

A CHRISTMAS EXORCISM

Written by

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OVER BLACK

The HIGH WAIL of a police siren.

SUPERIMPOSE: Christmas Eve. 2025

INT. POLICE CAR - TRAVELING - NIGHT

The siren BLARES as the vehicle speeds down a snow-covered backroad. Rooftop lights flash red and blue, illuminate the blizzard outside.

Windshield wipers frantically whip back and forth, unable to keep up with the heavy snowfall.

Behind the wheel is SHERIFF WINSTON, (53), burly and balding. Has a serious demeanor about him.

Beside him sits DEPUTY DAVIS, (23), fit and handsome, but clearly raw. He shoots Winston a nervous glance.

DAVIS

No offense, Sheriff, but your kind
of freaking me out here.

Winston keeps his steely eyes locked on the road before him.

WINSTON

I've known Father Linus for a long,
long time. I've never heard him
sound like that. Hell, I've never
heard fear in someone's voice like
that. He was so scared.

Davis turns to his window, watches as snowy fields blur by. He shakes his head.

DAVIS

It's just, like... Something out of
a horror film. I mean, this family
has to be full of shit, right?

Winston slows the vehicle, turns onto a sideroad.

WINSTON

The Carpenters are good folk.
Honest folk. Every Christmas, Mark
dresses up as Santa Claus and
visits the children's hospital...
So... No. I don't think they're
full of shit.

Davis doesn't respond, continues to stare out his window. He rubs his sweaty hands off on his pants.

WINSTON
You religious, Davis?

DAVIS
I believe in God, if that's what
you mean. Not really one for church
though, if I'm being honest.

The snow outside grows thicker, falls faster.

Davis fidgets in his seat, anxious.

Winston notices.

WINSTON
No matter what happens, I need you
composed. Understand?

Davis exhales a nervous breath, nods.

DAVIS
Yeah. You can count on me.

WINSTON
You're gonna do fine. Just stay on
my ass and do as I say.

Winston pulls the vehicle onto a snow-covered driveway.

WINSTON
Here we are.

He reaches over, switches off the siren.

EXT. CARPENTERS HOUSE

The two-story colonial is surrounded by dense woods. Secluded from potential neighbors.

Christmas lights and various other festive decorations cover the house.

A snowman, complete with a top hat, a carrot nose, and two large buttons for eyes, is planted in the middle of the front yard. It faces the house.

Lights still flashing, the police car slows to a stop behind a parked, snow-covered van.

Winston and Davis exit their vehicle. Snow CRUNCHES beneath their feet as they hurry toward the front door.

Just as they reach the door, it swings open.

Winston stops, motions for Davis to do the same. Davis silently complies.

WINSTON
Mark? Jessica? It's Sheriff
Winston. We got Father Linus' call.
We're here to help.

No response.

Winston looks to Davis, who gives a concerned shrug. Then --

FATHER LINUS, (59), a tall and thin priest drenched in blood, stumbles out of the open doorway. Vicious stab wounds cover his arms and chest.

WINSTON
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

Winston moves for Linus, who collapses just as the sheriff reaches him.

WINSTON
Father!? Oh, God!

Davis just stares in frozen horror.

DAVIS
What the hell happened to him!?

Winston glances over his shoulder, at Davis.

WINSTON
Get on the radio and get us some
damn backup!

Davis still doesn't budge.

DAVIS
What the fuck --

WINSTON
Davis! Now!

The deputy snaps out of it, rushes back to the police car.

DAVIS
Right! I'm on it!

Winston turns back to Linus, who's in shock. The blood spattered across his face sits in stark contrast to his pale white skin.

WINSTON
Hold on, Father. Help is on the way. Just stay with me, okay?

Finally, Linus' blank eyes meet Winston's.

LINUS
(weak)
I... failed...

Winston squeezes Linus' bloody hand.

WINSTON
Save your strength.

LINUS
The Devil... Is here...

Linus coughs up thick, dark blood.

WINSTON
Jesus!

LINUS
S-save... Save t-the girl...

