

When they returned to the kitchen, Mrs Weasley was directing the kids around with the air of a military general. “Oh, good,” she said when she spotted the three of them. “Harry, would you mind helping Ron with the cutlery? Fred, George, the salad is ready to go— oh NOT AGAIN!” She had reached for her wand on the table, only it had turned into a giant rubber mouse with a loud squeak. “BOYS!”

Fred and George shared an alarmed look, grabbed the salad bowl, and sprinted out into the garden. Mrs Weasley huffed, grabbing her real wand and flicking it towards the potatoes, which peeled themselves so violently they bounced off the ceiling. “Honestly, don’t know where we went wrong with those two,” she muttered to herself. “They’ll be brought up in front of the Misuse of Magic Office before they’re twenty.”

Harry grabbed a handful of forks and slowly backed out of the kitchen, not wanting to get involved in that. Clearly the twins had been... busy this summer.

Outside, the two tables they were supposed to be setting were doing battle in mid air thanks to Bill and Charlie, crashing into each other violently overhead. Harry saw Crookshanks dart across the grass, in hot pursuit of a chubby little gnome. Ginny, Ron and the twins were cheering on the table battle, while Hermione looked torn between amusement and anxiety.

“Watch out, Harry!” Bill exclaimed as his table caught Charlie’s with a huge bang and sent one of the legs flying. Harry ducked, coming up laughing. It was almost like being back with Sirius.

There was a clatter overhead, and suddenly Percy’s head was sticking out of an upstairs window, looking quite cross. “Will you keep it down?” he called. “Some of us have *work* to be doing!”

“Sorry, Perce!” Charlie said, grinning. “Didn’t mean to disrupt the cauldron bottoms!”

Percy scowled at him, slamming the window shut again. The two eldest Weasleys chuckled, but obligingly brought the tables down to settle where they were supposed to, reattaching the leg with a quick spell. Bill waved his wand, conjuring clean white tablecloths. Harry started setting cutlery out, and soon enough the table was set for eleven, and Mrs Weasley was directing several steaming dishes out with her wand.

Harry ended up seated between Hermione and Charlie, who quickly got Harry involved in a lively conversation about quidditch. “You should’ve seen the letter Ollie sent me when you joined the team,” the redhead said, smirking. “I thought he was going to cry with joy. That year between me leaving and you starting was... not a good time for them.” He popped a potato in his mouth. “I think you’re the only reason he started speaking to me again at all, actually. When I graduated without leaving a good replacement behind, he swore I was dead to him.”

Harry could absolutely see Oliver Wood doing such a thing.

“Y’know he’s playing reserve for Puddlemere now?” Charlie continued, and Harry raised an eyebrow.