

SLASHTER FLICK



'TIS THE SEASON TO BE BLOODY

The logo for 'Slasher Flick' is set against a dark, textured background resembling a stone wall. The word 'SLASHER' is written in a jagged, red, hand-drawn font with a thick black outline. Below it, the word 'FLICK' is in a white, blocky, sans-serif font with a thick black outline and a red inner border.

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INTRODUCTION

When most people think of Christmas films, movies like *Miracle on 34th Street*, *A Christmas Carol* or *A Christmas Story*. You know, feel-good movies with an uplifting moral to the story and an ending that warms the heart. But there's *another* kind of Christmas film lurking around; Christmas films completely devoid of anything remotely uplifting or heartwarming; Christmas films that drip with blood, gore and guts. We're talking about gems such as *Black Christmas*, *Santa's Slay*, *Christmas Evil*, *Jack Frost* and, of course, *Silent Night*, *Deadly Night*. These are not films to inspire...they are films to terrify.

Given that this is a supplement for the Slasher Flick roleplaying game, guess which type of movies we're focusing on here! Here's a slew of hints: they don't star Maureen O'Hara or feature a miserly old rich guy, and they sure as heck don't focus on a kid's quest for a B.B. gun.

Within this stocking stuffer-sized PDF, you'll find advice for creating your own Christmas-themed flicks, a tandem of psycho killers and a sample flick overview (this supplement's namesake) that can be easily fleshed out and used with minimal effort.

DIRECTOR'S ADVICE

Do you want to create and run your own Christmas-themed flick? If so, read on.

Focus

Most Christmas-themed slasher films focus on a specific aspect of the holiday. More often than not, this focus is somehow Santa-related, but there are certainly numerous exceptions. For example, *Jack Frost* found a ludicrous, but oddly entertaining, focus: a killer snow man, just as *Elves* put the focus on, well, elves (and Nazi occultism, but that's neither here nor there). It goes without saying that *The Gingerdead Man*'s focus was on a sentient gingerbread man. It's okay to go with obvious choices when devising the flick's focus.

The Christmas focus doesn't necessarily have to be on the killer. Many of these films simply took place on Christmas; *that* was the focus. This was true enough for *Black Christmas*, *Chopping Mall*, *ATM* and *P2*. In such cases, Christmas simply acts as a narrative backdrop for the stories and are otherwise normal slasher films.

Think of all the various aspects of the holiday and pick one that intrigues you. Even if it's seemingly silly. "Silly" works well, either for a less-than-serious flick or a serious flick that juxtaposes the ridiculous aspects with true horror. All you need is a hook that will inspire you to create something truly memorable.

Tone

Speaking of tone, how serious do you want your flick to be? Do you want it to be full-on horror or satirical in nature? Or maybe something in between? The question is: how straight do you want to play it?

The default for these movies is "serious" with perhaps a touch of the absurd thrown in. The absurd generally takes a backseat, though. I mean, it's hard to escape a little of the absurd when you have a dude in a Santa Claus outfit lopping people's heads off. For the most part, these movies are traditional slasher films with Christmas-themed killers or settings.

“Serious with a touch of the absurd” may be the default, but it’s certainly not the only common option. There are plenty of Christmas-themed slasher films that embrace outrageousness wholeheartedly. Take the short film, *Treevenge*, for instance. It’s told from the viewpoint of sentient Christmas trees, who are sick of being purchased, decorated and forced to stand in people’s homes for their amusement. They begin a killing spree to avenge their humiliating oppression. Total lunacy.

At the opposite end of the spectrum are films that are almost purely serious. While the premise may be preposterous, they’re almost always deadly serious with few signs of cheese. Try watching *Sint* and finding anything campy. Go ahead. We dare you.

Whatever tone you decide on, you need to establish it almost immediately after the game begins. Otherwise, the players could make the wrong assumption and dive into the opposite end of the pool, so to speak. Few things ruin a serious game as quickly as players playing it for laughs! Similarly, a quick way to kill a spoof game is for players to become too serious. Let them get a feel for the tone you’re after right off the bat.

Alternatively, you can discuss the flick with them beforehand so that there’s no miscommunication. Get their input as to what they want out of a Christmas-themed flick, so that everyone is on the same page and walks away happy.

Who Is The Killer?

We touched upon killers a bit in the *Focus* section, but we can go into the topic a bit more thoroughly here. So, who (or what) do you want the killer to be?

Santa Claus

The trusty ol’ standby is somebody dressed as Santa Claus! There are numerous reasons why this choice continues to be utilized by filmmakers, decade after decade.

First and foremost is the fact that Santa is a trusted figure, loved by children all over the globe. There is something beautifully perverse about such a beloved icon betraying that trust and brutally killing people. While it’s true that in most cases, it’s not *actually* Santa, that detail is irrelevant. It’s the visage that hits home, even though the killer is simply a psychopath donning Santa duds.

