

Date 1 / 12 PV Log: (circle one) Poem / Movie / Picture / LyricTitle "Richard Cory"Author / Director / Edward Arlington Robinson

Context (Where Found / Viewed / Read?)

I found the title of the poem "Richard Cory" on the AP Poetry handout given to me by Mr. Shakely under the ballad section. I then proceeded to look up the poem online, and I found a copy of the poem on a website entitled Poetry Foundation.

Content / CD / Summary / Precis (Say? "Plot? Setting/Situation? Key lines/phrases scenes, etc?)

"Richard Cory" is about a wealthy and well known man named, not surprisingly, Richard Cory. The poem for the most part comes from the point of view of the people observing Richard as he passes by them in town. The speakers (we) describe him as a "gentleman from sole to crown, / Clean-favored, and imperially slim." He appeared to them to always be well composed and well put together, but whenever they said "good-morning" to him, he fluttered as if there were something wrong. The speakers then tell the reader how Richard is "rich – yes, richer than a king" and how they would love to take his position in life. Finally, as the poor people are continuing on with their work humbly without substantial food, they hear of how Richard committed suicide by "put[ting] a bullet through his head."

Content / CM / Meaning? / Theme(s)?

In this poem, Robinson is seemingly trying to communicate that outward appearances are not always what they seem, and that money, affluence, and a seemingly perfect lifestyle do not necessarily make a person happy. Throughout the poem, Richard Cory is seemingly depicted as an isolated and alone human being, as the author mentions no family or friends, but instead only mentions people who admire and praise him as a human being. Companionships remains an ever so essential element in everyone's lives, and so the lack of any form of friendship or loving relationship in Richard's life may have been a direct cause of his suicide. Moreover, Robinson seems to be trying to divulge to the reader that money and artificial means of happiness may not be enough to sustain and support someone's life. There is a much larger picture of personal happiness and satisfaction that should be addressed and maintained so that a person's health and well-being can be sustained, and Richard seemed to lack this sort of fulfillment in his life. Finally, the poem suggests the fragility of life, and how simply, in a matter of seconds, a person can end his own life.

Form (Diction? Construction Terms? Symbolism?)

"Richard Cory" consists of four stanzas of four lines each that follow an ABAB rhyme scheme. The poem is also a ballad, or a narrative that is often set to music. No symbols, metaphors, or similes seem to be present in the poem, as the author tends to remain literal in his telling of the story of the seemingly magnificent Richard Cory.

Commentary (What do you want to say? Why like? Questions? Synthesis / Allusions-Connections / Relevance to personal experience, to literature, 20Q's? etc.)? "Poetic" Traits?

Although depressing, straightforward, and rather abrupt, Richard Cory still remains a relatively decent poem that addresses a sincere problem, especially among people my age today. Adolescent suicide rates have nearly doubled in the past few decades, and, despite the fact that I fortunately do not know anyone personally who has committed suicide, the subject is very touching and personal to me because I know of people who have, at one point or another in their lives, had thought about committing suicide themselves. This poem truly brings to life the reality that no one sincerely knows the pain and hardships that others are going through because people, afraid of voicing their own feelings and emotions, tend to internalize their problems, causing rapid deterioration of their mentalities. Richard Cory is a perfect example of how all of that deep-seated anger and rage at humanity and society can suddenly and explosively turn into one huge instance of chaos and disorder, namely, suicide itself. The poem's literalness also adds to the effect it has on the reader, making the reader believe in the credibility and legitimacy of the poem and the story the poem delineates. Overall, I find the poem to be at least somewhat poetic because it forces the reader to realize how fragile life truly is as well how easily it can come crashing down and to an end. Moreover, the poem makes the reader truly contemplate his actions and encounters with others and to become more aware of and sympathetic towards others around them.

over (do not mix logs; e.g., no poem log in front, and movie log on back)