

eyes shut. The other Weasley siblings started up a loud countdown, and even Hermione got involved halfway through. “Three... two... one... GO!”

Both seekers were off like a rocket, Harry much faster than Charlie. The older seeker was on one of the newer model Cleansweeps; an excellent broom, but no match for the Firebolt. He did a wide loop around the back yard, keeping his eyes peeled for a flash of gold.

Unable to help himself, Harry threw in a few of the tricks and rolls he’d been working on over the summer, earning whoops and cheers from their small audience. Charlie laughed as he tailed Harry through a particularly sharp Wollongong Shimmy. “You’ll have to try better than that to lose me, Potter!”

Grinning at the challenge, Harry shot up high, and Charlie followed. All of a sudden, Harry caught a glimpse of the snitch down below, and his smirk widened. Time to *really* show off a bit. Turning the nose of his broom to the ground, he dived full speed downwards, Charlie following him with a shouted curse. Harry kept going, picking up speed, growing closer and closer to the grass. The rest of the world faded away, his focus narrowed entirely to his broom and the snitch hovering above the ground. He was vaguely aware when Charlie pulled out of the dive, not willing to risk his neck, but Harry waited until the last second, veering off course and reaching out as his toes skimmed the grass, grabbing the snitch on his way past.

Slowing to a halt, he held the gold ball up to a gobsmacked Charlie, winking. “Found it,” he said. The redhead gaped.

“You certainly did, didn’t you,” he agreed faintly, drifting closer. “Blimey, Harry. I think Oliver might’ve actually been *underplaying* you a bit in his letters. That was some serious flying!” He ruffled Harry’s hair, and Harry grinned at him. They returned to the ground, where the audience was cheering, and he even saw money exchange hands between Fred and Ron, the latter looking put-out.

“You bet against me?” Harry asked in mock-offence, watching Ron’s ears redden.

“Well, no offence mate, but Charlie was *really* good, and—“ He stuttered out some half-hearted excuses, and Harry laughed.

“You could’ve just said you were showing family solidarity.” He was still a little breathless, exhilarated from the tense flying. He turned back to the dragon tamer. “Want to go again? Swap brooms this time?” He wanted to make sure he wasn’t relying too much on his fancy broom to get ahead. Charlie’s eyes lit up.

“You’ll let me ride your Firebolt?” he gasped. Harry nodded. “You’re on! Best three out of five?”

“What do I get for winning?” Harry asked cheekily, making Charlie bark out a laugh.

“Cocky little sod. If you win, I’ll owe you a favour. To be called in at any time you like, no questions asked, *even* if it’s to hex one of my siblings. Also I’ll let you take the rest of that bottle of firewhisky to school,” he added as an afterthought. “If I win, you’ll owe *me* a