

*Amor Fati*

Crossing off both options—six months  
or a year—I wrote *forever* on the form  
and *authorized* your knowledge of whatever

the doctor learns about malignancies  
that may invade my body, wear me down  
and carry me, like everybody else,

eventually away. I meant to make  
a mark, like Friday's footprint in the sand,  
before a flood of paperwork wipes out

worlds we two have shared, leaves one misfit  
only in a wilderness of bureaucrats—  
one holdout, among statisticians, for what counts.

**Weather Alert**

*The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) uses the  
Waffle House Index as an unofficial metric to determine the effect  
of a storm and to estimate the scale of assistance necessary for  
recovery.*

As the hurricane approaches, I imagine  
breakfast conversation over eggs over  
easy with biscuits at the Waffle House

in Covington with Walker Percy.  
*Don't go so easy on Binx Bolling*, he wrote  
about a piece of mine about *The Moviegoer*

and invited me across the Lake to visit.  
Binx can get cozy with the reader! Charmed,  
the unsuspecting esthete drops his guard.

Florence is storming Florence, and Columbia  
is next. Historic flooding washed away  
canals, fouling our water four months after

a boy from here massacred a prayer group  
(hoping to start a race war, so he said).  
*I never knew a Florentine more honest,*

Cassio remarks about Iago, a Venetian,  
namesake of the angelic militant  
against the Moors, Santiago Matamoros.

Far from the Grand Canal, in storm-tossed Cyprus  
a few acts later, Iago tries to murder  
Cassio. The sky is darkening overall.

Denying facts and stats in tweets, our Ba'al,  
the god of storms, ignores the Waffle House.  
His Sharpie stroke reroutes the hurricane.