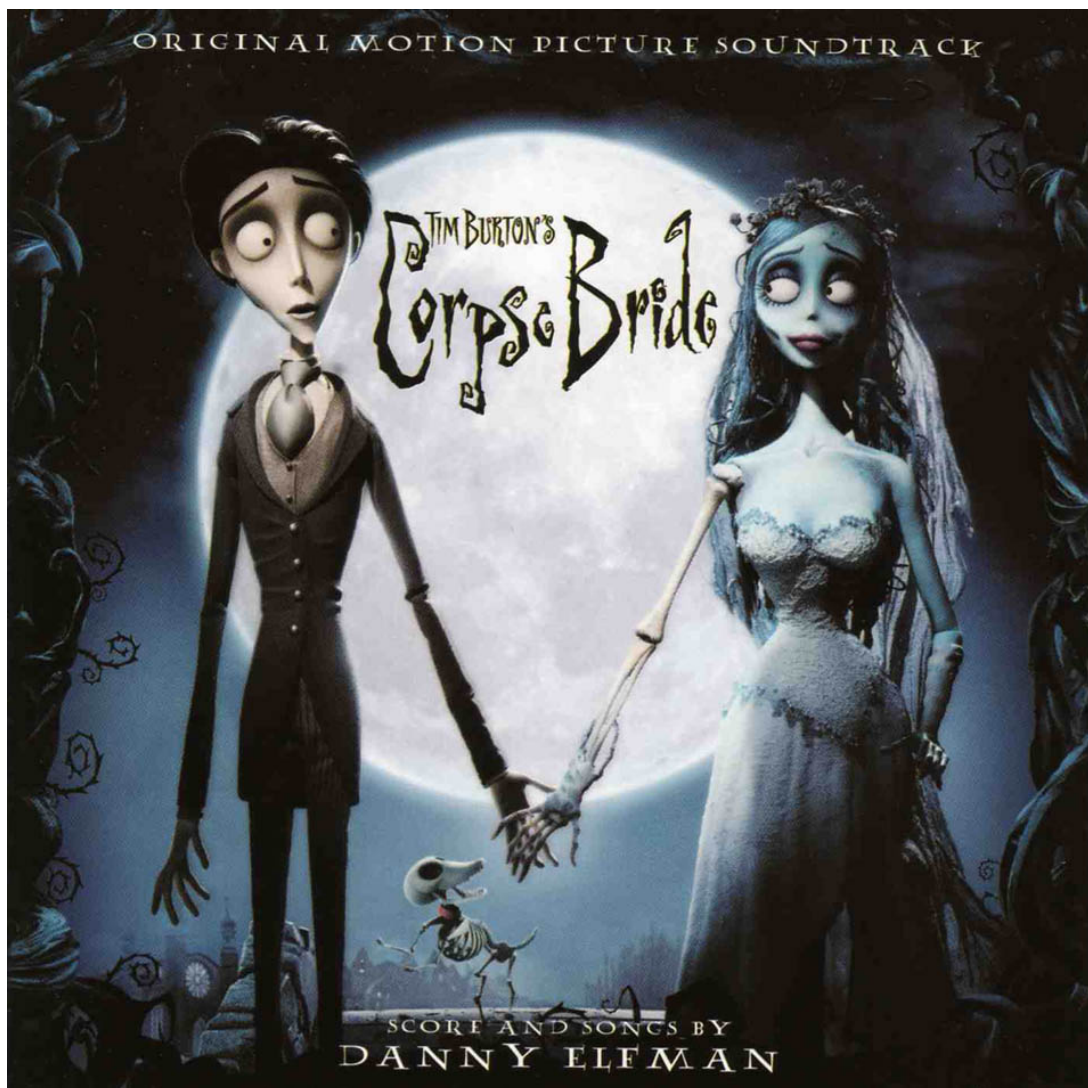


Juan Diego Illescas

Culminating Experience

Analysis of the Score by Danny Elfman for the Tim Burton's  
Corpse Bride



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## Introduction

*“...I consider that music is, by its very nature, powerless to express anything at all, whether a feeling an attitude of mind, a psychological mood, a phenomenon of nature. If, as is nearly always the case, music appears to express something, this is only an illusion and not a reality...” - Stravinsky*

