

# 21. Tim Burton

## Tim Burton

### *Vincent* (1982) 73

The following poem is a children's story written by Tim Burton, which reflects his own passion for horror films and Gothic atmospheres. From this story the author made his first short film of the same title.

Vincent Malloy is seven years old  
 He's always polite and does what he's told  
 For a boy his age, he's considerate and nice  
 But he wants to be just like Vincent Price<sup>1</sup>

- 5 He doesn't mind living with his sister, dog and cats  
 Though he'd rather share a home with spiders and bats  
 There he could reflect on the horrors he's invented  
 And wander dark hallways, alone and tormented

- Vincent is nice when his aunt comes to see him  
 10 But imagines dipping her in wax for his wax museum

He likes to experiment on his dog Abercrombie  
 In the hopes of creating a horrible zombie  
 So he and his horrible zombie dog  
 Could go searching for victims in the London fog

- 15 His thoughts, though, aren't only of ghoulish<sup>2</sup> crimes  
 He likes to paint and read to pass some of the times  
 While other kids read books like Go, Jane, Go!  
 Vincent's favourite author is Edgar Allen Poe

- One night, while reading a gruesome<sup>3</sup> tale  
 20 He read a passage that made him turn pale

Such horrible news he could not survive  
 For his beautiful wife had been buried alive!  
 He dug out her grave to make sure she was dead  
 Unaware that her grave was his mother's flower bed

- 25 His mother sent Vincent off to his room  
 He knew he'd been banished to the tower of doom  
 Where he was sentenced to spend the rest of his life  
 Alone with the portrait of his beautiful wife

- While alone and insane encased in his tomb  
 30 Vincent's mother burst suddenly into the room  
 She said: 'If you want to, you can go out and play  
 It's sunny outside, and a beautiful day'

1. **Vincent Price:** a famous actor of horror films
2. **ghoulish:** macabre
3. **gruesome:** horrific

- Vincent tried to talk, but he just couldn't speak  
The years of isolation had made him quite weak
- 35 So he took out some paper and scrawled with a pen:  
'I am possessed by this house, and can never leave it again'  
His mother said: 'You're not possessed, and you're not almost dead  
These games that you play are all in your head  
You're not Vincent Price, you're Vincent Malloy
- 40 You're not tormented or insane, you're just a young boy  
You're seven years old and you are my son  
I want you to get outside and have some real fun.'
- Her anger now spent, she walked out through the hall  
And while Vincent backed slowly against the wall
- 45 The room started to swell, to shiver and creak  
His horrid insanity had reached its peak
- He saw Abercrombie, his zombie slave  
And heard his wife call from beyond the grave  
She spoke from her coffin and made ghoulish demands
- 50 While, through cracking walls, reached skeleton hands
- Every horror in his life that had crept through his dreams  
Swept his mad laughter to terrified screams!  
To escape the madness, he reached for the door  
But fell limp and lifeless down on the floor
- 55 His voice was soft and very slow  
As he quoted *The Raven* from Edgar Allen Poe:  
*'and my soul from out that shadow  
that lies floating on the floor  
shall be lifted?*
- 60 *Nevermore...'*