

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 8.4 - Pardon my French

When they'd planned the day's shopping itinerary over breakfast at the Delacour estate—Apolline's croissants, Jean-Paul's glare, Gabrielle's rapid-fire French—nobody had accounted for Madame Boisvert requiring three hours to attune their custom wands. She'd insisted on performing the final calibrations with each of them present, adjusting the resonance between core and wood until she was satisfied. Harry couldn't blame her. You didn't hand a craftsman's life's work to its owner and walk away before seeing it held for the first time. Boisvert wanted to witness the bonding. Ollivander had wanted the same, in his own eccentric way. It was a matter of professional pride, and Harry—who had spent enough hours at the forge to understand what a finished piece meant to its maker—respected that completely.

But the delay had consequences. The rest of the group—Jean-Paul, Apolline, Gabrielle, Andromeda, and Gascon—had gone ahead to Grimmauld Place via the Leaky Cauldron's Floo connection. Tonks and Moody remained outside on the street, running interference and keeping watch. Which left Harry, Hermione, and Fleur with two stops remaining: Madam Malkin's Robes for All Occasions, and the apothecary.

Madam Malkin bustled between the two groups, her wand conducting the tape measures with practised flicks. She attended the Malfoy party first, as they'd arrived earlier, and the boy hadn't stopped talking since Harry had walked in.

"—Father managed to get the Greengrasses to agree to a twelve-percent reduction on the initial outlay, which gives us controlling interest in the expansion plots along the Devon coast. Quite the coup, really. Father maintains the Greengrasses have been overextended ever since the Shafiqs—their backing family, going back several centuries—had an heir crisis recently—"

The boy's silver-blond hair was slicked back from a pale, pointed face. He stood on the fitting platform as though it were a stage, spine locked straight, chin up. Somebody had drilled deportment into him before he could walk, and he'd mistaken it for gravitas. The tape measure wound around his chest and he barely acknowledged it. Every sentence landed like he expected the room to take notes.

"—and then there was the collection. Father recently sold quite the—"

"Draco, dear."

The girl on the next platform didn't raise her voice. She didn't need to. The words came out quiet, measured, and tired—not tired of the moment, tired of the sentence itself, worn thin from repeated use. She didn't look at the boy—Draco—when she spoke. She kept her gaze forward, chin elevated, whilst the tape measure circled her waist.

"You really shouldn't be discussing Father's business dealings in the open."

Draco stiffened. The colour rose from his collar to his cheekbones in a wave, and for half a second, his composure fractured. Then he recovered. He ran a hand across his slicked hair—smoothing what was already smooth—and adjusted his expression into something approaching nonchalance.

"Quite right, Cass. Poor form, really, to dangle before the unprivileged what they cannot attain."

Harry felt Hermione's gaze on the side of his face. He raised an eyebrow. Hermione returned it. Fleur, on Harry's other side, performed the same motion with marginally more Gallic disdain.

The blonde girl—Cass, Draco's sister—turned her head and met Harry's eyes.

Pale blue, washed nearly to grey. Winter sky over the North Sea. Her gaze didn't linger or wander—it catalogued. Threat level, social standing, potential utility, all assessed and filed in the space of a single glance. Her features were similar to Draco's—the same sharp planes and aristocratic angles—but where Draco's face carried a boyish petulance beneath the haughtiness, hers held something cooler. More contained.

She gave Harry a small, precise nod.

He returned it out of habit. The automatic courtesy of acknowledging someone who'd acknowledged you.

The black-haired girl beside them hadn't spoken at all, but she watched Draco with undisguised reverence, as though the monologue about property acquisitions were being performed for her benefit alone. She stood with her arms slightly away from her body to accommodate the measuring tape, her dark eyes tracking between the two groups with sharp, watchful interest.

Harry's thoughts raced whilst the tape measure wound around his inseam and he fought the urge to flinch.

