CARL PHILLIPS

MY MEADOW, MY TWILIGHT

Sure, there’s a spell the leaves can make, shuddering,
and in their lying suddenly still again — flat, and still,
like time itself when it seems unexpectedly more
available, more to lose therefore, more to love, or
try to…
But to look up from the leaves, remember,
is a choice also, as if up from the shame of it all,
the promiscuity, the seeing-how-nothing-now-will-
save-you, up to the wind-stripped branches shadow-
signing the ground before you the way, lately, all
the branches seem to, or you like to say they do,
which is at least half of the way, isn’t it, toward
belief — whatever, in the end, belief
is… You can
look up, or you can close the eyes entirely, making
some of the world, for a moment, go away, but only
some of it, not the part about hurting others as the one
good answer to being hurt, and not the part that can
at first seem, understandably, a life in ruins, even if —
refusing ruin, because you
can refuse — you look
again, down the steep corridor of what’s just another
late winter afternoon, dark as night already, dark
the leaves and, darker still, the door that, each night,
you keep meaning to find again, having lost it, you had
only to touch it, just once, and it bloomed wide open…