

Ending Maker: Fate Wizardry

Chapter Intro:

*This fic's premise is inspired by the webtoon titled **Ending Maker**/엔딩메이커 by **Chwiryong** and their illustrator **chyan**. Please check them out.*

Story Starts

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Ch. 3.3 - Charming Moms and Defense Against the Dad Arts (3 out of 3)

After finishing all the dishes and cleaning everything, it took some time because I had to clean the oven's ceiling, which was stained by the soot from the previously burnt pork chops. I also took it upon myself to clean the fridge.

Fine, fine, yes, I can admit to myself that I was being cowardly and delaying my return, and I might just ruin Rin's constructed lie about our background. I almost ruined that when she explained everything to Andromeda and the others.

To delay my return even further, I planned on making dessert, but then I remembered that Hermione's parents were dentists and probably frowned upon sugary treats.

Instead, some apples and oranges were in the crisper, so I sliced up a bunch, spearing them with a toothpick as I laid them on a platter. I turned one of the gas hobs off, as the kettle whistled, signifying that the water was boiling.

I placed three bags into the ceramic teapot and poured boiling water over them. I then transferred the fruits, a small pot of sugar and sugar substitute, a

plate of lemon slices, four teacups and their respective saucers, an extra plate for the tea bags, and the teapot onto a tray.

'Hey, that's hell you're walking into.'

Shaking my head as that bastard's voice echoed inside my head. Well, to be truthful, I no longer hold much contempt for my alternate future self and have somewhat come around to understanding what he was doing.

After all, when both of us were fighting within his reality marble, they resonated with each other, the frequency of our souls triggering a bleed of thoughts and memories flowing both ways.

"Just because you're correct, doesn't mean you're right."

I was wincing as I remembered what, according to Rin, were my 'cringe quotes'. A moment that, unfortunately, Arturia had shared with Rin during one of their pillow talks. Well, I couldn't help myself at that time when my younger self was literally faced with a distorted mirror of a possible future.

Looking back at the what-ifs: what if I didn't meet and face off with my desperate and broken alternate self, and what if Rin and Arturia weren't there to tether me to reality?

Would I travel down the same road Archer travelled? I think even if I had faced my potential future self, and knowing what hell he had experienced, I would still have probably accepted that deal with Alaya, thereby repeating the cycle of self-hatred.

I think the key difference this time around was Rin and Arturia grounding me, working on my survival guilt, teaching me how to live for myself, for once.

Admittedly, I still have those tendencies, even in this reality before the incident where I accidentally internalised my reality marble, turning the surface of my

body into a mesh of intercrossed, flesh-like blades. Before that, I would ensure Dudley and his gang's bullying was aimed at me, diverting them from the other children, and taking everything upon myself.

It was only after that internalised reality marble incident that the physical violence escalated, and Vernon stepped in. Still, after seeing their shredded knuckles, even damaging their shoes and pants, they stopped any and all harassment.

Of course, Dudley's gang didn't know about this incident, and they would still occasionally harass me with a very reluctant Dudley in tow.

After returning from an afternoon of high tea with her fellow housewives, Petunia was livid at seeing the state of Vernon and Dudley. While Dudley only had that shredded fist as a consequence of punching a body made of blades, Vernon had a myriad of wounds that spanned his hands, forearms, and shins.

I didn't really ask what excuse they told the people at A&E for their injuries, nor would they have given me that information if I had asked. Still, after they left for some medical care, I just cleaned the floor as usual, freeing it of the blood that splattered from Vernon's attack, and prepared everyone's usual dinner.

My body warmed a bit as my circuits silently hummed, instinctively activating the first line of my aria as I recalled that moment from the past.

Just as I crossed that imaginary line separating the living room from the dining room, Hermione raised an eyebrow as she probably felt the activation of my circuits. Giving her a shake of my head as I closed off my circuits, mentally saying '*trace off*', trying to convey that it was nothing.

I kneeled beside the coffee table at the centre of the room, taking good care to distribute the empty cups and saucers. Removing the teapot cover and fishing

out the bags of English Breakfast and placing them on an empty plate, I began pouring the freshly brewed tea.

From what I recall from last night's random meeting, as if fate had serendipitously provided us with potential allies, Rin, or rather Hermione's summary of the fabricated plans—thought up on the spot by Hermione last night—we really probably should have a meeting between us to actually agree on a plan, as everything so far has been reactionary and improvised.

