

St. Andrews Scots Sr. Sec. School

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Session: 2022-2023 - Notes

Class:IX

Subject: English

Topic: Poem- A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal

Answer the following questions:

Q1. The passing of time will no longer affect her, says the poet. Which lines of the poem says this?

Ans. He is referring to his belief that she would not age, or be affected by time. The line of the poem that mentions this thought of the poet is, "she seemed a thing that could not feel the touch of earthly years". Here the death is only implied, and is not ascertained.

Q2. Why has the poet referred to death as 'slumber'? Why has it sealed his spirit?

Ans. "Slumber" is a synonym of the word sleep. It is a state of unconsciousness, when we are not aware of things going around us. And here, the slumber has sealed his spirit because this time, the slumber was not temporary, but permanent.

Q3. Write an analysis of the poem in a paragraph.

Ans. In this poem, the poet speaks about being introduced to the realities of life only when his beloved slips into eternal slumber. He had no fears with regard to her life, but unfortunately, she fell prey to the laws of nature. However, the poet is focusing on the positive aspect of the situation, by saying that she has blend with nature, and perhaps, continues to live with the rocks, stones and trees. She has gone back to the place she came from. He has accepted the fact that she is no more.

Q4. Explain the line: "The touch of earthly years." Who would not feel the touch of earthly years?

Ans. The expression 'the touch of earthly years' refers to the ravages of old age faced by human beings- the depletion of energy, diseases, senility and death which a person has to suffer as one grows old during life on this earth. The poet's beloved Lucy will not face the problems of old age as she is no more alive.

Q5. Bring out the irony in the poem.

Ans. The poet's description of his beloved as having 'no motion or force and she is revolving with the earth around the sun actually implies that she is dead and the poet cannot be with her. This is also because the poet, unlike his beloved, was always alienated from nature.

This mismatch between what is said and what is meant is an example of irony. The poet's opinion that it was because of 'the slumber' which 'sealed' his spirit that he felt that his beloved was 'untouched' by earthly things like mortality is ironic because it is not really the slumber, but his desire that his beloved should not be touched by death as he loves her deeply, that has made him blind to the fact that she is dead.

