



"Ah, now, I'm glad you asked me that. It was one of my more brilliant ideas, and between you and me, that's saying something. You see, only one who wanted to *find* the Stone — find it, but not use it — would be able to get it, otherwise they'd just see them-selves making gold or drinking Elixir of Life. My brain surprises even me sometimes. ... Now, enough questions. I suggest you make a start on these sweets. Ah! Bertie Bott's Every Flavor Beans! I was unfortunate enough in my youth to come across a vomit-flavored one, and since then I'm afraid I've rather lost my liking for them — but I think I'll be safe with a nice toffee, don't you?"

He smiled and popped the golden-brown bean into his mouth. Then he choked and said, "Alas! Ear wax!"

Madam Pomfrey, the nurse, was a nice woman, but very strict.

"Just five minutes," Harry pleaded.

"Absolutely not."

"You let Professor Dumbledore in. ..."

"Well, of course, that was the headmaster, quite different. You need *rest*."

"I am resting, look, lying down and everything. Oh, go on, Madam Pomfrey ..."

"Oh, very well," she said. "But five minutes *only*."

And she let Ron and Hermione in.

"*Harry!*"

Hermione looked ready to fling her arms around him again, but Harry was glad she held herself in as his head was still very sore.

"Oh, Harry, we were sure you were going to — Dumbledore was so worried —"

"The whole school's talking about it," said Ron. "What *really* happened?"