His eyes roll over white as one final breath escapes his blood-caked lips.

Winston shakes the priest, refuses to let him go.

WINSTON
Father!? Stay with me!

It's too late. Linus is dead.

Davis returns, steps up behind the sheriff.

DAVIS
Backup's on their way.

He notices Linus' limp body.

DAVIS
Oh, God... Is he --

WINSTON
Yeah. He's gone.

Carefully, Winston lies the dead priest down.

DAVIS
What do we --

Just then, MUSIC starts up inside the house. It's "Let It Snow" by Frank Sinatra.

Winston stands, stares daggers at the open doorway.

DAVIS
Sheriff... What the hell's
happening here?

Winston draws his pistol, steps forward.

Davis grabs him by the arm, stops him.

DAVIS
Backup's only a few minutes out.
Let's just --

A little girl SCREAMS from deeper in the house.

Winston doesn't hesitate. He moves with a purpose, rips away from Davis' grasp and disappears inside.

DAVIS
Dammit.

After one last glance at the priest's corpse, the deputy draws his pistol and hesitantly steps inside.

INT. CARPENTERS HOUSE - FOYER

Davis steps into the large foyer, notices a blood trail that leads up the staircase.

He peeks over into the next room. A look of pure dread falls over his face.

INT. CARPENTERS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

It's completely trashed. Furniture is broken and flipped. The Christmas tree is on its side. Blood is spattered all over the walls and floor.

On the floor is a shattered family portrait.

In the picture, the CARPENTER FAMILY: MARK, (46), JESSICA, (38), and RACHAEL, (6), all dressed in their Sunday best, smiling wide. A very happy family.

INT. CARPENTERS HOUSE - FOYER

Davis turns to the staircase, starts up it.

DAVIS
Sheriff?

Slowly, he makes his way up the stairs.

INT. CARPENTERS HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALL

The blood trail leads from the staircase to --

Jessica, who lies face down in a dark red puddle in the middle of the hall. She has multiple stab wounds on her legs, her back, and her head. Part of her scalp has been savagely peeled back.

Davis reaches the top of the steps just as the SONG comes to an end. He spots Jessica's corpse, slaps a hand over his mouth and fights the urge to vomit.

Another SONG starts. It's "White Christmas" by Frank Sinatra. It comes from the bedroom at the end of the hall.

Davis does his best to compose himself.

Carefully, he steps over Jessica's corpse, makes his way to the open bedroom door.

DAVIS
(voice cracks)
Sheriff?

INT. CARPENTERS HOUSE - RACHAEL'S BEDROOM

With his weapon at the ready, Davis enters. Before him stands Winston, who trains his pistol on something.

Davis steps beside Winston, sees what he sees.

In the far corner, sitting on a small bed, is Mark. He's dressed up as Santa Claus. Covered in blood, his skin a sickly yellow, eyes a foggy white. Something is very wrong.

In his lap sits Rachael, dressed in a nightgown. Tears stream down her terrified face.

On a nightstand next to the bed sits the record player that the MUSIC comes from.

Mark holds a blood-stained chefs knife against his daughter's quivering cheek. With his free hand, he runs his fingers through the scared little girl's hair.

Winston takes a hesitant step forward.

WINSTON

Mark?

No response.

Winton's eyes meet Rachael's. He forces a smile.

WINSTON

It's gonna be okay, Sweetie.

Slowly and methodically, Mark turns to the sheriff.

MARK

(strained)

No it's not.

Mark tilts his head back, lets loose an unnerving cackle.

Winston keeps his pistol trained on the bloody Santa.

WINSTON

Mark. Listen to me, now. You need to let Rachael go. You don't want to hurt her.

MARK

Yes I do.

Another cackle.

WINSTON

Mark, please listen to --

Mark snaps his gaze back to Winston.

MARK

Mark's burning in hell with his whore and that pathetic priest.

A sinister grin stretches across Mark's sickly yellow face.

Winston's eyes start to mist up.

WINSTON

Please don't do this.