The second reason is somewhat in conflict with the first, in that many children (especially very young ones) are terrified of Santa in the same way that some of them find clowns scream-worthy. There’s just something unsettling about an overly-jolly, red-clad man whose whole existence revolves around kids. At least from a certain point of view.

The third reason is more practical one: it’s pretty easy on the budget to get a hold of a Santa costume. There’s no need for an elaborate get-up—no prosthetics, no make-up, no CGI. Just put the killer in a Santa suit and you’re off to the races!

Other Christmas Icons

Santa is but one of the possible Christmas icons available for use as your flick’s killer. Films have used Krampus, snow men, gingerbread men and even Christmas trees in the past, so the sky really is the limit here. And, truthfully, it’s fine to stretch out into other December holidays

as well. How about a killer dreidel or, for something less outlandish, someone who takes on the visage of Father Time.

Do a bit of research if you want to turn up some of the relatively more obscure icons. You'll be shocked at some of the crazy things you'll turn up! From Le Père Fouettard to Tió de Nadal, there are so many different possibilities out there just waiting to be contorted into a psycho killer.

Unrelated Killers

As mentioned earlier, the killer may have no ties to Christmas at all. It's possible that they're just psychopaths who just happen to be out slaying during the holiday season. Or perhaps they have a reason to do so... which brings us to the next section.

What is the Killer's Motivation?

Okay, so you know *who* your killer is. Now, you need to put some thought into *why* the killer is murdering people. The answer could be as simple as you'd like or as detailed and convoluted as you'd like.

The simplest motivation is insanity. That unto itself is reason enough for the killer to do what he or she does best. Still, you should probably add a nugget that ties it more specifically to the holidays in most cases. Did he see a man in a Santa suit kill his parents? Does he think he's actually Santa and therefore needs to punish the naughty? Is he trying to take enough souls to raise a Christmas demon from the underworld?

Other motivations are possible, especially for non-human killers. After all, what motivation does a snow monster need, aside from just being evil? Insanity would have nothing to do with a particularly nasty tomténisse (a gnome-like being from Scandinavian Christmastime folklore with fould tempers, immense strength and other abilities).

"TIS THE SEASON TO BE BLOODY"

In this section, we present you with a seed for a flick to flesh out and run.

The Backstory

Jasper Madison was once a giving, caring man. He gave blood, he donated money to charities, he lent folks a hand when they needed it and he even stepped into the role of Santa for a prominent department store so that all the children could tell him what they wanted for Christmas. During one such stint, three low-life teenagers with attitudes wanted to sit on his lap. He politely told them that they were too large and too old for that, but they were insistent. The situation escalated quickly, ending with one of them discretely threatening Jasper with a knife. His boss, Joe Higgs, had just walked up to the scene in time to see Jasper defend himself. As it turned out, the kid with the knife was Higgs' nephew. Guess who he believed.

Jasper lost his job—a job he loved doing—and to make matters worse, the teenagers caught up with him in the department store parking lot and attacked him. The assault caused him to hit his head on the concrete, putting him in a coma and causing brain damage.

A young woman named Missy Towe, who worked at the store as an elf, saw the attack. Missy was more than a little psychotic, to begin with and on top of that, she was Christmas-obsessed. She saw Jasper

as the bona-fide Santa Claus and she wasn't about to stand idly by as the downed "Santa" got the crap kicked out of him. She leapt into action and chased the teens away from Jasper with a knife of her own.

Jasper remained in a coma for three years. Every day, Missy would come to his room and read Christmas stories to him. When he finally came out of the coma, he was a changed man. The goodness and light were replaced by bitterness and a lust for revenge. Like Missy, he now believed that he was, in fact, Santa Claus... and that he needed to punish naughty children, starting with those who wronged him. It goes without saying that Missy was completely on board for his crusade.

The Setup

It's once again the holiday season; Christmas Eve, to be exact. Unbeknownst to Joe Higgs, a handful of the department store staff swiped a key to the back door after closing for the night. Since the store would be closed the following day, it was the perfect chance to have themselves a party. Normally, Higgs stays until late on Christmas Eve to get caught up on everything, but he was feeling under the weather earlier that day, so he went home. Knowing that Higgs usually sticks around, Jasper (who Missy calls "Santy") and his sidekick slipped into the store in an effort to punish him for being naughty. But when they did, they instead found a bunch of teenagers and early-twenty-somethings boozing, toking and screwing around. Very, very naughty indeed.

The Characters

Obviously, the scenario is set up for the primary characters and secondary characters to be the party-goers, but with some creativity, other options are possible. Perhaps a security guard decided to stay at work after all or maybe a homeless person knows a secret way to slip in and has been staying in the basement.

One thing is for sure: the three teenagers who assaulted Jasper are attending the party. Maybe Higgs has given them all jobs or maybe the other characters invited them. If you reveal the backstory at the beginning of the flick, you should ask the players if they would like to create one or more of these characters as secondary characters. Otherwise, you should use them as tertiary characters instead.

