

A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal

Introduction

This poem is written by William Wordsworth who is an English poet. In this poem, the poet expresses shock on the death of her beloved.

Summary

The poet's beloved has died. Her death has shocked him greatly. A deep sleep has closed off his mind. He is in a dream-like state, devoid of any common fears. He feels that his beloved after death has become a thing which cannot see or feel anything. The passing of time will no longer affect her. She has become a part of nature.

Message

The poet wants to convey the message that even though death is inevitable, it shocks the beloved of the deceased.



Extract Based Questions ↘

Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions that follow:

1. A slumber did my spirit seal—

I had no human fears.

She seemed a thing that could not feel

The touch of earthly years.

(a) The poet's soul had drifted into

(b) 'She' in the extract refers to whom the death had taken away.

(c) 'The touch of earthly years' here means:

- (i) touching the earth
- (ii) realisation of the truth
- (iii) thoughts from the heart
- (iv) inability to accept the truth

(d) The word 'slumber' means the same as

Answers

- (a) deep sleep
- (b) his beloved
- (c) (ii) realisation of the truth
- (d) deep sleep

2. No motion has she now, no force—

She neither hears nor sees,

Rolled round in earth's diurnal course

With rocks and stones and trees.

(a) State whether the given statement is True or False.

The poet realises that his beloved has become a part of nature.

(b) The poet's beloved will become one with the

(c) The poet accepts the truth that:

- (i) his beloved is now motionless and lifeless
- (ii) his beloved is going to die
- (iii) his beloved would come back soon
- (iv) his beloved would see and hear soon

(d) A synonym of the word 'motion' is

Answers

- (a) True
- (b) rocks, stones and trees
- (c) (i) his beloved is now motionless and lifeless
- (d) movement

Short Answer Type Questions ↘

Q 1. What happened to the poet's beloved?

Ans. The poet has lost his beloved forever. She has died and now lies motionless and forceless beneath the Earth.

Q 2. How does she become an inseparable part of nature?

Ans. The poet's beloved is dead and has been buried in the Earth. This makes her an inseparable part of nature.

Q 3. This poem is a kind of elegy. Explain briefly.

Ans. Elegy means a lament for the dead. In the poem, the poet laments the loss of his beloved who now lives with the rocks and stones beneath the Earth. This context of the poem makes it an elegy.

Q 4. Write down the imagery of the nature as portrayed by the poet.

Ans. The imagery as portrayed by the poet is that the nature remains busy in doing its activities irrespective of the time.

Q 5. What does the poet mean when he says 'A slumber did my spirit seal'? How does the poet react to his loved one's death? Does the poet feel bitter grief or does he feel a great peace?

Ans. The poet means that a deep sleep has closed off his mind. The poet is greatly shocked by the death of her beloved. He feels bitter grief after her death.

Q 6. The passing of time no longer affect her, says the poet. Which lines of the poem say this?

Ans. The following lines of the poem show that the passing of time will no longer affect her: 'She seemed a thing that could not feel The touch of earthly years.'

Long Answer Type Questions ↘

Q 1. We all know that nothing is ours permanently, then why do we crave for more?

Ans. It is true that nothing belongs to us permanently because one day we have to leave all the things on Earth and die. Nevertheless, people crave for more wealth, fame, knowledge, beauty and even commit crime to achieve it. We cannot separate ourselves from such things. If we give up our greed to have more and more, the world would be a much better place to live in. People would not go to extremes to achieve something.

Q 2. Describe in your own words how the poet's soul got sealed with slumber.

Ans. The poet was greatly shocked when his beloved died. He was grieved and his soul couldn't feel anything. She had gone beyond the touch of time. She had no motion or no force. She could neither hear anything nor see anything. She had become an integral part of time. Also, she became a part of nature. She now stood merged with rocks, stones and trees. In saying so the poet pays a warm tribute to his beloved. The poet's soul and his beloved have become one.



Practice Exercise



Extract Based Questions

- Every tinkle on the shingles
Has an echo in the heart;
And a thousand dreamy fancies
Into busy being start,
And a thousand recollections
Weave their air-threads into woof,
As I listen to the patter
Of the rain upon the roof.
 - 'Busy being' here means
 - As the poet listens to the patter of the rain upon the roof,..... come as dreams in his mind.
 - 'Every tinkle on the shingles' here refers to:
 - every heartbeat
 - every dream in mind
 - every raindrop falling on the rooftop
 - every imagination of the world
 - Complete the analogy with a word from the extract.
recollections : memories : : fantasies :
- Remember they have eyes like ours that wake
Or sleep, and strength that can be won
By love. In every land is common life
That all can recognise and understand.
 - The God has given the people of another country the which can be won through love.

- The message conveyed through this extract is that if we understand the feelings of others, there will be no between us.
- The common thing in every land is:
 - strength
 - human beings
 - life
 - feelings
- An antonym of the word 'common' is



Short Answer Type Questions

- What is intended by 'diverged'?
- Why is the wind called clever?
- How can you say that the poet loved his mother? (Rain on the Roof)
- What did Saint Peter ask the old lady for? What was the lady's reaction?
- Why do you think the poet describes in detail the killing of a tree? Explain briefly.



Long Answer Type Questions

- Describe how the poet will live in 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree'.
- Why do you think we don't live with other people harmoniously? What makes us fight and hurt other people? Discuss.

