

Book 1 The Empty Twin - Ch 2.1 Fray into The Planet Dungeon

“Push!” I shouted as I plunged my blade into the thorax of a medium sized arachnid, according to my assimilated knowledge these are monsters under the Aranea classification. They don’t really name each and every type of monster under certain classifications as there are a lot of variances in these types of monsters.

They come in all shapes, size, colour, and abilities. Some can spew poison, some upon death will have their abdomen burst out hundreds of smaller versions of themselves, some can wield magic, and some can even fly.

As I pulled out my blade, I stepped on the thorax of said arachnid to leap and slice at the claw of the one now charging at me. Yes, unfortunately these arachnids also have claws as their front two legs.

shink, shink, shink

“Ryuu fall back! They can resurrect.” I took a quick glimpse at the arachnid I just downed as several blades, courtesy of Shirou, are now jotting out of its body. Unfortunately, it began to hue a purple glow as it slowly stood up again.

Using my wind magic I accelerated towards Shirou who is now surrounded by the arachnids we have already killed just a few moments ago.

“I am the bone of my sword.” Shirou declared as countless swords began bombarding each monster surrounding us, only to be replaced by its revived companions putting us into a stalemate.

“Shirou, cover me, it’ll take less than a minute.”

“Okay, leave it to me. Mipsy standby just in case.” Shirou acknowledged. “Yes, Master Shirou.” a distant voice echoed into the room in reply.

“Steel is my body, fire is my blood.” He declared again as I was suddenly surrounded by swords that interlocked with each other caging me in, but at the same time deterring the monsters from easily reaching me.

I start my chant, “Astraea Record.”

Everytime he activates that magic of his a sort of pressure is felt in the immediate surroundings and that pressure seems to get heavier and heavier as he progresses through his aria.

“Duty shall be fulfilled, and the scales shall be balanced.” Just as I chanted the 2nd line of my aria, a large glyph symbolizing my first goddess appears on the ground I’m standing on and a blue aura starts to surround me.

This aura also serves as a barrier making the cage of swords that surround me redundant, as the arachnids that are now upon me are being repelled by the energies this aura is exuding.

“Bastion of order, crown of the honest, evil-crushing torch.”

According to him this spell of his is him slowly overwriting the surrounding reality with his soul. Where normally his magecraft deals with creating swords but when he projects his own soul outwards, he says that all of the swords are already made within him and he is now both tracing and summoning them forth from his soul; and with each line the need for tracing is lessened while the summoning gets easier and easier as reality is slowly being re-written, overlapped, rejected by his magecraft.

As he verifies my safety again, he redoubles his efforts. While the continued bombardment of swords keeps on coming, he summons twin single edge swords. This black and white pair begins to enlarge as he charges into the fray.

“Double accel.” He blurs into a large group as he shreds everything around him, enemies, walls, ceiling, and floor. As the group of the dead monsters began to glow, indicating their imminent revival.

He then throws both swords in opposite directions, as he summons two more of the same type. He enlarged both as well and threw them as well.

“In the name of the Goddess’s, charging through space, bind the star traces to this land.”

Looking around me as we are now surrounded by flying buzzsaws, unleashing just untold violence upon the arachnids that surrounds us. Every blade swings back and forth like a pendulum, every blade getting pushed and pulled by each other’s attraction.

The cycle of death, life, and carnage continues as he stands his ground in front of me cutting down anything that comes near. As more and more arachnids swarm us.

It looks like even the arachnids that we killed from other parts of the floor are now revived and are converging towards us.

“Mipsy, check on the others if they are okay. If it’s too much they should retreat to the floor above.” Looks like Shirou came to the same conclusion as he orders the brownies, formerly-named house-elves, to check on the others who are tasked at breaking down and collecting the corpses of the monsters.

“Return as standby after securing everyone’s safety.”

“Yes, master Shirou.”

“Justice returns!” As I finished my chant, “Shirou!”

He summoned two more pairs of black and white swords which he also threw down the hall. This last move influenced each flying buzzsaw of death into embedding into either a monster, wall, ceiling, or floor; and with a snap every blade exploded killing everything in its vicinity.

Raising my sword, "Agaris Alvesynth", I declared as enchanted flames covered my hands, legs, and weapon.

