



Tin Man Fic Ideas

Tin Man (US TV 2007) · Not Rated · 4119 words

by Arukir

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I know I won't get around to writing all of these, so I'm hoping to inspire someone else with them instead! Feel free to use them, so long as I'm credited for the idea.

And if you do write a fic based on any of these, please comment so I can read it! :)

(Number of fics until I reach 300: 7...)

Chapter 1: Glitch Saved His Wife And His Little Boy

What if Adora and Jeb's fate had been a little different?

(Written before I knew their actual fate, because of that ridiculous unmarked-abridged-version thing)

Ambrose spent quite a lot of time helping people get to safety before his brain was removed. When it's put back in, the first thing on his (long, very long, so very long) to-do list: help Cain find his family, because as it turns out, he knows where they are!

(Glitch saved his wife and his little boy. Cain has developed a lot of unexpected affection for this goofy, surprisingly competent little Zipperhead he's been stuck with. But Glitch saved his wife and his little boy. Affection, unexpected or not, doesn't begin to describe what he's feeling right about now. He isn't sure how to explain what he's feeling, actually)

(Glitch — Ambrose, he's Ambrose, he knows that, but they know him as Glitch and he's still glitching a bit and he likes that self name so, but the Queen beloved Queen his Queen knows Ambrose, which one is he which which which — isn't sure how to explain the feeling he gets when he realizes how happy he's made Cain. He isn't sure how to explain any of what he feels about Cain at all)

("Family," Raw declares, pulling them both into a hug. They smile at the Lion, Cain indulgently fond and Glitch-Ambrose uncomplicatedly bright, and can't find it in themselves to argue. Leave it to the feelings-psychic to name what neither of them, the brainless genius and the heartless cop, could, eh?)

Chapter 2: Glitch Was The Queen's Advisor. He Was Also, As It Happened, Her Brother

A headcanon I had that I dropped as the miniseries went on, but I still like as an AU

The queen is very, very beloved important. This, Glitch never forgets. He was her advisor, he's sure of it, and he turns out to be right — but something still feels wrong.

AKA: Glitch was the Queen's advisor. He was also, as it happened, her brother. After his brain is restored, DG must deal with her technically-not-new, very emotional, mad inventor of an uncle.

The Queen has her husband, daughters, brother, and kingdom back. If she's being honest, she's quite good with how things are, now— *(is tackle-hugged by a happy-crying Ambrose)*

Chapter 3: Glitch Came From Merryland, The Kingdom Of The Living Dolls

It would explain why he's so pale, at least, and why he says that muglug comes from 'my world' rather than 'this world'. (That latter point annoys my sister so much, lol)

Glitch isn't human, and he doesn't mean in the 'now he's a Zipperhead' sense. There's a reason he survives the Mobat attack and the cold without injury. Before he was a Zipperhead, even before he was his dear Queen's advisor, he came from Merryland, the kingdom of the living Dolls.

He's not a robot, he's not even a cyborg. He's quite literally a doll come to life. A scarecrow actually, technically, though he quit the fields when the crows wouldn't stop bullying him to pursue his interests in philosophy and science.

He's not entirely sure how to tell his friends. Raw knows, he thinks, since he can sense things like that. But DG and Cain don't. And Glitch isn't ashamed of his origins, even at his most uptight 'I haven't slept in four days and though that may be my own fault for obsessing over an invention I will now make it everyone else's problem- OOOH COFFEE!' as Ambrose, but still he's nervous about them finding out.

Cain is his friend, that he's sure of, but he doesn't actually know him that well. He had a thing against Zipperheads, even if he never really did anything besides say a few admittedly-reasonable things, when they first met. What if he's got a thing against Dolls, too?

And DG... She may be readapting to the OZ quickly and enthusiastically, but some things still take her off-guard. What if she freaks out? What if he scares her? Humans have horror stories about living Dolls, don't they?

Never one for good impulse control, Glitch blurts it out one evening over the campfire, with zero tact or lead-up. It goes well! His friends still like him, DG has a million questions about how a Doll even had a brain to remove, and he's happy with his decision...

...until Cain starts calling him 'Doll-face' with an amused little grin. Now Glitch is certain that everything is horrible and why does he like these people again?

