



## PREDATOR

Predator

ARCTIC

**Goddamn sexual  
Tyrannosauruses,  
they're not**

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Sometimes there's an anomaly in metal where a band that is clearly looking backwards somehow still manages to disgorge something fairly innovative—take DragonForce as an arguable (yes, very arguable to some) example. What's confusing about a band like Predator is they seem perfectly cozy playing a dated thrash/power metal hybrid that is clearly in the looking-backwards camp—minus any innovation.

In allegiance to the longhair-with-bangs form they play, they have loads of shred-ability and lots of Testament/*...And Justice for All*-style guitar wheedle, but once again, minus any novelty. The playing is gold-standard—sweet solos, dudes! But the awkward phrasing from the subpar screeching vocalist is, um, lacking. Maybe the layers of reverb that shroud the Geoff Tate/Bruce Dickinson wails should be a hint of this frontdude's vocal ability.

This record literally sounds and looks like it coulda/shoulda come out somewhere between '87 and '90—dig the Frazetta-esque cover—but sadly, it lacks any context to the way metal has developed since. Even if you're not down with many of the newer power metal or thrash revival acts, one has to concede that many of them throw in some contemporary spices. Not sure how many times—in the case of the new-school thrash kids—you want to hear *Bonded by Blood* riffs played backwards, but at least with bands like Warbringer, the spirit and intensity are there. But Predator just sound like they never left the basement since '89. Full props for the band being all Latinos and trying to throw in some socially responsible lyrical content (one jam rails against domestic violence), but methinks its time to update the playbook a bit.

—SHAWN BOSLER