

Sibling Strangers

By Pam Williams

Skinny legs stretching From beneath a
mini skirt

Pressed hair upswept - No ribbons or
bows.

Skin fair, like Mummy's
Not dark like mine

A haughty look - uninviting In
response To my shy child smile.

Birthered by the same mother
Grown in a different world

I was the English one
Last in line

And she a teenager
Just arrived in this cold land.

We were sibling strangers
Separated by time

Our stares colliding
Across an eight year divide.

We were names heard
Faces in photographs seen
We knew stories of each other
But had no mutual history.
All we'd learned Written in
letters, Or told by word of mouth
What was missing
The thing we didn't have Was
memories Laughed or cried or
hugged.
We had no knowledge of our likes
Dislikes, braveries, fears;
No nicknames to tease with Pain or
happiness along the way shared
Nothing other than our
blood Bridging the distance
To bring us near.
So there I stood Round cheeked,
knock-kneed
A little canerow-headed girl
Waiting for our foreignness to ebb
To become the sisters we were
born.