(Cut a poor headcase some slack and ignore the way he smiles back whenever Cain calls him that, please. He's had trouble controlling his expressions ever since the brain

removal surgery. He's had trouble controlling his expressions ever since the brain removal surgery. He's had trouble controlling his expressions ever since the-)

(Oof)

(...thanks, Cain)

(No problem... Doll-face)

(CAAAAIN!)

Chapter 4: Ambrose Had A Loyalty Spell Put On Him

Because of course Ambrose had a backup plan.

Before Azkadellia's final coup and capture of the Queen, Ambrose purposely had a loyalty spell put on himself so that he couldn't be forced to betray the Queen or DG.

Glitch doesn't remember this. All he knows is that he was able to resist the Witch's torture and keep his secrets before becoming a Zipperhead, that the Queen is important to him somehow, and that DG is one of the easiest things to keep his focus on.

The rest of the characters react with horror when they learn that Glitch was basically under an obedience compulsion this whole time — but after the spell is removed and his brain is put back in, Ambrose doesn't share their horror.

He's always been loyal, he explains. Always. His little compulsion plan just meant that the Witch couldn't twist him around as Ambrose or take advantage of his brainlessness as Glitch — he could forget anything else, be made to reveal nearly anything that wasn't related to them or wasn't important, even be forced by the Witch to do nearly anything that wasn't against them, but the loyalty would remain.

And remains still, even after the choice is back in his hands. Like he told them — he's always been loyal to his dear Queen.

Chapter 5: Let's Make The Tin Man More Literal

One of my crackier ideas.

When Cain is on the verge of death, Ambrose goes full panicked mad scientist mode and transfers his mind to a robot originally made to cut wood.

Ambrose, though sheepish, remains unapologetic. Cain is very much *not* happy about this situation, though he supposes dealing with the irrational urge to cut wood is better than dying.

AKA: Let's make the Tin Man more literal, shall we?

Chapter 6: Cain Keeps Calling Glitch Smart

Written before I got to see DG's amazing pre-battle speech.

Cain keeps calling Glitch smart. Glitch assumes he's making fun of him, and maybe he is (he definitely is), but that doesn't mean he doesn't mean it too.

Or: Glitch may be glitchy, but when his half-brain works it works well. Cain notices this before Glitch himself does.

Chapter 7: Ambrose Accidentally Heals The Cain Family While Couch Crashing

AU where Adora lives.

Wyatt Cain has his family back, even if his son's older and getting back into rhythm with his wife is going to take some work.

Unfortunately, he also has an ex-Zipperhead who seems intent on bunking with him.

(Or: Ambrose needs a place to stay while his room and lab in the castle are being rebuilt, and accidentally helps the Cain family heal while sleeping on their couch)

(Featuring Wyatt and Ambrose being best friends whether Wyatt likes it or not, Adora and Jeb growing fond of Ambrose whether Wyatt likes it or not, and Ambrose revealing that he's much more Glitch-like outside of the formality of court than he originally let on — particularly when he knows it will annoy Wyatt)

Chapter 8: Cain Punches Glitch And Things Only Get More Complicated From There

I'm glad nothing like this ever happened in the actual show, but it's still an interesting idea.

When Glitch makes an unintentionally-insensitive comment about the late Mrs Cain at just the wrong moment, Cain punches him.

Cain feels bad for the hit, but can't bring himself to apologize because he's still angry about what was said. Glitch is apologetic about what was said, but knows that saying sorry *after being punched* won't end well no matter how it goes.

It's up to Raw and DG to heal the new rift between their friends.

Chapter 9: 5 Times Glitch Slept Someplace Strange, +1 Time Ambrose Slept In His Own Bed

Glitch has a habit of wandering off to strange places when left unsupervised for too long. He also tends to fall asleep wherever he is when he gets tired — in closets, on couches, standing straight up in the middle of a cornfield, tucked behind a dresser... and, on one memorable occasion, in a *chandelier/other-large-thing-that-hangs-from-the-ceiling*.

Five times someone found Glitch asleep somewhere that wasn't a bed, plus the first time Ambrose got to sleep in his own bed again since becoming a Zipperhead.

Chapter 10: Glitch Forgets That Kissing Is A Thing

A fic with potential for misunderstandings, angst, and comedy.

Glitch forgets that kissing is a thing. Then someone kisses him (either on the lips or on the forehead/cheek or something) and he confuses them by being very, very confused himself.

