s naivety that led to his failure.

Speaking of which, Myourmiles pondered:

I already get to grab a drink and meal with Rimuru-sama quite often… If this were to go public, I’d probably get envied. Hmm, so I’ll just stay silent for now!

A smart decision. A capable man is indeed different from others.

He didn’t let anything slip before Diablo.

Then, Myourmiles began to assemble a draft regarding that matter and later submitted it to Rimuru.

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Rimuru had been organizing documents in his room when Myourmiles handed him the files regarding the salary system. Diablo stood next to Rimuru and helped organize the papers. He had resumed his role of No.2 Secretary as usual after his “vacation” ended a few days ago.

“Wow, has it been completed, Myourmiles?”

“Yes, we were able to finalize our proposal after putting much thought into it. As it states, we will not pay in cash but rather extended the more ideal point-system. But these are just my opinions.”

Myourmiles reported as such. Rimuru nodded happily in response. From that bright expression, one can see the remorse Rimuru had felt over not properly compensating his subordinates for all their work. Rimuru looked through the document and frowned upon seeing the top reward.

“Hmm? Wh-what is this… the right to serve me…?”

Of course there would be doubts regarding it, Myourmiles thought to himself.

“About the option of ‘the right to serve Rimuru-sama’, it’s in accordance to Rimuru-sama’s faith in everyone in the nation. I came up with it, believing that everyone working in this country would be most grateful towards Rimuru-sama.”

Myourmiles had prepared his answers before the presentation. It wouldn’t really be an issue if that one reward was taken out, therefore he was calm without a hint of panic. Diablo watched the entire thing while a small smile crept across his face.

“As I recall, it was a request from Rigurdo-dono, right?”

“Heh, Rigurdo? That guy is way too serious. There’s really no need to worry about this.”

Rimuru forced a smile upon hearing Diablo’s words. It can be seen that Rimuru put much trust in Rigurdo. If he was told that it was Diablo who came up with the proposal, Rimuru would probably have been more careful and discussed about it. But, hearing that it was what Rigurdo thought, Rimuru was easily convinced without paying it a second thought. Yet that was precisely Diablo’s goal.

Kufufufufu, all according to my grand scheme 12 ! This privilege was the most vital from the start. It will probably get scrapped in no time, so I’ll show you all who’s number one when everyone else is just pretending to observe.

Diablo snickered while revelling in his plot. It was precisely because only Diablo would do something like this that Rigurdo was wary of him. It was something that would eventually happen even without the person noticing.

“Hmm, however, it’s probably not wise to use all the points they earned through hard work on me…”

Rimuru still had some objections, so Myourmiles responded:

“…Indeed, it’s exactly as you say. However, everyone who’s discussed about the proposal had nothing but praise to say about it. What’s more, if someone decides to exchange their points for it even though the price is high, it would show how much gratitude they feel towards Rimuru-sama. If someone makes that choice, it’s a completely voluntary action. So I think we should wait and see how everyone reacts to it first.”

“Hmm, is that so? It certainly seems like it with everything you just said. Well I suppose it’s fine, since they won’t be able to collect that many points again in a short time span. Let’s wait and see.”

“Then would you agree to the proposal?”

Rimuru gave up thinking and decided to approve the proposal. And so it gained Rimuru’s approval.

— Diablo struck a victory pose in secret, no one noticed.

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Then, two months later—

“Aiyi, Rigurdo. It’s nice of you to have proposed ‘the right to serve me’, but we should probably cancel it.”

Rimuru summoned Rigurdo to tell him this.

“Ha, Eh? What do you mean?”

Somehow the proponent turned from Diablo to himself. Rigurdo had many doubts, but he hid them for the time and asked Rimuru the reasons behind it.

“As a matter of fact, it’s Diablo who first obtained the right. And it’s him this month again. It would seem that he has been collecting points behind my back. If we carry on, I feel that every privilege will end up in his pocket,” Rimuru answered.

I’ve been PLAYED like a DAMN FIDDLE!? So it’s true, I should never have believed that demon!

Feeling like the sky was falling down, Rigurdo realized that he had been completely duped by Diablo. It would seem that Diablo had even considered the abolishment of the right in his plan. In other words, once the situation devolved into this, that right would be placed on a pedestal and regarded as a dream-privilege, further adding to its value.

The impossibility in obtaining “the right to serve Rimuru-sama”—and the only one who was allowed to exercise the right had been Diablo, and him alone.

His plan was executed flawlessly.

Wuuu, I’m still too naïve. It all started with that damn smile; I had already seen through his cunning nature yet still lost to his tricks.

Such regrets hardly mattered at that point. In the end, as Rigurdo anticipated, “the right to serve Rimuru-sama” became a fantasy. What remained were many monsters’ envy and complaints.

As well as Rigurdo’s regret.

However, this did not happen for nothing.

Another reward-based point-system was adopted regarding the salary problem in Tempest.

A more complete and detailed structure was built.

— That was the inside story of the salary issue during Tempest’s early independence, when the kingdom still lacked a complete national system.