

What Remains

You rose to cardinal song from a maple tree,
Stepped into flip-flops, grabbed a shave kit,
And shuffled drowsily past gray, robed mentors
In the hallway, bound for the shower lottery.

*When Tuesday came the world stepped in, but
There were greens and blues you never saw before.*

The welcome bell pulled you from a fresh-lit fire
To smells of coffee, Cheerios, bacon, and eggs,
With raspy voices recounting last night's search for
Karaoke, fried asparagus, and Bloom's Taxonomy.

In a garden seeded by tycoons and visionaries
You helped a band of strangers draw close,
Respecting both deep experience and fresh eyes.
Were you ever somewhere else? It's hard to say.

*When Tuesday came the world stepped in, but
There were greens and blues you never saw before.*

A breath of Michigan nudged you down the beach
As your mind sorted jumbled gems of practice
Shared by a hundred ivory tower fugitives in hoodies
And sneakers, proudly getting pumped about learning.

After grappling with the quest for strength,
You watched fresh faces reflect a rainbow sunset,
Commiserated deep into the night on a lumpy couch,
Then finally rested in the palm of His hand.

*When Tuesday came the world stepped in, but
There were greens and blues you never saw before.*

Chris Clark, May 2016
For the Wakonse Conference on College Teaching
In honor of Mel George (1936-2016)