

Hufflepuffs were the Hogwarts rejects, I smiled and nodded. When I heard that Ravenclaws had their noses too far in books to be worth talking to, I didn't question it. Obviously, I know better now. I got the block and the charm removed before third year, and it's only a matter of time before he finds out. But I'll be ready when he does."

"So where do we come in?" Blaise asked quietly.

"When I expose Dumbledore, it's going to rock the foundations of the wizarding world. As far as they're all concerned, he can do no wrong, and I'm just an idiot teenager with a death-wish and a puffed up sense of self-importance. Skeeter isn't helping with these articles."

"Aunt Amelia's working on that," Susan assured. "You should get a letter from her at the end of the week."

Harry nodded; that was one angle covered. "Between us we have thirteen seats to inherit. I know of three more I can trust. And I'm betting there's a few more, if we can go about it the right way." He glanced pointedly at the Slytherins. There was no way they and Draco were the only Slytherins who didn't want the dark to rise. They just had to be wary of their parents.

"I'm not counting thirteen," Anthony cut in, looking around the room. Harry bit his lip; he had to tell them eventually.

"I'm the heir to the Potter, Black and Peverell seats," he declared. There was no point in telling them about Slytherin; from the sounds of things, that would sit passive his whole life.

"Well, fuck," Daphne muttered incredulously. "That'll take three of Dumbledore's proxy seats away." A catlike smirk flashed across her pale face. "You're going to cause all sorts of trouble, aren't you, Potter?"

"That is how it usually ends up, yeah," he admitted, because even though he didn't *try* and cause trouble, it always just sort of... happened. "So there's enough of us to have a good safety net when it all goes to shit. But there could be more. Even if they're not with us, if we can make them neutral at the very least — in an ideal world, every student who leaves this castle in the next five years would do so wanting to serve neither Voldemort nor Dumbledore. Because the way things are going, that's a very real choice they're going to have to make."

"Who would you rather we serve, you?" Cassius asked somewhat snidely. Harry winced.

"Merlin, no. I'm asking people to serve no one, but to fight *with* me. For themselves. For the good of the wizarding world."

A long silence followed his words. It was Daphne who broke it by snorting. "Bit dramatic." Harry flushed.

"You're proposing a third side to the war? Right under Dumbledore's nose?" Susan's sharp gaze met his. He nodded slowly.

"Yeah. Yeah, I suppose I am."