

Excerpt from DEAD STILL by Barbara Ebel, M.D.

When the entire group entered Mr. Newman's room, he peered over his newspaper and smiled. He sat in the armchair next to the window, the last drips of his evening dose of antibiotic going into his IV.

"Well, look at you," Robby said. "It appears your two primary surgical physicians have taken good care of you."

Dr. Wallace and Annabel stepped forward, and Brandy shut the IV pump off before it started beeping.

"Only after that one used me for a pin cushion," he said, pointing at Annabel.

Annabel's shoulders sagged and she wondered if Dr. Mack was going to chime in. He'd done enough damage to her for the whole rotation.

"Actually, I'm glad she got that IV in," Dr. Wallace said. "Otherwise I was going to have to start a central line."

"No thank you, ma'am," Mr. Newman said. "I know what those are and I don't want no part of them."

"You've had enough bowel rest," Robby remarked. "But I bet you enjoyed that gelatin and bullion."

"It was a stepping stone to the fat burger I'm going to devour when I get outta here."

Dr. Pittman patted the patient's shoulder. "You have a good night. I'm taking this motley crew with me," he said, pointing towards the door.