If romantic, this could open up a misunderstanding where they think he doesn't like them back when he in fact does. If platonic, it could open up a silly moment where they explain it and do it again and he still doesn't really get it but he knows it's a friend thing so he likes it (and immediately does it to someone else, confusing/exasperating them in turn)

(DG kisses Glitch on the cheek, he kisses her back on the cheek after it's explained to him, turns and finds Raw and immediately kisses him on the cheek, and then wanders off with a grin to find Cain and kiss him on the cheek. Raw is confused but shrugs it off as unexpected affection. Cain is baffled and exasperated and *who taught the Zipperhead to do this*– DG!)

Chapter 11: Scarecrow = Mad Hatter

Because it would be AMAZING

You know something weird? I can picture Glitch rocking a top hat for a party or something, but I just can't see him in *any* hat on a day-to-day basis. How bizarre...

Glitch throws a tea party for the quartet and things very quickly devolve into a full-blown Alice's Adventures in Wonderland Mad Tea Party reference.

Like seriously, most of the Mad Trio (Hatter, Hare, and Dormouse)'s lines would map onto him easily, and the others' reactions to him talking about fixing watches with the best butter and pissing off time and treacle wells would be *hilarious*.

Chapter 12: Glitch Reads Wonderland

Because the more you think about it, the more wholesome and heartbreaking this gets.

Glitch reads the works of Lewis Carroll and bonds with Alice because of her identity issues, confusion, and frustration whenever she tries to say something she knows that she knows and it comes out wrong but she's not entirely sure how it's wrong (like when she tries to say the How Doth The Little poem).

Chapter 13: What Happened Between Cain And The Mystic Man?

What happened between them that caused Cain, of all people, to have such a reverence of and loyalty to the Mystic Man? Because that felt a bit more personal than just 'I worked his protection detail for a time' like Cain explained...

And lets not forget that the Mystic Man in turn seemed to value and like him as well.

Cain's past would be interesting to explore period. When he and Zero were somewhat close, when he joined the resistance, the reason why he smiled when he heard that one hooker's voice (I think she used to be one of his informants or something, not that he slept with her), dealing with DeMilo, why he seemed to have knowledge interacting gently with people undergoing detox... just his life as a cop on the beat in Central City in general.

Chapter 14: Toto Literally Just Sat There

Okay, more a mini-rant than a fic idea, lol

Tutor literally just sat there in dog form while Azkadellia killed DG in the flashback. He sat there while *a child partially in his care was murdered*. Why? Is he actually evil after all? Did he not realize what was happening? Was he put under some kind of spell? Was that actually a real dog that just happened to look *exactly* like him?

An explanation/character study/backstory for Tutor.

Chapter 15: Inside Our Heads

An idea I came up with for my original stories and then thought 'hey, this would actually be really interesting applied to Tin Man', so here we are.

The quartet are magically able to go into physical representations of their own and each other's minds, where their moods and modes show up as different people.

The types of selves, their dynamics, and the architecture of the minds reveal different things about each character.

Each of their heads are different. Raw's a bit moreso, because he's a different species to the rest of them. But what happens when they get to Glitch's head?

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Chapter 17: Obligatory Pokémon AU

I wish that we could get a region based off of the OZ, it would be EPIC.

The miniseries is mostly the same, but with Pokémon. Maybe Pokémon exist in both worlds, or maybe it's another thing about the OZ that DG has to get used to. But everyone would have at least one Pokémon (though maybe the Viewers would actually be Pokémon? Or half Pokémon?)

Whether only using canon Pokémon, completely making up Pokémon, or a mix changes things.

Does Glitch still have a Pokémon from his days as Ambrose? Is it damaged too, or does it remember who he actually is even though he doesn't? Does he not have any Pokémon because they were all locked away when he was made a Zipperhead? Or maybe he has a Pokémon that he befriended as Glitch and still keeps when he's Ambrose again?

Does Azkadellia have a Pokémon, or have they all been locked away in favor of the Witch's Pokémon? If she does, is it possessed too? Or is watching sadly as its trainer fights from within?

Does Cain have a Pokémon that was trapped with him? Or waited patiently for his release? Or was trapped apart from him?

What would the Mystic Man's Pokémon be? What about Zero's, or DeMilo's? Or the Queen's, Ahamo's, etc etc?

