

CARL PHILLIPS

The Darker Powers

Even if you're right,
and there's in fact a difference
between trouble unlooked-for, and
the kind of trouble we pursued,
ruthlessly, until at last
it was ours,
 what will the difference
have been, finally? What I've
called the world continues
to pass for one, the room spins
same as ever, the bodies
inside it do, flightless, but
no less addicted to mastering—
to the dream of mastering—the very
boughs through which
they keep falling without
motion, almost,
that slowly, it seems they'll fall
forever, my
 pretty consorts, to whom
sometimes—out of pity,
not mercy, for
nothing tender
about it—I show the darker
powers I've hardly shown
to anyone: *Feel the weight of them,*
I say, before putting them back,
just behind my heart, where they blacken
and thrive.