

"Tokens from your friends and admirers," said Dumbledore, beaming. "What happened down in the dungeons between you and Professor Quirrell is a complete secret, so, naturally, the whole school knows. I believe your friends Misters Fred and George Weasley were responsible for trying to send you a toilet seat. No doubt they thought it would amuse you. Madam Pomfrey, however, felt it might not be very hygienic, and confiscated it."

"How long have I been in here?"

"Three days. Mr. Ronald Weasley and Miss Granger will be most relieved you have come round, they have been extremely worried."

"But sir, the Stone —"

"I see you are not to be distracted. Very well, the Stone. Professor Quirrell did not manage to take it from you. I arrived in time to prevent that, although you were doing very well on your own, I must say."

"You got there? You got Hermione's owl?"

"We must have crossed in midair. No sooner had I reached London than it became clear to me that the place I should be was the one I had just left. I arrived just in time to pull Quirrell off you —"

"It was *you*."

"I feared I might be too late."

"You nearly were, I couldn't have kept him off the Stone much longer —"

"Not the Stone, boy, you — the effort involved nearly killed you. For one terrible moment there, I was afraid it had. As for the Stone, it has been destroyed."

"Destroyed?" said Harry blankly. "But your friend — Nicolas Flamel —"

"Oh, you know about Nicolas?" said Dumbledore, sounding quite delighted. "You *did* do the thing properly, didn't you? Well, Nicolas and I have had a little chat, and agreed it's all for the best."