

Steven's triumph in remains of the day

[Life](#), [Emotions](#)



Stevens's "Triumph" Although Stevens claims to recall the evening of his father's passing "with a large sense of triumph" due to his professional duties, various hints throughout the night suggest that Stevens feels much more sadness than triumph. Stevens may honestly believe that the most professional and dignified analysis of his actions that night would be that he accomplished a great success, but his own actions indicate that is not how he truly feels. From all of the hints, the reader can indirectly understand the deep pain and sorrow that Stevens felt at the passing of his father, his mentor. After his father first fell ill, Stevens was truly troubled about his father's well being despite his insistence that he must be professional. Although he spent very little time with his father, he did realize "for a while it seemed undesirable that I leave my father in such a condition" (93). Stevens choice of the word "undesirable" reveals that he regretted leaving his father, but tried to play down his feelings. When Stevens visits his father, Stevens clearly seems to be in denial of the true emotional strain that his father's weakening state is taking on him. He barely can manage any words other than "I'm so glad you're feeling better now" (97). As it becomes increasingly obvious that father will not live for much longer, Stevens will not acknowledge this fact and does not make any attempt to comfort his father. He repeats the same phrase in order to he tries to block out the reality of the situation. Later, when Stevens returns to his work, both Mr. Cardinal and Lord Darlington can see the emotions apparent on his normally composed face. The reader realizes the extent of Stevens's distress, from Darlington's revealing comment "You look as though you're crying" (105). Stevens has not ever allowed his emotions to take control when in a professional

situation. When Stevens returns to work even after hearing his father has died, he again shows his inner vulnerability. Instead of continuing with his professional duty, Stevens stops to explain to Miss Kenton why he continues with his work, " ' Miss Kenton, please don't think me unduly improper...You see, I know my father would have wished me to carry on just now...to do otherwise, I feel, would be to let him down" (106). Stevens shares his reasoning with Miss Kenton not because they are particularly close, but because he feels he needs to justify his actions to feel better about them. In one final instance of Stevens's sorrow, his professionalism falters due to his inner turmoil when he briefly forgets M. Dupont's request for bandages. This is an error Stevens would never have made if he had been completely focused on his work. Through these many hints, Stevens shows his father's death affected him much more deeply than he lets on to the reader. He may have declared the night a triumph, but he is in denial of his true feelings about that night. The " sad associations" Stevens refers to are much more than that, even if he cannot even admit it to himself.