MARK
Silence your filthy hole. This
little one is mine to use.

Mark presses the knife harder against Rachael's cheek, draws blood. She screams.

RACHAEL
Daddy, stop!

Davis moves beside Winston, aims his weapon at Mark.

DAVIS
Let her go!

Mark's foggy eyes travel from the sheriff to the deputy.

MARK
So eager to be the hero. You wish
to save this one? Place your gun in
your mouth. Squeeze the trigger. Do
that, and I'll spare her.

Davis steps forward.

DAVIS
I said let her go! Now!

Mark lets out another cackle.

MARK
Rachael, darling. Is this not the
most wonderful Christmas you've
ever experienced?

Rachael whimpers in fear as blood drips down from the cut on her cheek.

RACHAEL
Please, Daddy...

Mark looks back to Winston.

MARK
Tell her you're going to save her,
Sheriff. Lie to her.

WINSTON
Mark... Please don't --

MARK
I SAID LIE TO HER!

Winston shudders as he looks to Rachael, forces a smile and fights back tears.

Mark's grin stretches wider as he moves the knife from Rachael's cheek to her throat.

WINSTON

It's going to be okay, Rachael. I'm going to --

The bloody Santa presses the knife harder against Rachael's throat, draws more blood.

WINSTON

(to Mark)

Don't do this. Please... Please, don't do this.

BANG! Davis takes his shot, wings Mark in the shoulder.

Rachael breaks free from Mark's grasp, runs straight into Winston's arms.

Davis squeezes off two more rounds into Mark's chest, paints the wall behind him red.

Mark falls backwards on the bed, goes still. His grip on the knife loosens.

Winston grabs Rachael up in his arms, buries her head in his shoulder. He starts for the open door, looks back to Davis and motions to Mark.

WINSTON

Check him!

Davis nods.

DAVIS

I'm on it --

Just then, Mark jumps to his feet. With a full head of steam, he charges at the window and jumps straight through it. He disappears in a CRASH of broken glass.

Davis rushes over to the broken window, aims his weapon out of hit. He quickly turns back to Winston, confused.

DAVIS

He's gone! He's fuckin gone!

Winston squeezes Rachael tight.

WINSTON
Well go get him, dammit!

Davis shakes his head, can't believe what just took place.

DAVIS
I shot him! Three times! No way
he's --

WINSTON
GO NOW!

Davis books it out of the bedroom.

Winston rocks Rachael in his arms, tries to comfort her.

WINSTON
It's okay, Sweetie. Everything's
okay. I'm not gonna let anything
happen to you.

He looks over, spots a closed closet door at the other side
of the bedroom, moves for it.

The MUSIC and the next SONG starts soon after.

This time, it's "Frosty the Snowman" by Gene Autry.

EXT. CARPENTERS HOUSE

The snow continues to dump down.

Davis rushes out of the open front door, glances down at
Linus' snow-covered corpse, then quickly turns his attention
to the shattered upstairs bedroom window.

The MUSIC pours out of the broken window.

Mark CACKLES O.S. He's nearby.

Davis whips his weapon around, desperate to find his target.
He's terrified, his pistol rattling in his shaky hands.

DAVIS
Where the hell are you!?

In the front yard, a shadow ducks behind the snowman.

INT. CARPENTERS HOUSE - RACHAEL'S BEDROOM

Winston kneels before the open closet door, looks into
Rachael's teary eyes.

She sits in the corner of the closet, squeezes a stuffed teddy-bear tight.

WINSTON

I need you to stay in here and keep quiet, okay? I've got to go help my deputy. You're safe as long as you stay in here and stay quiet. Do you understand? Not a peep, okay?

Rachael slowly nods.

Winston reaches out, wipes the tears from her cheeks.

WINSTON

You're such a brave little girl.
Now stay quiet. I will be back. You have my word.

BANG! BANG!

GUNSHOTS outside startle Winston, who looks to the shattered window, then back to Rachael.

WINSTON

Not a peep!

Rachael hugs her teddy-bear as Winston stands and closes the closet door.