Before the movies use dialogue, all movies were completely silent. Music was already a typical element used in the theatres and it was brought over movies to add a depth to the two dimensional image that appeared upon the screen. An added benefit was that it covered up the annoying noise from the projector. Full orchestras accompanied the majority of silent films. Books of music were published to provide the accompanists with ideas for scene music, categorized by the elements used in the picture and to create different mood along the film. With the advent of the talking pictures, music once again established itself as a principal element in the film industry. At first, sound films uses compiled classical music, usually from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This practice soon gave away, and the composing of original scores came as a new camp in music. Max Steiner wrote the first completely original score for King Kong in 1933, since then, many composers has decide to focus on the composing for films, creating their own styles and give a special characteristics to their compositions. One of those composers, who I personally had admired, event before understanding and studying the scoring for films is Danny Elfman, not only because of his particularly way of composing, but for his amazing career with the director Tim Burton, and the way they start working as a team. Danny Elfman is recognized as one of the most successful, interesting, and innovative composers in recent film music composition.

## The Director: Tim Burton

Tim Burton is a famed director, producer and screenwriter who born on August 25, 1958, in Burbank, California. As a child, Burton was feel attracted with the classic horror films of Roger Corman, many of which featured quintessential screen villain Vincent Price. Tim Burton also developed a penchant for drawing and enrolled at the California Institute of Arts, where he majored in animation. In 1980, upon his graduation, he began working as an apprentice animator for Walt Disney Studios. After a year of work, Burton grew tired with his work at Disney and decided to start out on his own. In 1982, he released the award-winning short *Vincent*, which paid homage to the enduring work of his childhood idol. In 1984, Burton created a unique version of the Frankenstein story with the live action short *Frankenweenie*. Impressed with *Frankenweenie*, Paul Reubens commissioned Burton to direct the comedy *Pee-wee's Big Adventure* in 1985. The success of *Pee-wee's Big Adventure* brought about other opportunities, including the ghost story *Beetlejuice* in 1988 starring with Michael Keaton, Alec Baldwin, and Geena Davis. *Beetlejuice* was recognized for its visual flair and interwoven themes of fantasy and horror. After forming his own production company, Burton directed the lavish production *Batman* (1989). With a cast that included Jack Nicholson, Michael Keaton, and Kim Basinger, the stylized feature became the first film to sell \$100 million in the first 10 days of release. The following year, Burton helmed the bizarre but touching film *Edward Scissorhands*. Featuring notable performances by up-and-coming stars Johnny Depp and Winona Ryder (as well as Price's final feature role as the eccentric inventor), *Edward Scissorhands* was acclaimed for being both a social satire and a simple tale of love and intolerance.

Edward Scissorhands was the first movie that Burton had full creative control over a feature film, having written the story and also produced the movie. The film was a hit with moviegoers and critics, and marked the beginning of Burton being taken seriously as an artist in the movie industry. He followed it up in 1992 with the sequel *Batman Returns*. It was not as big a hit as the first film, and suffered a backlash from parents who considered it too dark and twisted for younger Bat fans. Although the film was an artistic triumph, the perceived disappointment led to Joel Schumacher taking over the franchise. The same year Burton also found time to play a small cameo role in Cameron Crowe's grunge film, *Singles*, and an even smaller cameo as a corpse in his buddy Danny DeVito's film, *Hoffa*. After finally seeing his dream project realized with the feature length stop-motion film *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, Burton returned to smaller filmmaking with his next project, *Ed Wood*. An affectionate tribute to the supposed worst filmmaker of all time, but won Burton the best reviews of his career, as well as two Oscars. It was followed by an indirect homage to Wood's films, *Mars Attacks!* The film was a disappointment at the box office, and scorned by many critics, but has gained a cult status over the years. Burton made something of a comeback three years later with his first real horror film, *Sleepy Hollow* and the stop motion featuring film *The Corpse Bride* in 2005, which will be the stop motion movie that I will analyze in this investigation.

## The Composer: Danny Elfman

Danny Elfman born on May 29, 1953, is an American composer, record producer, and actor. He is known as the lead singer and songwriter for the rock band Oingo Boingo, from 1976 to 1995 and later for scoring music for television and film and creating The Simpsons main title theme as well as the 1989 Batman movie theme. He has scored the majority of his long time friend Tim Burton's movies. Elfman re entered the film industry in 1976, initially as an actor. He made his film scoring debut in 1980 for the film *Forbidden Zone* directed by his older brother Richard Elfman. He has since been nominated for four Academy Awards and won a Grammy Award for Best Instrumental Composition Written for a Motion Picture, Television or Other Visual Media for Tim Burton's *Batman* and an Emmy Award for his *Desperate Housewives* theme. Elfman was honored with the Richard Kirk Award at the 2002 BMI Film and TV Awards. The award is given annually to a composer who has made significant contributions to film and television music. Danny Elfman created one of the most distinctive and interesting bodies of work in contemporary film music, bringing his talents to a dark fantasy world populated by superheroes, monsters and freaks.

