

them all dressed in their official garb, staring down at him, made Charlie's neck prickle with sweat.

"With the permission of my father, Lord Prewett, Arthur Weasley; I, William Weasley, have come to claim the Prewett seat of my birthright," Bill declared, his voice strong. Charlie stared hard at a point on the wall ahead of him.

"With the permission of my father, Lord Weasley, Arthur Weasley; I, Charles Weasley, have come to claim the Weasley seat of my birthright," Charlie echoed. A heavy silence filled the room. Then, there were two bright glowing lights up ahead.

The seats had recognised them, and accepted them. Their robes changed, transforming into the same plum robes the rest of the Wizengamot wore.

In the Chief Warlock's seat, Fudge looked apoplectic with rage. Beside him, writing the minutes for the meeting, Percy had dropped his quill in shock. Seeing his younger brother made Charlie's heart clench. He only felt delight at Fudge's anger.

But the magic of the Wizengamot chamber was as old as the Ministry itself, and so complex even the Unspeakables didn't understand it fully. There was no arguing with the magic of birthright.

"Welcome, Lord Prewett, Lord Weasley," Fudge declared reluctantly. "Please, take your seats so we may begin."

Charlie glanced at Bill, who grinned at him, and together they walked up to their glowing chairs, sitting in unison. Instantly, Charlie felt the warm flare of the Weasley magic, accepting him into the family headship. It filled his chest and settled on his shoulders, an *awareness*, a power like nothing he'd ever felt before. And this was only the Weasley half of the magic.

He went wide-eyed for a moment as he thought about how it might feel for Harry, once he could fully accept lordships over all his family magics.

No wonder Dumbledore was afraid.

But as he looked down at a burst of warmth on his hand, he saw the Weasley lordship ring materialise on his right middle finger. He now technically had more of a say in the family than his father; than anyone but Bill. The Prewett magic was stronger than the Weasley magic, and Bill was the elder, after all.

He settled back, listening to Fudge begin some droning speech, his blood fizzing through his veins. They had done it. Now there was no way Dumbledore or their father could take the power away from them. The headmaster didn't know it yet, but his sphere of power had just grown a little bit smaller.

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They flooded back to Bill's flat, and as soon as they were home Charlie reached up to loosen the collar of his robe, letting out a whoop of triumph.