

(Every character depicted in the story below is a consenting legal adult over the age of 18)

A/N: Harry gets what he wants, of course!

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All things considered, it's not surprising when half a dozen wands shoot up moments after the Chief Warlock's question, their tips glowing and signaling that they all want to say their piece. Harry arches a brow when Augusta manages to put quite a bit of derision in her voice, even as she calls on the first of them.

"Lady Marchbanks."

Griselda Marchbanks rises to her feet, looking around the room with a sweeping gaze that offers no small amount of disdain.

"I have been alive for too long. I have seen this chamber rise and fall in relevance over the decades. However, I doubt anyone would argue with me on the simple truth that the Wizengamot has never been weaker in its entire history than it is now."

There's some shifting and murmuring at that, but nobody tries to interrupt to express their disagreement. To be fair, it's rather difficult to say Griselda is wrong if one just looks around themselves. The Wizengamot Chamber is made to hold up to a hundred wizards and witches. It currently holds less than a fourth of that number, with the empty seats far, FAR outnumbering the occupied ones.

"That we would question the legitimacy of a member returned to us, of two empty seats being filled once more... is a level of audacity that would take my breath away if I hadn't already learned to expect it from certain members of this chamber."

Oh damn, now that was some serious shade Griselda just threw Narcissa's way. The look on the Lady Malfoy's face is something to be treasured too, her mouth dropping open in the face of Griselda's own audacity. However, before she can

react, before she can likely erupt... Augusta steps in, the Chief Warlock clearing her throat.

“Lady Marchbanks, please keep your comments on the matter at hand. Lord Hallows’ position within this body has already been settled. What we are discussing now is his motion to combine the Potter and Black Seats into one under his new family name.”

Humming, Griselda bows her head.

“Of course, Chief Warlock. Well then, would I be lying if I said I didn’t prefer a world where our newest member sought to hold onto both seats in the hopes of eventually filling the second with an heir? Yes, that would be preferable. However, if the young man wants this, I see no reason to deny him anything.”

With that, the aged witch sits back down with a slightly smug smirk on her face, having clearly mostly wanted to speak just to slam dunk on Narcissa. Harry can’t help but be amused, even as Augusta immediately moves on.

“Lady Greengrass.”

Harry’s brow rises along with Lady Daphne Greengrass as the witch rises to her feet. He could have guessed that Griselda would back him up after how their previous conversations had gone. But what in the world would Greengrass have to say? Was she on Narcissa’s side, perhaps?

“Lord Hallows may be newly arrived to our shores, but he is still one of us. More than that, it will be quite some time before he can father an heir who would be able to take hold of his second seat anyways. In the event that such a future comes to pass, we can revisit the situation then, can’t we? I see no reason to block his motion today.”

Well now, that was a mild surprise. It sounded like Daphne Greengrass was signaling her support of him, despite the fact that they’d never even spoken before. Curiouser and curiouser...

Narcissa also looks rather stunned... before shifting into an expression of pure annoyance. However, there's also a hint of expectation in her eyes... likely because at least a few of the other witches currently waiting to be called upon are intending to speak up in her defense and signal their support for her cause, he imagines.

As Daphne retakes her seat however, things get very interesting very quickly. Before the Longbottom Matriarch can call upon any of the other witches who have their wands raised... the Lady Slytherin lifts up her wand, the tip promptly starting to glow.

The wand, Harry notes, is made of yew. However, it doesn't quite match his memory of Voldemort's wand...

There's a pause in the chamber... and then every other woman who has their wand up puts it down, leaving nobody left to call upon save for the veiled woman in their midst. Harry watches as Augusta's eyes narrow and her lips purse for a brief moment, but finally she nods.

"Lady Slytherin."

The woman doesn't rise from her chair. She remains seated, one leg crossed over the other, the animated gilded snakes on her dress writhing and sliding along her feminine figure. Her voice, when it comes out of the veil, is decidedly... sibilant.