Danny Elfman has always said that his training as a film composer happened when he was a teenager, during the time he spent at the Baldwin Hills movie theater in the suburbs of Los Angeles. The theaters regular program included reruns of classics from Hollywood's Golden Age, specially horror, fantasy, and science fiction films, and Elfman actively listened to scores in the context of the films he was watching throughout his adolescence. The effect of this on his approach to scoring is

apparent in the evident influence of Golden Age composers, although his approach to the use of themes often goes against the standard practice of the classical Hollywood film score. Elman's tend to structure most of a score around variations of a single theme. The context of the film for which it was written, the thematic material helps to impress the tone of the film on the viewer, creating an atmosphere and identity that goes beyond the localized events of individual scenes.

When Elfman first began writing film scores, he immediately established himself as a new and innovative voice. The musical idiom of his score for Pee Wee's Big Adventure was inspired by Nino Rota: the bright colors of the visual images and the brightness of much of the music are both reminiscent of Fellini and Rota's collaborations such as *Amarcord*. Elman's score was noticeably different from the type of music that was synthesizer pop music score. Reflecting on the types of films that he was being asked to score in the early years of his career, Elfman has two particularly distinct elements in this scoring style, the dark and the comic compositions. On the dark side, there are ideas of his music being gothic, intense, and melancholy. On the comic side we can say that his music is unpredictable and kind of weird for those who doesn't study music. There is a very distinctive character much of Elman's music that results from the mix of this elements. Beetle juice main title is in a minor key and has a melody played by the brass, the sound of the augmented fourth being repeated along the theme, increase the tension and create a dissonance in the melody, something that become a Elman's distinctive sound.

## Burton and Elfman

Tim Burton is one of three directors that Elfman has said he would always be happy to work with because of the freedom they allow him as a composer. Their exclusive collaboration is rare but unconditional in the film industry. They had been working since 1985 together creating a unique sound and picture work. It's really interesting how this team had, not only created an impressive work together, but also a unique picture accompanied and supported with music. For this analysis I made an investigation and listened carefully to most of the score to have a clear idea of their work together and compare it with the score of *The Corpse Bride*.

### **Pee-wee's Big Adventure**

Elfman's first collaboration with Tim Burton came at the same time, as he was still involved with *Oingo Boingo*, before he firmly established himself as a composer of note. He had another credit to his name with his score for *Forbidden Zone*, which was directed by his older brother, Richard. The main theme for the film was composed by Elfman prior to working on the score, the score as a whole contains elements that would make his future collaborations with Burton so memorable, striking a balance between excitement, suspense and whimsy. A promising start to a wonderful working relationship.

### **Beetlejuice**

The main theme, that's playful and menacing in equal measures, is among the best pieces Elfman has composed in his career, and after that has played out, the score



is packed full of pieces that are of a similar quality, that match the mood of the film perfectly, which makes this one of the most consistent pieces in the composer's back catalogue.

## **Batman**

The film's producers were reportedly a little skeptical that Elfman was up to task for scoring a major blockbuster like *Batman*, but Burton soon changed their minds when he played them Elman's composition for the main theme, which would go on to become the key theme for *Batman: The Animated Series*. With Burton and Elfman involved, it's a little surprising that Batman saw the franchise go in a darker direction, particularly when compared to the campy productions that preceded it, and the Joel Schumacher film's that followed their efforts. Main theme aside, the score is packed with amazing cues, with the waltz being a particular highlight for me. It's not a subtle score by any means, but that's not really what the film called for. This is a dramatic and incredibly assured piece from a composer who, at the time of its release, was making a name for himself.

## **Edward Scissorhands**

Further showcasing his ability to balance dark material with lighter themes, Elfman produced another masterpiece, which at times is absolutely beautiful and at others incredibly creepy. Elman's music is as much of a character in the film as any of those portrayed onscreen by the cast. The title theme is incredibly impressive but pales in comparison to the grand finale, which is an absolutely stunning piece of music that's incredibly emotive, with a huge sense of drama.

### **Batman Returns**

Given the success of the score for Burton's first *Batman*. Instead he only reuses the main title and comes up with entirely different pieces to make up much of the score. All of the key characters have their own themes, which adds to a sense of musical coherence and it is an interesting score. Even this movie had many critics, I personally think that Danny Elfman score works perfectly with the story line along the movie.