He draws his pistol, runs out of the bedroom.

INT. CARPENTERS HOUSE - RACHAEL'S CLOSET

Rachael hugs her teddy-bear and squeezes her eyes shut.

EXT. CARPENTERS HOUSE

Winston hurries out the open front door.

Neither Davis nor Mark are anywhere to be seen.

WINSTON

Davis!?

His voice is swallowed by the whipping winter wind. A cold silence answers him.

Then he sees it.

The snowman in the middle of the yard. Something is different about it. Wrong about it.

Winston cautiously approaches the snowman. Once he's within a few yards of it, he drops to his knees.

Horror fills the sheriff's face.

Davis' decapitated head now serves as the snowman's head, his face frozen in a horrifying scream.

Winston can't peel his eyes from it.

MARK (O.S.)
Merry Christmas, Sheriff.

The sheriff jumps up, spins around and spots Mark about ten yards away.

He stands motionless, gripping his bloody chefs knife in his hand. His mouth is twisted in an evil grin.

SIRENS grow louder as they approach from the distance.

Winston steps toward Mark, keeps his weapon trained on the macabre Santa Clause.

Mark drops the knife to the snow, casually puts his hands up. He looks down at his wounds, then back to the sheriff.

WINSTON
I believe I need medical attention.

WINSTON
Damn you.

MARK
You're not gonna let me die out
here, are you?

Winston takes another step forward. He tightens his grip on his pistol.

Mark drops to his knees, his hands still up.

Another police car and an ambulance pull into the driveway, lights flashing and sirens BLASTING.

Two deputies, KETCHUM, (35), and CAMERON, (29), exit their police car and rush over to assist Winston. They both draw their weapons and aim them at Mark.

KETCHUM
What's going on here, Sheriff?

Cameron looks past Winston, spots Davis' decapitated head on the snowman.

CAMERON

Ah, Christ!

Two paramedics, GREEN, (33), and ADAMS, (30), rush from the ambulance, make their way toward Mark.

Winston motions for them to head inside instead.

WINSTON

Forget about him! There's a little girl in the upstairs bedroom closet. Go help her! Now!

Green nods, runs into the house.

GREEN

On it!

Adams moves for the bloody Santa.

WINSTON

I said forget about him!

ADAMS

He's wounded! Let me do my job.

With pleading eyes, Mark looks from Adams, to the two deputies beside Winston.

MARK

Please don't let him hurt me anymore! I don't want to die! Please help me!

Adams moves closer to Mark.

WINSTON

I said to leave him be!

The paramedic tosses his hands up, backs away.

Ketchum steps beside Winston and places a hand on his shoulder, attempts to calm him.

KETCHUM

Sheriff. We've got him. Let us take this from here.

Winston keeps his pistol aimed at Mark's face.

Mark stares back at the sheriff.

KETCHUM

Sheriff. Please. Lower your weapon.

Winston ever so slightly lowers his pistol.

Adams exhales a deep breath and approach Mark, who gives the slightest hint of that evil smirk.

WINSTON

No.

Winston raises his pistol again, aims at Mark's face.

Both deputies quickly react and aim their weapons at Winston.

CAMERON

Sheriff! Don't do it!

Winston stares deep into Mark's foggy eyes.

KETCHUM

Sheriff! Listen to me! Please don't
do this --

Mark flashes another smirk.

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

Winston shoots Mark square in the face, while both Deputies immediately fire back at him.

Bullets tear through the sheriff's chest and gut.

Mark collapses backwards as his brains spill into the snow.

Winston crumples to the ground. The snow beneath him quickly turns red.

Adams rushes to Winston's aid.

Cameron runs his free hand through his sweaty hair.

CAMERON

Jesus Christ! Jesus Christ!

Ketchum holsters his weapon, kneels next to Winston, who struggles to breath. He squeezes the sheriff's hand.

KETCHUM

What the hell were you thinking!?

Winston stares up at the falling snow. His eyes go blank.

FADE TO WHITE.