Draco. Draco Malfoy. That much was obvious—the hair, the attitude, the casual references to "Father" and the Greengrasses. But the sister was a problem. Harry cycled through his memory of the books—the real books, the ones he and Hermione and presumably Fleur had read in their previous lives—and found no mention of a Malfoy daughter. The Slytherin roster in the stories had been sparse: Draco, Crabbe, Goyle, Pansy Parkinson, Blaise Zabini, Theodore Nott. The Greengrasses appeared later. Daphne and Astoria. Draco had married Astoria after the war—or would have, if this world followed the script.

But there'd been no sister.

He added it to the growing list of divergences. School starting at eighteen instead of eleven. The gate dampeners that regulated and absorbed

accidental magic across the country, feeding excess energy back into ley lines—a system never mentioned in any of the seven books. The Greengrass-Granger historical connection through agricultural contracts and shared bloodlines. And now a second Malfoy.

Older or younger? He couldn't tell. Draco and the girl looked the same age, give or take. He'd never been able to remember if Draco's birthday was specified in the books. June? September? It escaped him. But since Hermione was nearly a year his senior and they were in the same school year, the Hogwarts intake clearly operated on a wide age band. The two Malfoys could be months apart. Or they could be fraternal twins. Looking at their faces side by side—the same jaw, the same colouring, the same pale eyes—twins seemed the more likely answer.

The black-haired girl was almost certainly Pansy Parkinson. The blunt bangs matched Harry's vague mental image, though he'd never paid much attention to her description in the books. She'd been cruel and petty in the stories. Here she stood quietly on a fitting platform with her mouth shut, which was already an improvement.

"There," Madam Malkin said, flicking her wand sharply. The measuring tapes around the Malfoy party snapped back into neat coils and dropped onto the counter. "That's you sorted. The first uniform will arrive by owl at six o'clock tomorrow morning. I'll have the remainder sent to Hogwarts directly."

Draco stepped off the platform first—smooth, practised, as though he'd been fitted for robes since infancy. His sister followed with less flourish and more efficiency. The black-haired girl hopped down last, landing lightly on the balls of her feet.

"My thanks, Madam Malkin," the Malfoy sister said. Her voice was clipped, polite, and empty of warmth.

The three departed without acknowledging Harry, Hermione, or Fleur further. The shop bell chimed as the door swung shut behind them.

Then Madam Malkin turned.

She was a squat witch with kind eyes that had, at some point during the last thirty years of outfitting Hogwarts students, developed a permanent furrow of irritation between them. She looked at Harry, then Hermione, then Fleur. Her gaze lingered on Fleur for a beat longer—the allure, even dampened, still drew attention—before returning to Harry with an expression he recognised from every tradesperson who'd ever dealt with a last-minute order.

"Another group of students who think it prudent to get their uniforms the day before term starts."

The three of them winced as one.

"We're very sorry," Harry said.

"Our sincerest apologies, Madam," Hermione added.

"*Pardonnez-nous*," Fleur said.

Madam Malkin looked between them—the plain apology, the formal apology, and the French apology—and her furrow deepened by approximately one millimetre.

They offered no excuse. There was none to give that wouldn't sound ridiculous. *'We were in Paris getting custom wands from a French artisan and it took longer than expected because she needed to attune the resonance between a manticore heartstring and apple wood'* wasn't going to improve anyone's mood.

Madam Malkin sighed. It was the sigh of a woman who had been sighing the same sigh for decades and would continue sighing it until she retired or died, whichever came first.

"Every year," she said, flicking her wand. The tape measures surged back to life and descended on Harry with purposeful aggression. One wrapped around his neck. Another seized his right arm. A third dove for his ankle. "Every single year. You'd think that after receiving their letters weeks in advance, students would have the basic organisational capacity to—hold still, dear—visit during

any of the preceding thirty days. But no. They all descend on the thirtieth, or in your case the thirty-first, as though the calendar were a decorative fiction."

