

A PHOTOGRAPH

Q1. What does the word 'cardboard' denote in the poem? Why was this word used?

Answer: 'Cardboard' denotes the photograph of the poet's mother and her two cousin sisters. The word has been used because the photograph has lost its colour and clarity with the time.

Q2: What has the camera captured?

Answer: The camera has captured the happy moments of mother's childhood. The girl, two cousins and uncle went to a sea beach. The mother, the bigger girl, was paddling in the water. It also captured the beautiful sea and the transient feet of the mother.

Q3: What has not changed over the years? What does it suggest?

Answer: The Sea has not changed over the years. It is still the same. The sea symbolizes eternity.

Q4: The poet's mother laughed at the snapshot. What did this laugh indicate?

Answer: It indicates that after twenty years or so, the mother would laugh to see her past. She would look back her childhood and remember the joys of her childhood days.

Q5: Explain: 'Both wry with the labored ease of loss'.

Answer: It denotes the sorrow of the poet and her mother. The mother remembers her childhood while the poet remembers her mother laughing face because the other has died/passed away.

Q6: What does "this circumstance" refer to?

Answer: 'This circumstance' refers to the changed circumstances after the death of the mother. The poet has lost her mother who seems to be her only companion. There is a vacuum in her life and she struggles to come out of it. She remembers the laughing face of her mother.

Poetic Devices Used

1. Alliteration: Repetition of same sound at the beginning of a words in close proximity.
 - i. My Mother's hands
 - ii. Stood Still smile
 - iii. Terribly Transient feet
 - iv. Silence Silence Everywhere

2. Transferred Epithet: 'A transferred epithet' when the adjective or modifier is transferred to different noun from and thus modifies some other noun.
 - i. "Washed their terribly transient feet"

3. Personification: Personification is an attribution of human characteristic to something non-human like animals, vegetation and abstract notions.
 - i. "Cardboard shows me how it was"

4. Oxymoron: using to different self-contradictory words to create a new word or impression.