

Standing Vicky to one side to shake off the spell, he sent McLaggen up next, and shot off a Patronus up to the castle that had several people in the crowd clapping. The girls were equally ruthless, but the blond boy saved all five shots, and landed with a smug smile on his face.

“Ron, you’re up,” Harry said, gesturing for the redhead to take off. Ron looked like he might be sick, being the last candidate and having all eyes on him.

He did fairly well despite his nerves, but missed the fourth shot — and then, thanks to his embarrassment, missed the fifth as well. He was blushing as red as his hair as he stalked off the pitch.

“So the position is mine, then?” McLaggen drawled. Harry grit his teeth.

“No, because Vicky was Confunded. We’re not done yet.” As he spoke, he saw a white-clad figure bustling across the pitch, and smiled. “Thanks for coming, Madam Pomfrey.”

“I have to say, it’s the been a while since I’ve been summoned just for team try-outs,” the medi-witch muttered, shaking her head. “Someone’s been Confunded, you say?”

“Vicky Frobisher,” he confirmed, an arm around Vicky’s shoulders as he brought her towards Pomfrey. The older woman studied the way the Gryffindor girl walked unsteadily, and waved her wand in the same test Harry had used.

“Yes, definite interference here,” Pomfrey confirmed in disapproval. “Not to worry, I’ll have her back to rights in just a moment.” She reached into her bag, tutting quietly. “Honestly, the lengths some people will go to for quidditch!”

She had Vicky drink a potion, and within moments the girl’s eyes were sharp once more. She was furious as she looked at Harry. “You’ll give me another shot, right?” she begged, and Harry squeezed her shoulder.

“Of, course, yeah. Are you up for it now?” Vicky nodded, and Madam Pomfrey confirmed that she should be in perfect mental faculties, so Harry sent her back up to the hoops.

Madam Pomfrey stayed just in case of any further problems, and Harry was glad — hopefully whoever had Confunded Vicky the first time would think twice about trying again with a member of staff present.

Luckily, Vicky was back on fine form; she saved all five shots, and was grinning when she returned to the ground.

Harry eyed Vicky and McLaggen — he would love to just give the position back to Vicky, but he knew he’d never hear the end of it if he did. “Okay, both of you get up there. We’ll keep alternating penalties until someone misses.”

McLaggen gestured for Vicky to take the first attempt with a smarmy grin, and Vicky glared at him, heading to the goal hoops. Harry mounted his own broom, wanting to be sure he could properly see everything that was happening.