Her wand conducted the tapes from Harry to Hermione, then to Fleur. Measurements recorded themselves on a self-inking quill hovering over parchment.

"Now, for last-minute purchases, the process is expedited but not miraculous. Your first uniform—one set of outer robes, one pointed hat, one pair of protective gloves—will be delivered by owl early tomorrow morning. That's dragon hide for the gloves, standard issue. The remaining four sets will be sent directly to Hogwarts and should arrive by Monday evening at the latest."

"That's perfectly acceptable," Hermione said. "Thank you."

"Perfectly acceptable," Madam Malkin muttered, guiding her tape measures with sharp, economical wand movements. "I should hope so. At least I can be grateful that since the age change, students are generally young adults. You lot don't change much in measurements from one fitting to the next—unless you've fallen victim to the daily Hogwarts spread and grown horizontally rather than vertically. Which happens more often than you'd think. The kitchens are generous and the students are weak."

Harry caught Hermione's eye. Then Fleur's. The three of them maintained carefully neutral expressions whilst the seamstress continued her audit of their dimensions and her grievances in equal measure.

The quill scratched furiously.

"And the purebloods!" Years of accumulated grievance sharpened the word to a point. "Oh, Madam Malkin, the fabric is too coarse. Oh, Madam Malkin, could you add a silk lining? Oh, Madam Malkin, my family crest needs to be embroidered on the inside collar in thread-of-gold. As if I'm running a bespoke atelier and not a school uniform shop."

Harry bit the inside of his cheek. Beside him, Fleur's shoulders trembled with suppressed laughter.

"There." Madam Malkin's wand slashed a final arc. The tape measures retreated, the quill dotted its final full stop, and the parchment rolled itself into a neat scroll. "You're done. Seven Galleons each, twelve Sickles for rush delivery. And for the love of Merlin, don't come to me in November asking for alterations because you've discovered Butterbeer."

They paid, apologised again, and filed towards the door. Harry held it open for Hermione and Fleur, and as he stepped through, Madam Malkin called after them.

"Hats are mandatory! I don't care what the upper years tell you—the pointed hat is part of the uniform and I will not be held responsible when Professor McGonagall sends you back to the dormitories!"

The door swung shut. The bell chimed. Harry glanced at Hermione and found his own amusement looking back.

'I like her.'

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The apothecary smelled like a greenhouse that had been left to its own devices for decades. Dried herbs hung in dense clusters from the rafters. Glass jars of pickled things lined shelves from floor to ceiling—beetle eyes, newt spleens, armadillo bile, things Harry preferred not to identify. The wooden floor was stained with the residue of a thousand spilled potions, and the air held a thickness that coated the back of the throat.

It was, at least, a straightforward process. Like Flourish and Blotts before it—where they'd collected their textbooks in under twenty minutes by simply stating their year—the apothecary operated on the principle that every September brought a predictable flood of students requiring a predictable set of ingredients. First-year Hogwarts. Standard kit. The shop kept pre-assembled packages behind the counter, adjusted annually according to the updated curriculum, and sold them by the dozen.

"Year?" the harried witch behind the counter asked without looking up from her ledger.

"First," Hermione said. "Three kits, please."

"Three kits, first year. Fifteen Galleons even. Current wait is forty minutes—we've run out of prepared kits and need to assemble fresh."

Hermione paid. The witch handed her a numbered ticket—thirty-seven—and returned to her ledger.

Forty minutes. Because, of course, every student in the country had left their shopping to the last possible day, and the apothecary was heaving. The queue snaked from the counter through the narrow aisles and nearly out the door. Customers squeezed past one another between shelves, reaching over heads for jars, bumping elbows, apologising in harried tones.

In hindsight, they should have just ordered the ingredient kits by owl. Term started tomorrow—a Saturday—and the first actual day of classes wouldn't be until Monday. They could have had everything delivered to Hogwarts without needing to stand in a cramped shop for forty minutes, breathing in armadillo bile fumes and dodging a family of redheads.

