

'No, thank you,' said Professor McGonagall coldly, as though she didn't think this was the moment for sherbet lemons. 'As I say, even if You-Know-Who *has* gone -'

'My dear Professor, surely a sensible person like yourself can call him by his name? All this "You-Know-Who" nonsense - for eleven years I have *been* trying to persuade people to call him by his proper name: *Voldemort*.' Professor McGonagall flinched, but Dumbledore, who was unsticking two sherbet lemons, seemed not to notice. 'It all gets so confusing if we *keep* saying "You-Know-Who".' I have never seen any reason to be frightened of saying Voldemort's name.'

'I know you haven't,' said Professor McGonagall, sounding half-exasperated, half-admiring. 'But you're different. Everyone knows you're the *only* one You-Know - oh, all right, *Voldemort* - was frightened of.'

'You flatter me,' said Dumbledore calmly. 'Voldemort had powers I will never have.'

'Only because you're too - well - *noble* to use them.'

'It's lucky it's dark. I haven't blushed so much *since* Madam Pomfrey told me she liked my new earmuffs.'

Professor McGonagall shot a sharp look at Dumbledore and said, 'The owls are nothing to the *rumours* that are flying around. You know what everyone's saying? About why he's disappeared? About what finally stopped *him*?''

It seemed that Professor McGonagall had reached the point she was most anxious to discuss, the real reason she had been waiting on a cold hard wall all day, for neither as a cat nor as a woman had she fixed Dumbledore with such a piercing stare as she did now. It was plain that whatever 'everyone' was saying, she was not going to believe it *until* Dumbledore told her it was true. Dumbledore, however, was choosing another sherbet lemon and did not answer.

'What they're *saying*,' she pressed on, 'is that last night Voldemort turned up in Godric's Hollow. He went to find the Potters. The rumour is that Lily and James Potter are - are - that they're - *dead*.'

Dumbledore bowed his head. Professor McGonagall gasped.

'Lily and James ... I can't *believe* it ... I didn't want to believe it ... Oh, Albus ...'

Dumbledore reached out and patted her on the shoulder. 'I

(also unless')