

CARL PHILLIPS

## Craft and Vision

Though the casting of light can't really be called—not at least believably—in any way a property of shipwreck once the wrecking's done with, what harm's left, now, in saying so? As for those who would argue otherwise let them. Always, if it's wanted badly enough, there's somewhere a findable veil just waiting to be lifted or pulled slowly aside, classic revelation, a word that itself at its root has a veil within it, somehow making the word feel all the more like proof, as if proof meant nakedness, as if one and the same—darkness

and weather; force, and sex. Every thing I do I had to do a first time, even if I've forgotten it; after that, I think the rest, what follows—the second time, the last, etc.,—it's all just translation, this life coming down to the same three questions I'm told—and believe, most days—it always has: what happened, what didn't happen, who does it matter to? Write what you must, then walk away from it is not the hardest thing I've ever had to learn, by any stretch, only one of the hardest. Witness, then blindness—that's a way of putting it. To be clear, by blindness I mean the deepest blue possible, good cotton, not silk, the blindfold.