

castle has woken the heirs for the first time in centuries.” He smirked, eyes flashing. “And for all Lord Voldemort calls himself the heir of Slytherin, only one of us has the family magic running through our blood.”

He flicked his fingers, and — much like at the end of year feast — all the drapes in the Great Hall turned green and silver, replacing the school crest with the Slytherin crest. Gasps rang through the room.

Then, Hannah scoffed. “Stop showing off, Potter,” she scolded, getting to her feet. With a flourish of her hand, half of those drapes were black and yellow, flying the badger rampant.

“Both of you are ridiculous.” Neville waved his arm, bringing the Gryffindor banners into the mix. Amused, all three of them stared expectantly at Luna. She giggled, clapping her hands together, completing the set — all four houses were represented equally, as they should be.

“This is fun!” she enthused.

You could have heard a pin drop. Harry looked to his fellow heirs, chin tilting in a slight nod; they knew what they had to do. He got off the table, taking Luna’s hand, Neville and Hannah joining them as they walked towards the staff table.

“Minerva McGonagall,” Harry called, and the woman sat up straighter in her chair. “You stand as deputy headmistress of Hogwarts school. Due to the unsuitable nature of Albus Dumbledore to continue his position; we, the heirs of Hogwarts, entrust our school into your protection. You have served the castle well for many years, and we know you will continue to do so for many more. For the benefit of your students, not for yourself.” He grinned at his housemistress. “Do you accept, Headmistress McGonagall?”

McGonagall sat there for a moment, speechless - a first for the Scottish witch. When she regained her senses, she stood, bowing to them. “I am honoured to accept, and vow to do everything within my power to protect the inhabitants of Hogwarts school, to see them safely through their education and prepare them for life to follow.”

A spark of magic shuddered through Harry, through all four of them, into McGonagall — connecting her to the wards of the school. And, more importantly, disconnected Dumbledore for good. At once, the drapes all furled up again, and when they unrolled they were back to their usual black, proudly displaying the Hogwarts crest. A school united once more.

Hogwarts had accepted the appointment. Minerva McGonagall was the new headmistress.

As a cheer went up around the hall, particularly loud from those dressed in red and gold, Harry watched McGonagall blink, no doubt startled by how intimate the connection to the castle truly could be. “It takes a bit of getting used to,” he told her, and her eyes narrowed in his direction.

“And how long exactly have you been getting used to it?”

He laughed, winking. “Only since Hannah turned seventeen,” he assured. “As far as the castle is concerned, one of us of age is as good as all of us of age.”