

A background image of a Hogwarts courtyard. In the foreground, a student is seen from behind, looking towards a group of students on brooms. The students on brooms are in various positions, some appearing to be in the middle of a lesson. The courtyard is green with a stone path, and the Hogwarts castle is visible in the distance under a clear sky.

"Stick out your right hand over your broom," called Madam Hooch at the front, "and say 'Up!' "

"UP!" everyone shouted.

Harry's broom jumped into his hand at once, but it was one of the few that did. Hermione Granger's had simply rolled over on the ground, and Neville's hadn't moved at all. Perhaps brooms, like horses, could tell when you were afraid, thought Harry; there was a quaver in Neville's voice that said only too clearly that he wanted to keep his feet on the ground.

Madam Hooch then showed them how to mount their brooms without sliding off the end, and walked up and down the rows correcting their grips. Harry and Ron were delighted when she told Malfoy he'd been doing it wrong for years.

"Now, when I blow my whistle, you kick off from the ground, hard," said Madam Hooch. "Keep your brooms steady, rise a few feet, and then come straight back down by leaning forward slightly. On my whistle — three — two —"

But Neville, nervous and jumpy and frightened of being left on the ground, pushed off hard before the whistle had touched Madam Hooch's lips.

"Come back, boy!" she shouted, but Neville was rising straight up like a cork shot out of a bottle — twelve feet — twenty feet. Harry saw his scared white face look down at the ground falling away, saw him gasp, slip sideways off the broom and —

WHAM — a thud and a nasty crack and Neville lay facedown on the grass in a heap. His broomstick was still rising higher and higher, and started to drift lazily toward the forbidden forest and out of sight.

Madam Hooch was bending over Neville, her face as white as his.

"Broken wrist," Harry heard her mutter. "Come on, boy — it's all right, up you get."

She turned to the rest of the class.