

**These Tragic Souls and a Sword Reborn
in an Intergalactic Space Opera**

Story Starts

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Book 1 - The Empty Twin

Ch 3.5 Depersonalisation-Derealisation

[Part 5 of ?]

“Hermione, I need you to hold on to this and tell me how it feels.”

Crash!

“Wha—what did you say?!”

I felt a blush creep up my face as I remembered what had happened over breakfast. Everyone else looked just as red—watching as Shirou approached Hermione, hand outstretched, the other holding one of his weighted-hilt prototypes. It was one of the many inventions that he had proudly presented to us that afternoon, designed to help him customise each sword to suit its user.

Hermione, having been preoccupied with research, had missed the presentation. Now, faced with the vaguely phallic-looking object and Shirou’s earnest expression, she kept backing away—clearly still haunted by this morning’s incident.

It also didn’t help that Shirou was currently shirtless and wearing only a hakama—a loose, skirt-like trousers. Both he and Marin almost always wore hakamas, though Marin paired hers with just a tube top—something that only covered her breasts. Not that anyone blamed her; the temperature from the forge could get uncomfortably high.

Well, when I say everyone was blushing, I meant everyone except Marin—who was busily taking notes while whistling merrily, a tape measure floating around me as it sent her my measurements back. It was one of the new charms she picked up from the wand witches. She'd officially declared herself the team's armourer and fashion designer.

On top of the skills she bought from that transfer ritual with Zelretch, she and Shirou researched a lot of enchantments together—diving deep into the texts from our recently translated library.

Before this, the two of them—along with their team of skrattes, centaurs, and brownies—mass-produced standardised gear or modified our old clothing with bits of armour. Shirou, in particular, applied his own brand of '*alteration*' magecraft to weapons, tailoring them to each user.

Now that we had access to better materials—monster parts, ores, jewels, magicites, and the blackstones everyone has been requesting—they'd begun crafting personalised equipment for each of us. Which was why we were all here today... well, everyone except Rin.

Turning away from the awkward little dance between Hermione and Shirou as they inched closer to the wall, I spotted our missing person entering the forge—Rin, wobbling slightly on unsteady legs as Cuspey flitted around her, fussing. She made her way toward us, drawing everyone's attention.

"Hmmm... Sakura, why is everyone suddenly acting weird?" Marin asked me, head tilted like a confused puppy, her ballpoint pen tapping thoughtfully at her lip.

Well, this was Marin and Shirou's third iteration—meaning it was their third cycle of the day and second use of the time-turner—so they hadn't seen what happened this morning.

Hermione, cornered against the wall, finally reached for Shirou's hand. He just looked puzzled, helped her up, and handed her the baton-looking thing. She gripped it with both hands, face beet-red—clearly trying not to glance at his crotch, failing.

“Umm, Hermione, is it comfortable to hold it with one hand, or is it too big?”

I heard someone snort behind me, followed by a poorly stifled giggle.

Shirou, oblivious as ever, gently took her hand again—demonstrating how to grip the handle properly. She'd asked for a single-handed sword, after all—something she could dual-wield with her wand.

A chair popped into place right beside me—courtesy of Cuspey—as Rin plopped down with a loud, exhausted sigh.

“Ummm, it's a—There was an incident during breakfast at Base 1.” I thought hard on how to explain it properly, without sounding too crude—nothing immediately came to mind.

“Ohhhhh, was it bad? Do tell! I haven't sat down for breakfast since yesterday.” The curious Marin, clearly eager for gossip. She turned to Rin, motioning for her to lift her arms as the tape continued measuring.

“Whatever!” Rin muttered, waving off the awkwardness. “Hermione was looking for me, so she barged into my room while Shirou and I were in the middle of you know—” She explained it away by putting her thumb between her index and middle finger miming a rude gesture.

“Hoh hoh hoh~!” Marin said, teasingly lifting a hand to her mouth in mock scandal.

I gave them a blank stare at their antics as I decided to add more context, “Well, when Hermione barged in, she fell from the shock—and the door was

wide open, so everyone saw them, ummm—” I coughed “, in a compromising position.”

“Oh, you mean our resident genius here—bent over on all fours, face in ecstasy—as Shirou wielded his ‘sword’ like he was ready to slay some pussy?” Illya interrupted as she strode in with Syr and Gabrielle.

“That sword was massive!” Syr helpfully supplied.

I just shook my head at their antics.

“Are you okay? You look haggard for someone who just got some this morning.” Gabrielle teased, while Illya, Syr and Marin grinned like schoolgirls.

“Mistress Tohsaka just be stopping making babies with Master Emiya.”

“ ... ”

CLANG! Clang. clang.

“ ... ”

CLANG! Clang. clang.

For some reason, Cuspey’s tiny voice echoed around the entire forge.

Everyone in the group heard it—except Shirou, who was still hammering away at a new blade in the back, having already finished with Hermione.

At the same time, everyone—except Marin, who just looked confused, and Rin, who just buried her face into her hands in shame—checked either the wall clock or their wristwatch.

We'd installed clocks in all the major work areas for convenience. Still, most of us also wore wristwatches—modded by those who acquired engineering-related skills through Zelretch to reflect the planet's 39-hour day-night cycle.

Marin supplied the wristwatch, as she had collected G-Shock watches in her past life, that she brought over through '**Inherit Previous Life's Assets**'.

The room fell silent as everyone exchanged flabbergasted glances—just as the rest of the girls approached.

Rose, who locked eyes with me after looking at her watch, mouthed, 'Nine hours?'—her face a picture of disbelief.

Gabrielle broke the silence, "Wait, you've been at it since—?"

"Yes." Rin begrudgingly interrupted.

"And you just fini—?"

"Yes." she croaked.

"How?" Illya finally asked.

