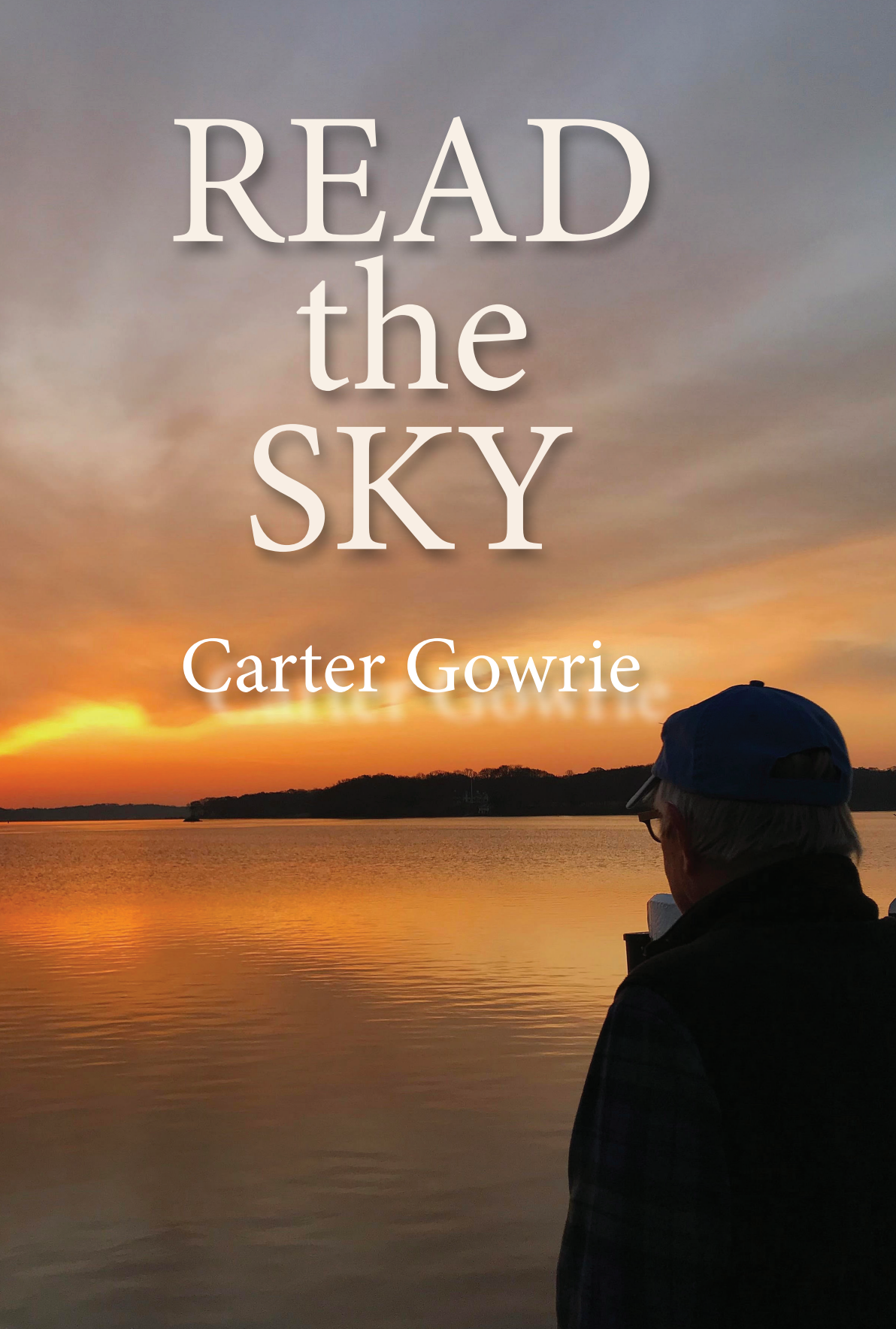
READ the SKY

Carter Gowrie



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I dedicate this book to my wonderful family who inspired me to do more than just take pictures every morning. My loving wife Carla, and our seven children; Ashley, Casey, Dylan, Ali, Nick, Emilee, and Scott all contributed by helping with the captions. I would also like to thank my sister, Nancy, for her invaluable help in organizing this collection. These photos are a celebration of my life, and I am thrilled to share them with you.

