



Welcome to Kiki's Guide to the TV Dimension! My name is Kiki and I'll be your guide through the strange and somewhat nonsensical thoughts that happen while watching different shows and movies. This guide is mostly for long form thoughts that don't fit in 500 characters or less. If you'd rather receive short bursts of text then feel free to follow me over on Hackers.Town. The link to that and other places are available by clicking the pager icon on the main page of my website.

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Is There the Corpse of Sweeney Todd in Burton's Pies?

After recently watching Sweeney Todd, I ended up reading about how Burton was kind of obsessed with the musical after he saw it once. Apparently, he ended up going to multiple showings afterwards because he just liked the experience so much. This led me to think about how much The Demon Barber may have influenced Burton's movie style. Looking through his filmography, Burton only has writing credits for three movies. Edward Scissorhands, The Nightmare Before Christmas, and Frankenweenie. Frankenweenie is still a few movies away in my Burton marathon so I won't touch on that one much, except to say that it's very obviously a love letter to the 50s Universal Monster movies.

Let's start with Edward Scissorhands, which was the one that I first thought of while watching Sweeney Todd. There's a scene where Todd, having been reunited with his shaving blades, sings about them being his friends. At the culmination of the song, Todd holds out his blade to the window in reverence. The scene is very reminiscent of Edward Scissorhands. The extended blade, the wild hair, the white blouse, all reminded me of Edward. But does it work in reverse? Can we see Todd in the shadows of Edward? I'd say we can. The stories definitely have some similarities. Edward starts off very much as flashback Todd. Innocent, appreciating the beauty of his love interest,

cutting hair. It's through the course of the movie that another man, with more power, gets in the way. Who's in the judge's place? Kim's boyfriend, Jim. Like the judge, he's jealous that the beautiful woman has eyes for someone other than him. Mirroring what happens to Todd, Edward also gets blackmailed for a crime he didn't commit, and is sent to jail. When he's released, things start to devolve into the style of place which resembles Fleet Street. The neighbors turn their once adoring faces away from him and treat him like garbage. That's about the point where an accident, caused by Jim, makes Edward hurt Kim. Resembling the end of Sweeney Todd, maybe? I'll let you decide. This causes our soft and meek protagonist to run away in anger. Like Todd, he starts slashing wildly at everything. Maybe not people but a hedge person does get their leg cut right off! I think this is the point where the two diverge. The rest of the movie resembles a Universal film. I will also note that our Avon lady also resembled Mrs Lovett, just without turning people into pies.

I think *The Nightmare Before Christmas* is a little less blatant about its influence. What it does have is the musical aspect that was not in *Edward Scissorhands*. But aside from that, let's look at Jack. He's depressed when we meet him, like Todd. He becomes single minded and manic after he finds Christmas Town, like Todd and his obsession with getting revenge. He's got a female suitor who's trying to warn him about the disaster he's rushing into in Sally, much like Mrs Lovett. You also have a powerful being holding someone important captive with Oogie Boogie and Santa, much like the Judge and Johanna. It's obvious that aspects of Sweeney Todd still exist in *Nightmare*. I think the biggest difference in both Edward, *Nightmare*, and Sweeney Todd is that Burton refuses to do the big tragic gothic ending. He wants, if not a happy ending, then a bittersweet one. Edward staying up in the tower and making it snow every winter. Jack having to accept his role as Pumpkin King with Sally by his side. While influenced by Sweeney Todd, I think this is what makes Burton's movies his own. He likes to write fairytales. Maybe not the happiest fairytales but fairytales, none the less.

I'm looking forward to watching *Frankenweenie* again. I've only seen it once and really caught the Universal monsters aspect of it. But this time around, I'm going to see if there's any Sweeney Todd hiding in the pieces of meat that make up our *Frankenweenie* pie! I may just update this soon!