

Emperor of ice-cream

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The Emperor of Ice Cream “The Emperor of Ice

This poem is telling us to take things easy, but seriously. The room of the living, in the first stanza, is set against the room of the dead woman in the second stanza a structure that employs a punning etymological efficiency, and the living are calling, whipping, dawdling, and bringing in preparation for the viewing. His uncle, fearing for his life, also devises plots to kill Hamlet.

The Emperor of Ice Cream Literary Elements

Stranded building to a boisterous crescendo in Into Paradise type territory. However, having faced the dead body, the speaker seems to realize he must choose life over death, must eventually return to the ice cream party, even though life is naturally gaudy, crude, and full of animalistic desire. It was first published in 1922, and is in the public domain.

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Clearly, this bustling vitality is a response to death— a sort of compensation— but Stevens suggests something inauthentic about the activity, mocking the actors, imbuing the activity with a strange, ironic sexuality. But, more importantly, perhaps, I hope this reading further demonstrates that Stevens is preoccupied with ontology and performance, especially in his greatest poems, and future work on Stevens-as-philosopher can be intellectually fertile.

The Emperor of Ice

Closer, Grow as You Are, has a drifting optimistic feel before crunching guitars lift it into its imploring chorus and epic outro. The contrast between the two stanzas, between kitchen and corpse, is also a form of dramatic irony.

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