



Figure 174 - Tim Burton, concept drawing for *Alice in Wonderland* (2010)



Figure 175 - John Tenniel, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865)

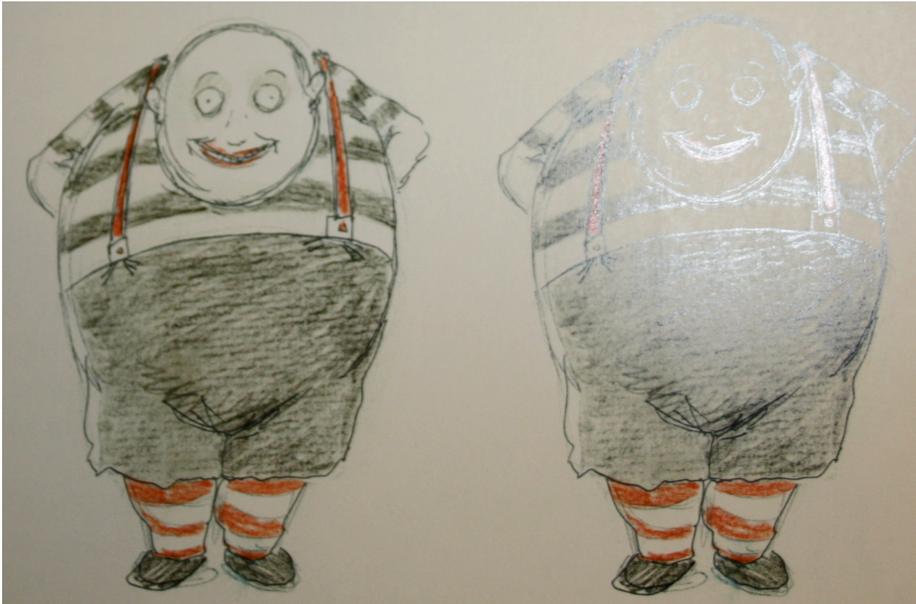


Figure 176 - Tim Burton, concept drawing for *Alice in Wonderland* (2010)

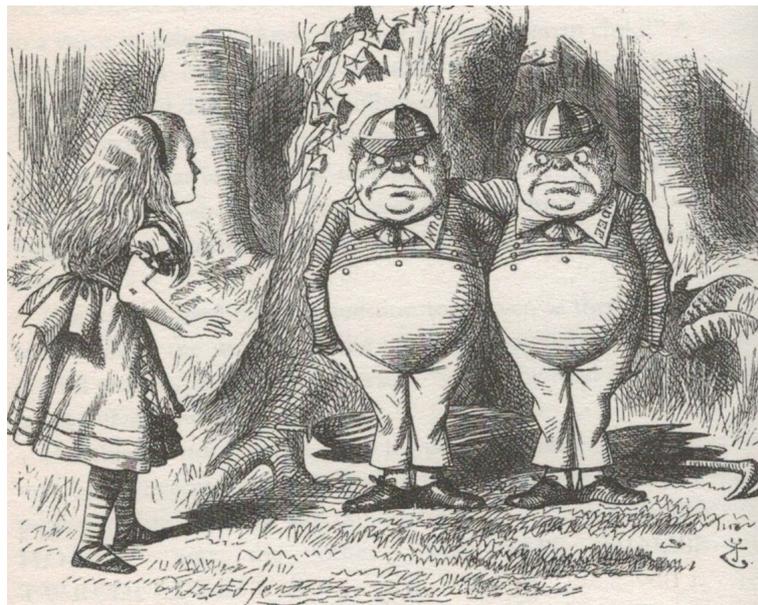


Figure 177 - John Tenniel, *Through the Looking-Glass* (1871)



Figure 178 - Charles Addams, (*The New Yorker*; February 17, 1973)

Burton's aim in filming *Alice in Wonderland* was to realise a movie that truly captured Carroll's world. Actually, he goes far beyond this purpose. Burton puts on the big screen his own reading of the Alice books, offering his personal interpretation and point of view, but his ready-made images do not prevent the viewers from creating their own picture of Wonderland. He shows the viewers one of the possible ways to fill the gaps, inciting them to rethink and rework their traditional image of Alice's story. Burton challenges his spectators, prompting them to discover new meanings and interpretations of a classical story. Thus his viewers are aware that among the lines and the pictures of a book countless stories are hidden and that new media can give substance to this hidden potential.

