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Sommario/riassunto	In our modern ICUs, death, previously seen as an irrevocable event, passes more clearly to the order of processes, whose duration, intensity and consequences are managed or regulated according to criteria and values that are often not explained. Through a case study, the author addresses the social organization of intensive care centers, the ethical dramas involving health professionals, patients and family members, and, finally, the emergence of a new specialist, the intensivist.