Anyway, Hermione is currently on the tail end of her explanation, surveying everything laid out on the table. I paused, realising I'd forgotten to bring milk for those who wanted it. Not really familiar with everyone's preferences for English black tea, even Hermione's, I quietly stepped away to fetch the milk jug, ducking my head as I could feel Dan Granger's heated gaze follow me.

Opening and closing the kitchen compartments as I searched through the organised kitchen drawers of the Granger household. Almost giving up and rushing back to ask Hermione for their location, a fleeting thought entered my mind as I peeked inside the dishwasher, seeing several milk jugs and what were probably the dishes from at least two nights ago.

I didn't really think to use the dishwasher, as we didn't have one at the Dursleys, being the designated dishwasher of the household, so I didn't know how to operate the machine.

Another reminder of how the tables had turned with Rin and my technological know-how, as living with the Dursleys had stunted my exposure to many modern things like mobile phones and other technology. My only access to modern tech was the dated PCs at the local library.

My living situation was equally rudimentary; I'd been summarily transferred to the shed about a month after the incident, and all I had inside were a steel-framed bed, a single chair—which I sometimes used as a desk for my studies—, a fan, and a shelf for everything else I owned.

Pulling out two milk jugs, I held them near my face as my nose scrunched up a bit. The somewhat off-putting smell of stagnant moisture entered my nostrils. I turned on the heated tap, placed the jugs underneath the water flow, and began to wash them.

Thinking back, my transfer to the shed had been a good thing; the cupboard under the stairs was getting too cramped for my liking, and ever since the accident of internalising my reality marble, more of my past memories had unlocked.

I was able to almost freely practice my magecraft inside the shed during my free time. This situation mirrored some of my previous life, as I often practised my magecraft in the Emiya household's shed, even sometimes passing out and sleeping in said shed.

After drying the jugs with a fresh tea towel, I moved towards the fridge to bring out an open carton of semi-skimmed milk. Taking note of the scent and its best-before date, I deemed it suitable enough and poured the remaining milk into the two jugs and heated it in the microwave.

After rinsing the inside of the now-empty milk carton, I proceeded to flatten it, removing the plastic nozzle from it, and disposing of it properly. Taking a deep breath as I braced myself, I trudged towards the Grangers, two milk jugs in hand.

Crouching down in front of the coffee table, I offered to pour the visibly steaming milk into their respective cups. Hermione's father grunted and gave me a curt nod, while Hermione's mother hovered her hand over her cup and waved—indicating that she didn't want milk in hers. Hermione then gave me a gesture indicating her want for milk.

Standing beside Hermione, everything went quiet, save for the sips of tea and the crunch of apple slices being bitten into.

Placing her tea back on the table, Hermione's mother, Emma Granger, pinched the bridge of her nose.

"So let me get this straight: during that incident where you got suspended, you somehow discovered your magic, as this energy somehow reinforced and strengthened your actions, which explained why you were able to break that boy's shin with a simple kick."

She paused, waiting for Hermione's nod. "You then proceeded to experiment with this newfound ability, keeping it a secret from us, your parents."

She then gestured towards me. "This young man, who also found out about his magic, discovered you practising at a secluded place because his nose has an extra-sensory ability to detect magic, and ever since, you've been secretly meeting whilst developing your talent?"

Crossing both her arms and legs as she leaned back into the sofa, mirroring her husband's countenance. "Fast forward a few months, when you were experimenting—"

"Analysing." Hermione corrected.

Giving Hermione a pointed look as she then continues, "Experimenting with Harry's scar, which you previously found out was emitting an off feeling and concluded was 'Cursed'."

I took a peek at Hermione, seeing her in a relaxed posture, unbothered by how her mother was currently framing their fabricated story of how we met and came into our abilities.

"Whilst experimenting with Harry's scar—" I discreetly tugged at Hermione's shirt as she was probably going to interrupt with another 'correction', preventing her from interrupting again.

“—which you previously ‘concluded’ to be cursed. It somehow pulled both of your consciousnesses into a flashback of an event when Harry was still a toddler from the point of view of his mother.”

During that very short time of private discussion between Rin and me, beneath the bowels of Gringotts, we needed to somehow refer to my mother’s protection without actually saying out loud that we know that Lily Potter sacrificed herself for the sake of her son.