But Hermione had insisted. She wanted to browse, which in Hermione's vocabulary meant she'd already identified six supplementary ingredients she intended to purchase and Harry's vault was about to learn another expensive lesson.

Though he understood the impulse. For a magus, access to an entire shop of magical reagents was intoxicating. Back in their old reality, materials like these would have been impossible to source—every phantasmal creature had long since retreated to the Reverse Side of the World, taking their bones and blood and heartstrings with them. Here, dragon's blood sat on a shelf with a price tag. Manticore parts could be harvested by anyone mad enough to fight one. The stock in this shop alone outstripped anything the Clock Tower's procurement department could offer on its best day.

It just didn't compare to the real thing. Harry had killed a manticore with his own hands, had forged with dragon's blood for months, and neither creature carried the presence of the beasts Heracles had fought, or Curruoid, the sea monster whose bones had become Gae Bolg. Potent, yes. Phantasmal, no. Different weight entirely.

Which meant Hermione was going to buy everything that interested her and justify it later.

The shop's crowd had its own geography, and the most prominent cluster was a family of redheads.

Harry counted them as they dispersed through the shop. A tall, thin man with a receding hairline and spectacles—Arthur Weasley, almost certainly. He stood near the entrance looking mildly overwhelmed, his gaze tracking between his children the way a man might watch several small fires burning simultaneously, unsure which to address first. A shorter, rounder woman with a kind face and a voice built to carry—Molly. Then the children. Two identical boys, tall and rangy, moving in perfect synchronisation as they examined a display of poisonous mushrooms with far too much enthusiasm. A gangly boy with the same red hair—taller than the twins but thinner, all elbows and wrists, as though he'd grown six inches in the last year and his body hadn't caught up—with a smear of something on his nose, arguing with one of the twins about the ownership of a Chocolate Frog card. Another boy, tall, with horn-rimmed glasses and a prefect's bearing, reading the label on a jar of scarab beetles with scholarly intensity. A girl with the same flaming hair, browsing the dried herb section with quiet attention.

And one more. Tall. Lean. An earring catching the lamplight. He stood slightly apart from the family group, arms folded, watching the shop with an easy half-smile—present out of obligation, or possibly because someone interesting had walked in.

"I'm glad you didn't reincarnate as Ron Weasley," Hermione whispered to Fleur, her voice barely audible beneath the shop's din.

Harry closed his eyes.

Fleur looked at Hermione, then at Harry, and shook her head.

"What?" Hermione said. "I'm just saying. Can you imagine? The King of Knights. The Once and Future King. Reborn as—"

"Hermione."

"—a gangly teenage boy with a rat. A rat that was actually—"

"Hermione."

She closed her mouth. But the self-satisfied curl at the corner of her lips remained.

The three separated to browse whilst they waited. The displays were well-organised, at least. Each ingredient sat beneath a placard detailing its name, arithmantic value and formula, quality grade, known properties, and standard potion applications. Harry drifted towards the minerals and metals section, running his eyes across powdered moonstone (arithmantic coefficient 7.3, lunar-aligned, primary use in Draught of Peace), crushed scarab beetles (coefficient 4.1, solar-aligned, Wit-Sharpening Potion), and bezoar fragments (coefficient undefined, universal antidote properties, sourced from the stomach of a goat).

He paused before a display of dragon blood. Twelve uses, according to the placard, which credited Dumbledore with their formal classification. Harry had spent enough time with the substance over the past months—forging with it, analysing its structure, using it to craft the magically neutral blades for the Azkaban operation—to know that twelve was a conservative number.

A commotion erupted from the mushroom display.

One of the Weasley twins had done something—Harry didn't see what—to the shorter red-haired boy. The boy's face was now a vivid shade of purple, clashing spectacularly with his hair, and he was sputtering whilst the twins howled with laughter. A fine yellow powder hung in the air around them.