"Alize." I whispered to myself and with my resolve reinforced, I sprung forth quickly gliding towards my enemy. With my first slash a wave of enemies burned, as I kept on piling up the corpses.

Unfortunately, it looks like everything on this floor is now swarming the hall we are on.

"At least the magic is reviving and not reanimating." Shirou said as he is now back-to-back with me.

Looking around me as some of the corpses that were too mangled or burned stayed dead. I feel Shirou tensed up behind me as he crouched down with one of his legs extended as he summoned a bloodthirsty looking spear with a multitude of thorns surrounding its shaft.

'Who the hell would make such an unwieldy spear.' I thought to myself, the spear itself looks small compared to Shirou's new height. He now stands at 229 cm, a trait that was given to each of us, minus Illya, since apparently most humanoid species in this reality are taller than our previous reality's average.

I myself now stand at around 202 cm, compared to my previous 165. As these distracting thoughts entered my mind I have been deploying my luminous orbs above us. As I kept on hacking and slashing at everything.

Shirou, facing the opposite side of the hallway leapt, holding the spear in a throwing position. As blood trickled down his arm, indicating that thorns have pierced his flesh.

"Gae Bolg"

As he threw the spear towards the swarm behind me, a deafening explosion followed as everything paused. Even the arachnids that were rushing towards me hesitated as the unbelievable scene of destruction was presented to us. Everything in the direction of the thrown spear, the walls and the swarm, were incinerated.

Luckily the ceiling and floor didn't collapse. As Shirou landed and spun to face us, with his right arm extended side wards, the spear flew back towards his arm. For some reason, instead of his usual stoic face, Shirou is now sporting a crazed looking grin, with both his hands bleeding due to the thorns around the shaft of the spear, he ignores this as he taunts the remaining swarm.

And with that the remaining swarm resumed their charge as Shirou, yelling out a battle cry, as I somehow heard the screech of metal upon metal as he charged towards them twirling his now lengthened spear.

I joined the fray as I kept on charging my magic.

“Shirou, fall back.” I called out as it’s my turn to leap as the zenith of my magic was reached, directing each orb towards the arachnids that regrouped. “Luminous wind!”

A bright light illuminated the room as the majority of the remaining swarm succumbed to my magic.

“Ryuu, shoot a fire down towards the end of the hall that way.” As he pointed down the direction of the hall we were attacking, “I think I saw something.” As he actualized a dark bow, which he enlarged to match his height.

“Iruvute! I yelled, as a torrent of flame illuminated the hall. Behind the swarm you can see another aranea far larger than any of the monsters that are currently swarming us, another difference is that it had the upper-half of an armored humanoid body on top of its thorax, where its eyes were supposed to be, wielding what looks like a staff that’s currently glowing purple. The same tinge of purple that coats each monster whenever they get revived.

“Ryuu, get behind me.” Shirou shouted as I leapt back, slashing at monsters on the way. Shirou summons a black and red blade, which exudes a sort of blood lust. This blood lust is not like the crazed bloodthirsty aura that was wafting off the red spear he threw a while ago, this one is more focused.

It feels like a solo predator stalking its prey. The sword vibrates showing its eagerness to spill the blood of its targeted victim.

Shirou then lifts the sword towards the bow as he alters its form, making it more aerodynamic as he notches the altered sword on his bow; and with his full body tensed up he pulls.

“Hound of the Red Plains, Hrunting!” A loud bang, courtesy of the sound barrier being broken, followed the release of the arrow as it violently flew down the hall towards the newly identified monster. Due to the speed of the arrow every monster down the hall was pushed back.

In the end nothing really mattered as the monster was deleted from existence when the sword detonated upon contact. Thankfully, all of the arachnids that were swarming us all collapsed as if they were marionettes whose strings were cut.

“Oh, I guess they were getting reanimated and not revived.” Shiro said as he scratched his head awkwardly. “That was kinda anti-climactic.”

“What’s the difference?”

“Umm, I’m not really the expert in concepts involving magecraft or in our new reality’s case magic, but from what I understand it just implies that when you are revived you retain your own will and agency, while if you get reanimated you are being controlled.” Shirou explained as he shrugged. “So it means if all of the monsters that were swarming us were revived they will still be alive even when we kill the one who revived them.”

