

CLASS XI ENGLISH
A PHOTOGRAPH

A poem by
SHIRLEY TOULSON

MODULE 1/1

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AECS #3 TARAPUR



Shirley Toulson: Poet, journalist,
and travel-writer was a highly
regarded poet and an innovative
writer



Shirley Toulson's 'A
Photograph' is a tribute written
in memory of her dead mother.

Card board is a hard paper on which the photograph is usually mounted or pasted

Here Card board stands for photograph itself

Theme/ Central Idea

Shirley Toulson deals with the transience and futility of human life

The title

A Photograph

per se suggests that the cardboard
stands for lack of durability

A Photograph by Shirley Toulson is

1.a dysphoric poem

2.In three different stanzas

3. It captures the three different moods of the poet.

Poem is all about the memories associated with two women- the poet and her mother which they missed and wanted to revisit.

A Photograph

The cardboard shows me how it was
When the two girl cousins went paddling
Each one holding one of my mother's hands,
And she the big girl - some twelve years or so.
All three stood still to smile through their hair
At the uncle with the camera, A sweet face
My mother's, that was before I was born
And the sea, which appears to have changed less
Washed their terribly transient feet.

Some twenty- thirty- years later

She'd laugh at the snapshot. "See Betty

And Dolly," she'd say, "and look how they

Dressed us for the beach." The sea holiday

was her past, mine is her laughter. Both wry

With the laboured ease of loss

Now she's has been dead nearly as many years

As that girl lived. And of this circumstance

There is nothing to say at all,

Its silence silences.

BY SHIRLEY TOULSON

Stage I

- 1.The Poet Shirley Toulson,
looks intently at a photograph,
- 2.Her mother was enjoying her
beach holiday
- 3.Along with her, her two girl
cousins, Betty and Dolly were
there

1. She was around 12 years old at that time.
2. They were paddling on the sea shore
3. The Poet's mother was the eldest among the three
4. She held the hands of both her cousins fondly and securely

1.They happily stood and faced the camera for a still picture.

2.Their uncle, their escort, clicked the snapshot

3.The strong sea breeze made their hair caressing their faces

1. All the three kids had special dress for the beach
2. Laughed because they looked strange, quaint and funny in the beach dress.
3. May be their dresses of the yesteryears looked weird, outdated and obsolete
4. The photograph thus kindled sweet old memories and revived a nostalgic feeling.

Stage II

1. Twenty or thirty years later, The Poet's Mother, looked at the beach holiday photograph.
2. Remembered the event with fondness and laughter
3. Nostalgically recollected the past with Betty and Dolly.

1 Their parents had dressed and
spruced them all

2. Poet's mother told Shirley to
note Betty, Dolly and her own
dress , too

3 In fact, they were in the
appropriate attire and apparel
for the beach

- 1.The beach holiday had happened way before the poet was born.
2. The poet Mother's sweet face was tender and mild, with full of smiles.
- 3.Now Mother's face has changed considerably but the sea in the background of the photograph had not changed much

Stage III

1. This takes place about 12 years after her mother's demise.
2. The Poet's mother who laughed at the photograph is no more.
3. The poet looks at the same photograph and remembers her mother's laughter which has now become a thing of the past

- 1.The Poet's Mother is no more she is dead and gone or passed away some 12 years, ago.
- 2.The Poet with much difficulty could overcome the loss
3. Her mother's silence has completely moved her to silence.

1. Poet's mother lost, her innocent laughter at the sea beach
2. Poet lost, her mother's laughter.
3. It was disappointment for both of them.
4. The present circumstances have made the poet speechless

Poetic Devices

Allusion

Alliteration

Transferred Epithet

Synecdoche

Personification

THANK YOU