

# THE INDIGO PROPHECY

Developed by Quantic Dream

★★★★★

The Indigo Prophecy is a blast. The story is the real hero of this 3rd person graphic narrative. The ease and intuitive control of the characters as you move them through their story brings you to really identify with them. From simple details like Carla retrieving wine glasses from a cupboard for a neighbor who arrived unexpectedly at her door with a bottle of wine to reflexive key hitting to execute expertly choreographed action sequences. The game is almost more fun to watch than play. But because you have to play it to watch it you just don't want to stop. Unlike the trend of popular games today, Indigo Prophecy is not about reaction time and headshots--allow there is some of that—it is about the dark story line that grows darker and richer the longer you play. While the cinematic camera angles, especially during the seamless cut scenes, build potent atmosphere they can sometimes totally disorient you in game play which can be a little frustrating and spoil the illusion.

Indigo Prophecy's narrative structure, inspired by cinema, functions like a seamless movie set. The game's basic structure is a series of linear stage sets, that within which the story is allowed to unfold. Within each stage set, the player determines how the scene unfolds by controlling the actions of your main characters Lucas, Carla, and Tyler. Unlike games like Half-Life where the general rule of progression is "if you see a ladder climb it," in Indigo Prophecy, the restrictions of playing within a set allows for very flexible story telling. When speaking to other characters, the dialogue structure offers you multiple choices with a limited amount of time to decide. Whether you choose to be sincere or aggressive, for example, those choices determine the flavor and the ultimate outcome of the conversation. Just like a film, you watch the story unfold from the perspectives of each main character. In this game, you become each character as you speak, explore, interact, fight and confront unknown dark forces.

In an age where graphic adventure games are totally uncool the Indigo Prophecy could be the saving grace to this dying genre. While classic games like King's Quest seem inspired by fantasy novels, resulting in an awkward blend of graphics and narration. Indigo Prophecy's adoption of cinema vernacular has proved to be an especially compelling story telling method.

The biggest downfall of Indigo Prophecy is it is an ugly game. Compared to other recent releases like Half-Life 2, this game's graphic engine looks primitive. As graphic engines progress (that is if the developer actually uses them, shame on you Quantic Dream), the line between a feature film and a game like Indigo Prophecy will be blurred. Really, the only distance between this game and Hollywood is realism. Otherwise, Quantic Dream has proven you can make a game that is as fun to play as watching a perfectly composed thriller.

Owen Hoskins

