

## Fango Flashback: “SANTA’S SLAY”

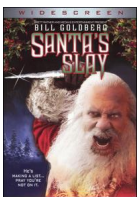
Written by Allan Dart

Tuesday, 28 December 2010 11:09

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Sure, there’s **BLACK CHRISTMAS**, **CHRISTMAS EVIL**, **SILENT NIGHT**, **DEADLY NIGHT** and the recent **RARE EXPORTS: A CHRISTMAS TALE**, but to me, the best Yuletide horror film is, hands down, **SANTA’S SLAY**. OK, maybe it isn’t the *best*. However, the 2005 flick is a hoot—and the only holiday slasher picture to feature former WWE wrestler Bill Goldberg as a devilish Santa Claus. Oh, and it’s also the only holiday slasher picture to feature Santa Claus killing Saul Rubinek with a menorah.



Directed by David Steiman (a former assistant to **RED DRAGON** helmer Brett Ratner, one of **SLAY**’s producers), **SANTA’S SLAY** isn’t going to make anybody’s Great Horror Films list, but it’s certainly a goofy pleasure for those who smiled at the mention of **CHRISTMAS EVIL**. The story is pretty basic: Santa Claus (Goldberg) isn’t really the sweet and jolly legend beloved by little boys and girls. He’s actually the devil’s son, and the only reason he hasn’t been raising hell and doing bad is because of a bet he lost to an angel that bound him to be good for 1,000 years. But that bet is up, and now Santa is ready to rampage—and he’s coming to town to spread blood and violent revenge. Standing in his way are Nicolas Yuleson (Douglas Smith), his girlfriend Mary (**LOST**’s Emilie de Ravin) and Nicolas’ grandpa (Robert Culp—yes, Robert Culp!), who has a secret connection to Saint Nick.

The best scene in the film is the opening, in which Goldberg dispatches of James Caan, Fran Drescher, Rebecca Gayheart and Chris Kattan at a dinner party. Santa Claus killing Chris Kattan? That’s better than Saul Rubinek’s death by menorah! That sequence sets the tone for the rest of the flick, which emphasizes humor over horror. Goldberg’s evil Santa not only fashions a nine-branched candelabrum used in celebration of Hanukkah as a weapon, but drives an old lady off the road, kills a bouncer with a Christmas wreath and attacks a strip club. Sophistication isn’t **SANTA’S SLAY**’s strength. Silliness is. So if you enjoy wrestlers-turned-actors playing evil Santas who spout cheesy one-liners and kill people in goofy Christmas-related fashion, then you’ll get some holiday cheer out of this movie. It’s far from perfect, but it’s the only Christmas story I know of in which a gray buffalo/Hell Deer named Berserker leads Santa’s rocket-powered sleigh. Ho! Ho! Ho!

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