

When you first open the package of this game, you may feel a little startled and possibly hesitant: it comes on nine 5.25" disks or four 3.5" disks. Further, if you install the game on a hard drive (highly recommended), it will eat up about 3 meg worth of space (make sure you have room!). So, you might think that this is some incredible epic adventure that will take months of playing time.

Actually, most of that space is used for graphics. They are *very* pretty, full-screen and beautifully detailed. Many of the screens also have animation, which has both good points and bad ones. The animation adds a nice touch, but slows Rosella's movements by a large factor whenever she's in an animated screen.

The game begins, in fact, with a very long animated sequence (you can skip this later on) explaining just how Rosella came to be in a strange land dressed as a simple peasant girl. Boiled down to essentials, King Graham is dying and Rosella can cure him by obtaining a special fruit. However, she also has to help the good fairy Genesta, the only person who can send her back to her own land. Genesta herself is dying and only a special talisman, stolen by the evil witch Lolotte, can restore her. Thus, Rosella must find the magic fruit and get the talisman from Lolotte before she can return home to save her father.

Rosella starts on the seashore, where she is left pretty much to her own devices. Genesta doesn't tell her very much about the land or indeed, anything else. Rosella must find out everything for herself. The first thing to do is walk around the area, which is only about 30 locations or so, to see what's there (the area wraps around at the edges in most places to the north and south).

Movement is done with the arrow keys. One touch on any key sends Rosella in that direction and another touch on the same key stops her. Rosella will, therefore, continue to walk automatically unless she comes to an obstacle or reaches the next screen. Beyond this, keyboard input is used to accomplish actions, such as "get lamp." There is also a set of function keys for often repeated commands, especially save and restore.

Walk-thru On The Mild Side

Warning: This section of the review contains specific hints related to "King's Quest IV" and should be avoided by readers who would prefer to complete the game without assistance.

Watch out for the weird trees and the ogre hut. If you walk into a screen with strange trees, leave immediately or that will be the end of Rosella. The ogre hut and surroundings should also be avoided for now or Rosella will end up as dinner. It's a good idea to save periodically, in case you run into trouble.

You should visit Lolotte early on in the game. She doesn't especially trust you, but for her son Edgar's sake, is willing to give you the benefit of the doubt by sending you on little quests to bring her certain items, one at a time. Therefore, much of the game is taken up in solving puzzles to obtain these items.

Many of the puzzles are based on old fairy tales (a Roberta Williams "trademark"). So, if you're up on those, you may have a little easier time of it in some situations. Most people know about kissing frogs, but that's just one of several in the adventure.

King's Quest IV

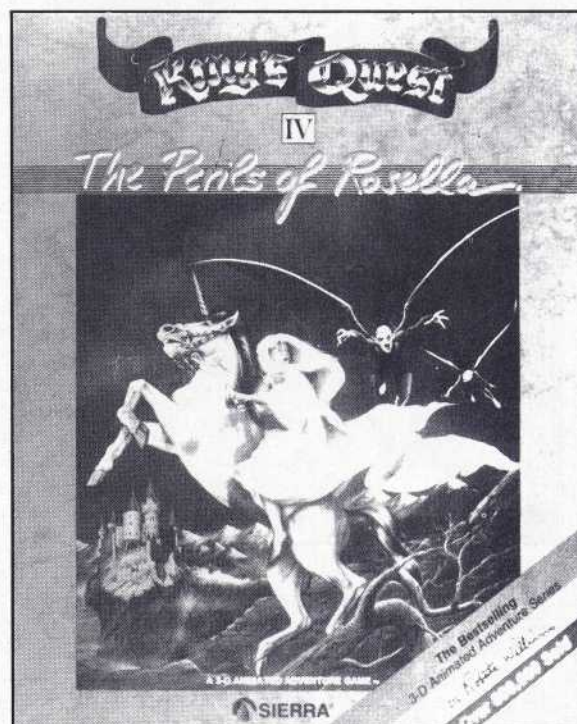
Hints and Harangues for "Rosella"

by Scorpia

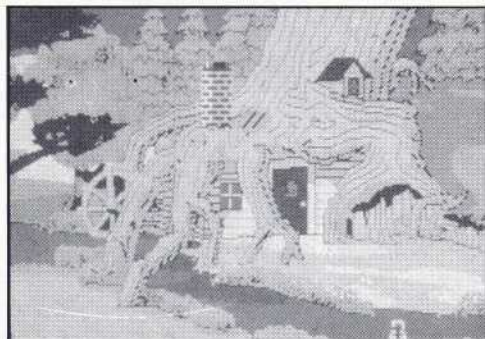
Some of them are also not too fair. For instance, one object Rosella needs is a bridle. Finding this can be a frustrating experience, since it is not visible on the screen, and you would never know it was there unless you had Rosella search every possible spot on the screen. There are no clues at all to this, therefore you might not even search very long, if at all. And as the location itself is not easy to reach (you have to so some swimming, among other things) it makes the situation that much more exasperating.

