

Tin Toy



In 1988, John Lasseter took on the highest ambition of all the Pixar shorts with the release of Tin Toy. Lasseter was essentially inspired by the jerky movements and proportions of a friend's baby.

He wanted to make a human baby character for this film, which was extremely ambitious for 1988. The modeling of the baby's head ended up looking like an old man and on the screen, the baby's skin looked plastic. In this Pixar short, the diaper looked solid and immovable. Looking at Tin Toy now, comments about the creepy baby still come up, and he is awkward looking, no doubt. But time restraints and restrictions in technology made the compromise necessary.

One of the elements of Tin Toy that excited John Lasseter the most was the collection of vintage toys. Each member of Pixar got to design a frightened toy hiding under the sofa to leave their mark of creativity in the film. The photo-realism of Tin Toy becomes even more apparent with the light and shadow effects, the cellophane of toy box, and especially the wood grain on the flooring.

Pixar won its first Oscar for Best Animated Short Film in 1988 for Tin Toy. Members of the Academy and CalArts both agreed that the future of computer animation was well on its way to becoming a medium to be reckoned with. The main Tin Toy character, Tinny, became the inspiration for the Buzz Lightyear character *in Toy Story*.

Tin Toy Plot

In this Pixar short, a little one-man-band shiny tin toy named Tinny is in the living room when he looks up and sees a big baby crawling his way. He's delighted to see Billy the baby and looks forward to being played with. But Billy starts shaking some of his toys and sticking the plastic ring toy in his mouth, with lots of baby slobber trailing behind.

Tinny becomes terrified of this destructive child and makes a run for it under the sofa. In the deep shadows under the protective cover, Tinny sees many other toys looking at him, shaking and eyes wide with fear.

Suddenly baby Billy falls hard, face first, on the wooden floor and squalls. Tinny feels bad for the baby and decides he must help Billy, even though he's scared. He prances back and forth in front of Billy and his antics make the baby feel better. Billy picks up Tinny and shakes him, too. Then tosses him aside, but Tinny lands on his feet and is alright, but frightened.

When he uncovers his eyes, Tinny notices Billy now playing with the box and bag he arrived in! Notice that the bag has the original Pixar logo on it. Billy continues to wander around the room with the bag over his head with Tinny following him as the ending credits roll. Once the credits finish, the other toys hiding under the sofa scurry across the floor now that the coast is clear