

## **You Reading This, Be Ready**

by William Stafford

Starting here, what do you want to remember?

How sunlight creeps along a shining floor?

What scent of old wood hovers, what softened  
sound from outside fills the air?

Will you ever bring a better gift for the world  
than the breathing respect that you carry  
wherever you go right now? Are you waiting  
for time to show you some better thoughts?

When you turn around, starting here, lift this  
new glimpse that you found; carry into evening  
all that you want from this day. This interval you spent  
reading or hearing this, keep it for life —

What can anyone give you greater than now,  
starting here, right in this room, when you turn around?