Another irritation is all the climbing around that has to be done. Early on, you'll probably find the secret door that leads to a winding staircase. As you might expect, one wrong step and Rosella falls to her death. That's bad enough, but what you don't know at the time is that there's no need to climb the stairs until after evening has come (and you've done some other things as well), meaning many people will make the tedious trip at least twice, if not more.

There are other staircases to climb (also winding), as well as a whale's tongue (probably the hardest climbing sequence in the game). Saving often is the best thing when you're in one of these situations. That's especially important inside the whale, as you have only a limited number of moves before Rosella is overcome by noxious fumes.



TITLE:	King's Quest IV: The Perils of Rosella
SYSTEMS:	IBM
# PLAYERS:	1
PRICE:	\$49.95
DESIGNER:	Roberta Williams
PUBLISHER:	Sierra Coarsegold, CA



You will also have to sit through some tedious animation in the dwarf's house. This is a puzzle in the game, the solution to which is rather sexist, although obvious. When the dwarfs come in (after you're done), Rosella stands there as a dwarf enters, walks to the fireplace, gets a bowl of soup, walks to the table, and sits down. The next dwarf enters, walks to the fireplace, gets a bowl of soup, walks to the table, etc. This happens seven times and there is no way around it. Save the game when this is finished so you don't have to go through it again.

After nightfall, you'll find ghosts in the old house in the graveyard. They appear one at a time and each has to be satisfied with something before the next one shows up. Once you've figured out what do to for the first one, you know pretty much what needs to be done for the rest of them, so solving this puzzle becomes pretty much a matter of boring repetition.

Getting back to Lolotte, the first thing she wants is

a unicorn. There's one roaming around the meadow, but it's rather shy, so you'll have to make friends with it. Then you need the infamous bridle so you can ride the unicorn. Among other things, it will be necessary to get the pole from the fisherman, as well as taking a long swim, before this task can be accomplished.

Still not entirely satisfied, Lolotte will send you to get a hen that lays golden eggs from the ogre. You'll need to have found the troll cave (which is hidden) beforehand. It also helps to snoop carefully around the house once you're inside, but save first in case you walk into the wrong room. This is probably the simplest sequence in the game.

Speaking of the troll cave, it's a dangerous place. Even with light, you don't see very much. The graphic effect is very nice, but if you're not extremely careful in there, Rosella could fall into a chasm. The best thing to do is watch the edges of the light and move slowly. If there's a troll around (his appearance is random), get out and try again later. Save often.

Somewhere in all this you need to take some time out to find the fruit that will restore King Graham. There are a number of things you must do before you can obtain the fruit, among them dealing with the frog. What you need is in plain sight in another screen, although easy to miss if you don't look carefully. You'll

also have to solve the Pan riddle as well; the minstrel can be helpful with that one.

Now Lolotte sends you out after Pandora's box. This is a tough one. You'll have to make it past the weird trees (if you've mapped, you probably know the spot) to the weird sisters. You shouldn't have too much trouble avoiding their clutches if you move carefully and don't get too close. They have something you need later on, so you'll have to work out a trade of some kind. Just don't be too nice to them (they are evil, after all).

You will also have to get into the mysterious crypt in the graveyard (you've been wanting to do that for awhile, I'll bet). There's a key somewhere, although obtaining it will take awhile; there are a few things you'll have to do (more than once) before you find it.

Unfortunately, after you give Lolotte the box, she doesn't quite keep her word to let you go (you didn't really expect her to, did you?). Instead, she locks you into a room in the castle. Luckily, you have a friend who provides you with a means of escape, but that isn't quite enough. After all, Lolotte might come after you, and she might not be too charitable the next time. Besides, you still have to get the talisman so you can help Genesta and get back to save your King Graham.

Once out of the room, you come to (did you guess?) a winding stone staircase. Negotiate this carefully, and also be careful what rooms you walk through. Lolotte had all your items taken away, and you'll need to find them before going further.

What to do about Lolotte when you finally reach her is not very hard to figure out; there aren't many things that would work in this situation, after all. Her big death scene is a trip to watch, and rather funny (if you can imagine a funny death scene).

However, Rosella isn't done yet. She still has to get the talisman back to Genesta, and she'll have to take the long way to do it. There's also a couple of other things she might want to do on the way back to make things tidy, as well as pick up a perfect score.

The actual ending, like the introduction, is all automatic; you just sit back and watch. Rosella is returned home, King Graham is saved to rule many more years, and all's well that ends well.

Tell-tale Part

King's Quest IV is not your typical adventure game. Some puzzles are clever, others merely tedious. The storyline is wrapped and connected with cinematic touches which utilize sparkling graphics and surprisingly good music (I'm told this is especially true with one of the new sound boards from Ad Lib, Roland, or IBM!).

Gamers who demand constant interactivity will probably become impatient with these cute cameos, but many will be pleased.

Bottom line: Excellent graphics, good music, uneven puzzles, and deliberate pace. The overall impression of the game is more gentle and non-violent than most adventure games. So, the bottom line is that it's a matter of personal taste.