### **The Nightmare Before Christmas**

This is a film that's been part of my Christmas rotation for a few years now. I personally think that the movie as a whole is wonderfully executed. Not only does Elfman compose the music for the film, but he also lends his vocal talents to Jack Skellington's singing parts. The musical backing itself shares thematic similarities with much of his other work with Burton, but it's still an incredibly strong listen that's heightened by Elfman's rather excellent singing voice.

### **Mars Attacks!**

Elfman captures the feel of the sci-fi movies of the fifties and gives it a modern spin in very much the same way that Burton does with the film itself. A little more off the wall than some of his previous efforts, as elements of the score resemble the voices of the Martians and include liberal use of a Theremin. As is typical of his compositions, there are elements of playfulness and creepiness here. Still, it's not a classic Elfman score by any means, and ranks as one of his weaker efforts with Burton up to that point.

## Sleepy Hollow

For his score for the gothic slice of goodness, Elfman does away with much of the light heartedness of much of his previous work and instead goes all out on the darkness. Played by a full orchestra, this is an incredible piece of work, full of tension and action that also captures a sense of romance at times. It doesn't see a major thematic shift as it very much keeps in with the mood of the rest of the piece as a whole.

## The Movie: The Corpse Bride

The Corpse Bride is British-American stop-motion-animated fantasy film directed by Mike Johnson and Tim Burton. The plot is set in a fictional Victorian era village in Europe. Johnny Depp led an all-star cast as the voice of Victor, while Helena Bonham Carter voiced Emily, the title character. Corpse Bride is the third stop motion feature film produced by Burton and the first directed by him, Henry Selick directed the previous two films, The Nightmare Before Christmas and James and the Giant Peach. This is also the first stop-motion feature from Burton that was distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures. The film was nominated for the 78th Academy Awards for Best Animated Feature, but lost to Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit, which also starred Helena Bonham Carter. It was shot with a battery of Canon EOS-1D Mark II digital SLRs, rather than the 35mm film cameras used for Burton's previous stop-motion film The Nightmare Before Christmas.

Most of the scenes are at night, and very dark colors are used in this movie. Tim Burton has used many varieties of shots, and because of the small characters like

the worm and the spider, there were a lot of big close-ups. There weren't many shots imitating dolling up or real camera shot techniques as well. However, they were a lot of zoom ins to signify the shocking factor, like when Barkis Bittern swallowed the laced drink and was dead. The setting of the movie is in a small-secluded town, with forest and woods. It is shabby and dark, solemn and reeks of despair, much like most Tim Burton movies. The characters are Victor Van Dort, Corpse Bride, Victoria and Barkis Bittern as the main characters. Their makeup is tired looking, with purple shadows under their eyes, with Victorian-era fashion.

They were mostly shot to shot, straight cuts. There was a lot of backlighting involved as well. The black and white contrast is very high, Tim Burton used many stripes on his character's costumes. The camera angles that were mostly used in this movie were also from low angle. The transitions are commonly the continuity shots. This movie is also a sort of musical, because there were several songs played, and the songs composed were very much fitting, while some are a bit cheeky and contain some dark humor. As usual, his main voice actors are Johnny Depp and Helena Bonham Carter.

There are also montage shots to signify that the character is very laden down with the stress from his parents and his peers. As the scenes are beautiful, there were a lot of establishing shots or long shots that show the character and its surroundings. Overall, the movie gives a very gothic feel, the stop-motion was perfect, the color even if its dark goes very well with each other, and paired with the music altogether forms a perfect jigsaw piece of a great movie.

The storyline is where Victor has to be wed with Victoria, who is the only

daughter of Lord and Lady Everglot, who decides to marry beneath their status because they are close to being in poverty. Victor, who was nervous about his vows one day before his marriage, practiced on what he thought was a branch, but ended up being the bony finger of a corpse, who then takes him underground. The corpse bride, Emily was killed before uniting with her lover, who turned out to be Lord Barkis, who was a greedy and cold man. He stepped in before Victor could take Victoria's hand in marriage just because he assumed that the Everglotts, being Lords are rich and powerful, but that was not the case.

After marriage, when Lord Barkiss found out that Victoria was not filthy rich, he threw a big tantrum and swore to get something out of the marriage, but then was interrupted by the creatures from the underground: the dead, who came up to celebrate the wedding of Victor and Emily, whom Victor has decided to marry because Victoria was already married to Lord Barkis. From there we can deduce that Victor has given up hope that he would find anyone like Victoria, and would rather live without his life, and at least make someone happy rather than no one.

