



INTRODUCTION



I KNOW how much everyone hates when I go on holidays. It means FLASHSHOT stops and takes a short breather as well. This Christmas, my wife, Deb and I are celebrating twenty years of marriage with a short boat ride around Mexico. FLASHSHOT won't be going but stewing away on my hard drive until we get back.

So, keep you all from suffering from hardening of the micro-fiction arteries I put together this little Twelve Days of Flash Christmas for you. (The exact number of days I will be gone.) You can read them all at once or just one day. Like a good Christmas cake, there are lots of odd bits jumbled together but the over-all effect is pleasing. Some are old and some are new (maybe new to you.) Enjoy. I hope no one is expecting egg-nog.

G. W. Thomas



ONE: CHRISTMAS PARTY



California 1846

"What's so funny?" asked one of the men gathered around the robust figure in the red suit.

"Your last name. I have a flying reindeer with that same name."

"You see, Santa," he said to the large man tied to the ring above his head. "It all started with you. Oh sure, I was a rotten kid, but no more so than most."

The fat man whimpered.

"But the continual giving of coal each year drove me to seek -- other ways of seeing the world. But don't worry. You won't feel the pain of this scalpel for long. In a minute, I'm going to light the coals, yes, all the coal you gave me..."



EIGHT: TRADITION



The time machine stopped. Dan Girard stepped into the past to see if what he had been told was true. That somewhere in the past an event had happened that Humankind repeated year after year.

He saw hairy forms collect around a cave. Out of the opening a strange figure appeared. Large stomach, long white beard, all dressed in red. The figure handed presents to the surrounding cave men. Strange, magical gifts, each beyond the ape men.

Dan got back into his time machine and tried to forget that jolly figure, with its rosy cheeks and three silver eyes.



NINE: A CHRISTMAS STORY PART I



He tried on the suit. Its red satin was cool and yet warm. But who did it belong to? Could he just slip away with it? He had been in jail before. With his Dyslexia and no education he had headed to crime like a sow to slop. But there was no one watching in the deserted alley.

He pulled the shirt off, looked at the tag. S-A-N-T-A. He laughed. If this was Santa's suit he wouldn't mind giving it away.

Jones put the shirt back on and walked away. Things were changing for the better. He smiled so hard he never caught the smell of brimstone.



TEN: A CHRISTMAS STORY PART II



Jones couldn't believe it. When he thought real hard an object just appeared in his hand. That was how Santa did it. He didn't need a magic bag.

Jones smiled. What a racket! He sold the first three things he thought of: a watch, a Shaggy CD and a baggy of pot. He walked away with cash in his pockets.

More customers. A woman who wanted a waist like a supermodel. A man who wanted a gun to kill his wife. A crack whore looking for a fix. A terrorist who needed plutonium...

His pockets would never be empty again.



ELEVEN: A CHRISTMAS STORY PART III

Jones sat on the bed, giggling like a girl. The entire top of the bed was covered in cash. He could buy houses, cars, booze, drugs and women, lots of women.

But all that could wait. It was Christmas Eve. What did he want right now? Gold? Jewels?

He imagined a Faberge egg. It appeared. He looked at it a minute then threw it on the floor. A ruby. A diamond the size of his fist. They all ended up on the floor.

“What do I want?” He screamed at last. Tears were not far behind.



TWELVE: A CHRISTMAS STORY PART IV

Jones looked at the girl. She was thirteen. She had been a sexual toy since she was eight. Now men on the street for money. Jones couldn't look away from those cold, sad eyes.

“I don't have what you want,” he said.

“But you're Santa, aren't you?”

Jones tried again. No matter how hard he tried, nothing would appear in his hand. He could give anything – but this.

“Alright,” said the girl. “I'll take the gun then.”

“No,” said Jones, taking off the suit and throwing it into the gutter. He took the girl in his arms.

“I can give you love. I can.”



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