



nce I went to a fancy dress party as the Predator. Covering my body in oil and wearing ripped ladies' tights and a pair of green wellies, I topped the whole lot off with a very expensive, shop-bought Predator mask. It was rubbery latex, quite unattractive, with loads of tentacle things coming from its mouth. I looked not unlike a novelty condom.

So I was at the party and people were avoiding me. Groups of women gathered in corners of the room and muttered that I look like a pervert. Some of them threaten to expose me to the local women's movement. Old women gatecrashers prodded me with umbrellas while muttering things that began, "Never in my day..."

Retreating to a dark, confined space, I pulled at the rubber face to remove it – and it had stuck. Didn't your mum always tell you that if you pull a face it'll stick? (Groan. A Reader.) No, it's true.

Several other old wives' tales are true too. Take heed:

- If you suck your thumb, it will eventually fall off – Absolutely true.
- If you don't eat your crusts, your chest will implode – Again, absolutely true.
- If you pick your nose, your head will cave in and your brain will begin making friends with people you don't like – Staggeringly true.
- If you play with your thingy, it will turn into a small replica of famous explorer Ferdinand Magellan. – Absolutely true yet again.

Enough to worry about. Meanwhile, I'm still stuck in this mask, which is perhaps why I was so easily goaded into reviewing this unscintillating game.

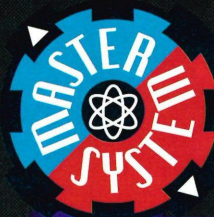


The Plot

Based very loosely around that of the film, you wander around LA killing people who have taken too many drugs, informing them of their rights and saying, "You're not doing your body any favours, you know." They make an unconvinced sound (not unlike 'Pschaw'), so you shoot them. You collect their discarded drugs as evidence (though since they're dead, this seems rather pointless).

Unfortunately – certainly within the first six levels – we never get to see the Predator. There are three red dots that chase you around every so often, being the Pred's laser sights, but that's hardly scary or innovative in terms of graphic design. Bit like the Stylophone, really (which is probably why they used Rolf Harris in the ad, to scare small children).

Part of your mission is to rescue hostages, which is completely unlike the film because there weren't any in the film. The Predator takes no hostages. He is the Mexican-looking guy in westerns who squints a lot, chews tobacco and calls everyone 'Gringo'; he is the bloke with the mask and beret who swings through embassy windows; he is the dodgy geezer on the 747 with numerous explosives strapped to his stomach; he is... well, you get the idea. Preddie shoots first and asks questions later. In fact, he generally omits the question part altogether.



NICK GRIFFITHS has a Predator mask stuck to his head. It seems too good to be true - who better to review

PREDATOR 2 (on the Master System). Blimey, that almost rhymes!

Predator 2

Drugs

1 coke

Not to be confused with sugary fizzy drink.

2 crack

Not to be confused with thin, pencil-like fissures in household walls.

3 blood

Blood?! (Looks like blood to me, too. Reader.) Yeah, weird huh?

Armchty



pistol

Weedy and small. Hardly the sort of thing that any self-respecting cop would tote, unless, of course, he was playing William Tell with his small children.



pump-action shotgun

Curiously weedy but it looks quite macho, at least. Fires in three directions with one shot, but none too powerfully.



machine gun

Sprays bullets in three directions on successive shots. Pleasantly curved magazine, but not smooth enough to impress passing uncouth children.



m-16 carbine

Now we're talking. One shot kills all. Druggy types quake briefly in its presence then continue to, well, to do whatever it is those people do.



grenade

Heheheh! Effectively a device to make men's trousers seem more packed, but hugely effective against druggy types who refuse to carry a handkerchief.

level one

Down on the streets. Street-talk – it's the only language these people understand. They eat mice for breakfast and keep the mouldy Stilton they put in the trap for afters. They wash the lot down with liquid crack. They are... Druggie-Type People. Their eyes are bloodshot and they have problems pronouncing words like 'extraneous'. One day, if law enforcement doesn't get to them first, they will get a big headache.

You, Danny Glover, Mr Big Cop, must deal out your own particular brand of justice to these low-lives. And that means death. Sounds great, doesn't it? It's not. It's a bog-standard shoot 'em up with admittedly decent background graphics, but some of the baddies have beards.

The Boss: A car with people inside.

level two

Up on the roof. It's quite high up, but that doesn't seem to bother the Druggie-Type People. Their motor-neurone systems (or whatever) are shot. They wouldn't know a long-way-off-the-ground if someone from the Department Of Trading Standards measured it with a regulation tape measure. They are fearless because their heads don't work.

Solution? Kill them all. Traverse the rooftop, lobbing grenades through skylights, blasting snipers, rescuing hostages and avoiding the three red dots. (Done that all before, haven't we? Reader.) Yeah, but this is on the roof, dummy. What do you want, originality?

The Boss: A helicopter with some guns.

level three

Back on the streets again. Street-talk – it's the only language these people understand. They eat mice for breakfast and... Hang on, I've done that bit already. Well, anyway, these Druggie-Type People eat spinach and enjoy it

– and they didn't even pass any exams at school.

Luckily, nothing here is too tricky, so you at least move through levels quite quickly, not having to dwell on the fact that they're pretty much the same.

The Boss: A graffiti-covered van from which people roll barrels at you. (Obviously running out of ammo.)

3

Where's the blammin' Predator?

level four

Down in the subway. And, as popular beat combo The Jam once said, "Down in the tube station at midnight, Woah-oh-oh". Wise words. They clearly understood the seediness of Druggie-Type People.

This level is slightly different from before, in that baddies jump from tube trains instead of doorways. Otherwise, it's more reckless firing. These guys don't pay their fares. They jump over ticket barriers and willfully ignore the ticket inspector.

The Boss: Large punk with mohican hairstyle and gun, standing in the open doorway of a moving tube train (now that is reckless).

level five

In the slaughterhouse. They eat meat, these Druggie-Type people, and they wear fur coats purely to offend people. They hunt foxes with hand grenades and they laugh when presented with salads in restaurants. Sheesh!

Except there are no dead animals in this slaughterhouse, which is unashamedly sensitive yet unrealistic. The action is by now all too familiar.

The Boss: Bloodstained fellow with axe.



END ZONE

Graphics



Sound



Addictiveness



Playability



OVERALL 40

Out: January Price: £29.99

Publisher: Acclaim

later...

Level six takes you back to the (yaaaaaawn) streets, with still no sign of Preddie, and after that, who knows and who cares... Zzzzzzzzzzzzzzz.