Moving move away from Burton's movies, I want to dwell on a book he wrote and illustrated, which provides the ultimate example of his involvement with children's literature at different levels. Burton's exploitation and remediation of the genre of children's literature is evident in *The Melancholy Death of Oyster Boy and Other Stories*, a children's picturebooks which he wrote, illustrated, and published in 1997. The book is a collection of illustrated poems of different lengths. The shorter ones are in limerick style.

Burton's aim was to "convey the anguish and pain of the adolescent outsider in a manner that was both delightfully and mildly macabre."⁴⁴² The word-picture dynamic in the text is quite complex, because, depending on the poem, it could be symmetrical, enhancing, complementary or counterpointing. Despite the fact that each story is independent from the others, all the protagonists are joined together because they share isolation and a sad and painful destiny. For example, Oyster Boy is eaten by his own father; Stain Boy is a weird of superhero whose talent is to leave a nasty stain; Stare Girls literally loses her eyes.

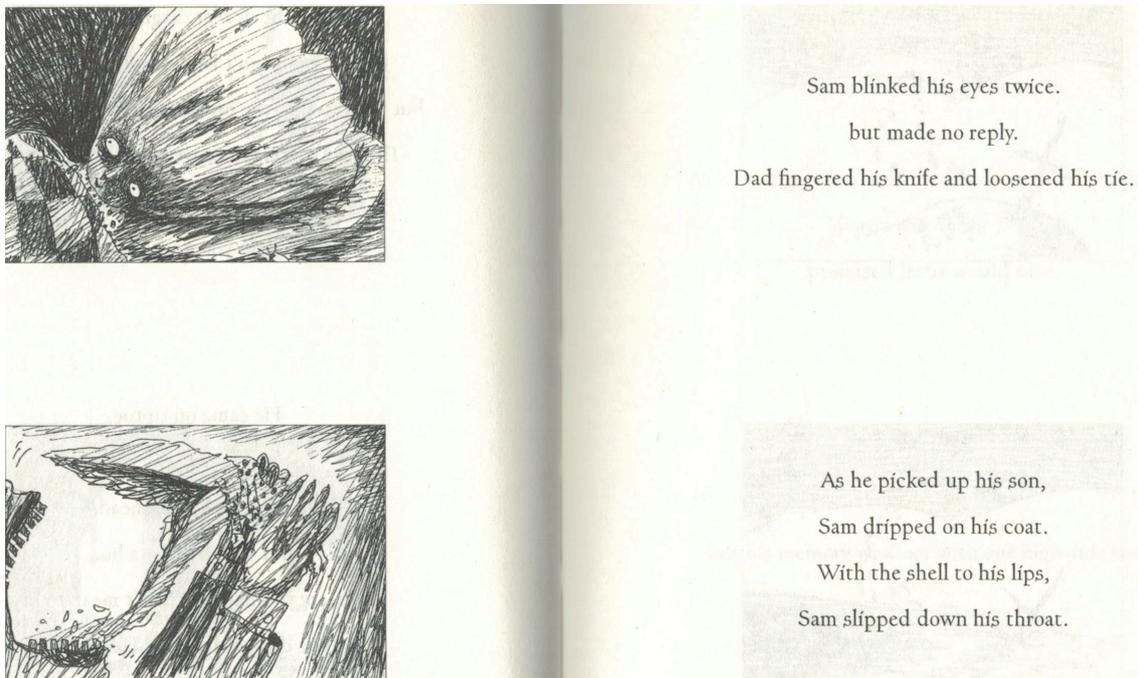


Figure 179 - Tim Burton, *The Melancholy Death of Oyster Boy and Other Stories* (1997)

As shown by the following images, it is impossible not to see in this collection the creative adaptation of Lear's and Gorey's limericks and stories, especially as far as the illustrations are concerned.

⁴⁴² Salisbury, Mark, ed., *Burton on Burton*. Revised Edition. Foreword by Johnny Depp, cit., p. 156.

