

CHAPTER-10 – A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal

Thinking about the Poem

1. “A slumber did my spirit seal,” says the poet. That is, a deep sleep ‘closed off’ his soul (or mind). How does the poet react to his loved one’s death? Does he feel bitter grief? Or does he feel a great peace?

The poet’s mind and soul are bereft of any human fears or feelings at the death of his loved one. He feels that his mind has been numbed by a deep slumber that neither allows him to feel bitter grief nor great peace. He only thinks of what his loved one must be experiencing after death and describes how she lies on her deathbed, motionless.

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

“She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthy years.”

The poet uses these words to describe how his loved one will no longer be affected by the passage of time.

3. How does the poet imagine her to be after death? Does he think of her as a person living in a very happy state (a 'heaven')? Or does he see her now as a part of nature? In which lines of the poem do you find your answer?

The poet thinks that death has made his loved one a part of nature. He imagines her lying buried in earth being rolled by its daily motions, just like other elements of nature such as stones, rocks and trees. The concluding lines of the poem, i.e. "Rolled round in earth's diurnal course, With rocks and stones and trees," tell us about this imagination of the poet.