

# Violent Night

***Violent Night*** is a 2022 American Christmas action comedy film directed by Tommy Wirkola and written by Pat Casey and Josh Miller. It follows Santa Claus (portrayed by David Harbour) as he fights mercenaries who have taken a wealthy family hostage in their home.<sup>[6]</sup> The film also stars John Leguizamo, Alex Hassell, and Beverly D'Angelo.

*Violent Night* had its world premiere at the New York Comic Con on October 7, 2022. Universal Pictures released the film in theaters in the United States on December 2, 2022. The film received generally positive reviews from critics and grossed \$76.6 million worldwide. A sequel is in development.

## Plot

In Greenwich, Connecticut, Jason Lightstone and his estranged wife Linda take their daughter Trudy to his mother Gertrude's mansion for a Christmas gathering. They overhear Trudy's Christmas wish for family unity through an old walkie-talkie. Other family members at the gathering are Jason's sister Alva, her boyfriend Morgan Steel, and her son Bert. Meanwhile, Santa Claus arrives at the estate, just as a group of mercenaries with holiday codenames, led by "Mr. Scrooge," raid the house with some of them having posed as caterers and take the family hostage after killing the staff.

Startled by Tinsel's gunfire, Santa's reindeer are frightened off the roof. Wrapped in Christmas tree lights, Tinsel is pulled out of an upstairs window and impaled on a large decorative icicle. Stranded, Santa resolves to rescue Trudy and her family from Scrooge, who wants \$300 million cash hidden in a vault in the mansion. After killing the mercenary Frosty, Santa takes his radio and finds Trudy's channel. He then finds that the mercenaries are on his "naughty list." When Scrooge discovers that Trudy has been talking with Santa on her walkie-talkie, Jason denies Santa's existence, and a distraught Trudy runs past the kidnappers and successfully hides in the attic. Santa reassures her over the radio, revealing to her his ancient Viking warrior past.

Wounded Santa is captured by Scrooge, who hates Christmas. Recognizing their real identities, Santa convinces henchmen Gingerbread and Candy Cane of his authenticity and escapes

### Violent Night



Theatrical release poster

<b>Directed by</b>	<u>Tommy Wirkola</u>
<b>Written by</b>	<u>Pat Casey</u> <u>Josh Miller</u>
<b>Produced by</b>	<u>Kelly McCormick</u> <u>David Leitch</u> <u>Guy Danella</u>
<b>Starring</b>	<u>David Harbour</u> <u>John Leguizamo</u> <u>Alex Hassell</u> <u>Alexis Louder</u> <u>Beverly D'Angelo</u>
<b>Cinematography</b>	<u>Matthew Weston</u>
<b>Edited by</b>	<u>Jim Page</u>
<b>Music by</b>	<u>Dominic Lewis</u>
<b>Production company</b>	<u>87North Productions</u> <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Distributed by</b>	<u>Universal Pictures</u>
<b>Release dates</b>	October 7, 2022 ( <u>NYCC</u> )

magically, although his magic sack is burned. Gertrude's "kill squad," led by Commander Thorp, arrives and kills Morgan—revealing their allegiance to Scrooge. Discovering an empty vault, Scrooge threatens Linda. Jason admits he stole the money, hidden in an outdoor nativity, and planned to flee with his family. Gertrude forgives him, revealing this as a Lightstone family rite of passage and naming him her heir.

In a shed, Santa finds a sledgehammer and eliminates the kill squad. Trudy sets up *Home Alone*-inspired traps, leading to Gingerbread's death. Santa kills Candy Cane before she can shoot Trudy. Alva, Linda, and Bert thwart Scrooge's order to kill hostages by killing Krampus. Scrooge and Thorp escape into the woods with Gertrude and the money, pursued by Santa, who kills Peppermint. Linda kills Jingle, and Trudy witnesses her parents' reunion. Santa and Scrooge fight in a cabin; as they grapple, a badly-wounded Santa magically flies up the chimney, mangling Scrooge's body and killing him.

Thorp shoots Santa, but is killed by a vengeful Gertrude. Despite using burnt money for warmth, Santa slowly starts succumbing to the gunshot wounds. Trudy rallies her family to affirm their belief in Santa, healing him from near death. Confused by the magic, but renewed in faith, Santa receives his returning reindeer, a note from Mrs. Claus, a new gift sack, and the return of his long-lost hammer Skullcrusher. He bids Trudy farewell and continues his gift deliveries.

	December 2, 2022 (United States)
<b>Running time</b>	107 minutes <sup>[2]</sup>
<b>Country</b>	United States
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Budget</b>	\$20 million <sup>[3]</sup>
<b>Box office</b>	\$76.6 million <sup>[4][5]</sup>

In a mid-credits scene, Bert vlogs next to a dead mercenary, telling his viewers that Santa is real and warning them to behave during Christmas.