"The boy wants to hobble himself, reducing his voting power from two to one. I see no reason why we shouldn't let him do as he likes."

Now Narcissa truly looks gobsmacked. And even a little betrayed. Nobody speaks, the tension in the chamber absolutely palpable as barely anyone even wants to move. Harry can't help but stare at the cowed visage of Lady Slytherin, wondering who he's dealing with and what she's thinking.

It feels like it would be much too simple for her to be behind all of the wizard murders. Surely it can't be that easy, right? But then... where had she come

from? Who was she, exactly? How was she 'dealing' with Voldemort as Death had said someone was doing, and how had she obtained a claim to House Slytherin?

When it becomes abundantly clear that none of Narcissa's allies are willing to speak up in her name now that the Lady of House Slytherin has spoken against her... Augusta finally clears her throat and speaks.

"Very well. Since there is nobody else who wishes to say their piece, we shall move on to the motion. To reiterate, Lord Hallows' motion is simple. He wishes to consolidate the Potter and Black Seats within this chamber into one single seat under the name of House Hallows. We will vote on this motion now."

Harry watches on, slightly bemused, as the vote proceeds. He wins of course... by a landslide. In fact, there is only one vote in dissent of the motion... from one Lady Narcissa Malfoy, who at this point looks an interesting mixture of shellshocked and petulant. She clearly votes against the measure in protest, a sort of surrender in her attitude that wasn't there before.

It makes him wonder how the vote would have gone if Lady Slytherin hadn't spoken up. Surely Narcissa had to have had a plan... was it possible she had the votes to block him before that point? In the end though, it didn't really matter. What's done was done.

"With that, the motion carries. Lord Hallows, this body recognizes the Seat of House Hallows."

With a wave of her hand, the Chief Warlock melds the two seats in front of Harry into one. He watches on as this happens, a faint smile on his face as he finally circles around from the back and takes his seat once there is only the one chair left in the space.

Resting back in his chair, Harry steeples his fingers together in front of him and inclines his head to the rest of the people in the room.

"My thanks to my fellow members."

Some of them turn up their noses at him still of course, those who are likely of Narcissa's faction even now. Some of them have calculating glints in their eyes, clearly wanting something from him. Among those he sees both Lady Zabini and Lady Greengrass and knows that he hasn't had the last of his interactions with the former... nor should he expect the latter to stay away for long either from the look of things.

Of course... just because Harry had called for this meeting to get his motion passed and the seats consolidated in order to thumb his nose at Narcissa Malfoy... that doesn't mean the meeting is over already. Rather, the Wizengamot then proceeds to use this meeting to go over other things such as proposed legislation and what not.

Or to put it another way, once his bit is done... things get very, very boring. It's all just political posturing and jockeying for scraps of power and influence and now that it doesn't involve him anymore, Harry isn't the least bit interested.

He does stay seated though of course, even as he listens to them all speak and tries not to die of boredom. Leaving the Wizengamot mid-session after getting what he wanted COULD have been seen as a bit of a power play, but it probably would have also made him enemies he wasn't looking to make with certain members of the old guard. The likes of Griselda or Augusta would not look favorably on him for being so irreverent and disrespectful, Harry figured.

... But it really is boring. So boring in fact, that even as he sits in his new Hallows Seat, he finds himself dozing off. It's a little surprising all things considered, because normally he can feign interest a lot better than this. But he's just so tired... so damn tired... he can't keep his eyes open and...

...

"Lord Hallows, it would seem we've bored you to death."

Harry startles awake, blinking as he jolts up in his chair and sucks in a deep breath... the first breath he's breathed in quite some time actually, if his internal

clock is to be believed. He quickly realizes he has quite a few eyes on him... and the Chief Warlock in particular is frowning at him.

He forces a smile on his face and rises to his feet to sketch a quick bow before sitting back down again.

