For My Vita

William Stafford
My life has the country in it; hills follow me; miles of grass climb toward this traveler’s eyes in the morning. Even at night the country unfolds whenever a splinter of quiet at a party happens along: I fall straight as rain into whatever is around me.

Once in prison I felt I was too free—my cell tumbled with the earth, all of us flung unknowing and blind. Since then thousands of miles have sluiced headlong as comets past my life-shield and vanished where the rest of the world goes. Some day I’ll save it all by closing my eyes.

William Stafford