## Cast

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- [David Harbour](#) as [Santa Claus](#)
- [John Leguizamo](#) as Scrooge
- [Alex Hassell](#) as Jason
- [Alexis Louder](#) as Linda
- [Edi Patterson](#) as Alva
- [Cam Gigandet](#) as Morgan Steel
- Leah Brady as Trudy
- [Beverly D'Angelo](#) as Gertrude
- Ray Strachen as Al
- [André Eriksen](#) as Gingerbread
- [Brendan Fletcher](#) as Krampus
- [Mike Dopud](#) as Commander Thorp
- [Alexander Elliot](#) as Bert
- Mitra Suri as Candy Cane
- Can Aydin as Frosty
- Phong Giang as Tinsel
- Finn McCager Higgins as Jingle
- Rawleigh Clements-Willis as Peppermint
- Stephanie Sy as Sugarplum

## Production

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### Development

In March 2020, [Universal Pictures](#) announced that it acquired the original screenplay to *Violent Night* by [Pat Casey](#) and [Josh Miller](#) and that [87North Productions](#) would produce.<sup>[7]</sup> In November 2021, [David Harbour](#) was cast in the lead role, with [Tommy Wirkola](#) set to direct.<sup>[8]</sup> Wirkola was hired to direct after he sent an early cut of his prior film *The Trip* to producers at 87North, and after enjoying it, they sent him the *Violent Night* script.<sup>[9]</sup> In early 2022, [John Leguizamo](#), [Beverly D'Angelo](#), [Alex Hassell](#), [Alexis Louder](#), [Edi Patterson](#), [Cam Gigandet](#), and [André Eriksen](#) were confirmed to star.<sup>[10][11][12]</sup>

### Filming

The shooting of the film took place from January–March 2022.<sup>[13]</sup>

## Release

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*Violent Night* had its world premiere at the [New York Comic Con](#) on October 7, 2022. [Universal Pictures](#) released the film in the United States and Canada on December 2, 2022.<sup>[14]</sup>

## Home media

*Violent Night* was released on [VOD](#) on December 20, 2022. The film was added to [Peacock](#) on January 20, 2023. That same day, it became available for digital purchase, while the Blu-ray and DVD release followed on January 24.<sup>[15]</sup>

## Reception

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### Box office

*Violent Night* grossed \$50.1 million in the United States and Canada, and \$26.5 million in other territories, for a worldwide total of \$76.6 million.<sup>[4][5]</sup>

In the United States and Canada, the film was projected to gross around \$10 million from 3,682 theaters in its opening weekend.<sup>[3]</sup> It made \$4.9 million on its first day, including \$1.1 million from Thursday night previews, and went on to debut to \$13.5 million, finishing second behind holdover *[Black Panther: Wakanda Forever](#)*.<sup>[16][17]</sup> The film fell 37% in its sophomore weekend to \$8.7 million, remaining in second.<sup>[18]</sup>

### Critical response

On the [review aggregator](#) website [Rotten Tomatoes](#), the film holds an approval rating of 73% based on 208 reviews with an average rating of 6.5/10. The website's critics consensus reads "*Violent Night* isn't as wildly entertaining as its concept might suggest, but for those seeking harder-edged holiday fare, it may be a ho-ho-whole lot of fun."<sup>[19]</sup> [Metacritic](#), which uses a [weighted average](#), assigned the film a score of 55 out of 100, based on 37 critics, indicating "mixed or average reviews".<sup>[20]</sup> Opening weekend audiences polled by [CinemaScore](#) gave the film an average grade of "B+" on an A+ to F scale, while those at [PostTrak](#) gave it an overall positive score of 76%.<sup>[17]</sup>

[MovieWeb](#) wrote, "The first reviews... heap praise on David Harbour's savage Santa Claus."<sup>[21]</sup> [Syfy](#) wrote that "critics hail what might be a new holiday classic that more than earns its R-rating by turning every conceivable Christmas item into a deadly weapon" and that Harbour "steals the show".<sup>[22]</sup> [Total Film](#) wrote that reviews were mixed, "Some critics are calling Tommy Wirkola's movie a fun riff on the festive genre, while others are critical of its plot and length."<sup>[23]</sup> [Box Office Mojo](#) said, "Critics mostly like it."<sup>[24]</sup>

## Sequel

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In November 2022, Harbour mentioned that there were discussions of Mrs. Claus appearing in a potential sequel during production of the first film. The actor expressed interest in seeing [Charlize Theron](#) in the role.<sup>[25]</sup> In December of the same year, Wirkola confirmed that there have been ongoing discussions between him and the writers, with potential for Mrs. Claus, the North Pole, and the elves factoring into the story. The filmmaker stated that the realization of a follow-up movie depended on the success of the first

film.<sup>[26]</sup> Later that month, producer Kelly McCormick confirmed that all creatives involved intended to make a sequel with work on the project commencing in "the next few weeks".<sup>[27]</sup> In January 2023, it was confirmed that a sequel is already in production.<sup>[28]</sup>

## See also

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- List of Christmas films
- Santa Claus in film

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## External links

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- [Official website \(https://www.violentnightmovie.com/\)](https://www.violentnightmovie.com/)
  - *Violent Night* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt12003946/>) at IMDb
  - *Violent Night* ([https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/violent\\_night](https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/violent_night)) at Rotten Tomatoes
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