Whether a Pokémon himself or not, does Raw have Pokémon? If he does, is his bond with them the same as a human's would be?

Does DG have a Pokémon? Did she have one as a child and remeeting with it is part of her reclaiming her OZian heritage?

Would Tutor/Toto's dog form now be a Pokémon form?

Idea's for Glitch/Ambrose Pokémon team:

- Spinda
- PorygonZ

- Banette
- Cacturne
- Alakazam
- Applin
- Yamask
- Sunflora
- Mimikyu
- Murkrow
- Blacephalon

Chapter 18: Daemon AU

His Dark Materials had such interesting worldbuilding, I wish there were more Daemon AU fics out there...

An AU where people have something like Daemons from His Dark Materials, though maybe not exactly the same.

Would both worlds have Daemons, or just the OZ?

This idea gets especially interesting with the following:

- Glitch — How does being a Zipperhead and being split in two brain-wise affect his Daemon? Is his Daemon split too? Fractured? Unstable? Did his Daemon disappear or maybe go dormant? Is it stuck near the other half of his brain? Is it captured and he occasionally gets the *wrong wrong wrong* feeling of other people touching it without knowing why?

- Azkadellia — How does being possessed affect her Daemon? Does the Witch have her own Daemon, and if so how does that affect things?

- DG — If only the OZ has Daemons, what does that mean for her living on the Otherside? And if both worlds have Daemons, was her Daemon still different because she's actually from the OZ? How does her literal *death* and rebirth affect it??

- DG's robo parents — Would series blah-blah-blah nurture units have Daemons? Would they have robo Daemons? Or maybe them not having Daemons would be a plus, if only the OZ has them, because they could blend in better?

- Raw — Would he even *have* a Daemon? If Viewers do have Daemons, do they act or look different than human Daemons do??

Chapter 19: Cain Refused To Give Up And Die — Be Like Cain

A brief character study

After Zero shot him and he fell through a window into a frozen lake, Cain managed to swim upward and get partway to the castle before passing out in the snow. What was that like for him?

Cain didn't go crazy after 8+ years in the tin suit, despite the fact that most people subjected to it do. Traumatized, of course. But mostly okay, mostly functional, and with his senses of humor and reality intact.

Cain is made of tough stuff. Very tough. And he doesn't give up, ever. Even when facing something that would destroy anyone else, physically or mentally or emotionally — he refuses to die.

Chapter 20: Ambrose Meets Glitch

Because I've seen plenty of fics where Jar!Ambrose meets Glitch, but Jar!Ambrose isn't full Ambrose, and it would be really interesting if full Ambrose got to meet Glitch.

The quartet get sent back in time and the only one that can help them get back to the present is Ambrose — who is a bit busy processing Glitch's existence and is going to need a moment, please and thank you.

To save the trouble of paradox nonsense, let's assume that something makes it so that Ambrose will forget after sending them back and he only remembers again after Glitch gets turned back into him.

Mostly comedy as Ambrose deals with watching himself act like an undignified, bumbling fool and him experiencing Glitch's bonds with the others — the sweet parts and the NO GLITCH DON'T EAT THAT actively-having-to-be-managed-like-a-particularly-stupid-child-or-unruly-pet (from Ambrose's perspective, as he hasn't noticed Glitch's brilliant side yet) parts — from the outside.

A little bit of angst because Ambrose is currently bluescreening over the idea that he's going to have half his brain removed eventually and WHAT. Which also works for humor because he wants to have a mental breakdown in peace but these time travelers are telling him to fix the thingy and he pulls himself together while glancing at the thing that is technically him oh Gods every five seconds and what the actual fuck is this day???

Glitch meanwhile is feeling that same sort of sad feeling he gets when he discovers he's been walking in a circle again — that the world around him is familiar and he knows it well, except it isn't and he doesn't, except he's so sure it should be and he does.

He also gets a brief surge of something light in his chest, though, every time he says or does something in sync with his other self. A phrase, a gesture, a conclusion reached together. Finally the brief, spare moments when his brain fires right suddenly have something to be compared to, proof that they should be his baseline. And he manages to hold onto this thought in bits and spurts, but never for long because they are in a lab he thinks he likes labs there's someone that looks just like him ooh what does this doohickey do OH THAT'S SHINY and it SPINS—

(And someday Ambrose will have to deal with remembering both sides of this encounter, which is its own kind of hilarious yet interesting)

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Chapter 22: The Harp

IDK, I just think that Ambrose's friendship with the queen is cute.

