What happens?

A speaker uses examples from nature to argue for physical closeness.

The main idea

A speaker turns the apparent harmony of nature into a persuasive argument for intimacy.

1. “The fountains mingle with the river”

Method: Recurring verb

Different elements seem to participate willingly in union.

2. “All things by a law divine”

Method: Religious diction

The appeal claims a higher authority for the speaker’s desire.

3. “See the mountains kiss high Heaven,”

Method: Personification

The landscape is made to model human intimacy.

4. “If thou kiss not me?”

Method: Conditional question

The argument ends by making nature’s apparent harmony depend on a personal response.

Form and structure

Two eight-line stanzas with alternating rhyme; each ends in a direct question to the beloved.

Development, voice and tone

Water and wind — Playfully assured. Examples of mingling present togetherness as the normal condition of nature.

First question — Personally insistent. The general principle becomes a request involving the speaker and addressee.

Mountains to last question — Intensifying. Kissing imagery accumulates until the practical desire is made unmistakable.

Context

Shelley’s Romantic attention to nature becomes a rhetorical strategy. The speaker’s claim is an argument, not an objective natural law.

Comparison links

Sonnet 29: longing for presence. Porphyria’s Lover: unequal ideas about desire.

Recall question

Is the speaker’s argument persuasive, playful or pressuring?