**The Boy Who Loved Ice Cream**

**SUMMARY**  
This short story is about a little boy's obsession with ice-cream. Benjy is a little boy who lives in rural Jamaica. His family is extremely poor and the most important, and festive, day for them is the Harvest Festival. It is an even more important event for Benjy because this is the only place that he can access the coveted ice  cream. Benjy has never tasted ice-cream, but he relishes the very thought of it through the second hand description that is passed on to him by his sister. The story opens with the family's preparations to attend the festival and their scenic journey down the hill. Benjy's obsession with ice-cream becomes evident at this point because he cannot enjoy himself due to his anxiety surrounding when the ice-cream will be forthcoming. This mirrors his father's obsession with scouting out the man whom he believes to be his wife's lover and Benjy's father. The obsessions collide when Benjy finally gets his ice cream and it falls out of his hand because his father sees a male talking to his wife and drags Benjy along to confront him. The story, therefore, ends in disappointment for Benjy.  
  
**SETTING**

* The story occurs in the small town of Springville in rural Jamaica.
* The family is from an even smaller town called One Eye, located in the mountains of Springville.

**CHARACTERS**  
*Benjy*

* The second youngest child.
* He is a really intense child in terms of achieving his desires.

*Elsa*

* Benjy's older sister.
* She takes care of Benjy when his mother is busy.
* She introduces Benjy to the foggy concept of ice cream.

*Mother*

* She was very progressive and forward thinking.
* She was a very sociable and friendly person.
* Always eager to go or do something different.

*Papa*

* He was a farmer.
* The short story reveals that he was wedded to the soil.
* He did not like to go out.
* He preferred a predictable lifestyle.
* He was very jealous.

**THEME**  
*Jealousy:*  
Papa is irrationally jealous about his wife's activities. It is revealed that he believes that she cheated on him when she spent three weeks away from him in Springville, where she was attending to her dying mother. He watches her like a hawk at the Harvest Festival, thereby getting very little enjoyment out of the fair. This jealousy has serious implications for his relationship with his son Benjy. He does not believe that Benjy is his biological child, but a product of his wife's 'affair' in Springville. Benjy, therefore, is not treated well by his father, but viewed with suspicion and slight contempt. The narrator tells us that Benjy is in a state of constant suspense in terms of what his father's response to him will be.  
  
**SYMBOL**  
*Ice cream:*  
Ice cream, in this short story, is the symbol for anything that is intensely desired, anything that is anticipated to bring great pleasure.   
  
  
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