"Fred! George!" Molly Weasley's voice sliced through the shop. Several customers near the door flinched. "If I have to come over there—"

"It was George!"

"It was Fred!"

"It was both of you! Ronald, come here. Come here right now. Let me look at you."

Ron—presumably—stumbled towards his mother, his purple face twisted in outrage, one hand clamped over his nose. The twins trailed behind, shoulders shaking, identical expressions of poorly suppressed glee on their identical faces.

The red-haired girl near the herb section didn't even look up. She'd clearly seen this exact performance too many times to find it interesting. Her brown eyes drifted from her brothers to the wider shop, scanning faces without particular interest—

And met Harry's.

He looked away immediately. Casual. Natural. Just a stranger's gaze sliding past another stranger's in a crowded room. Nothing to note. Nothing to remember. His scar was hidden, and there was no reason for a girl who'd never met him to give him a second glance.

He moved.

Because across the shop, the tall redhead with the earring was leaning against the shelf beside Fleur.

Harry wound between customers, stepping around a woman arguing with her daughter about the necessity of a gold cauldron, and approached from the far aisle. He could hear the conversation before he reached them—though "conversation" was generous. The redhead was doing most of the talking, but not all of it.

"—youngest curse-breaker Gringotts has employed in over forty years," the redhead was saying. He leaned against the shelf with one arm braced above him, posture open, dragon-fang earring swinging gently as he tilted his head. He had, Harry noted, the kind of easy physicality that came from years of fieldwork—tanned, fit, comfortable in his own skin. "The work's brilliant—dangerous, naturally, but that's part of the appeal."

Curse-breaker. Gringotts. The earring. Bill Weasley, then—the eldest of the brood.

Fleur examined a jar of lacewing flies.

Bill paused. To his credit, he read the silence. Most men hit with Fleur's indifference either stammered harder or retreated. Bill did neither. He shifted approach.

"Sorry—I'm talking about myself, and I haven't even asked. You're shopping for Hogwarts?"

"*Oui*," Fleur said, without looking up.

"First year? You don't sound English—French?"

"*Oui*."

"Beauxbatons transfer?" He sounded genuinely curious now, the showmanship dialling down a notch. "That's rare. I spent a summer working with their ward team at the Palais—beautiful architecture. The layered enchantments on the east wing alone are some of the finest I've seen outside Egypt."

A fractional pause from Fleur. The Beauxbatons reference had landed—not because she was impressed, Harry thought, but because it was the first thing Bill had said that constituted an actual conversation rather than a performance. She turned the jar of lacewing flies in her hand, reading the label.

"Ze architecture is adequate," she said.

Bill smiled. It was, Harry had to admit, a good smile. The kind that worked on most people. He pressed the opening.

"What drew you to Hogwarts? If you don't mind my asking."

Fleur set the jar back on the shelf with a soft click.

"I do mind," she said.

Another silence. Bill held it well—didn't flinch, didn't fill it immediately. He glanced at the lacewing flies, then back at Fleur.

"Fair enough. I'll try a different question—have you been to Diagon Alley before? If you need recommendations, there's a—"

"I 'ave everyzing I need," Fleur said. Her tone was polite. Immovably polite. The kind of politeness that functioned as a wall.

Harry noted with grudging respect that the allure didn't seem to be affecting Bill in the typical way. Most men who encountered Fleur's Veela heritage without preparation became slack-jawed and glassy-eyed, reduced to stammering and staring. Bill wasn't doing that. His interest was deliberate, adaptive—he'd noticed the standard approach wasn't working and kept adjusting rather than doubling down. That meant he had either natural resistance or had been trained to handle Veela enchantment through his work with the goblins. Either way, it was impressive. He simply had the misfortune of trying to charm someone who already had a significant other. Two significant others. And, knowing Hermione, possibly a future third or fourth if she ever decided to expand the arrangement—a prospect Harry had learned neither to encourage nor to rule out.