In the scene where the underground residents came above the ground, when they approached the people, at first the people were scared. However, it showed a boy, who due to his innocence, can ignore other elements and recognize his grandfather despite the bones and haggardness, and it is thanks to this this boy that the others began to look at the underground residents properly and recognize their loved ones, re-united once again.

## Introduction to music Analysis: Life vs. Death

Analyzing the contrast for *The Corpse Bride*. Most of the pieces that soundtrack the land of the living, including the "Main Titles" and "Victor's Piano Solo," are dark pieces clearly inspired by classical music. Meanwhile, the music of the dead spans the dark but still vibrant "Remains of the Day" which explains how the Corpse Bride came to pass, and makes a refrain like "die, die, we all pass away" sound downright cheerful, as well as the swooning, spooky romance of "Moon Dance." Indeed, aside from a few slightly scary tracks, we can say that *The Corpse Bride's* music is largely darkly romantic: "Piano Duet" and "Finale" both have an otherworldly sweetness shared by the sad but hopeful "Tears to Shed," in which the Corpse Bride's friends including the maggot that lives in one of her eye sockets try to convince her that lacking a pulse isn't so important when it comes to true love. I will focus this analysis in the contrast of the music scored by Danny Elfman for the different plots along the movie, the land of living and the land of deaths, that is perfectly what Tim Burton try to present in the stop movie animation, and the reason why both, Burton and Elfman, does an excellent work together.

The other songs are just as concise with their lyrics. "According to Plan" clearly outlines the living couple's families and their reasons for marrying Victor VanDorts' parents are grasping new rich, while Victoria Everglot's are aristocratic but penniless and offer some clever commentary on arranged marriages to boot. "The Wedding Song," meanwhile, recalls the madcap whimsy of *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, although for two films with similar looks, themes, and creative teams, *The*

Nightmare Before Christmas and The Corpse Bride's scores are remarkably, and admirably different.

A piano is shown at one point in the movie, and we get just a glimpse of its nameplate. It's a Harryhausen. That would be Burton's tribute to Ray Harryhausen, the man who brought stop motion animation to the level of artistry ("Jason and the Argonauts," "The Golden Voyage of Sinbad"). These days most animated movies are computer-generated, creating effortlessly flowing images. But in the days when they had to be laboriously drawn one frame at a time, it was scarcely more trouble to do tabletop animation, building model figures and moving them a tiny bit between each frame.

Along the movie, Danny Elfman support all the stop motion animation with 3 principals themes with some variations in the melody and harmony that support the movement of the characters, the plot and the mood of the story; the audience keep connected and fallow the story line as the movie goes through. Danny Elfman represent perfectly what Tim Burton wants to present, contrasting ironically life and death, typical from many of the Tim Burton's movies, and Danny Elfman does it in a perfectly musical way. As we see the movie, we relate the themes with the characters and the plot, behind the dramatic but romantic story.

When the main title start playing, the movie starts with a close up of an empty drawing book, which is holding by Victor Van Dort, the main character of the story. Victor Van Dort is nervous, shy, and insecure, we can notices this when the movie starts. As the camera keep moving we can see in the background a picture of Victor when he was a child, and we can tell more about his personality; while he is holding a feather and putting into an inkwell, he is going to draw something. We can listen

chorus in the main title. The background is dark, melancholic and kind of sad as the main theme. He is drawing a butterfly that is captured in a bottle of glass. At the beginning we can listen to the harp and piano playing an ostinato, supporting what is shown in the picture. The chord progression in the main theme corresponds to A#min – FMaj – A#min - G#Maj – C#Maj – D#min – A#min - F#Maj – D#min – FMaj in the first movement, presenting the first theme that will be played in the entire movie with variations in the melody and harmony. The Clarinet and the Glockenspiel play the main melody, while the string and the woodwinds section plays the harmony. One of the variations comes next when Victor keeps drawing softly some curved lines supported by the strings section and the chord progression corresponds to Fmin – CMaj – Fmin - D#Maj – G#Maj – A#min - Fmin - C#Maj – A#min – Cmaj with the same melody transposed a third minor down, according to the chord progression. The string section and the glockenspiel play the melody. When he finishes drawing the music becomes softer and we can listen to the main melody played by the glockenspiel, the chorus, and the cello. Danny Elfman does a very interesting movement with the melody to prepare something that is going to happen in the picture. Victor just frees the butterfly from the glass and the whole orchestra plays the main melody supported by the chorus section, creating an atmosphere of hope and makes hold your breath and it captures you instantly with the picture. The camera starts following the butterfly flying out of Victor's room while the music becomes darker but inspired. It's really interesting to listen to the sound effect of the butterfly flutter that is on time with the music and supported by the strings and the harp. We can listen to a woodblock like a clock and now we can see the plot is set as a Victorian era village in Europe for the first time in the movie. Danny Elfman uses the woodblock to represent a clock in the background of a store, the woodblock is playing quarter notes and does in a



