

When my father died, I grieved all year.
But Michael Stipe was right that
sweetness follows.

When it's over,
a cloud of feeling lingers, calls up memories,
shows me the world with eyes more raw,
more open to this stark leafless maple
growing in the sidewalk.

And shows me to the work
that's next to do.

When it's over,
We might start that lovely, awkward dance
of hugs, and wait our turn
to hug Ralph, and Chris, Karen, Joelle, and Lisa,
everyone who won and read and wrote,
and lay a wreath for Laurel on the earth.

When it's over,
We might stand in Harrison's circle
with hands joined and faces outward
hearts burst open to the horizon
and the mystery of walking toward it
alone and together
finding spaces
snapping open
like poppies.



~ Jeff Aiken
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chart by
Diane Cline