We know the Queen played the harp. We also know that Glitch, very briefly, recognized that harp. What if Ambrose used to love listening to her play, because it could calm his million-mile-per-hour mind?

What if hearing it again as Glitch helps soothe his fragmented, still million-mile-per-hour but now with speed bumps half-mind?

What if hearing it after he's gotten his brain back in but before he's fully settled helps too? Helps his disparate pieces quiet down and reconnect?

What if it's not the Queen playing at some point, but DG, having inherited her mother's talent? And Glitch, Ambrose, whoever he is — he can't help but smile at the sight and the sound.

(Or maybe it's Azkadellia that plays, more practiced than DG but not quite like their Mother yet. Maybe he hasn't quite stopped fearing and hating her, despite knowing that it wasn't really her that he once feared and hated. And maybe this helps, this soothing sound coming from under her fingertips. Maybe it helps him see his little Azkadee under the image of the Sorceress)

What if Ambrose loves harp music? Purely, simply, quietly loves it.

Part 1 — Pre-canon, the Queen playing to him as Ambrose

Part 2 — Mid-canon, DG playing to him as Glitch

Part 3 — Post-canon, Azkadellia playing to him as whoever he's becoming

Chapter 23: AU Concepts

A looser idea than most, but an interesting one

Pirate AU

Space AU

Everyone-are-animals-instead-of-people AU

The Office AU

Fashion Magazine AU

Dinosaur times AU

Modern times and/or no magic AU

Same characters but more closely following the plot of the books AU

Wonderland AU

Roleswap AU

Once Upon A Time AU

Or: Everyone or just one of them gets *trapped* in one or multiple of these AUs and must play along in order to escape back to the main universe.

Chapter 24: Left And Right/Swapped

Because he gets them swapped around twice and isn't shown to get them correct even once, so let's explore that a little.

Just anything to do with Glitch's problems telling left from right. Comedy, angst, fluff, whatever.

Set during the series, before it, after it.

Or even with Ambrose, having the most unexpected lingering issue after rebraining (trouble telling left from right), or surprising everyone by revealing he's always had issues with that (it was just worse as Glitch).

Or maybe one of the others automatically goes to remind Ambrose which is which, having forgotten that he doesn't need help with that anymore since the rebraining.

Maybe with someone else getting a bit offended on behalf of the proud Royal Advisor, only to be surprised when Ambrose just chuckles and moves on.

Who knows? Just something with the left-right thing.

Chapter 25: Spite

There is NOT enough with Jar!Ambrose being his own character out there, and I seek to correct that.

When he gets his memory back, the first thing Ambrose does is collapse in laughter.

"We didn't need to stop the Sunseeder!" he finally manages to gasp out, grinning madly, making everyone's looks of confusion and worry that much worse. "It would've—" he is interrupted by his own cackling and the need to pause for breath. "It would've only worked for an *hour*!"

AKA: What if the half of Ambrose that was in the jar didn't have Ambrose's loyalties (Glitch had that bit) but could feel *spite*? And what if the Witch's attempts to use solitude and sensory deprivation to force his compliance only made him angry? What if he pretended to be broken and grateful for every scrap of mercy shown or hard-earned 'privilege' bestowed, while secretly sabotaging every design he gave her?

What if neither side of Ambrose gave up the fight, if for very different reasons?

Chapter 26: Jar!Ambrose's Mind Palace

Because seriously, what else did he have to do in there?

Years of being alone in his own (half) brain led Jar!Ambrose to construct a rather complex mind palace. It's a bit crumbling and patched-up and fading out of existence in random places, and he keeps getting lost, but the parts that aren't broken are marvelous. Just like him, he thinks wryly.

After being rebrained, Ambrose doesn't really need Jar!Ambrose's mind palace anymore. Still, something makes him decide to try to finish it, now that he has his full mind available to him.

(He remembers blurry years spent wandering and struggling and fighting)

(He remembers blurry years spent alone and bored building that damn palace)

(He remembers both, and just like it feels wrong to abandon Glitch's new friends, it feels wrong to abandon the only thing that kept Jar!Ambrose sane)

— end of "Tin Man Fic Ideas" —