



## **Rhythm: a poem by Jerry Judge**

**Rhythm**

**...and Richard Cory, one calm summer night,  
Went home and put a bullet through his head.  
...Edwin Arlington Robinson**

**3 a.m.**

**From the living room,  
light from one lamp.  
Vincent is reading  
the poem over and over.**

**Aching to pulverize his father's bones,  
Vincent once, in his twenties,  
began to dig up the grave.**

**When Vincent's eyes close,  
he is eight and his hands are tied  
to the back of a kitchen chair.  
His father's grin face  
in his face calling him trash  
like his mother, saying that he's  
only good as a practice drum.  
The sticks beat to a rhythm  
that the band will no longer  
let his father play.**

**Vincent's life  
so carefully constructed  
with wife, job, two children.  
Vincent steps outside.  
Down the street,  
another house  
with a light on.**

**Jerry Judge, Semantikon Literary Feature: Feb. 2009**

**Visit [childhelp.org](http://childhelp.org) to learn what child abuse is, and how to end it.**