

JINX IS A MONSTER

So why do I still love her?



An ARCANE fanzine
by David Witteveen

SPOILER WARNING

This zine contains spoilers
for Season 1 of ARCANÉ.

Please watch the show
before reading.



1. THE BEGINNING

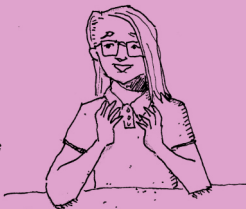
The first time I heard about Jinx was December 2021.

I was having dinner with some friends and their children. Their teen daughter started raving about this new Netflix show, Arcane.

"It's SO good!"

"I've watched it
three times
already!"

"I want to dye
my hair blue
like Jinx!"



"Jinx is awesome."

2. JUNE 2022

My partner is away. I'm bored and lonely. I flick through Netflix and see ARCANÉ.

I'm hesitant - isn't it a computer game adaptation? Has there ever been a good computer game adaptation? But I remember my friend's daughter.

With reservations, I give the first episode a try.

I watch five episodes that night.

I watch three more the next night.

And I skive off work early the day after to watch the finale.

The show is *excellent*.

And I fall totally in love
with the character Jinx.

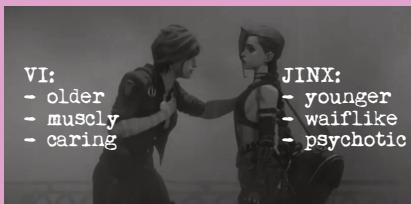


Which is a problem.

Because Jinx is an
unrepentant mass murderer.

3. ARCANE

ARCANE is the story of two sisters, Vi and Jinx, who get caught up in the conflict between the wealthy city of Piltover and the downtrodden undercity of Zaun.



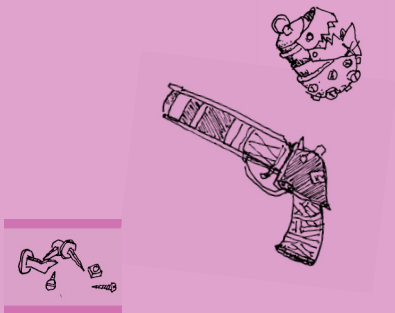
The show features rich and nuanced animation, beautiful visuals, and a melodramatic but compelling story.

And it's based on a computer game called LEAGUE OF LEGENDS.

League of Legends is a game in which teams of 5 players try and kill each other in a battle arena while their anime-style characters spout prerecorded one liners.

It would have been easy for the Arcane creators to adapt LoL into a forgettable shoot-shoot bang-bang action series.

Instead, they turned it into an epic tragedy.



4. WHO IS JINX?

In LEAGUE OF LEGENDS, Jinx is like a cross between Harley Quinn and Tank Girl.

She's cute-but-psycho. She wears skimpy clothes and giggles and blows things up with a rocket launcher shaped like a shark.

She embodies the anarchic glee of ridiculous violence*.

She's fun!



* There's a music video on YouTube called "Get Jinxed" that was made to introduce her character. It's fun too.

Jinx in ARCANÉ is not fun.

She's a tragic figure: an innocent driven mad by her own guilt.

Jinx starts out as young girl named Powder. Orphaned in a battle between Zaun and Piltover, Powder idolises her older sister Vi. She tries desperately to prove her worth to her sister.

This ends in a disaster. Trying to help Vi in a fight, Powder accidentally kills their friends and their father-figure Vander.

Vi is furious at Powder. She abandons her.

The trauma breaks Powder mentally.

And then a creepy crime lord named Silco adopts her and shapes her into a weapon.

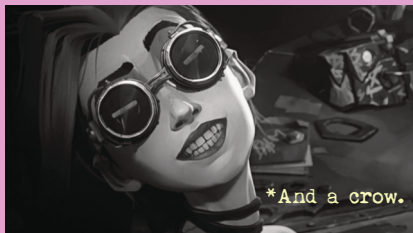
5. WHY IS JINX A MONSTER?

ARCANE is an action show, which means emotional conflicts get resolved with physical violence.

But even by that standard, Jinx kills a LOT of people.

In the course of the series, Jinx kills at least 21 people*, and almost certainly starts a new war between Piltover and Zaun.

And she feels no remorse about any of it.



Now, you could argue that this isn't really Jinx's fault. She has severe PTSD, and she's raised by a father who gives her guns instead of therapy.



But the whole thrust of the Jinx-Vi storyline in Arcane is "Who will Jinx choose to be: Jinx or Powder?"

The climax of the series isn't a fight scene, it's a tea party where Jinx finally makes that decision.

And Jinx chooses to be the monster.

6. SO WHY DO I LOVE HER?

One of the strengths of fiction is that it can take small, everyday emotions and blow them up to epic proportions so that we can see them clearly.

For example: I didn't enjoy being a teenager. I found it lonely, stressful and confusing. A lot of the time, it felt like I was going mad.

Jinx embodies that feeling. We can relate to her pain and her madness the way we relate to an angsty pop song.

But there's also something *aspirational* about her...




...Because Jinx
takes her trauma
and turns it into
power.

It's a fucked-up,
monstrous power,
one that relies on
guns and explosions
and killing people.
But it's one that
resonates.

Perhaps Jinx's
choice isn't really
between being
innocent little
Powder or psychotic
Jinx.

Perhaps her choice
is between being
crushed by her
trauma, or using it
to crush others.



adorable
little
murder
child

7. CONCLUSION

In the real world, Jinx would be reprehensible: a cold-blooded killer, as bad as any mass shooter.

But Arcane is melodrama, not realism. Its characters express themselves through grand, operatic action.

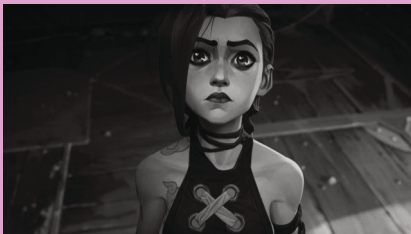
Jinx is a tragic figure, so we feel sympathy for her.

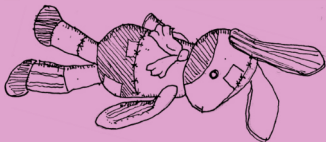
Jinx is driven mad by her pain, which makes her relatable.

But she also suggests that pain can be power. A dark, chaotic power: we don't want to *be* her. But we can admire her.



Also? She has cool blue hair.





"Monsters are the patron
saints of imperfection."
- Guillermo del Toro

Screenshots taken from **ARCANE**

Words & Drawings: David Witteveen
Instagram: @davidwitteveen
Website: library3000.com/zines
October 2022, Melbourne