Lovely young consultant charms my husband

Kate Compston

“Look! here and here,” she breathes. I note her intentness, as the three of us pore over her strange map. I see his greying face light at her nearness, how he floats in her interest in him. I could be half in love with her myself, lap at her kindness greedily, but brace myself to hear her verdict. Poet in an alien tongue and territory, she rhapsodizes about gaps where gaps ought not to be. ‘We trace low dopamine uptake ...’ (she strokes her throat, addressing me): ‘Dementia – DLB. Given the other signs – the overlap of dream and real, the slowing pace, visual hallucinations, remote expression – this scan wraps up my diagnosis . . . ’

(stops and holds his hand, devotes herself to him): ‘Together, we will deal with this thing, yes?’ Embraced by her concern, he throws aside encroaching night, flings his windows wide.

The trap door of my heart slams shut.