

## Glossy line in classics

Jinxter  
Supplier: Rainbird/Magnetic Scrolls  
Price: £19.95 disc

**F**OLLOWING the successes of *The Pawn and Guild of Thieves* comes *Jinxter*, the third adventure from Magnetic Scrolls. What struck me as soon as I opened the box was that they are trying to out-do Infocom.

The glossy packaging, the little extras included with the documentation, the extended descriptions, and even the parser bear more than a passing resemblance to the American company's games. Has Magnetic Scrolls succeeded? Read on...

The land of Aquitania is down on its luck. Real luck that is, the kind that can be bad. Rumour has it that the evil Green Witches, held in check for centuries by the six charms on the bracelet of Turani, have a new leader - Jannedor - who has found a way of bypassing the power of the bracelet.

The charms have now been removed from the bracelet and, to halt Jannedor, have to be re-attached.

Of course the Department of Guardians has acted swiftly. A committee charged with resolving the problem has been in existence for 128 years, and has now reached

a conclusion: Someone has to DO something about it.

Unfortunately, nobody can be spared at the moment. The recent strike by cheddar cheese processors has come at a bad time and generated far too much paperwork for anyone to be released.

Accordingly, a member of the public is to be chosen for this arduous task.

A suitable candidate is searched for across the depth and breadth of the land, or at least as much as can be seen from the department's windows. Eventually, you are chosen for your courage, intelligence, tenacity, and not at all because you were the first person to get off the bus at that stop. Perish the thought!

One of civilisation's answer to angels - a guardian - is assigned to protect you. Most guardians fall at one time or another, usually when they are trying to do their job, which is to protect the public from themselves and any other minor accidents which might occur. They are immortal and have the ability to rescue you from tricky situations.

With what little good grace you have left, you accept the mission and, after collecting from your house those articles which may aid you, set out on your quest.

Moving out of your front door into Neverending Lane could be a mistake if you don't take the name seri-

ously, but your back garden also has an exit and this proves more rewarding.

Nearby you find that your friend's house is deserted. A careful examination of the premises should find you better equipped, and knowing that the postman always rings twice, should find you faced with a container holding the first of the charms.

Getting it out of this container is not easy and requires you to match the correct object - twice.

Before leaving the house to search for the second charm, a timorous visitor has to be caught to solve a later problem. Having done this, it is time to search the gardens.

If you haven't already done so, you will soon meet a bull. It can be bypassed, but can also be made to see red if the barbed wire proves too much of an obstacle.

A route is soon found to a lake. If you are wondering who ran past on your way there, it was me - and I'm still working on stopping myself.

If you took my advice at the house, you will soon be crossing the lake. On reaching the pagoda, you may find that burrowing around will turn up some dirt. You shouldn't expect to get your hands dirty, though you may have to move some after all.

Having done this, you are now in a position to collect the second charm. A quick dip in the lake, a brief

search, a quick dip under the lake, and you should rise to the occasion.

You are now in a position to swim to another shore for the remainder of your quest and the final confrontation with Jannedor.

*Jinxter* is unusual in that a large number of puzzles have to be solved to get each charm, yet very few points are awarded for solving them. I found the game to be reasonably easy, so the allocation of points may reflect this.

Does it out-do Infocom? Only in terms of price, I'm afraid. That special something which distinguishes the Infocom range is still missing from *Jinxter*. Having said that, this is probably the closest thing to it I have seen, and it has the added bonus of graphics.

In relation to *The Pawn and Guild of Thieves*, *Jinxter* is, to my mind, a vast improvement. It has the technical excellence of the previous two games and also something of its own - humour that works.

I do have two minor complaints though. One is the number of unnecessary actions required to pass through doors. Every locked door - including your own - has to be unlocked with the correct key, opened, and then passed through.

This is simply a device to make the game last longer and is superfluous to the action. Since you start with three keys, this can mean making up to five moves just to pass through one door.

The other whinge is the protection system. You are prompted every so often to input a specific word from the documentation. As my desk tends to get very cluttered I usually have to search through piles of mail, solutions and review samples to find the packaging.

Overall, most definitely the best yet from this software company, and surely destined to be a classic.

Gandalf



Two rows of seats separated by a narrow central aisle run the length of this traditionally malodorous bus. It's no Rolls-Royce, but then neither are you. There's a sign behind the driver's booth and a set of automatic doors allows you on and off the bus. Mounted above the doors is a button.

### Presentation 96%

*Extremely well packaged.*

### Atmosphere 95%

*I found the plot a bit hard to swallow, but the program does put it over well.*

### Frustration factor 90%

*Generally easy with the odd really fiendish problem.*

### Value for money 75%

*I would be happier if it was a fiver cheaper.*

### Overall 89%

*An excellent game though a little over priced. Certainly more fun to play than Magnetic Scrolls' previous two games.*