# Christmas Crime Story

Released in 2016, Christmas Crime Story is about a disastrous robbery on Christmas Eve, and all the many lives impacted by the selfish decisions of one person.

And then, suddenly, it isn’t. But we’ll get to that part.

**The story**

Christmas Crime Story is the tale of a Christmas Eve holdup gone wrong. We see the story from several points of view, starting with Chris, the detective first on the scene.

Chris is having a hard Christmas Eve. So, on his lunch break, he visits his mom at her diner. It appears that they have a contentious relationship. But nothing is solved in this quick visit.

Chris goes on to pull over a man speeding. When the man, named David, pulls over, Chris discovers something in the trunk. That something must have been pretty damn incriminating, because rather than open the trunk, David shoots him dead.

We then switch to David’s pov for the night. Then his girlfriend’s pov. Then, the man his girlfriend has been cheating on him with. And on and on we go, until we see how all of these different stories and people come together for a dark, sordid Christmas Eve.

**What worked**

The first thing I want to say about Christmas Crime Story is that it’s heartwarming. Like, to a fault, which we will be talking about.

The ending is very sweet, in a Christmasy sort of way. Families come together, people are filled with joy, and all is right in the world for almost everyone. Except for Lena, who deserves to have a bad Christmas, everyone gets a happy ending.

That brings me to my next point. The characters, mostly, are all deeply sympathetic. Even when David or James are killing people, you feel bad for them.

You don’t agree with what they’re doing, but you do feel bad.

You have to feel sympathetic for the man whose girlfriend hired a killer to merk him. Or the woman whose daughter has cancer. Or the guy who just can't find work, even though he's trying to make good decisions. You want things to work out for them. You want them to be okay. Even when they do terrible things.

Finally, I always love stories told from so many different points of view. It's always fun to see a story unfold in a nonlinear way, but in a way that makes more and more sense as we get more points of view. It's a hard thing to pull off, and I think Christmas Crime Story did it very well.

**What didn’t work**

Unfortunately, all of the sympathetic characters and clever storytelling methods in the world won't save a story that doesn't work. And Christmas Crime Story just does not work.

Let’s begin with the ending. The big twist near the end of the movie. I won’t spoil it, but you will for sure know it if you’ve seen the film. Or, if you waste your time watching the film.

As a rule, twists work when they make sense. Not when it feels like the writers threw up their hands and said, “Okay, but what if everything we just did for the last hour and fifteen minutes didn’t happen, and instead…”

This wasn’t clever. It wasn’t fun. It felt like the writers didn’t know how to end their movie and just decided to cheat.

Finally, I mentioned earlier that Christmas Crime Story was heartwarming. And yes, that is nice.

But is it maybe a little too heartwarming?

I mean, we have an adorable angel of a child with cancer. Her parents don't have enough money for her treatment. We have two poor guys who are in love with a black-hearted woman. And we have a detective so sweet and kind that he makes you rethink ACAB. And, he's about to get married to his pregnant girlfriend. *And* they’re naming the baby after his mom. *And* his name is literally Chris DeJesus. His mom’s name is Maggie DeJesus. I tried to think of a sillier less subtle name to use as a joke, and I literally couldn’t think of one.

They could have at least named him De La Cruz. *That* would be more subtle, and I still would have complained.

In the end, Christmas Crime Story just missed the mark. It came *very close* to being a good movie. But it focused too much on how it wanted you to feel, rather than telling a satisfying story that made sense. Much like that third glass of eggnog, it’s fun in the moment and regretful after. If you’re looking for a satisfying Christmas horror, I’d suggest looking elsewhere.