

“Charlie, we need to talk to Dad. We need to get our seats,” Bill declared. Sirius felt Charlie tense beside him.

“You think he’ll go for it?”

Sirius knew the boys had been laying the groundwork for a while now, especially since Arthur’s attack.

“We’ll have to keep at him until he does. If we leave it too late, we risk getting caught out by Dumbledore; he’ll never let Dad pass his seats on to us if he thinks there’s even a *chance* of us voting against him,” Bill pointed out with a frown. “Hell, having the guarantee Dad will vote with him is the only thing that keeps him one up on Malfoy.”

With all the seat proxies given to Lucius Malfoy from various Death Eater friends who were incarcerated, or otherwise unable to take up the positions, it gave him nine votes in the Wizengamot alone. But with all of Harry’s proxies, Dumbledore held nine of his own, and several more that were his in all but magic, considering how devoted their true holders were. Considering those who kept their politics firmly neutral were often not Dumbledore’s biggest fans, losing the Weasley and Prewett backing might just tip him out of his power vacuum.

Not that Bill and Charlie would necessarily agree with *anything* Malfoy proposed, but it would stop Dumbledore passing his ridiculous, restrictive bills that so many people didn’t realise were merely cementing the old man’s foothold in society.

“If you can, that’ll be a huge step in our plans,” Sirius agreed. He ran a hand through his hair in frustration. “Merlin, I wish I could do something useful.” If he were a free man, he could take Harry’s proxy seats as his godfather, without it necessarily looking like the boy’s faith in Dumbledore was waning. He could take up the Black seat, as he should have years ago.

At this rate, they would have to wait until all of Harry’s classmates began turning seventeen before any real progress could be made. And that was only if many of them could convince the current seat holders to step down — not all of them had dead parents and proxy holders, after all.

“You’re doing what you can,” Charlie protested, hand squeezing Sirius’ knee. “We always knew the Ministry would take time. There won’t be any real change until all of the Death Eaters have been weeded out. Fudge’s incompetence is just making that part of our jobs even harder.”

He was right, and they all knew it — Dumbledore’s adoring public wouldn’t matter one knut if Voldemort took the Ministry proper. All the kids coming of age wouldn’t mean anything if it was too dangerous for them to attend Wizengamot sessions.

“Now he’s got his best generals back, we know the Dark Lord won’t wait around forever,” Kingsley said solemnly. “He’ll strike eventually. And we’ll be ready when he does.” Sirius caught the man’s dark gaze, seeing it become bloodthirsty for just the briefest moment. “We know who the key players are. If we can catch them, get them off the board, we can begin to turn the tide. Enough for Harry to sweep in and do the rest, once he’s ready.”