Turning her gaze to me, her face softened a bit. "If this were real, you have my condolences for your loss. But to continue, and do forgive me for being frank about it, this flashback showed you the final moments of your parents in which they were apparently betrayed by someone close to them named Pettigrew."

“The vision then ended with a flash of green, which then triggered a what?”

“A clairvoyant event,” Hermione answered without hesitation. “It was somehow a myriad of disjointed scenes—”

“Wait, Hermione, let me do the summary first, as I am still processing quite an outlandish story if you look at it from our perspective.”

“Okay, clairvoyant event, but before we continue, just a quick question, as it seems you just skimmed over this point. According to the Headmaster of this wizarding school in your vision, a school you apparently will be attending—”
Giving Hermione a raised eyebrow as she currently is enrolled in her A-levels.

In which Hermione awkwardly averted her eyes at the implied question, mumbling about somehow making it work.

Taking another sip of her tea, now probably lukewarm, she continued, " Your mother sacrificed herself and invoked a strong magical protection on Harry here, leading to him surviving and partially vanquishing the said wizard?"

“Ummm—, yes, after our initial analysis of Harry’s scar, we found two distinct magical signatures: one clearly malevolent—hence our conclusion that it was a curse—, while the other is more warm and invokes a feeling of protection. Our current theory is that Lily Potter’s final moments were imprinted within the protection, which was the reason for the vision.”

Emma Granger, who probably felt somewhat frustrated, stood up and began pacing behind the couch where she had previously sat, leaving Dan still silent and stewing in his own thoughts, perfectly content with letting his wife take the lead.

“My problem with this is, how are you able to make these fantastical theories, when by your own admission, witches and wizards need at least seven years of guidance?”

She stopped in between her pacing, as she exasperatedly gestured towards us. “What, did you just read a bunch of fantasy books, experiment with concepts, and just see what stuck?”

Exchanging glances with Hermione, we just shrugged and nodded at her as both parents raised their hands in frustration.

“Well, we do experiments using the scientific method,” Hermione grumbled, another small lie added to our seven novels' worth of lies uttered in the past hour.

Putting on a stoic face, I inwardly winced at Hermione’s parents' frustration and their summary of our fabricated story; we were still hoping that, despite the absurdity, they would come around to our side as certain events took place. Well, provided anything we had done so far hadn't caused too much of a butterfly effect on canon events.

In our opinion, this is better than the truth, which is an existential dread-inducing explanation of how we are reality-hopping travellers waking up in a popular fictional universe.

I can hardly begin to fathom this reality when placed in the context of the related fictional work. Is this a fabricated reality made by a higher entity aiming to entertain themselves, or was this an actual reality that somehow resonated into the Root, which then resonated with the author J.K. Rowling and was somehow able to write a novel based on that?

Maybe Zelre—, no, no, shaking myself from that particular dreadful sanity check.

Mrs. Granger now resumed her previous pacing as she held her chin with her right hand, as it was propped up by her folded left hand. “Fine, setting aside, in my opinion, were dangerous experiments about something you previously didn’t know about.”

“Let’s move on to your ‘clairvoyant event’,” Emma began, ticking points off in the air with her finger, “throughout the coming years, both of you shall be dragged into dangerous situations—”

“In your incoming first year, your headmaster puts a legendary, immortal-granting artefact up as bait to lure out a spectre version of Harry’s murderer possessing a teacher.”

As we averted our eyes, Hermione’s father chimed in for the first time. “What, you thought we wouldn’t catch on to the fact that, according to your story, your headmaster laid out challenges and not traps or defences to protect said artefact.”

“Admittedly, the last part was actually a defence, and if it weren’t for your apparent future intervention, he probably wouldn’t be able to gain access to the Stone, but even then, your upcoming headmaster did classify said

murderer-terrorist—Tom Riddle, right?—as one of the most brilliant minds in wizarding history, so there's still a possibility that he could work around that particular defence.” He said, shrugging.

“You defend something by sealing it off from anyone's access, not dangling it as bait. Is that person senile or stupid for luring a known terrorist into a school full of children?”

“Probably both.”

“Maybe both.”

We both begrudgingly replied at the same time. Giving us a nod at our acquiescence, Dan Granger leaned back, resting his case.

“In the following year, an artefact that binds this Tom Riddle to the mortal plane, you described this as a soul tether, is planted amongst the students, letting a younger version of that spectre possess another victim, this time a student.” Emma Granger immediately continued after her husband's interjection.

