

# The Ministry of Happiness

April, 1968

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*The United Arab Emirates is the first Muslim country to appoint a minister of happiness, and she is charged with policies to ensure the happiness of all people.*

The dog escaped into the middle of the road, a car ran her over in front of me,  
her legs under the wheels, the doors opening, the cries of the pup, the ambulance

that takes me away with her in my arms, the splints that attach to her mangled legs,  
to set the bones in some order that makes sense to the vet, but seems impossible to

me. I am humming, We shall overcome, we shall overcome, because that is what we sang  
in 1968 to our teacher, Mrs. Poyer, when she came into our classroom of 32 children,

refugees, escapees, first-generations. How can these splintered bones knit themselves  
back to a whole, like yarn left outside on a porch, now the feral cats' toy, inciting or

tamping the urge to hunt. There is no ministry of happiness yet. There is no dog.  
I know I went to school with bows in my hair, later a mess of paint and sweat and

wild eyes, and while you made yourself into something beautiful, your feet on the ground,  
or barely, we made our teacher cry, by singing and walking together.