mickymousing way. In the picture we see some characters typical from the era, and the harpsichord is listened for the first time giving an old fashion sound to the main title. The camera keeps moving trying to follow the butterfly and it looks like if the butterfly is showing us the village and the representative characters of the era. Some fishers are shown now and the melody is played once again but this time by the flute supported by the bassoon and the tuba that plays a melody with a bass sound. For the first time we can see Lord Barkis, who plays a very important roll in the stop motion animated movie, the music becomes darker with his appears on the set, he tries to chase the butterfly who disappear while the next cue is coming.

The main title introduce the main melody of the entire movie and the end prepare the incoming cue, "According to plan" which will tell more about the story with the lyrics and also in a musical way. For the first time on set we see Nell and William Van Dort. Nell Van Dort is very conceited and craves any sort of connection to the higher orders of society. William Van Dort is a very successful owner of a fish cannery. He is just as obsessed with getting status as his wife is, although his general nature is much more amiable and humble. They show in scene singing the musical song "According to plan" lyrics by John August and Danny Elfman and composed by Danny Elfman

*It's a beautiful day; it's a rather nice day*

*A day for a glorious wedding.*

*A rehearsal my dear, to be perfectly clear*

*A rehearsal for a glorious wedding.*

From Warner Bros. Pictures' *CORPSE BRIDE*  
**ACCORDING TO PLAN**

Lyrics by  
 JOHN AUGUST and DANNY ELFMAN

Music by  
 DANNY ELFMAN

$\text{♩} = 92$   
 N.C.

The piano introduction consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble clef with a melody of eighth notes and a bass clef with a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. Chords are indicated above the staff: F, Fdim, F, Fdim, F, Bbm/F, F, Bbm, D/F, F, Bbm, Dbm.

G $\flat$  F Bbm N.C. MRS. VANDORT Bbm F/A

It's a beau-ti-ful day. \_\_\_\_\_ A

MR. VANDORT

It's a rath-er nice day.

F Bbm G $\flat$  C $\flat$

day for a glo-ri-ous wed-ding. \_\_\_\_\_ A re -

A re - hears - al, my dear, to be per-fect-ly clear.

The vocal section features Mrs. Vandort and Mr. Vandort. Mrs. Vandort's line is in a treble clef, and Mr. Vandort's line is in a bass clef. The piano accompaniment is in a grand staff. Chords are indicated above the staff: G $\flat$ , F, Bbm, N.C., Bbm, F/A, F, Bbm, G $\flat$ , C $\flat$ .

Extracted from the Tim Burton's song book

Finis Everglot and Maudeline Everglot introducing to the movie singing the song with the lyrics According to Plan as a response for Nell and William Van Dort.

*It's a terrible day  
 Now, don't be that way  
 It's a terrible day for a wedding  
 Its sad, sad state of affairs we're in  
 That has led to this ominous wedding*

After this song, we can tell what is the complexity of the story line and also have an introduction to the characters that support the story line of the main characters. Victor first meets Victoria when his parents are going to the rehearsal for the wedding. He sits down to play the piano in her house and she approaches him. The cue “Victor’s Piano solo, composed by Danny Elfman, also had the main melody from the main titles, but this time down up a third and follows the chord progression: C#min - BMaj – EMaj – F#min – AMaj – F#min – Bmaj – G#Maj C#min – F#min Faug – F# - G# - EMaj – C# - F#/A#

Piano

**Victor's Solo**  
 Tim's Burton Corpse Bride

Danny Elfman  
 Transcribe by Juan Diego Illescas

Slow Balad

C#min Imin

Piano

5 BMaj VIIIMaj EMaj IIbMaj

Pno.

10 F#min IVmin AMaj VImin F#min IVmin BMaj VIIIMaj

Pno.

15 G#Maj V7 C#min Imin F#min Faug IVaug

Pno.

19 F#Maj G#Maj C#min BMaj EMaj

Pno.

