

Stanza-by-Stanza Analysis

Stanza 1 :

Lines	Meanings
My small grandmother is tall there, Straight back,	In the photograph, the persona's petite grandmother looked youthful and tall. She also looked poised and composed.
white, broderie anglaise shirt, pleated skirt, flat shoes, grey bun,	She was wearing a white shirt that had embroidered lace, with a pleated skirt and flat shoes. Her grey hair was combed into a bun.
a kind, old smile round her eyes.	Her smile radiated kindness and warmth, and sincerity.
Her big hand holds mine, white hand in the black hand.	Her grandmother was a white Scottish lady, and because the persona's father was Nigerian, her hands were much darker than her grandmother's. However, despite the persona's dark skin, her grandmother still loved her.
Her sharp blue eyes look her own death in the eye.	The persona's grandmother knew that she would grow old and die one day. However, she was a brave person who was not afraid of dying, or death.

Note :

The persona refers to her grandmother in the present tense to show that she is alive in her memories, and that the state of her grandmother in the photo is how she wants to remember her.

Stanza 2 :

Lines	Meanings
It was true, after all, that look.	The persona realized that what her grandmother had foreseen had become reality. The grandmother became old.
My tall grandmother became small. Her back round and hunched.	As any old person, her grandmother started to shrink and wither. She developed a hunched back and became bent.
Her soup forgot to boil.	She also became forgetful. And, developed dementia.
She went to the awful place grandmothers go. Somewhere unknown, unthinkable	In the end, her grandmother died. However, as a child, the persona did not understand where her mother had gone. And, because she did not know, it frightened her.

Note :

The persona refers to her grandmother in the past tense to show that she has accepted the fact that her grandmother is now dead.

Stanza 3 :

Lines	Meanings
But there she is still,	The memory of her grandmother lives on
In the photo with me at three, The crinkled smile is still living, breathing.	She wants to remember her grandmother as she was in the photo with her when she was three years old.

Note :

The persona refers to her grandmother in the present tense again to show that she will always remember and love her grandmother.

References

Akmal Razlan, “*The English Journey.*” Internet:
<http://theenglishjourney.blogspot.my/2015/06/spm-english-literature-poem-living.html>,
date updated 18 April 2016.

Amanda Christine Wong, “*Absolutely Wicked.*” Internet:
<http://amandachristinewong.blogspot.my/2015/02/the-living-photograph-by-jackie-kay.html>, date updated 18 April 2016.

Appuduray, S. “*A Quick Guide To Literature*”. Petaling Jaya, Selangor: Penerbitan Ilmu Bakti Sdn. Bhd., 2015.

Appuduray, S & Kok, A. “*Selected Poems, Short Stories and Drama*”. Selangor: Penerbitan Ilmu Bakti Sdn. Bhd., 2015.

Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum. “*Buku Rujukan Program i-THINK : Membudayakan Kemahiran Berfikir*”. Kuala Lumpur: Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia., 2012.

Christine Tan. “*Selected Poems, Short Stories and Drama*”. Selangor: Penerbitan Pelangi Sdn. Bhd., 2015.

Labelle, J. “*And So She Woke Up.*” Internet: <http://jolielabelle.blogspot.my/>, date updated 1 May 2016.