He wouldn't comment on Hermione's greed. Not within Gandr distance.

Harry remembered something Fleur and Hermione had told him. Not here—not in this life. In the previous one. A conversation in the kitchen of their Fuyuki apartment, late at night. Rin cross-legged on the counter, ankles swinging. Saber sitting straight-backed at the table, teacup held in both hands.

"It's not that we can't handle these situations ourselves, Shirou. Obviously we can. But sometimes..."

Saber had set down her cup. "Sometimes it is pleasant when you choose to speak for us. Even knowing we don't require it."

"Especially knowing," Rin had added, and smiled.

Harry stepped forward.

He walked directly between Fleur and the redhead, close enough that the taller man had to drop his arm from the shelf and step back. Harry didn't acknowledge him. Didn't look at him. He leaned against the shelf beside Fleur, matching her angle, and turned his head towards her.

"Found anything interesting?"

Fleur's expression thawed into something softer—not dramatically, not in a way anyone watching would notice, but Harry saw it. The slight easing around her eyes. The tension leaving her shoulders.

"*Non*," she said. "Nozing in zis store has really caught my eye."

She looked directly at Bill when she said it.

Behind them—from somewhere near the mushroom display—came a dramatic gasp.

"George, are you witnessing this?"

"I am witnessing this, Fred."

"The legendary William Arthur Weasley. Curse-breaker extraordinaire. Conqueror of tombs. Charmer of witches across three continents."

"Rebuffed."

"Defeated."

"Humiliated."

"Brought low by a blonde in a baseball cap."

"The first recorded instance of THE Bill Weasley failing to charm a living creature. And I'm including the sphinx in Luxor."

"Everyone should hear about this."

"We should frame this."

"We should commission a painting."

The last sentence came in perfect unison—practised, polished, timed to the syllable. A double act that had clearly been touring for years.

Harry didn't turn around. Neither did Fleur. They moved together towards the counter, away from the shelf and away from Bill, whose reflection in the shop's grimy front window showed an expression shifting from confident to bewildered inside three seconds.

The twins followed them at a distance, their commentary undiminished.

"Note the tactical retreat, George."

"Clean. Efficient. Decisive."

"He's already moved to the bezoar section. Look at him pretending to read the label."

"Tragic."

"Do you think he'll recover?"

"Physically, yes. Emotionally? That's a longer timeline."

The three of them walked towards the exit, past the Weasley family—Molly still scrubbing purple powder off Ron's cheeks, Arthur examining a jar of something with absent-minded fascination, the twins now suspiciously quiet, and Bill standing alone by the bezoars with his arms crossed and his earring very still.

Harry filed the eldest Weasley away. Curse-breaker. Gringotts. Resistant to Veela allure. In the books, Bill had been one of the good ones—Order of the Phoenix, fought at the final battle, scarred by Fenrir Greyback. Worth keeping track of, even if his taste in witches wanted adjusting.

They stepped out into the fading light of Diagon Alley.

The memory faded.

Harry blinked. The platinum-blond girl stood in the corridor of the Hogwarts Express, her pale eyes fixed on his face with the same cool assessment she'd shown in Madam Malkin's shop. Behind her, Draco and Ron had paused their argument to stare.

"You're Harry Potter," she said. It wasn't a question. "We've met. Briefly. At Madam Malkin's, yesterday afternoon."

Harry remembered the nod. The automatic courtesy.

"We did," he said. "I remember."

Her gaze flicked past him into the cabin, where Hermione sat with her textbook and Fleur reclined against the window. Something shifted in her expression—a slight narrowing, a recalculation—before she returned her attention to Harry.

"Cassiopeia Malfoy," she said. "My brother, Draco."

She gestured behind her. Draco had abandoned his argument with Ron entirely and was staring at Harry with an expression caught between recognition and indecision. Ron, behind him, had gone very red.

"Pleasure," Harry said.

The toad between Draco and Ron let out a low, mournful croak.

End

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