

*Happiness is...*

today  
I was stuck in traffic  
in a white van  
sucking on a candy bar  
letting the milk chocolate  
cling to my teeth  
and make love to my tongue

I was on the job  
clothes were blocking the rearview mirror  
and the screeching of the hangers  
as they slid across the metal bar  
during sharp turns  
was enough to make  
any straight laced  
being  
coil in madness

that and I had a heavy heart  
like it carried the shells of  
shotgun ammo  
and they clinked like loose change  
with each, rhythmic, pitiful breath

man, I'm getting tired  
of feeling lousy,  
I thought to myself

why was happiness so lost  
and out of reach  
that I couldn't wrap my  
short fingers around it

doesn't my heart have wings enough for it?

I am too young  
to be so miserable, man  
I thought to myself

and as I thought  
about pressing my foot down upon the pedal

and plunging myself in the back of the car in front of me  
forgetting about my job  
forgetting about writing  
forgetting about the sorrow I have soaked my heart in

finally ending it  
in one big boom  
with some moxie  
and some dignity

I took a moment to read  
the bumper sticker  
on the back of the car  
I was about to smash into

and it said,

“Happiness is being Jennifer’s Grandparents”

...so that’s what it is, I thought.