Poem for Recuperation

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for my father

It's no use regretting
the ration of light
I tip from my eyes.
And if the world
is largely made up
of things I overlook,
I know that everything under the sun
is half the time turning away.

You became sick in the dark
while I slept, my face
pressed to the other side of the moon.
And although this feels now
like a lapse in my own attention
I don’t think any kindness from me
would have spared you.

Love is a rivet,
and I often feel the thought of you
pass clean through me
and into the ground
(although I like to see my thoughts
as banners flown
from some high solemn ground. In truth,
they haven’t been able
to stake a claim on anyone.)

I know it’s folly
to try to improve on fact—
but that’s what my heart does best—
to wish your soul a star, invincible,
instead of being stitched
to a faltering flesh
(like the blue silk lining
inside your winter coat).
I would like to take your foot
(which I hadn't the imagination to invent)
and set it lightly on the earth:
at home among the smooth pebbles,
the insects, small and jagged as fragments,
the grass that is newly cutting the rim
of the world with such tender blades.