**Figure 1 Victor's solo piano transcribed by Juan Diego Illescas**

He falls in love with Victoria as they have their first conversation. Victoria is for the most part shy and soft-spoken; she performs acting the part of the obedient child to her parents. She's a bit romantic, wanting to marry for love and falling in love with Victor practically at first sight. Even when she's feeling miserable, she doesn't typically speak up as evidenced by her silence both when Barkis marries her and when she's watching Victor and Emily's wedding. However, when Victor is in a hurry, Victoria shows a streak of bravery and rebelliousness. She defies her parents and sneaks out of the Everglot mansion to try and find help for Victor. After that goes awry and she's sealed into her room, she tries to break her way out with a fireplace poker. Although she falls briefly into inactive despair once she's forced to marry Lord Barkis, she angrily tells him off and shoves him once it becomes apparent he's married her only for her nonexistent fortune. The main theme becomes dark just with variations on the harmony and playing the main melody with long notes. Along the movie the main theme is presented with some variations but supporting the picture in many manners. We can listen how Danny Elfman plays around with the main melody around the entire movie with some variations in the harmony that support the film and the plot of the picture while the storyline continues.

As I planted before, the music contrasts the land of the living and the land of the dead with the score. As the same with the characters, Victoria doesn't laugh or smile as much as Emily, and isn't quite as lively, because with parents like hers, there isn't much to smile or laugh about in her life. The land of living is full of lies and hypocrisies. But on the inside she is quite sassy and smart. She is not so much scared of Emily and the other dead people, but more scared of what happens in real life. For example, when things don't go according to her plan, she is seen looking scared and miserable, and shows happiness in a different and calmer way than Emily

As long the storyline continues, we see Victor dumbfounded in the land of dead. A skeleton is talking to him trying to explain what is going on, some other dead characters do the same. From the moment that Victor wakes up, we can listen the Cue "The New Arrival" that has a happy swing big band sound. We can see all the dead characters having a small party in the land of dead, and we can tell that they are having a good time together; the music perfectly accompanies what we see in the picture. From this moment, we have the contrast from the land of life and the land of

dead, not only because of the characters and the color on the plot, but the music all of a sudden changes to happy, intensive and little dramatically. The dialogue opens the new upcoming song Remains of the Day.

*Hey! Give me a listen, you corpses of cheer  
 'Least those of you who still got an ear  
 I'll tell you a story make a skeleton cry  
 Of our own jubiliciously lovely corpse bride*

From the WB Motion Picture CORPSE BRIDE  
**REMAINS OF THE DAY**

Additional Lyrics by JOHN AUGUST Music and Lyrics by DANNY ELFMAN

Moderately bright ♩ = 160 (♩ = ♩♩)

N.C. Gm

D7 Gm Bone Jangles: D7

1. Hey, ...

Verse 1:

Gm D7 Gm

give me a lis - ten, you corp-ses of cheer... at least those of you who

D7 Gm Cm Cdim7

still got an ear. — I'll tell you a sto - ry, make a skel - e - ton cry, — of our

Figure 2 From WB Motion picture, The Corpse Bride.

We can see in the picture a skeleton singing with a deep and low voice. Once again we have a musical accompanied with lyrics that explains in a comic, dramatic and subtle way how the story line continues and develops. The reminds of the day gives an explanation of what had happened to Emily, the Corpse Bride. It's really interesting how Danny Elfman mix perfectly the orchestral with the big band sound, creating a happy swing sound to the land of the dead. The Bonejangles is the band of skeleton that supports the main voice in the reminds of the day. They perform a



choreography singing the comic but sad chorus with the lyrics:

*Die, die we all pass away*  
*We don't wear a frown 'cause it's really okay*  
*You might try 'n' hide*  
*And you might try 'n' pray*  
*But we all end up the remains of the day*  
*Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah*  
*Yeah yeah yeahhh*

The story gets deep, contrasting with the score. Victor is trapped in the land of dead in he try to scape from Emily, who just married. Victor is not as bad to hurt even a butterfly, like the movie begins, and he doesn't want to hurt Emily, who has a very lively personality. She's often seen smiling and laughing, She is also extremely kind-hearted and sweet. However, she has a bit of a temper and gets jealous easily, as seen when she finds Victor talking to Victoria Everglot instead of finding his parents like he said he would. Her reaction is to furiously drag Victor back to the Land of the Dead, then tearfully accuse him of cheating on her. Her jealousy towards Victoria is shown in the song "Tears to Shed," where she sings about how Victor might prefer Victoria to her simply because Victoria is living. Her moods tend toward extremes when she's happy, she's extremely joyful; when she's sad, she lingers in the depths of despair. Once again we have the story line supported with lyrics in a song scored by Danny Elfman, the song describe how Emily feels about Victor and the romantic situation between Victor, Victoria and her.