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CGW met with Roberta on a recent public relations tour. She was travelling throughout the country demonstrating *King's Quest IV: The Perils of Rosella* and autographing copies of the game and photographs.

CGW: Was the original *Adventure* the first computer game you ever played?

Roberta: Right, I mean, if you don't count *Pong*. We had a *Pong* machine before we bought our Apple. In fact, I played the original *Adventure* before we had our Apple. Ken brought a terminal home from work and would use a modem to hook into an IBM mainframe down in L.A. somewhere. We would play it and our moves would be printed out on hard copy. That was a long time ago. I usually just say that I played the original *Adventure* on the Apple because it is so difficult to explain.

CGW: As both a female designer and a female game player, we wonder what the original attraction of *Adventure* was and why you liked playing it.

Roberta: I've always been a book reader. I love books more than anything, almost, especially in the fantasy area. When I played *Adventure*, it was words and it was like reading a book. You would get these paragraphs about what you had done, but I could talk to it and it could talk back to me. I felt like I could manipulate the story and that was better than a book.

CGW: Why there aren't more women involved in the hobby?

Roberta: The only answer I can really give, and I see it all the time with kids, is that you put a computer in front of a boy and they automatically go toward it and get comfortable with it. Girls need a little extra push. Even today, you have to say, "Don't be afraid. It's okay." They're better than women, though, but I still think girls are mostly uncomfortable with technical things. Even if you go into a stereo store, what do you see? Mostly men and boys looking at them and the women standing back saying, "Can we get help?" Don't you think that's true, kinda?

CGW: That brings up a related question. You've set up a situation in the "King's Quest" series where two characters, one male and the other female, seem to have an equal chance to inherit the throne. In fact, you've veritably set up the sequel to follow the boy in *King's Quest V*, but you chose to follow the girl in *King's Quest IV*. Is your intent to involve more women, even as *Mixed-Up Mother Goose* was an attempt to involve young children in computer gaming?

Roberta: Yes, I designed *King's Quest*

IV with that in mind. I figured that men and boys would accept a female heroine and think it was okay. Then, possibly the women and girls would notice it and become attracted to it.

Yes, with the children, too. However, this was also true with *Mixed-Up Mother Goose*. In *Mixed-Up Mother Goose*, you have a choice as to whether you are a girl or a boy. Originally, I designed the game where you were going to be a boy, but I said, "I can't have that!" So, now it asks if you're going to be a boy or a girl. Then, all of a sudden I realized that if you were going to be a boy or a girl that it ought to look like them. Now, they can choose color of hair or even

They had never seen it before and the parser understood everything they typed in. I'm very pleased with that. Beyond that, they're getting a little bigger, which I've got to stop.

CGW: Is it true that *Mystery House*, your first design, was inspired by Agatha Christie's *Ten Little Indians*?

Roberta: Yes, as well as the game, *Clue*.

CGW: Is there was any direct literary inspiration for the *King's Quest* series?

Roberta: Well, as a kid, my all-time favorite reading



Interview with Roberta Williams

Designer of the "King's Quest" Series

color of skin.

CGW: Besides the fact of a female protagonist, what do you think will bring the women and girls to the game? The music? Animation?

Roberta: Hopefully, all of it. The game is certainly more colorful and prettier than games that I'm used to. The animation is more like what you would see in an animated cartoon series. It should feel more comfortable to them because the music is more interesting.

CGW: What about violence? Is there going to be any violence that would put them off?

Roberta: Not really. The only violence in the game is at the very end and then, it's unintentional. You don't mean to commit violence, but you do.

CGW: Besides the obvious differences of improved graphics, sound, and memory capabilities, what would you say is the biggest difference between your recent designs and your earliest design, *Mystery House*?

Roberta: The storyline. I'm really trying to develop a sophisticated storyline. Even in *King's Quest I*, there wasn't much of a storyline. I'm trying to develop the plot more and be more sensitive to characterization and why characters do what they do. Also, I'm trying to do better in understanding what people type in and why. With this game, I watched a person sit down and play it for an hour without ever typing in something that the game didn't understand.

was fairy tales, literally, fairy tales. I don't know why but I read every fairy tale I could get my hands on. I read them and re-read them.

CGW: So that's why there's, at least, a cameo by fairy tale characters in each game?

Roberta: Apparently.

CGW: Besides the introductory and final wrap, what cinematic effects have been added to *King's Quest IV*?

Roberta: The way we change screens. We have a dissolve, wipes, iris in, and iris out. Those are all cinematic approaches. Of course, the use of music to create an atmosphere and the use of more dialogue to have conversations with characters. Dialogue may not be cinematic, but I think it is.

CGW: As the author, what is the most satisfying aspect of the *King's Quest IV* story to you?

Roberta: I like the heroine, Rosella. I guess because she's a part of me that's coming out. I really identified with her. Sometimes she's delicate, but she's strong, knows what she wants, she's not afraid to do what she has to do. She's courageous. It was fun for me to do a female character.

CGW: Is there a love interest for Rosella?

Roberta: Well, let's just say that the possibility exists for a love interest that could be developed in a future game.