“My apologies. I suppose I spent more time preparing for today than I intended and my sleep suffered for it. More time than I really needed to, as it turned out!”

That draws some titters of laughter from the other members of the truncated Wizengamot, with even Augusta having to hide a small snort of derisive amusement. Harry, meanwhile, forcibly calms his rapidly racing heart back down, even as he sits up in his chair and tries to come to terms with what just happened to him.

“Well, with our newest member back among the land of the living, I hereby bring this Wizengamot Session to a close. Until next time ladies... hm, ladies and gentleman, I suppose.”

More titters of laughter and this time Harry joins in with a soft chuckle... a soft *strained* chuckle that he all but has to force out of him. He’s still reeling a little bit. Because... Augusta’s words were hitting a little closer to home than he would have liked.

He hadn’t just fallen asleep there... he’d *died*.

That was a death and rebirth, he’d know the difference in feeling from a simple nap. He’d fully stopped breathing and his body had ceased biological functions... he’d been killed right here in the Wizengamot Chambers, right through his magical protections, like it was nothing.

His first death by ritual magic... that was understandable. Harry hadn’t been taking the threat seriously, he hadn’t had nearly as many protections in place at that point. To be fair, they hadn’t been taking him very seriously either... they’d gone with one of the quickest and dirtiest methods of long range killing, using a

symptomatic connection between him and his image to just assassinate him from afar.

This was something else altogether, however. And Harry had just one question on his mind, even as he sits there.

How? How had they done that? How had they managed to murder him through his protections without him even seeing it coming? Ugh, it was going to bother him until he figured it out... not least because it could just happen again and again if they wanted to keep doing it.

As everyone starts to get up and either file out of the room or split off into small groups to talk with one another, Harry finds himself rising to his feet as well... only to look across the chamber and make 'eye contact' with a certain Lady Slytherin. He can't actually see her face through the opaque veil of course... but he can feel her eyes on him all the same.

They look at one another from across the chamber for a moment before Lady Slytherin rises to her feet and turns away in a fluid motion, walking out without once looking back. Harry frowns... and decides then and there to go after her and get to the bottom of this. He's not just going to let the mystery of Lady Slytherin stew forever and ever.

Except, just as he's coming to that determination, a voice calls out to him, stopping him in his tracks. It's perhaps one of the only people who he can't blow off right now, all things considered.

"Lord Hallows. A moment of your time, please."

He really, really wants to follow Lady Slytherin... but in the end, he turns to regard Chief Warlock Augusta Longbottom, careful to hide his irritation as he offers her a smile and a nod.

"Chief Warlock. What can I do for you?"

Augusta stares at him appraisingly for a long moment, her face tight and drawn.

“That is the question everyone is asking themselves, isn’t it? The first Wizard Lord in our world in years... and somehow surviving a full week without any terrible fate befalling you. I imagine every single person in this chamber is asking what you can do for them... and what the price would be.”

Harry arches a brow at that and tilts his head to the side.

“Including you, Chief Warlock?”

Augusta’s lips purse even further and her nostrils flare.

“... I may have something to discuss with you Lord Hallows. In private, at a later date. Please be sure to attend me at the Longbottom Ancestral Home at your earliest convenience.”

Was that seriously why she’d stopped him? Ugh, that’s even more annoying, because by this point Harry has no expectation of being able to catch up to Lady Slytherin. The woman will be long gone by now. Still... he simply nods and smiles some more.

“Of course, Chief Warlock. I’d be happy to.”

He’s lying through his teeth of course. Honestly, he’s far more interested in what’s happened today... and figuring out what the fuck killed him. Of course, the question becomes, even as he finally extracts himself from the Wizengamot Chambers without being stopped by anyone else... where does he focus himself first?

Does he start by looking into how he’d just died again, or does he start by looking into who the fuck Lady Slytherin truly is?

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A/N: Remember to Vote, leave a Like, and let me know what you think!

