

the brain capacity for anything more complicated. So he let it go, and Hermione pursed her lips, and walked away.

.-.-.

Other things that Harry didn't have the brain capacity for included a meeting with the heirs right before dinner, but he didn't know when he'd next get the chance, and the clock was ticking. They deserved to know the truth.

They were all gathered when he arrived, slumping down into his usual empty chair.

"What's all this about, then?" Anthony asked, quill tucked behind his ear as he looked up from an essay he was writing. "Surely you don't want to study that desperately after yesterday."

No, if Harry had his way, he'd be in bed until dinnertime. "I was talking to Neville, and I think it's time I tell you all about the full reason Dumbledore can't know about this. About me. I'm trusting you with an awful lot, and it's unfair that you're not being told why. Also, you'll need to be in on it if we're going to achieve what I'm hoping for."

"And just what is it, exactly, that you're hoping to achieve?" The question came from Padma, her gaze shrewd. Harry winked at her.

"World domination." The answer made several people laugh. Harry sat up straighter, and took a long breath.

"When I was a baby, Dumbledore did a ritual to block my family magics from my core."

There was a beat of silence. Everyone was too horrified to speak. Then finally, Susan swore loudly. The sound of such a filthy curse coming from the mild-mannered Hufflepuff's lips was almost as shocking as Harry's announcement.

"How *dare* he!" she exclaimed. "If my aunt ever found out, he'd be dead before he could make it to Azkaban!"

"One day, maybe," Harry said with a shrug. "It's not worth getting the truth out just yet. I need too much information from him first."

"He's turning you into a weapon." Harry whipped around to look at Sullivan Fawley, whose dark eyes were frighteningly aware. "A block that extended from a man like him on a person as powerful as yourself, you'd explode as soon as you turned seventeen. Or the moment the block was released."

The realisation went around the room quickly. Harry nodded. "Whatever he's planning, he's aiming for a moment in my life, before I turn seventeen, where he can pull the pin and make me go boom. Along with the block was a Compulsion charm — to make me reckless, and to make me easily influenced. Dumbledore made himself my saviour, with just enough magic to stop me looking for other options. So that when I was surrounded by people who said that all Slytherins were dark wizards and I should hate them, I agreed. When someone told me all