Emily is at heart a loving soul, however, and forgives fairly it doesn't take too long for her to forgive Victor after he comes to apologize particularly after they play piano together. Later, her jealousy towards Victoria finally dissipates, when she sees her "rival" in the church and realizes that her chance to be a bride has come and gone, and that letting Victor kill himself to marry her will only destroy Victoria's hopes the way hers were. The one person whom she doesn't forgive easily is Lord Barkis, with good reason. In the final fight, she shows off a bit of a protective side, both helping Victoria avoid being hurt by falling church pews and shielding Victor from Barkis's final sword blow. Along the film, Danny Elfman plays around with the main melody with variations in the main theme and the harmony. His creativity make the audience keeps connected with the film and listened the music relating with the plot and the

characters. The final cue is a mix of dark and hopeful feeling that resolves the story when Lord Barkis, because of his malicious and ambitious, he drinks the poison by mistake dying slowly.

## Conclusion

Danny Elfman did an impeccable and contrasting work with the score of The Corpse Bride. His particular composition agrees perfectly with the story that Tim Burton wants to tell in the stop motion film The Corpse Bride. The contrast between the land of the living and the land of dead are supported with the score in an impeccable manner. Danny Elman once again create an emotional, romantic and dark score that support perfectly the story line, creating the mood that Tim Burton wants to present in his stop motion film. The main tittles opens the film subtle and gives the audience the main theme that will be listen along the entire film with some variations, but capturing the audience with the story and the characters. Its really interesting how the music fallows the dialogue and open the songs also composed by Danny Elfman as According to plan and Remains of the day, this songs support the story with their lyrics and also give the contrast of the movie between the land of the living and the land of the dead. The Victor's piano solo and the duet are compositions that not only support the story, but also interact directly with the characters from the film, making the audience connected to the story. Having worked together for years has created a very strong bond between composer Danny Elfman and director Tim Burton, and has also created a unique style that combines perfectly into film production. We can clearly notice how this team has grown and established an era of movies with an original music for films. I dare say, after deep research I've done on the impeccable work of these artists, Burton and Elfman, that Tim Burton would not have reached the level of his films if not for the work of Danny Elfman as a composer. Similarly, Danny Elfman would not have founded his own style without collaborating with Tim Burton's film. I personally admired the way they work together and how they build a unique picture supported by music. That is something that they create working all this years together.

## Cue List

### **Main Title (2:06)**

0:00 – 02:03

### **According to Plan (3:45)**

02:03 – 06:20

### **Victors Piano Solo (1:18)**

07:47 – 09:06

### **Interlude Victor and Victoria Talking (main title)**

Harp, Clarinet

09:46 – 10:48

### **The Ring**

13:05 – 14:18

### **Into the forest (4:36)**

14:25 – 18:57

### **New Arrival (0:42)**

18: 58 – 20 :04

### **Remain of the Day (3:27)**

20:35 – 24:00

### **Main Title Interlude**

24:01 – 24:22

### **Interlude**

25:08 – 25:57

### **Victors Scape**

26:00 – 30:58

### **Casting a Spell (1:26)**

31:50 – 33:28

### **Moon Dance (1:28)**

33:28: 35:30

### **Victors Deception (00:00 – 0:21)**

35:31 – 35: 51

35:51 – 36:17**Victors Deception (0:22 - 0:40)**

36: 18 – 36:40

### **Balcony**



36:41 – 36: 56

(Edited music)

**Victors Deception (0:41 – 2:09)**

(Edited music)

**Victors Deception (2:10 – 4:00)**

38:39 – 40:38

**Tears to Shed**

40:38 – 43:20

**Victoria scape**

43:48 45:47

**Lord Barkis theme 1<sup>st</sup>**

46:34 – 47: 17

**According to plan theme (hit)**

48:07 – 48:13

**Lord Barkis theme 2<sup>nd</sup>**

48:14 – 48:56

**Mayhew death**

49:32 – 49:46

**The Piano Duet**

50:02 – 51:55

**New Arrival**

52:03 -52:40

**Remains of the Day – Combo Lounge version**

52: 40 – 53:50

**Victoria’s Wedding (0:00 – 0:37)**

53:50 – 54: 25

**Wedding music**

54:25 – 54:53

**Victor Solo sits down**

54:54 – 55:05 continue..

**Victoria’s Wedding (1:22)**

55:06 - 55:57

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