“I thought they were getting revived because the monsters with mangled and burnt bodies remained dead.” Shirou grinned at me sheepishly, as then he vacantly stared at his hand. The same hand which was previously bleeding due to the barbed spear. He then flexes his hand as if he’s holding something that’s not there.

“Are you okay?” I hesitantly asked. “What’s wrong with your hand; a while ago it was bleeding quite a bit?”

“2 lines.” He unhelpfully supplied.

“2 lines?”

My question seems to snap him out of his state, as he again ruffles the back of his head. “Oh, I was just both amazed and concerned at the fact that it only took me 2 lines of my aria to trace that spear.”

“Isn’t that supposed to be amazing?”

He then explained that the spear he traced was made from the bones of a magical sea creature of significance, and had reality bending enchantments from the age of gods.

According to him even with his boosted mana capacity; even when gaia is not here to correct magecraft’s perversion of the natural order; even with the new skills he has purchased, he shouldn’t be capable of tracing that spear without at least most of his aria chanted and a large toll on his body.

He added that the easiest way for him to use that spear was when he deploys his reality marble. “Maybe it’s due to me no longer being considered human.” He silently whispers to himself, which was easily picked by my elfen ears.

If I recall correctly it was one of the concerns their group brought up as his race was classified as “??Processing??/Sword Incarnation (*Updating*)”. Shirou was not the only one with this concern as several of our group had the same “??Processing??” on their race but at least they still retained their humanity alongside it while Shirou was the only one who’s had his previous race removed.

I myself was not exempted from this as /Elf was written on both me and Lefiya’s race classification.

“Anyway, do you think Rin and Hermione will mind that they will not get a sample of that reviving monster?” Shirou, interrupting my thoughts as he changed the subject.

“Hopefully that monster isn’t a unique one-off.” I shrugged, an unholy pair was born when they started collaborating in their research regarding the monsters and their materials. Rin was especially insistent that the magic core of each monster should always remain intact and we should especially avoid killing the monsters by destroying their magic core; which according to this reality’s common sense is a valid and quick way of dispatching monsters.

It has been about 5 days since our transfer to this new reality, on the 3rd day, Rose Potter using her broom, was able to locate the entrance of the dungeon which was thankfully not far from where we started; and it is isolated on an island north east of our starting point.

Yeah, the shock of seeing someone using a cleaning instrument as a flying vehicle was shocking to us former citizens of Orario. Well shocking to Lefiya, Haruhime, and I, Syr probably knows these types of devices due to her previous divinity.

We always hear gods and goddesses spout random nonsense which apparently were them referencing things from other realities. A drunken trio of Loki, Syr, and Hestia were the ones who dropped the ball when they revealed this fact. Unfortunately or fortunately, depending on who you asked, both Takemikazuchi and Hermes were there to prevent them from revealing more.

Anyway, during the second day of dungeon delving whenever Shirou identifies the location of a monster’s mana core, or what is typically called magicite in this reality, he’ll just snipe everything from a distance. This resulted in him being scolded by Rin as a floor’s worth of monsters were harvested with their magicite destroyed.

Shirou argued that at least they can easily harvest the monsters with their bodies largely intact, and that this method is easier and safer.

Rin countered that while the materials you get from harvesting monsters are valuable, the magicite of each monster easily eclipses that in value as it can be used not only as a power source but also as a medium since each magicite from each different type of monster has different properties.

Hermione also added that since each type of monster that appears is birthed on different floors, and the fact that while the space within a dungeon is its own special unique space it is also rooted on this plane of existence.

Hermione deduced that while monsters can go up or down any floor when given enough external stimuli, their birthing process, which is limited to their own unique floor, might have its own space-time coordinate related to their floor.

This was later on confirmed by Shirou who analysed the intact magicite that were previously harvested. This apparently was a really important attribute, in which they can use this into constructing what they call a portkey or something related to that.

According to both Rin and Hermione any magical ability that has an xyz coordinate factor or a space-time coordinate factor will probably be rendered ineffective or will be actualized

inefficiently. That was the reason why Rose's spell failed when she summoned the plates and cutlery a few days ago.

They can practice these abilities if sight is involved; though certain things like summoning, levitating, and especially sight-apparition, which again was a shocking ability to the majority of us.

According to Hermione and her group while they can apparate, which is an ability to teleport, they unfortunately need to see the location they are going to apparate to. Even then mistakes can be made, because they are using their own current body's location as a reference, and they need to account for the rotation and revolution of the planet; and the fact that the planet is also moving through the galaxy.