Revealing the Background

You should definitely consider letting the players in on the series of events that led to what will transpire during the flick. How much of it you reveal and when you reveal it is up to you.

The most straightforward way is to reveal it by describing the events at the very beginning of the game, framing it a prolog of sorts; something that's shown right before the movie title hits the screen.

If the three assailants are tertiary characters, you could have them drunkenly brag to the other characters about what happened. And maybe another tertiary character has heard that the old man woke up from the coma recently.

You could also have the backstory come to light via Santy or Missy (probably Missy) when they have the final character cornered or otherwise at their mercy. Missy likes to flap her gums, so this approach is very reasonable.

Lastly, you could keep things mysterious by not revealing it at all. Maybe in the sequel...

Possible Events

Below, you'll find some events that can be dropped into the flick should you wish to.

- Joe Higgs starts to feel better, so he decides to come back to the store to get some work done. Imagine his surprise when he finds out that his employees have been throwing a booze blowout in the building! More importantly, imagine his surprise when he finds out that Jasper has come back for revenge!
- Santy and Missy lock the entire place down, making it all but impossible to escape until the day after Christmas. You might allow them to find alternate means of escape, however (sewers, air ducts, loose bricks, etc.).
- A police officer named Jane Marella does a drive-by to check the place out and sees some lights on. This seems suspicious to her, so she gets out of the patrol car to investigate further. She should manage to get in, adding another potential victim to the mix and spicing things up.
- Santy and Missy cuts the electricity, making life even more difficult for the characters trapped inside.

Santy (Damage Threshold 3)

Santy (aka Jasper Madison) is a 60 year old man with a long black beard and thick, arched eyebrows. His face is in a constant state of glowering. Rage exudes from his every pore. He dresses in a blood-red robe, taking on the appearance of Santa from centuries past rather than the contemporary Santa look. His weapon of choice is a large, menacing-looking meat tenderizer, but he never relies solely on it to "off" his victims. He is quite creative and seems to delight in using his environment in that capacity.

Santy seldom speaks, preferring to let his actions do the talking for him. Besides, Missy does enough talking for the both of them.

- **Normal Person:** He's big, scary and in great physical shape for a man his age (or *any* age for that matter), but he's still human.
- **Punish the Naughty:** This is a modified version of "Punish the Promiscuous". Any character who Santy sees doing something "naughty" will roll one less die for all checks (except freak-out checks) during kill scenes involving Santy.
- **Signature Weapon:** Santy is fond of his meat tenderizer.

Missy Towe (Damage Threshold 2)

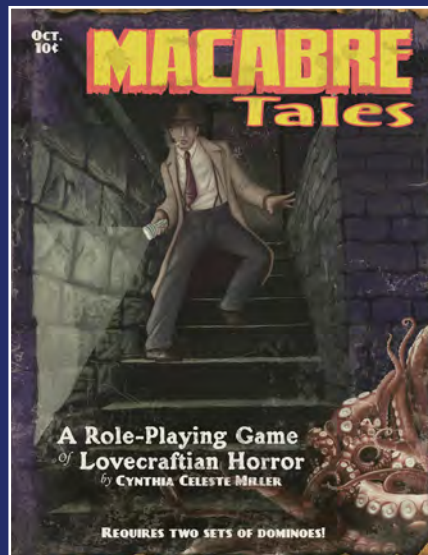
Missy is a 23 year old woman with poofy blonde hair who looks far younger than her actual age. This isn't just because she's well under five feet in height, but also because she has a "baby face". This look of innocence is ruined by her demented, ever-present smile and the glint of evil in her eyes. She wears a green, red and white elf costume and packs around a weapon that looks like a bladed lollipop.

Quite frankly, Missy Towe is off her rocker. She firmly believes that Jasper is Santa Claus (she calls him "Santy"), gets particularly excited about killing people and tends to be annoyingly talkative, especially to her would-be victims. She may come off as bubbly and giddy, but her mind is anything but wholesome.

- **Normal Person:** Missy is simply a girl with nasty, vile things on her mind.
- **Signature Weapon:** She's all about her bladed lollipop!
- **Small Stature:** What she lacks in size, she makes up for in evil intentions.

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The Lightspeed Adventure Manual (LAM), a “pay what you want” PDF that offers a stripped-down, but fully playable, version of the Retrostar system. Retrostar is a roleplaying game that faithfully emulates the science fiction TV shows of the 1970s.

In addition to all the rules needed to play, the LAM contains a ready-to-play series, complete with setting information, pre-generated characters and a full episode to kick off your adventures with! The series is called Rōgun. In this setting, the earth has been ravaged, her resources depleted. Noble warriors defend a mobile, solar-powered fortress, traveling from town to town. These rollerskating Samouri stand against the Warriors of the Night and cy-bornetic Scroungers.

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