Rin slumped further into her seat. "Apparently, his '**Battle Continuation**' applies to sex too."

"Wait... what? Please explain to me what happened. Why is everyone shocked about Rin getting some?"

"Was it at least good?" Syr asked.

"It was amazing... tiring... but amazing."

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I twirled my new double-bladed sword—or maybe it was a spear at this point? Shirou and I had tested different lengths for the shaft and found that the best for me spanned from fingertip to opposite shoulder—roughly under 120 cm for the shaft, with both blades measuring about 60 cm each

Quite the unwieldy length, but with my '**Divinely-Bestowed Arms**', it felt practically weightless.

I lunged forward, flexing my back and shoulder muscles—left arm extended, right gripping my weapon in a throwing stance—as I hurled it at an **Aranea** charging straight at me.

At the same time, two of my shadows intercepted a group ambushing from the ceiling—their ribbons lashing out, slicing them to pieces.

I doubted those would be revived.

My thrown weapon, still embedded in its target, was suddenly swallowed—monster and all—by a black void, then it appeared beside me, blade upright, the other end still gripped by the same void.

Said void is a pocket of '*Imaginary Numbers*'—an unplottable region of XYZ space coordinates. Through my elemental affinity and sorcery trait, I can access this plane. Paired with the unfortunate '*Absorption*' trait, I can not only store things inside... but also convert them into energy—or even control them

Lately, I'd been working with Rin, Hermione, Illya, and Gabrielle on three projects involving my trait.

First, improving witches' makeskin pouches—those spatially-altered bags that are deceptively larger on the inside. Sadly, such expansion charms and containment enchantments have fundamental limits. You can only expand a

bounded space so far before the forces holding the pocket dimension—and the pressure exerted by compressed space—either cause it to spill over or, worse, pop.

At least that's how Rin and Hermione explained it to me. Apparently, it's easier to expand an already expansive environment compared to stretching something small.

Second, would be absorbing a collection of monsters. Besides my shadows—familiar made of the *Imaginary Numbers Element*—I had several capture monsters deployed to assist the skrattes, brownies, and the three centaurs currently accompanying us toward the 30th floor.

“...!”

Suddenly, all the **Areanea** around us went still, collapsing in a heap, and I let out a long breath of relief.

And finally, the last thing we're currently working on is travel through '*Imaginary Number Space*'. So far, I've only managed to transport objects.

As the skrattes and brownies laid out tarpaulins on the dungeon floor, I absorbed the corpses and deposited them—one by one—on top, away from direct dungeon contact. That way, the breakdown team can begin disassembly.

This method significantly preserves the quality of the monster drops—especially the magicite.

“Here,” Haruka said as she approached me, offering me a canister of water.

Unlike the bubbly and outgoing Marin, Haruka—who, like her, arrived here alone, her friends either chose to reincarnate without memories or didn't see that option like the rest of us—was more reserved, sometimes even aloof.

So—apart from our collaborations with farming—I hadn't grown as close to her as I had with others. Our interactions were always polite and professional, and nothing more.

I reached out, smiling at her as I thanked her.

But after that incident between Rin and Shirou, a lot of walls started coming down. We bonded over the sheer absurdity of it—Shirou, who was mortified the next morning, tried avoiding everyone. It took a bit of coaxing from Rin and some teasing coming from Syr and Marin to drag Shirou back, assuring him that everything was fine.

Marin and Haruka, who were rooming together, had turned their quarters into a cross between a manga café and a gaming den—showcasing Marin's absurd collection of game consoles, anime merch, figurines, and god knows what else.

Haruka—along with the two other elves in the squad—had been dubbed the *fairy-trio* by Syr. That nickname stuck, much to their eternal annoyance. During their free time, the three of them had been playing some ninja-samurai game with a brutal parry mechanic. From what I'd seen, they passed the controller around every time someone died—which was often. Even the ever-stoic Ryuuk let out a cheer whenever they finally downed an enemy.

“Hey, Sakura, don't stray too far from the team—especially if you're going to throw your weapon like that. Unlike Shirou, who can *Trace* his weapons instantly, yours takes a bit more time. You might get caught flat-footed—familiar gone, and without backup.” Lefiya said as they approached us, along with Marin and Haruhime.

Lefiya had taken the lead with our team of newer fighters, since we were handling the top floors—and likely some of the middle ones too. While Haruhime had been an adventurer for years, she'd only recently picked up

melee combat. Her role had always leaned more toward support, given her enchantment sorcery.

Haruka—who used to pick off monsters from afar with her bow, now utilising a katana—and I were delegated the task to hold back the swarm of monster arachnids, while Haruhime and Marin double-teamed the mini-floor boss—the one responsible for reanimating the fallen **Aranea**.

I made an awkward face as I apologised. “I’m still not used to the length of my weapon. I was worried I’d hit someone behind me.”

Lefiya wasn’t really angry, but her expression still softened, “I understand—” she said, glancing at the others, “We can keep track of Sakura’s position and her weapon as well, right?”

With everyone else’s nods, Lefiya continued, “I still want you to stick close to the team, just take note of everyone’s position, and you’ll probably be fine.”

The hiss of a high-intensity burner echoed through the hall. Off to the side, the rest of the team sat sipping tea—while we were waist-deep within the monster horde

Shirou, Rin, and Rose—along with a team of brownies—had set up their mobile kitchen

They were protected from the hoard as Shirou rained swords around the perimeter of their setup while the rest sniped the stragglers.

As our group headed toward the resting zone, I sat beside Illya. From there, I had a clear view of the working skrattes and brownies, and I continued to deposit monster corpses as needed.

“So... do you think you’ll be able to absorb the Weapon?” Illya asked, turning to me, reminding me of one of our objectives in this dungeon run.

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END

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