

## Goodbye

**By Rachel Loveday**

The one thing that I've always loved and has always scared me about life is how fast it all goes by. You always think that you have plenty time for everything.

My time is running out.

The one thing that perfectly represents how fast time goes by is a child, or in my case, children. I became a parent at sixteen, way too young, way too difficult, but I wouldn't change it for anything. Joanna was the best thing to happen to me and always has been for the thirty-four years she has been in my life. My other children, twins, Prudence and David and my youngest Paige have also provided me with twenty-seven and twenty-five wonderful years respectively. My husband, Dan feels the same way, although a mother's bond with their children is significantly different.

Joanna's holding my hand right now; her hands have always been tiny and gentle. Prue, Dave and Paige aren't here; I don't know where they are. Maybe they're getting food from the downstairs cafeteria. Just because I'm not eating, doesn't mean they should starve. Dan's sitting on the other side of me, holding my other hand.

I don't have much strength in my eyes, but the strength I do have I use to look around the room. I have never understood why hospital rooms feel the need to be so bland. I know a hospital needs to be sterile, but it doesn't mean it has to look that way. I hate all of the machines, they make intermittent, annoying noises, they're bulky, but they'll all be gone soon.

My first husband, Sebastian walks in with our son-in-law, Scott.

"How long did Doctor Lake say it would take?" Sebastian asked.

"He said that he can't give a definite time, but with all of her injuries and being on life support since she was admitted, probably an hour at the most." I replied.

"How long has it been since Scott had the life support turned off?"

"Twenty minutes" Scott replied.

I didn't look at either them, particularly Scott. Joanna was driving, so she was the one with all of the major injuries, Scott walked away with a broken arm and cuts on his face. They

didn't see the car coming from the other direction, and why should they have to look? It was a green light for them, not the other car. I know it's awful, but I want Joanna to be standing behind me with cuts on her face that will heal in a couple of weeks. She's brain dead, there's no hope for her, so Scott decided to end her suffering. We're all waiting for it to happen. Prue, Dave and Paige said their goodbyes, but they didn't want to be in the room, it's too painful for them and I know I should, but forcing them to be here would just traumatise them further. Dan hasn't left my side, Sebastian's keeping it together, but I know him better, Scott's trying to be strong too. I haven't let go of her hand for one minute.

I'm stroking her hand to try and hardwire into my memory of how her hands feel, ignoring the long continuous noise that has just started to fill the entire room.