

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=euuCiSY0qYs> Richard Cory live performance

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dwqwAy85CgY> Richard Cory from Sounds of Silence album

Simon & Garfunkel - Richard Cory 1966 live

They say that Richard Cory owns one half of this whole town,
With political connections to spread his wealth around.
Born into society, a banker's only child,
He had everything a man could want: power, grace, and style.

But I, I work in his factory
And I curse the life I'm living
And I curse my poverty
And I wish that I could be,
Oh, I wish that I could be,
Oh, I wish that I could be
Richard Cory.

The papers print his picture almost everywhere he goes:
Richard Cory at the opera, Richard Cory at a show.
And the rumor of his parties and the orgies on his yacht!
Oh, he surely must be happy with everything he's got.

But I, I work in his factory
And I curse the life I'm living
And I curse my poverty
And I wish that I could be,
Oh, I wish that I could be,
Oh, I wish that I could be
Richard Cory.

He freely gave to charity, he had the common touch,
And they were grateful for his patronage and they thanked him very much,
So my mind was filled with wonder when the evening headlines read:
"Richard Cory went home last night and put a bullet through his head."

But I, I work in his factory
And I curse the life I'm living
And I curse my poverty
And I wish that I could be,
Oh, I wish that I could be,
Oh, I wish that I could be
Richard Cory.

Richard Cory

Whenever Richard Cory went down town,
We people on the pavement looked at him:
(transportation)

(people on pavement implies lack of

He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
Clean favored, and imperially slim.

(clean favored means handsome)

And he was always quietly arrayed,
And he was always human when he talked;
But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
'Good-morning,' and he glittered when he walked.

(quietly arrayed means tastefully dressed)

(glittered means he was just "way cool")

And he was rich - yes, richer than a king -
And admirably schooled in every grace:
(sophisticated)
In fine, we thought that he was everything
To make us wish that we were in his place.

(schooled in every grace means

So on we worked, and waited for the light,
And went without the meat, and cursed the bread;
And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
Went home and put a bullet through his head.

(the light means a better day to dawn)

Edwin Arlington Robinson

1897

For Consideration:

1. What do you learn about Richard Cory's appearance? Manners? Economic condition?
2. What might you infer the "people on the pavement" looked like? Did?
3. What effect does Richard Cory have on people? Do they understand him?
4. What happens to Cory? Why?
5. What might his name imply?
6. Is this an ironic poem or was the final line expected?
7. Compare the text of the poem with the lyrics of the song.
8. Note the dates of each.
9. What does this have to do with our unit of study?
10. Read the student poem, "Poor Man's Dilemma" and relate it to this poem.
11. Why might Edwin Arlington Robinson write such a poem? What else did he write?
12. How does this poem relate to any situations in today's society?