

# OPINIONS

## Is "Die Hard" A Christmas Movie?

BY MALIQUE MCCOY

**DIE HARD** IS ONE of the greatest action films of all time, as well as one of the greatest Christmas movies of all time. The movie stars Bruce Willis, who would become a household name in Hollywood and star in action movies for years to come. John McTiernan directed the film, which is truly an action masterpiece in all aspects. What makes the movie so unique is the mixture of a Christmas feel and the high intensity of action. Throughout the film, beyond seeing the shooting and violence, they allude to the movie being a Christmas film with Christmas songs being hummed or murmured while a cop walks to his car or even while waiting for a bomb to blow up. They make it very intentional that Christmas is still on their mind despite all the mayhem that arises.

"Die Hard" follows the story of John McClane, a New York City cop who travels to Los Angeles to see his family on Christmas Eve. Although separated from his wife and kids, it is evident through his actions that family means everything to him, and he would even

take a bullet for them, literally! John is taken through a roller coaster of emotions and life-chattering decisions as his wife's Christmas work party is wickedly turned into a hostage situation. A time of celebration, joy, and cheer is now a place of dread and hopelessness for people, with presents, milk, cookies, and Santa as the last thing on their minds.

This brings us to the root of the question. Is "Die Hard" a Christmas movie? I personally don't think it's a question, it is. But where do our values lie as people? We say Christmas is about family and the feeling of being grateful and sacrificing, as well as giving to others less fortunate than us. Christmas is about morals, how we treat people, and how when you do good things, you will get good things back in

return, right? Well, that's what we tell children at a young age. Or, could that all just be fluff we tell children so we can feel like politically correct parents? A father willing to do anything to see his family again should scream Christmas.

John McClane should not only be looked at as a hero, but I could make the argument that John McClane was Santa in the flesh! He disrupted all the terrorist's plans and gifted all the hostages in the building the gift of life. Christmas is about appreciating the things you have and the things you receive. In the film, we see John believe his luck has run out and that he won't make it out of the building alive. He reflects on how he could have done things differently with his wife and kids. We see him think about what's at risk if he can't pull this off. His kids will become fatherless, his wife a widow, and hundreds of lives will be lost. John McClane is a symbol of hope and what extent a person will go to do the right thing for their family.

More importantly, why "Die Hard" is a Christmas movie is the tone and setting of the film. It takes place on Christmas Eve, the attack is at his wife's office during a Christmas party. Saying that this movie is not a Christmas film leaves out a key element—criminals and cops usually don't have off days. Does this mean they don't celebrate Christmas or have stories that align with the overall meaning and arc of Christmas? All sorts of people have Christmas and a story or memory to tell when it comes to the beloved holiday. Also being that the setting is in Los Angeles, and there's no snowy Christmas Eve to look at and make you reminisce about the holidays. Does this devalue the experience of people who live in hot weather states? No! Christmas is Christmas no matter where you are, if you celebrate it. Christmas is a mindset and a holiday that makes you feel closer to your family and friends.

"Die Hard" is undoubtedly one of the greatest Christmas movies of all time. From beginning to end we see a realistic take on Christmas— a parent sacrificing everything to give his kids the best Christmas ever. This is something the average parent can relate to, not the violence, but the act of going through whatever to bring a smile to your child's face on Christmas morning. John McClane was able to do it all while toting a gun and giving us some of the best catchphrases of all time in the process.



Photo Credit: Pierre Antona