

# Vincent

By Tim Burton

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

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  
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

His thoughts, though, aren't only of ghoulish 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 tale  
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

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  
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"

Vincent tried to talk, but he just couldn't speak  
The years of isolation had made him quite weak  
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  
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  
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  
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

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?  
Nevermore..."

### Questions:

1. Create a plot line for the poem.
2. Which rhyme schemes are found in "Vincent"? Why might Burton have used this rhyme scheme?
3. What kind of life does Vincent's mother want for him? What does Vincent think about this?
4. Do you think Vincent's fantasies are harmful to him? Why or why not?
5. Does Vincent really die at the end of the poem?