

“And of course, there’s all the vacant and proxy seats. And some people hold two seats. Like Nott,” Susan continued.

“Theo holds the Nott seat, and the Avery seat on his mother’s side,” Zabini explained.

“Is it unusual for someone to hold two seats?” Harry asked nervously, thinking of the four he had waiting for him when he came of age. Zabini shrugged.

“It’s rare, but not unheard of. Family lines inter-mix fairly well, but most pureblood lines try not to merge too many heirs into one family, or if they do they’ll spread the seats out amongst siblings, like the Weasleys. The mix of family magics can be a little... volatile.”

Great. Even in the pureblood world, he was a freak.

“I read that some of the seats have been vacant for decades,” Harry said. Like the Slytherin seat, and the Peverell seat. Harry didn’t understand why his father hadn’t been Lord Peverell, only the proxy to it — surely it didn’t come through his mother’s line?

“Sometimes lines die out,” Neville informed him. “If the family magics can’t find a suitable heir, they’ll sit in proxy until one steps into the Wizengamot hall. There are probably a few heirs to the older lines who don’t even realise it, but without a Line Test they’ll never know, and that’s not exactly common these days. If a line has truly died, once confirmed by Gringott’s, then the seat stays empty. Some lines are just waiting for a valid heir to come of age, and those seats are held in proxy to whichever family was allied the closest to them when the last heir was in session. Except the Founders’ seats; those always belong to whoever’s head of Hogwarts.”

“The Founders’ lines are different, though,” Goldstein said. Harry eyed him questioningly. “There’s been plenty of legal heirs to the Hogwarts founders in the last few centuries, but their family magics are fussy. If you don’t fit the bill, you can’t claim the seat. And they don’t necessarily make that decision when you come of age. Usually it happens when there’s great conflict in the wizarding world, and the heirs are needed to bring guidance. Also, they’re interlinked — you either get all four, or none at all. So of course, it’s really rare circumstances for the Founders’ seats to be occupied by actual heirs. Hasn’t happened since 1783. Most of the time, even if you’re a legal heir, the family magic just kind-of... sits there.”

Harry’s shoulders relaxed a fraction. That was one less thing to worry about.

“So between us in this room, we hold almost a third of the seats of the Wizengamot. Or we will, once we all take our seats. That’s why it’s important to play nice in these early stages, so we can make fair and just decisions for the good of wizard-kind.” Hannah’s words were accompanied by a sweet smile and a pointed look in the direction of some of the Slytherins.

“Don’t expect us to be nice to you, Potter,” Greengrass said plainly. “We all have roles to play. But good heirs don’t hold grudges. The Dark Lord almost won because his followers had too many Wizengamot seats, and we’re worse off for it, regardless of what our elders say. I refuse to let that happen again.” She held her head up proudly, daring someone to comment,