

One door closes: Julie Howard

I watch my feet move, in and out of the shadows cast by the fluorescent lights. The corridor with its grey rubber doors stretches before me. I'm afraid of what I might find.

I'm so weary, the last set of heavy doors almost defeat me, but I stumble through to the confusion of bright sterility and silently blinking workstations. I'm confronted by the row of doors blazoned with yellow hazard warning signs.

I hear a groan and turn to see an old man alone on a gurney. He's curled in pain. In a gut-wrenching moment, I see his name written in capitals next to the words **URGENT. SURGERY SCHEDULED.** My world begins to spin. My brain rejects what my eyes see. My feet refuse to take me away from this horror.

The doors swings open and in a smooth movement a young nurse swivels the gurney around and with a cheerful 'Won't be long' disappears through one of the doors marked '**RADIATION DO NOT ENTER**'

ANDREW MCALLAN. My beautiful son is now beyond my reach.

I'm back at the hospital again. My feet clatter down a different, more cheerful corridor. Pausing before the swing doors I ready myself, and then he's there ... crying. His fists are clenched against his red, wrinkled, face. My heart swells with love and joy and I look up to see Andrew and Claire smiling. Three years ago, who would have thought this possible? Andrew McAllan, healthy and strong, welcoming Angus, his first child and my grandson.