

to the use of the imagination and the senses, and man unhappy because he does not utilize that which is at his disposal, like the man on the beach in section "2" who can only "observe" the auroras, and not grasp what it is, a source of imagination and transcendence. Stevens is being cynical in advising the Rabbi, or the representation of some religious leader, to espouse the concept of "an unhappy people in a happy world," and shows it by sentencing him to a "hall Harridan (haggish)" rather than a "hushful paradise". Although God is dead and incapable of causing any type of spiritual transcendence other than the meditation of "a whole...the full of fate," the imagination with its near joyous illumination of the external world, as embodied in the serpent, can. The center of the self that Riddle sees sought in the poem is the imagination, and the act of man applying the imagination to the external world in a communion with the senses which are in turn transformed by the external world.

Stevens world in these poems may be Godless, but it is not without feeling, and while the feeling may be fleeting and expensive, the moment is true transcendence, and an innate and cultivatable part of human existence and imagination. Although despairing at times, Stevens is looking for something bigger which he finds in the imagination, the external, and the senses.

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