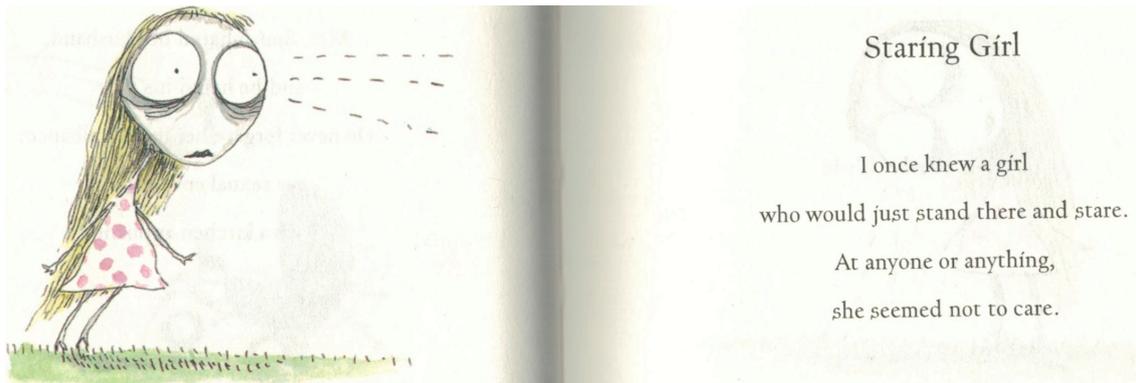


Figure 180 - Tim Burton, *The Melancholy Death of Oyster Boy and Other Stories* (1997)

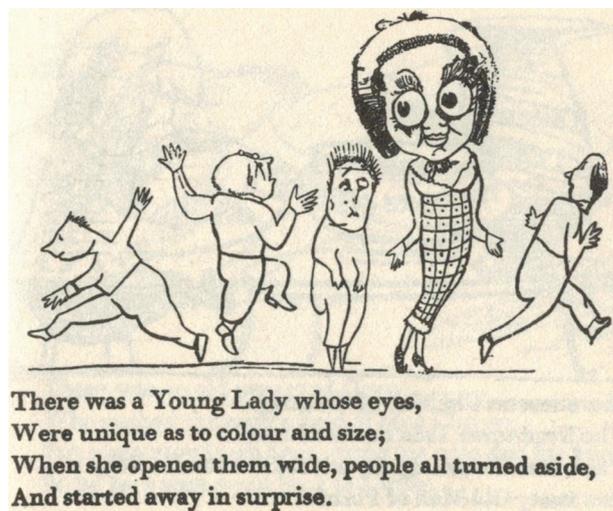


Figure 181 - Edward Lear, *A Book of Nonsense* (1846)

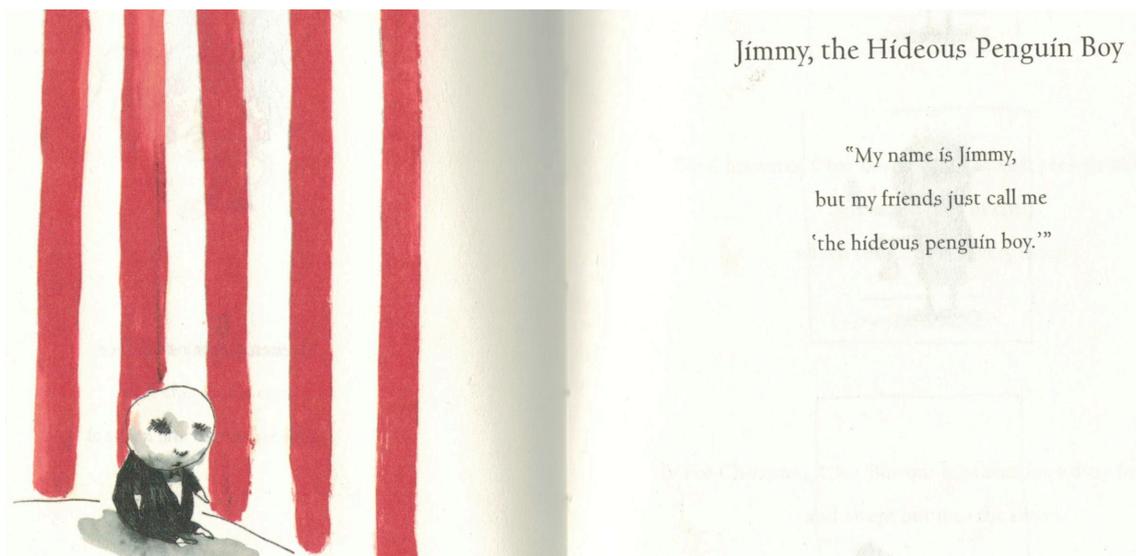


Figure 182 - Tim Burton, *The Melancholy Death of Oyster Boy and Other Stories* (1997)

