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By: Alexandra Dogaru, Editor, Gaming Reviews (PC)



[Sam and Max - The Mole, The Mob and The Meatball](#)

I'll make you an offer you can't refuse!

Time flies and I realize it's almost February. What's the big deal with that? Well, it's the perfect time for yet another case of my two favorite characters: the white rabbit and his dog buddy. To tell you the truth, before this series was re-launched I was almost sure that comical adventure games were on a path going straight down to oblivion. With the Monkey Island series gone and too few cartoony games out, the desire for more veridical worlds seemed to triumph. Although I do appreciate all the realistic effects used by more and more game developers, the innocent cartoon characters were always close to my heart. Yet I almost got used to the idea that a hilarious gameplay experience in the company of such strange heroes is something to talk about in the past tense. Luckily there are still some people that refused to give up hope on this kind of adventures, people like Steve Purcell - the creator of the comics phenomenon called Sam and Max - and the development team behind Telltale Games. With the episodic adventure of the Freelance Police they really manage to supply the melancholic adventure gamer as well as anybody else that feels like taking a short relaxing break. The parody on reality continues with [Sam and Max: The Mole, The Mob and The Meatball](#). This time it's eyes on the toy mafia in the purest comics style signed Steve Purcell. It's a subject that will appeal both youngsters and adults as the remarks and actions manage to be funny either with or without taking into consideration the subtle sarcasm. With all these being said, I proudly invite to a quick overview on the new case. **Story**As the prankster detectives were enjoying some free time the phone rings again. Looks like the commissioner was nosing into an underground operation at the Ted E. Bear Mafia Free Playland and Casino. Unfortunately (for him, not at all for us), the mole he sent in has suddenly gone quiet. Whom to call? The Freelance Police, of course. Sam and Max are the best choice to infiltrate the organization and re-establish contact with the mole or at least find out what happened. "Holy cap-wearing catfish flopping a crime beat!" (Sam answers on the phone again) They're on the way to the Playland to... well, gamble a little and pick around. Once they establish a link that could introduce them to the mobster world they will have to prove their worth. Obviously being a gangster was everything Max ever dreamed of. He would have an immense pleasure in hurting the enemies and apply every cruel torture there is, but when it comes to doing harm to the only few persons our detectives like things get a lot more complicated and a life of crime doesn't seem so interesting anymore. On the side the stories of Sybil and Bosco gain a little more depth. While Sybil tries yet another career change - she's a professional trial witness now - Bosco manages to astonish us with his multi-national adjustment ability. They'll both play important parts in the case at hand as it seems that Sam and Max chose the most disaster targeted neighborhood to set their office. **Concept**Some of you might be a little disappointed, but there are no former child stars in this episode. Do not desperate yet. Sybil is now the symbol of truth and correctitude as she dedicates to her new witnessing job. Of course the truth gets her in danger and the Freelance Police has to come up with a plan to save her. Bosco's engineering genius is priceless to our detectives. Once again they'll have to see beyond his elaborated disguise (of a Frenchman called Sissy pants) and pay an exorbitant sum for his latest invention - the organic listening device. The story is spiced up with Teddy Bear mask wearing characters. They resemble the hypnotizing teddy on Myra's show, which quickly connects this episode to the previous ones and also reveal a clue on the global story. The catchy aspect of this particular episode is that it introduces a few arcade style puzzles while still preserving the comical yet perfectly logic style. Sam will be able to put a few holes in some singing rats (no blood is spilled - don't worry) and even enjoy a game of

poker. **Gameplay**First of all I must say that this was the funniest episode thus far. While still keeping the classic point and click style Episode 3 introduces more cinematic videos and catchy new logical games. As I mentioned above, the "Whack-Da-Ratz" arcade-like puzzle provided an absolutely fantastic gaming experience (and you can do it over and over again). Another hilarious puzzle involved a fade sense of stand-up comedy and particularly a good match-the-phrases sense with "Yo' Mama's" jokes. The good news is that there's another mission where you take the DeSoto Chrysler out for a spin. The bad news is you can't drive around whenever you wish. I guess we can forgive them, as it really shows that a lot of work was put into making the gameplay even more exciting than before. For the ones that already got used to the "Do you have any..." jokes with Bosco, new lines and new reactions were introduced. Also the closet got "upgraded" with the souvenir of Situation Comedy - the burned hypnotic bear. The puzzles shouldn't pose a problem, yet if you're lost at any point feel free to browse through the walkthrough. **Video**The neighborhood got richer by a Ted E. Bear Mafia Free Playland and Casino. That's basically a casino place, with arcade games, slot machines and of course poker tables. Unfortunately the place has only three new rooms for you to wonder through. The main room is decorated accordingly to the Mafia free Playland that it poses as, with Teddy Bear heads all over, a big clown over the entrance and shiny stars on the ceiling - truly a children's paradise. The "secret" office in the back is just as you'd imagine a gangster's office to be - mini-bar, guards for the Don, small work station and huge boss' desk. The toy factory is a practical place with a touch of "tricking the law" Mafia style (checkout the fire extinguisher and you'll know what I'm talking about). **Sound** Composer Jared Emerson-Johnson and his team at Bay Area Sound accomplished what I thought would be impossible: they did an even better job at pleasing our ears than in the previous two episodes. While the background music reminds of the gangster movies of the '60s, the voice acting of the mob characters are a self standing parody of the above mentioned films. These are plain and the words come out so slowly that it seems they have all the time in the world to do their dirty jobs. **Multiplayer**Sam and Max... Max and Sam... No multiplayer mode.**Conclusion**The beginning of the episode gives you a faint hope that you just might be able to get a little closer to the truth behind all this hypnosis madness that Sam and Max seem to confront with lately. Yet the final video leaves you hanging once more. Now I'm really curious about what happens next and just who in the world is this almighty mastermind of the mass hypnosis attempt. And what is plan B?Once again, playing the previous episodes is not mandatory, but it would be a shame to miss out on them as you would definitely appreciate the adventures of the hyperkinetic rabbit thing and the anthropomorphic detective dog. All I can say is "Bravo Telltale!" The season proves to be even more captivating than I expected. When you think of an episodic adventure game you don't really expect to find many differences from the previous works, yet this series doesn't cease to amaze me. Next release due in late February - beginning of March.