**Shard of Memory Poem**

Write a poem to remember memorable, interesting, funny, cool things about your past. Brainstorm a list of memories that you have, jotting down a list of

(1) places you’ve lived, (2) jobs you’ve had, (3) old friends and people you don’t see much anymore, (4) two embarrassing things you’ve done (5) a lie you once told, (6) one accomplishment, (7) one failure, (8) names of people who hurt you (9) people who helped you, (10) people you admire or have mentored you, (11) a piece of clothing you once loved (12) the title of a song you still love (13) and two old movies or tv shows or cartoons you watched growing up (14) a happy memory and (15) a difficult memory

Plug in some ideas from the list above, but make sure you mix up the chronology of the memories so there is no clear progression between one or the other. Also, three of the memories should connect, even if only a little. Start each line with the words “Around (year)” or “About (year).” Write about between 8-10 memories.

**I’ve Got a Feelin’ Tracy Hickman**

Around 1996, I go with my friend, Andrew, to Food 4 Less

and buy a 12-pack of Brisk Iced Tea for $1.99. We bring

it up Little Cottonwood Canyon with us camping. It

prevents a forest fire when we use it to spray the fir trees

that we accidentally set ablaze while we are roasting S’mores.

Around 2009, Rebecca excitedly hands me a crisp, white

envelope and asks me if I’ve ever been to Texas.

Six weeks later, we walk out of Jerry Jones’ brand

new, billion dollar NFL stadium in a daze amidst a

crimson sea of unhappy Oklahoma Sooner fans.

In the car, we blast Black Eyed Peas’ “I’ve Got a Feelin!’”

Around 2018 I stand at the starting line of the 5th Annual Spartan

Race wearing a black bandanna with #509 printed in faded

White, my shoes swimming in a sea of mud. I start the race

Quickly, ready to truly compete, but get stuck on the rope

Climb, my arms and legs bloody from trying to climb it.

Around 1999, I flip off of a rusty evergreen water truck

carrying me along a dusty dirt road in San Salvador.

I somersault headfirst into a large grey stone resting

peacefully in the middle of the highway. My eyes

roll back in my head and my chest stops moving.

Around 1984, I’m at the babysitters watching Heman and

Skeletor battle on an old black-and-white TV while my

baby brother sleeps. When my mom comes to pick us up,

she yells out that my brother is not breathing. I sit on the

broken up curb outside as an ambulance and two fire engines

pull up to the duplex. The funeral is that Saturday.

Around 2011, I carry our red and black sit-and-stand stroller

down two flights of rusty, steel steps into the dimly

illuminated Brooklyn subway. There’s feces on the sickly

yellow tile in the corner and a badly misspelled swear

word spraypainted on the wall of the train as we get on.

I can’t stop talking about how tasty the greasy cheese pizza

was that we bought at Leo’s outside of Yankee stadium.

Around 1986, my diabetic mom tells me she can’t make breakfast

because she is sick. I pour some applejuice out of a Crème O’

Weber milk carton in the fridge and butter some bread for myself.

Afterward, Mom asks me how it was. I tell her that the toast was

good, but the “applejuice” sure was nasty. She stares at me in

horror.

Around 2015, we fly on JetBlue to the Dominican Republic and stay

In an enormous white mansion on a hilltop in the countryside

With a crystal blue swimming pool on the back patio. We love

Every minute of our trip, especially the waterfall tour, until the

Town tries to take us hostage so that the government will turn

Their electricity back on. The cops exchange gunfire with the

Locals and spend hours removing debris from the road to help

Us escape. We cower in our van, our backpacks pressed up

Against the windows.

Around 1997, we’ve rigged up a TV for Game 6 of the Western Conference

Finals on an old, mustard-colored couch next to the basketball

court on the side of my house. I drop a perfect pass from my

brother, Daniel, so I can see John Stockton roll around a pick and

calmly swish a wide-open three to send the Jazz to the Finals.

We high-five each other happily and keep playing.

Around 2011, I stand out on the front lawn of the Smith Fieldhouse

in navy blue graduation robes. Iris, my aunt, fingers the inscription

*Master of Arts*, *Brigham Young University* like she was reading

braille. I hug my brother-in-law from Pakistan while my mother

pats me on the shoulder proudly.

Around 2014, I’ve brought my students to Salt Lake Comic Con for the

5th year in a row. We browse the booths full of Marvel, DC Comic,

and other iconic art. I shake hands with Tracy Hickman, my boyhood

hero, and proudly tell him how much his writing impacted my life.

When I get home, my wife tells me to delete the picture I took with

Slave Leia.