

A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL William Wordsworth

A Slumber did my spirit seal;
 I had no human fears:
 She seemed a thing that could not feel
 The touch of earthly years
 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.

slumber = sonno; **seal** = sigillato/intorpidito
fears = paure/timori
She.....years: Wordsworth loved this woman so passionately he thought she was almost immortal.
now: The "now" of the second stanza situates the reverie of the first stanza firmly in the past; she "seeming" immortality is fleeting and now the poet realises that her condition as a "thing" is permanent.
neither hears nor sees: now she seemed a thing that could not feel. The status as an inanimate object arises concomitantly with the poet's dispelled slumber;
Rolled round = avvolta.
earth's diurnal course: the poet comes to realize the trajectory of "earth's diurnal course" through the transformation from life to death.
.With...trees: the poet's consolation is, that the matter can be neither created nor destroyed, now she lives on with the rock, stones and trees.

Theme: "A Slumber Did my Spirit Seal" (Lyrical Ballads) was composed in Germany in 1799. Coleridge wrote of this poem in a letter of April 1799: "Some months ago Wordsworth transmitted to me a most sublime Epitaph ... whether it had any reality, I cannot say. Most probably, in some gloomier moment he had fancied the moment in which his Sister might die."

In this poem there is the recognition of how death deprives the organic body of its sensibility. But Wordsworth's poem is perhaps best known for its ironic reversal. The second stanza circumscribes the naive perspective of the first. Wordsworth meditates on his lover as an occasion to explore the ironies of his naiveté and subsequent demystification.

Form: On a basic level, plainness of expression characterize the poem. The unadorned rhymes give each work an air of simple, yet direct poetic statement. The rhyme scheme is: ABAB.