




A photograph

Shirley Toulson

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.


Paddle: to walk through water



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.




Transient: Temporary



**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.****



Wry: a difficult situation that is slightly funny



Now she's been dead nearly as many years As that girl lived. And of this circumstance There is nothing to say at all. Its silence silences.

