

“Oi!” Sirius protested, only to be tossed a vial of his own. “Okay, yeah, new favourite, sorry Moony.”

Remus was not there to argue, but Snape’s lips twitched.

“I only do that for Severus and Draco,” Harry assured, seeing several concerned looks around the table. “I don’t just blindly drink any old thing I’m handed, promise.” He could trust those two — both to not give him poison, but also to know exactly which potions he could take safely at any given time.

Despite his scowl, Snape had brought enough potions for everyone who needed one, stoically ignoring any and all gratefulness in response.

“Did you just come to sober us all up so we don’t make tits of ourselves at the Ministry, or did you need something?” Charlie asked, one of the few people at the table who was far too used to Snape to take offense at the man’s general countenance.

“I am coming with you,” Snape replied. “Gringotts has confirmed that I am indeed still eligible for the Prince seat, and I am long overdue in claiming my birthright.” Harry was sure only he and perhaps Sirius and Narcissa could see the tension in Snape’s shoulders, the slight hesitation at his admission. He was nervous, confessing these secrets of his past to a group of mostly students.

Susan gasped, eye lighting up excitedly. “I wondered where Dumbledore’s last seat came from! It’s been you all along!”

“Indeed.” Snape inclined his head. “I went straight from Hogwarts to my Apprenticeship and then to teaching, so I was never given the opportunity to come forward. Dumbledore,” he sneered, “has been my proxy since my mother passed. It is high time that changed.”

“Doesn’t that mean Dumbledore’s got no seats left?” Ernie pointed out. “Unless he’s been willed any proxies in the last year.”

“I think we’re mostly present and accounted for,” Narcissa confirmed. “As far as I’m aware, the only sitting Wizengamot members who died in battle were ones who almost certainly willed their seats to my late husband. Unless they updated their wills recently, I should be gaining quite a few more.” She looked less than pleased by that outcome.

“I think some seats will have died off, now,” Draco mused, a dark edge to his voice. “Crabbe and Goyle were the last of their families. And I think the Lestranges have gone extant, too.”

“We shall see,” said Narcissa primly. “And on that note, we had best get going.”

“Do you have room for one more?” Professor Slughorn slipped through the open door, hands on the lapels of his velvet jacket. “I’m running rather late, my apologies. But I ate in my quarters, so if you are all on your way then might I accompany you?”

In all the chaos, Harry had completely forgotten that Slughorn was also on the Wizengamot.