FOREWORD

Like David Crosby, two of the most fun and important things in my life are sailing and music. Many of the photos in this book were taken in The Thimble Islands where I was lucky enough to spend summers growing up. They are an archipelago located off the coast of Branford, sixteen islands with summer cottages, where I first learned to sail, thanks to my Dad. My children are the fifth generation to enjoy our special, unique place.

The story of how it came into our family is unique. My great grandfather owned a grocery store in West Hartford in 1898. He had a long-time customer who ran up a bill that she could not pay. She came into the store one day and offered to give him the house she owned on an island in Long Island Sound, if he would forgive her debt. Sight unseen he accepted, and our family has enjoyed it for well over a century. In 1936, the house burned down along with four others, from a lightning strike. My grandfather, who was in the construction business, got some of his friends to help him build the cottage that still stands today. Grampop used to like to say, "If it hadn't burned down in '36, it would have blown down in '38." My passion for sailing grew out of the Thimbles with my Dad and later with my five children.

Music, my other love, also came from my Grandpa and my Dad. Grandpa started the Mandolin Club at Yale in 1916, which still exists today. He was a great baritone and sang in the Hartford Choral Club. He had an octet that he used to bring to the Thimbles to serenade us all. I remember it well. My Dad played piano, and anyone who knew him would attest to the fact that he made the best Louis Armstrong impression ever. It didn't take me long to grab the music genre. I started with drums in a rock band, but later took up the guitar and have played and sang my whole life, often with my kids. There is no better way to bond with the family than with music; except perhaps with sailing and being on the water.

Now that I am retired and, in my renaissance, I have taken up

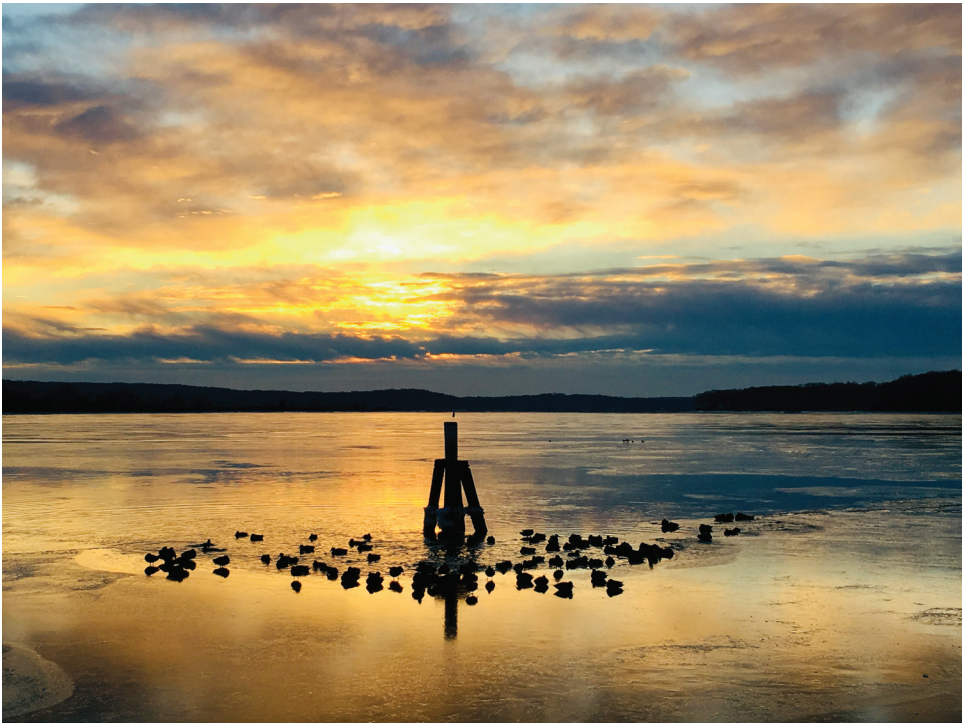
photography (mostly sunrises) and song writing. The title of this book is the title of the first song I wrote, "Read the Sky." You can check it out on Spotify. I had a good chorus and was working on verses. I asked my kids to give me random three-word phrases. In a short time, I had over one hundred phrases. I paired them together and created my first song.

"Read the sky/ Ride the tide/ Walk the walk/ Draw the line.
Find the truth/ Pave the way/ Be the change/Every day."
Chorus:
"When I'm not singin'/ That's when I get the blues.
I take out my guitar/ And stay away from the news."

