

Write Your Life

A micro memoir writing project

Recall a big moment from your youth, maybe when you were very young.

The Forty Fish

The photo is lost. It's an old black and white of four boys—my brother and me and our two cousins from up there, standing at the edge of Houghton Lake, holding a stringer of fish. We were still little boys, wearing dumpy long pants, sweatshirts, and unzipped jackets. The photo had a shiny finish, with bent corners, like it had been passed around a lot—maybe one of twenty-four in an envelope and someone had pulled that photo out to examine it more carefully. The photo had a name: The Forty Fish.

When they're biting, four boys can catch forty perch in a few minutes. They must have been jumping in the boat that day. Fish the dads would have thrown back, too small to fillet and eat. They strung them for us, right out there on the lake.

"Look at this," Tizi said yesterday. She holds up her iPad. A color shot of our granddaughter in California, two and a half years old. She's standing on the sidewalk in front of their house, wearing a diaper. Standing on a long sheet of paper that's been rolled out. In large block letters in pink paint, someone, probably her mother, has written her name. F R A N K I E. Her hair in pigtails. Splotches of pink on her forehead, on her stomach; all over. She's holding the paint tube in her right hand.

This one: Pink Legs. It's a keeper.

One in a million.