

A contemplation upon
flowers by henry king
essay



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Analysis of A Contemplation Upon Flowers

The title of the poem “ A Contemplation upon Flowers” means that the persona is in deep thoughts about the flowers. The persona admires the flowers because, according to him, they are brave and charming. He wishes that he was not conceited because even though the flowers are very charming and beautiful they are not conceited. The flowers exist and allow others to observe and critique their appearance without becoming so self-conscious that they harm anyone or cause disruptions. They then die and decay in the earth (dirt).

The flowers return to the earth when they die and are not ashamed of it because they know that they grew from the earth. They know that their petals would not have a chance to be beautiful if the earth did not exist. The flowers unconsciously experiences the different cycles of life and the seasons they go through as a result of the resolution of the earth. The flowers do not change the appearance they are supposed to have during these seasons as a result of self-consciousness. On the other hand, the persona would prefer if he could live forever and retain his youthfulness.

The persona hints that if he had the powers to defy the forces of nature he would allow himself to live forever and always look youthful. He would not even think about mortality or aging. The persona also wishes that he could know beforehand when he is going to die so that he could try to avoid it, or just be like the flowers instead and remain happy knowing that death is in

his path. In the final stanza the persona asks the flower to teach him how to be more like it; how to not fear aging and death.

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Instead, he wants to come to an agreement with the idea of death. He has observed flowers on a coffin stand at funerals and even though they are going to die, they look fresh and spruce. When he sees flowers in such situations they teach him that the way he live his life can make the idea of death easier to accept. The persona finally learns his lesson. He realizes that instead of over-thinking the situation he should just not think about it so that he can enjoy his life and accept its cycles.