Now that I am in my eighth decade, I have become obsessed with taking sunrise pictures. Most of them are on the Connecticut River, which I am so fortunate to live on. Our home is in the wonderful village of Essex. The river is one of the greatest rivers you will ever cruise. This is because most rivers are steaming with commerce and industry, with commercial vessels coming in and out. Not true of the Connecticut River. You see the mouth of the river is too shallow to accommodate ships, but it is perfect for pleasure craft. As a result, the river is all residential, with a few marinas and yacht clubs. It is truly gorgeous, as you will see from the photos.

To keep with our theme of music and sailing, I have placed captions with each photo. Many are song titles or lyrics, some are quotes and some are my own thoughts. I hope you listen to the songs and enjoy the book.

Carter Gowrie



Get your ducks in a row.



"Every sunrise is an invitation for us to arise and brighten someone's day."
—Richelle E. Goodrich

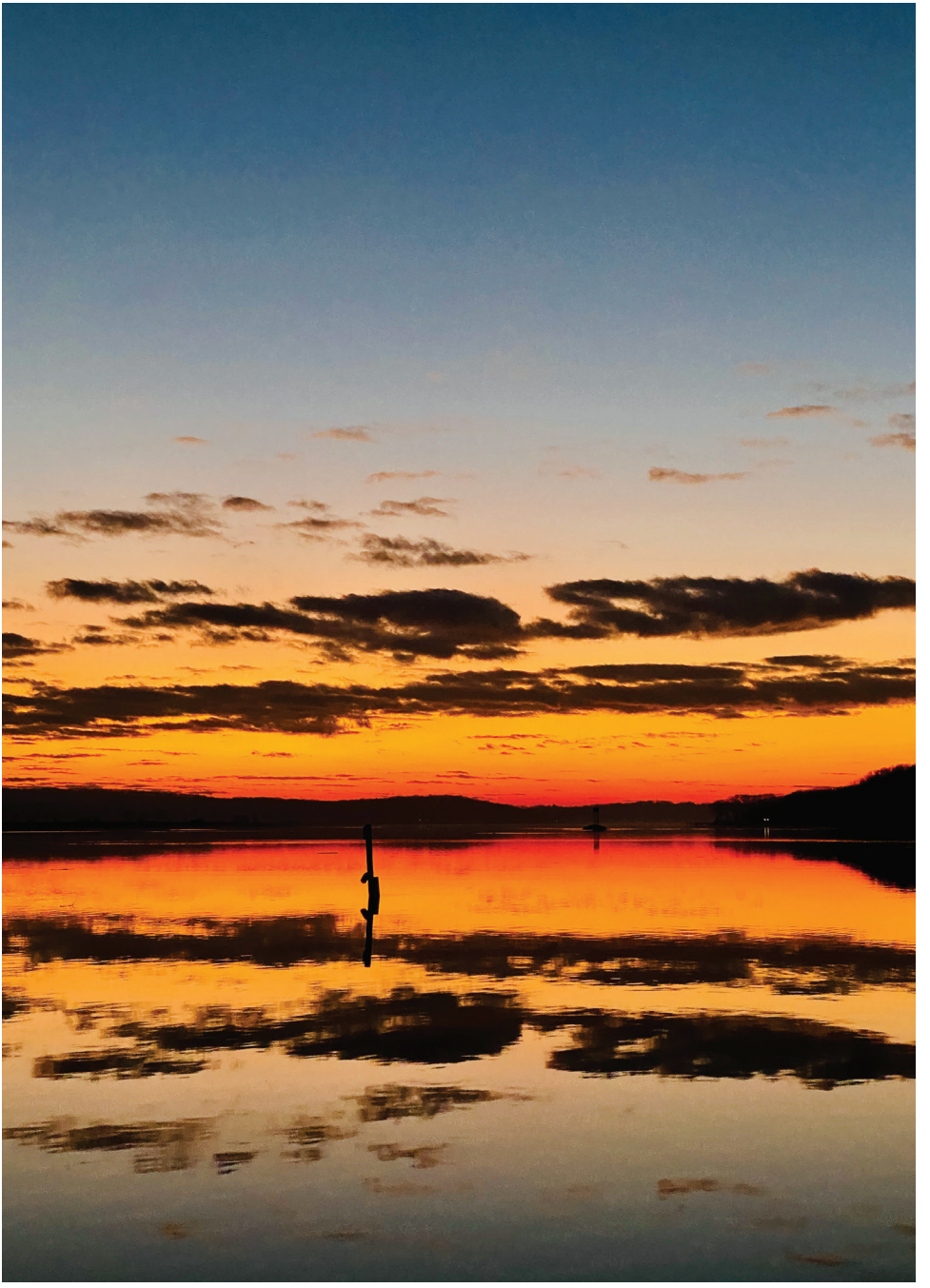


“Fly like an eagle to the sea.” —Steve Miller Band

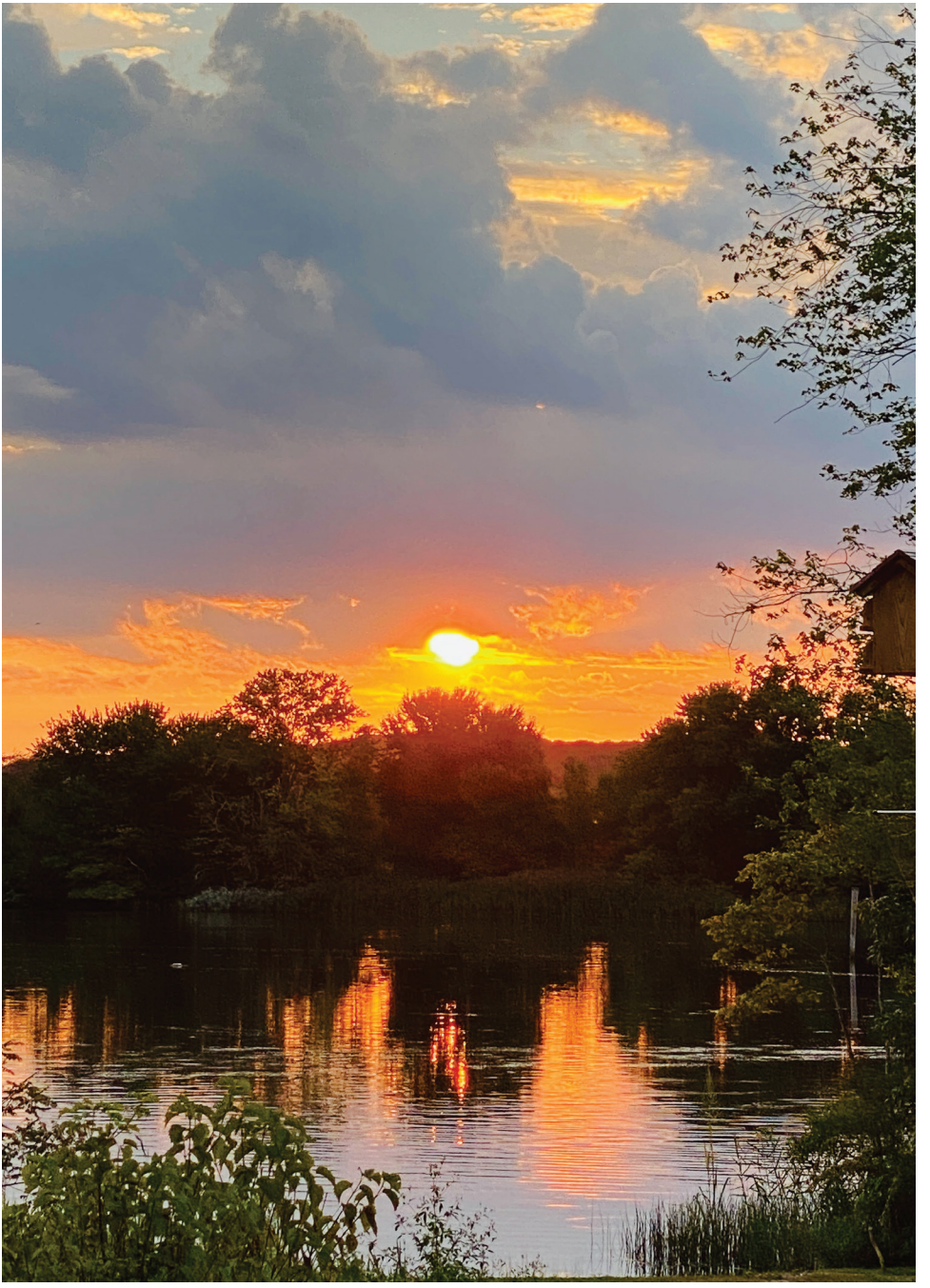


“Every sunset is also a sunrise. It all depends on where you stand.”
—Karl Schmidt

Thimble Islands



“When will my reflection show who I am inside.” —Christina Aguilera



I was thinking about the sunrise, then it dawned.