They said that since magic, in their old reality, was ingrained in their being and the planet that they have a what they say a mutualistic relationship with it, a lot of things like their apparition is assisted by magic itself.

They described how they do blind apparition, an ability where they can traverse large distances just by picturing the place and just knowing their coordinates. They don't need to calculate how fast their planet is rotating, they don't need to calculate that their planet is hurtling around their galaxy while it's revolving around their sun; because everything is intrinsic.

Well that was for Hermione and their group, Rin said that, for magi, unlike our new wizarding friends they need to calculate for each or rather it's part of the properties when actualizing certain magecraft. The reason why Rin can't just easily help Hermione with the calculations is that in their own world all of these numbers are standardized and are known.

Rin explains that she doesn't have the expertise in astronomy nor the equipment to do the calculations for this planet. This planet which has another planet that shares its orbit is vastly different from their previous reality's planet. It's hard to infer the proper values, since they can experiment and approximate if this planet was somewhat close to their previous planet's existence.

As for Shirou's ability to easily project objects into reality and can easily bombard enemies with precision is due to what they call a reality marble, which Shirou has, his tracing ability is largely dependent on his reality marble as it serves as the origin of this ability.

When he partially overwrites reality with his own, regular space-time coordinates are considered moot since everything is now projected in a different xyz plane with his own soul used as an intrinsic reference point; and even when he doesn't externalize his soul. His normal tracing ability still uses his own soul as a reference point. Though his tracing ability suffers in accuracy the further he projects things from his body.

"Master Shirou, Mistress Ryuui!" Mipsy suddenly appeared behind us. "Everyone be doing alright sirs and madam but Tripsy and Pockey be having injuries when bad spider be surprising them."

“Oh, have someone escort the two of them back to base and order them to rest until they are back to 100%.” I ordered Mipsy.

“Tripsy and Pockey will not be liking that order, good madam.” Mipsy slightly chastised me, as I sighed Hermione did describe how these creatures operate.

“Mipsy, if they complain tell them that when their wounds are healed and they are cleared to do light work they can work again, but only when they are at 100% they can help with the dungeon and with anything taxing around the camp.” Shirou, offered as a concession.

Mipsy then proceeded to call a different brownie and delegated the task of escorting the injured towards our camp. As she does this other brownies begin to apparate in, they too are subject to the problems that plague their reality's teleporting ability; but fortunately since their race basically use apparition all the time their adjustment into this reality wasn't that difficult.

They can easily do long distance sight apparition without much deviation in accuracy, of course the further the distance the less accurate. Once the thickness of a floor or wall has been somewhat estimated they are also able to do short distance sightless apparition.

As the brownies start with their task of organizing the dead monsters the skratte who are apparated in by some of the brownies start with the disassembling of the monsters.

These skratte were formerly known as goblins, unfortunately like the formerly known house-elves they had to change their race's name due to the fact that there could be a possible fallout or outrage with the other races in this reality if they retain their race's name.

“Mistress Ryuu, Master Shirou, the stairs to the next floor is being here.”

Flashback

The next day after the long planning/meeting with everyone, Rose Potter asked everyone to gather outside.

I still felt somewhat groggy due to the fact that last night's meeting ended close to day break. Everyone only had a maximum of 3 hours sleep, some even took Hermione's offer of a pepper-up potion where they powered through the morning to prepare for today.

Illya, the cute, sweet, small, and amazing miracle worker that she is, was handing out cups of freshly brewed coffee to everyone.

'Oh, was she able to pick-up on my thoughts?' I amusedly thought as I ducked outside to escape her glare.

Illya, who unfortunately was experimented on as a child, previously had a prepubescent body despite her being the oldest in our group. Because of this she invested some points into fixing her previous predicament. Unfortunately, she didn't take into account the average height of humanoids in this reality. Even the shortest amongst us stands at least a head higher compared to Illya.

'Anyway, I don't think I'll ever get used to that.' I thought, as I looked at the size of the outside of the tent and mentally compared that to the space within it. 'Looks like we are eating outside this morning.'

I can see Shirou, Haruka, and Marin, with the help of what looks like an impish looking creature no taller than their waist setting up breakfast. Said creature was sporting a pretty concentrated face as it was levitating dishes filled with food.

