

“He is. So are Crabbe and Goyle, and Theo, Pansy, and Millicent,” Zabini confirmed. His voice was deep; he’d hit puberty at the end of first year, and even the fifth and sixth year girls were paying attention to him by now. Harry didn’t know much about him, except that he kept to himself, stayed out of fights, and was incredibly good-looking. “Draco’s situation is complicated.”

Harry snorted; he’d bet he knew about as much about Draco’s situation as Zabini did, by now. “So what’s the point of this little meeting, other than introductions? Is there some sort of induction ritual, or a test I need to pass? How do you know you can trust me?”

“You’re Harry Potter,” Susan said flatly, rolling her eyes. “Also, Neville vouched for you. That’s good enough for us.”

“No ritual, no test. Just a bit of conversation,” Padma Patil piped up, smiling prettily.

Harry looked between the sisters, brow furrowing in confusion. “How can you both be heirs? If you don’t mind me asking. I mean, surely one of you is older.”

“I am,” Padma confirmed. “But our family magic will decide which one of us is fit to be heir once we come of age, so for now we both train for the position. Lots of families work that way with twins — it hardly seems fair to decide just because of a few minutes of extra life.”

“Different family magics have different conditions for inheritance,” Greengrass explained, her tone surprisingly free of condescension. “Some go for boys over girls, some have magical strength take precedence, some have bizarre and obscure inheritance laws. Not every family makes their public.”

“So how do I know I meet those conditions?” Harry asked, wondering if it had all been some big mistake.

“If the Gringotts Line Test says you’re an heir, you’re an heir,” Warrington told him. “Otherwise it would just say you’re a potential heir. I have an older brother, but the family magic passed him over due to an... incident when we were kids.” His lips twisted in a sour expression, and Harry didn’t dare ask for details.

He looked around the room, studying faces carefully. “So this is what the Wizengamot is going to look like in ten years, hmm?”

“Maybe not ten,” Hannah said, shrugging. “Some of us still have parents or guardians happy to keep their seats for another fifteen years or so, if all goes well. But eventually, yes.”

“This isn’t even half of the Wizengamot seats, though. What about the rest?”

“Just because most purebloods try and have children at the same time, doesn’t mean it worked out for everybody. Accidents happen,” Susan said with a cheeky wink. “The rest are either too young for Hogwarts or already graduated.”

“There’s twenty-one of us at the moment that we know of,” Warrington cut in. “But there could be more; not everyone makes their heir’s identity public knowledge.”