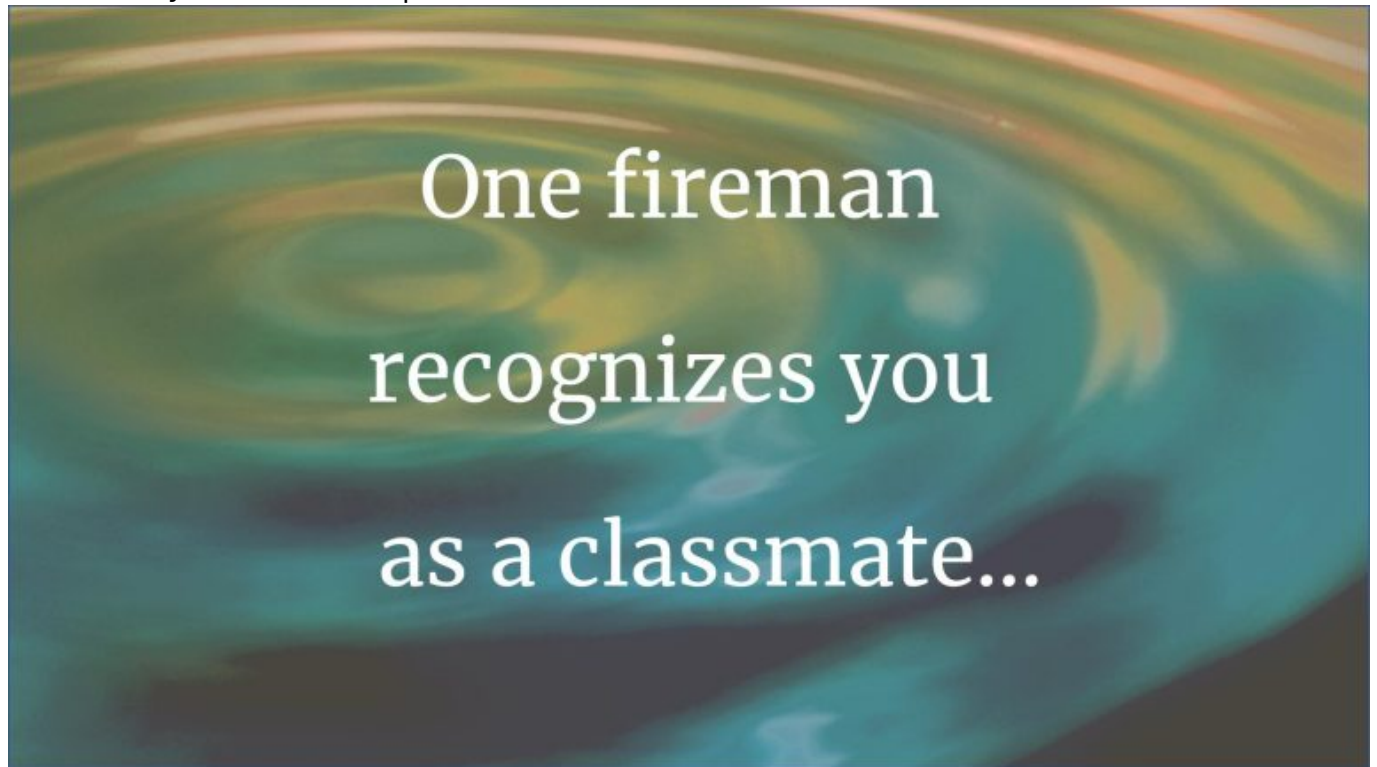


Amor Fati

Category: Poems

written by Joe Amaral | November 29, 2024



Fortunate to have a heavy coat
and camp pants in the nightlong cold,
we find you face down in a field

rewarming like a lizard
near dead of an overdose—
leaves of grass imprinted
on your body catatonic,

eyes swollen from allergens.
All you can do is drool, mutter,
hallucinate and punch the sky.

We wrangle off your wet clothes,
tamp down your swinging fists.
One fireman recognizes you
as a classmate in this small town,

says the whole family are addicts—
a loose fit the way genes cinch.
We know you smoke fentanyl.

You were intubated at the hospital
last month where you yanked
the plastic ET tube out your throat
and ran out of the ICU in a back-

less gown. We strap you down,
start an IV, search your bags for ID
to confirm you're the correct person

because you look so young yet so
weather-beaten. I wonder if you'll
ever reason a need to change?

The body cameras on the policemen

are turned off. Maybe we should
record your altered state; the ER could
film you now before you feel healed

enough to talk, walk, shrug and wave,
saying it was just a real bad bender,
a hangover, as peacefully you go across
the meadow this time to seal your fate.

Amor fati is a Latin phrase that means "love of fate" or "love of one's
fate."