He can still make out basic shapes: his son’s hand laid on his, his tray brought close, a spoon of pudding lifted to his mouth, although he pushes it away—hehis appetite now shutting down; he can still hear you if you shout, the way his parents used to scold their dog; the shouting comforts him—a music station left on low to help him sleep; and he hates prayer but lets a little bit get said, as long as those who say it say it without telling him, and call it something else; and keep a proper distance, like the thin, aloof house cat he’s fed for eighteen years who curls at his feet from time to time, then for its private reasons slinks away.