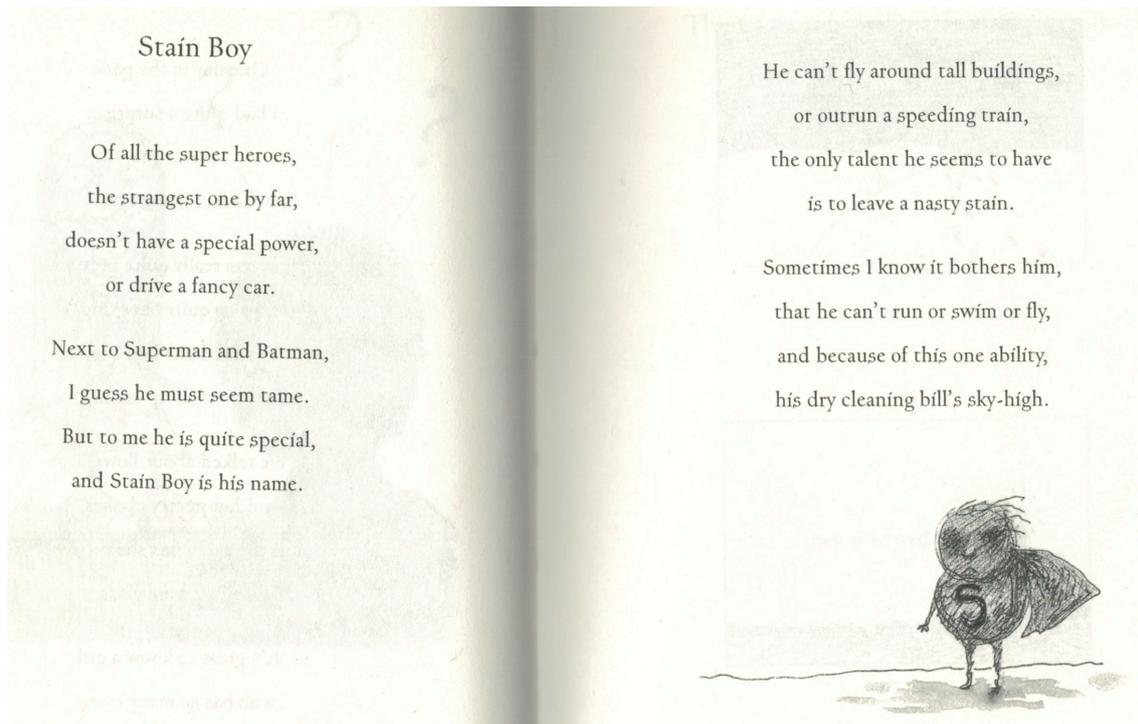


Figure 183 - Tim Burton, *The Melancholy Death of Oyster Boy and Other Stories* (1997)

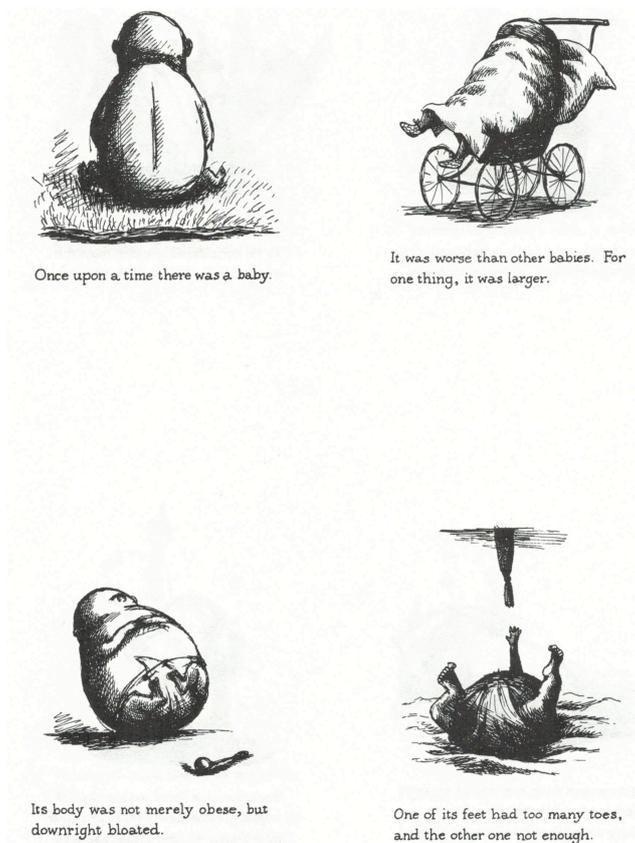


Figure 184 - Edward Gorey, *The Beastly Baby* (*Amphigorey Too*, 1980)