

Mr. B

Category: Nursing

written by K E Denby | March 26, 2026

I couldn't help but gag at the stench in the room. Mr. B greeted me with a smile.

"Pretty disgusting isn't it. Rotting flesh. The smell. Nothing like it. Your mask won't help you much." He gave a loud chortle as though he had told the funniest joke ever.

The year was 1965. I was a student nurse. This was my first encounter with gangrene.

My task was to give Mr B. a bed bath. A daunting task, as the cradle over his feet had to remain in position while I swabbed his body with soap and water.

"You're a newbie, aren't you?" he asked.

"I have been here a few months now," I replied.

'You'll be off getting married," he said. "Girls like you don't last long in this game."

"You'll be having babies, and that will be it. You know giving birth to a baby is like shitting a watermelon." As I ran out of the room, his laughter followed me down the corridor.

His words came back to me in the delivery room as I gave birth to my son many years later. Mr. B had been correct!

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