

CARYL PAGEL

TELEPHONE

There was fear involved—yes—some
fear and hesitancy to discuss what
you knew you had done but
had not yet told anyone It
was nothing You discussed it for
hours—all that nothing and what
nothing meant—what a shame it
would be to allow the nothing
to decay—to fade and fly
and die like all those nothings
that you both had had before
It felt like a new nothing
but you knew—instinctually—in your
frantic animal soul—that all nothing
sustains itself the same way—by
expanding—cracking—swallowing itself and all
around it—by colliding with old
nothings You knew and discussed what
a nothing all your nothing was—
and yet—you could not find
an end to it This kind of
nothing kept going It kept going

into itself and back out again
around the day—winding itself through
you and whispering things concerning you
across the wire and in sleep's
abysmal strangle and after all that
talk you felt true Like a
new version of yourself you never
knew A version of the very
dreadful nothing that you had always
had a vision of yourself becoming