

The Baking Battle

A hushed silence fell as Mrs Fenton announced the pairs for Year 6's baking competition. Two of the class were especially nervous — a small, skinny boy called Jack and a girl with a ponytail whose name was Demi. They were sworn enemies, and the only thing they agreed on was that they wanted nothing to do with each other.

"Jack Hunter and Demi Lewis," Mrs Fenton called.

Demi's heart sank. Jack's face fell. They scowled at each other from across the room.

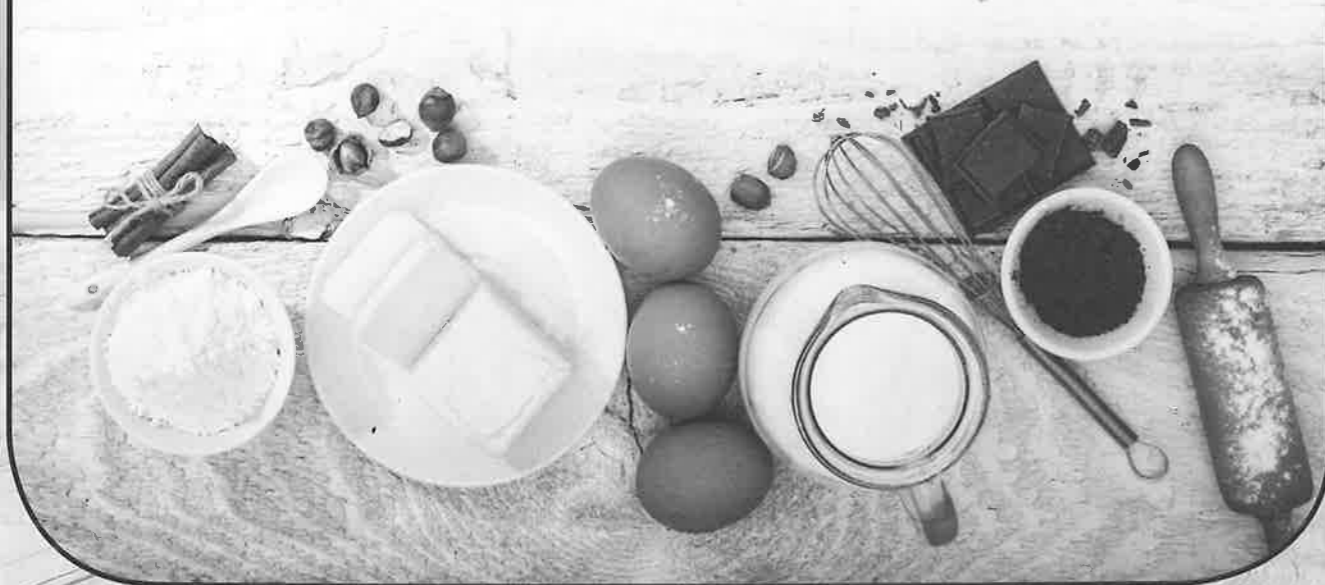
Jack jostled Demi at their table as they waited to begin. Demi sighed. Working with Jack was a nightmare, but she was desperate to win the competition, and she wasn't going to let Jack get in the way of that.

"Okay, start baking!" declared Mrs Fenton.

Everyone sprang into action immediately. Having glanced through the recipe, Demi dived for the flour, but at the same time, so did Jack. In the process, the bag was knocked over, scattering flour all over the table and up into the air in clouds of white dust.

"The flour should be my job," insisted Jack, glaring angrily. "You break the eggs."

Demi agreed, grumbling under her breath. But when she cracked the first egg against the side of the bowl, the shell splintered messily. As she attempted to fish fragments of shell out of the bowl, she spotted Jack struggling to lift the heavy bag of flour.



"Here," she said with irritation. Together they hoisted the flour up to the scales. In return, Jack, having spotted her struggles with the egg, demonstrated how to break one without getting any shell in the mixture. Demi looked sceptical, but when she tried his technique with the final egg, the frown slipped from her face and she smiled broadly.

"Half an hour to go," called Mrs Fenton.

Demi and Jack glanced at each other urgently. From that point on, they stopped trying to fight against each other. Instead, they worked together, dividing the tasks in a way that played to both of their strengths. Demi had a knack for weighing out ingredients precisely, while Jack's whisking left the batter lump free. Demi knew how to grease the cake tin, but it was Jack who was so good at pouring the batter in that he didn't spill a drop. Just in time, they passed their cake to Mrs Fenton, who slid it into the oven. The pair grinned, all signs of their bitter feud gone. Once they had started to cooperate, everything had gone according to plan, and they were sure they would triumph.



Jack and Demi had begun to tidy up their table, but they stopped instantly when they saw Mrs Fenton walking to the front of the room, clutching two gold medals in her hand.

"And in first place... Alison and Tyrone!" she declared.

Jack and Demi were dismayed. They watched glumly as Alison and Tyrone, both beaming from ear to ear, stepped forward to receive their prizes from Mrs Fenton. As the winners turned back around, the class could see the image of a chef's hat embossed on the front of both medals.



"And now," announced Mrs Fenton, "let's eat!"

Demi and Jack each grabbed a slice of their cake and devoured it enthusiastically, savouring the delicious taste. They may not have won the competition, but they had to admit that once they put aside their differences, they made a pretty great cake — and an even better team.