

Poem for Recuperation · *Ilene Moskin*

*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.