“Said possessed individual, will release a gigantic thousand-year-old predator that has a poison that can kill within seconds, swallow you whole, and can literally kill with just a gaze.”

“Not to mention that neighbourhood deathtrap of a nest of gigantic spiders, nestled within this apparent wonderland they aptly called The Forbidden Forest, which apparently is a pet of the school's groundskeeper?”

Dan Granger, again inserting his two-pence as he huffed at the absurdity. I myself couldn't really object to his assessment; we didn't like the Harry Potter stories for their logical premise.

“Quite frankly, government corruption and ineptitude perfectly describe the end of your second year, all the way to the sixth, and the seventh was just the

terrorist group taking over everything.” Mrs. Granger tagged in while raising her hand as she extended each finger at each of her following points.

“At the end of the second year, they didn’t send home the students because of the threat, nor did they increase security.”

Another digit raised. “They sent soul-sucking depression demons into the school to ‘protect’ the children from a prison escapee, who, if we believe the vision, didn’t get any due process and was summarily thrown into literal suffering on Earth without due process.”

Sighing as she exhaled, Mrs. Granger plopped back down onto the couch. “Where were we?”

“Fourth, the revival of both a death sport and the terrorist leader.” Dan Granger answered.

“Ah, yes, and the subsequent backlash from the government when you—” Hermione’s mom gestured at me. “Reveal to everyone Tom’s return, in which they sent a racist hag to torture and maim students as retaliation.”

A large sigh escaped both parents; they were probably tired from today’s revelations. “I don’t think we need to talk about the last two years, as everything just collapsed, and quite frankly, if the vision is true, I wouldn’t support sacrificing Harry so you can finally vanquish that evil man.”

We conveniently omitted the fact that if I were willing enough, I would survive sacrificing myself. The problem was that although I could now see the distortion within my mindset and my inherent disregard for my personal value, despite all that, I don’t think I could actually sincerely become a willing sacrifice. Plus, I wanted to be selfish for once and stay with Rin forever.

Now the parents both exchanged glances, “I think I could say for us both, aside from finding justice for Harry’s godfather, we don’t think this should be

your responsibility. Why can't you just leave your vision with capable adults, and we can just move away from England?"

Yes, Hermione's mother is right; I also wouldn't want to put her family in harm's way. Maybe I could—

Hermione then grabbed my hand, interlocking her fingers with mine as she squeezed it, reassuring me and breaking me from my previous train of thought.

"Well, to be frank, I have three-maybe-four-or-five reasons. Leaving it in the same hands who let the current wizarding society rot to this point, where the next seven years seemed like a logical effect to the cause ingrained within their government."

"The following reason is that if we take ourselves out of the picture, the clairvoyant vision is rendered moot by our non-participation, even if we inform certain adults within the wizarding society, subsequently, even with specific factors that are static to a point, like the soul tethers being in particular places and will not be moved unless threatened or, in the second year's case, Lucius was motivated to dispose of the artefact."

Releasing my hand as she adapted one of her patented lecture poses, the one with her hand on her hip, she then continues, "We are also aware that every minor change we make to the scenario could potentially change everything. I think, as long as everything doesn't change too much from the perspective of Tom Riddle, we could potentially mitigate any major changes in the timeline."

"And finally, my last reason is that I can't just leave Harry here." She again grabbed my hand, pulling me forward as her father's gaze intensified. "I promise you, if everything reaches the point that the sixth-year scenario or something equivalent happens, we'll get out, but I know Harry—something will gnaw at him from within if we don't at least do something and help prevent this

catastrophe from happening.”

“The wizarding society may exist in an isolated bubble, but it isn’t separate from the normal side. Suppose we allow this to happen, and the normal society finds out about the wizarding side without any pre-greasing of the wheels between leaders of nations, religious groups, and other major societal forces. In that case, fear might be bred, and something much worse would probably happen.”

“Mr and Mrs Granger, if I may—” Harry interjected, “as you heard both Hermione and I aren’t that weak of wizards despite our self-study, as demonstrated by Hermione’s story of us facing a horde of goblins and trolls when we—”

Ouch, I winced. I suddenly felt her nails dig into my hand, and her feet stomping on mine.

“I haven’t told them about our trip to Diagon Alley,” Hermione said through gritted teeth.

“Could you kindly shut your trap, as you are making things worse.” She said as she gave me a smile that filled me with dread.

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END

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