Haruka, noticing us, waved us over as a breeze wafted the scent of freshly baked bread towards us. This is one of the things that I'm thankful for, even though we are trapped here on this empty planet, we still are able to eat amazing food.

Even through last night's hectic meeting, I can't help but drool at the memory of the food that was prepared. Haruhime and the others who help truly outdid themselves.

"Good morning!" A chirpy Marin greeted us. "How was your sleep? Did you know I already started with my magecraft lessons? I already am practicing their Structural Analysis, Illya taught me this morning while Shirou supervised me."

As I picked up a piece of bread, Shirou handed me a bowl full of greens with some meat on it. While this is happening, the very energetic Marin explained to us what she plans to do as contributions to our group.

*She plans to be what she declares as the group's armorer and designer, as she purchased related skills like **Weapon & Armor Smith Aptitude, Leather & Cloth Production Aptitude, Engineering Knowledge, Couturier Aptitude**. She excitedly explains that she has a lot of reference materials from her previous reality which came from her purchasing **Inherit Previous Life's Assets**.*

*While Marin, Lefiya and Haruhime continued talking, 'Oh yeah I haven't checked what I inherited.' Everyone in our group, minus Syr, also purchased **Inherit Previous Life's Assets**, but I alone purchased **Inherit Claimable, Unclaimed Inheritance**.*

I was hoping that I can get any memento from my first family as a keepsake. 'I'll probably check that out later.' Making a mental note for my later self.

'Eroge?' I was suddenly brought out of my musings as Lefiya asked Marin a question while both Shirou and Haruka suddenly started coughing.

"Yes, I have a lot of them. I can probably take a lot of inspiration when designing everyone's clothes from those." As she innocently ponders her voiced ideas "Shironeko had some pretty cute designs for women."

As Marin kept on babbling about her ideas both Haruka and Shirou were shaking their heads vigorously as they were miming an x with both their index fingers, warning us not to inquire further.

"Umm, what is a Gamestation 5?", both Shirou and Haruka visibly relaxed at Haruhime's question. Rin suddenly called Shirou for help, as everyone continued eating while waiting for Rose and Hermione to arrive.

"By the way, these are Dobby, Mipsy, and Winky." Haruka gestured towards the tiny imp-like creatures, who smiled and bowed deferentially "These are house-elves from Rose's reality they helped us with today's breakfast."

"House-elves?" I asked, unfortunately a frown was visibly shown on both Lefiya and my face.

"Yeah, I already discreetly talked to Shirou about this. We'll bring it up during the meeting." Haruka assured us.

"Good morning everyone." Rin arrived with Shirou, who's carrying Sakura bridal-style, in tow.

Sakura visibly looked under the weather as Shirou and Rin fixed her up a simple plate of breakfast.

"What happened to Sakura?" Haruhime worriedly asked.

Sakura tiredly smiles as she explains that one of Rin's purchases led to her gaining a sorcery trait called Ore Scales, which allows her to manifest a copy of all her inherited family crest and transplant it to a family member.

The reason why she looks under the weather is due to the process of assimilating the transplanted magic crest.

*"I probably inherited that trait when I purchased **Inherit Claimable, Unclaimed Inheritance**. This is a sorcery trait from the Edelfelt family which we had relations a few centuries ago that ended poorly. I also inherited their crest." Rin said all this with a large grin as she chuckled darkly to herself.*

Shaking her head Illya who has been sitting here for awhile now while she silently eats breakfast interjected. "Family or Magic crests are artificially created magic circuits made by a magus family. We use this as a way to generationally improve our family's magic. Within it you'll have all of the spells your family has developed and even information on family traditions, practices, etc. The last part is meant as a failsafe incase family members suddenly dwindles in number."

"Good morning!" Rose greeted us as she suddenly stepped out of an enlarged trunk, this weird scene continued as a myriad of creatures followed her and assembled directly to our right.

More of those house-elves appeared as they conjured a couple of tables parallel to ours, complete with benches. They also conjured a raised table perpendicular and behind us.

*As everyone settles Hermione also steps out of the trunk followed by a retinue of creatures.
“Good morning everyone, these are the representatives of each race that are currently not in stasis.” Hermione gestures towards the group beside her.*

To be continued...