

Red Snow

Michael Slade

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A raging winter storm and a team of mercenaries have cut Whistler Mountain off from the rest of the world. Bent on bloody revenge, Mephisto attacks the members of Special X—the psycho hunters of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police—and that's just the start of his horrific plan. Red Snow is a three-ring circus of mystery, horror, and suspense. It has everything: whodunits and impossible crimes, psychological terror and police procedure. Let the games begin!

Red Snow Details

Date : Published 2010 by Penguin (first published 2009)

ISBN: 9780143167792 Author: Michael Slade

Format: Mass Market Paperback 303 pages Genre: Horror, Mystery, Crime, Suspense

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From Reader Review Red Snow for online ebook

John says

Slade knocks another one out of the park!!

Lance says

Review:

A quaint British Columbia village, Whistler, that is hosting the Olympic trials before the Winter Olympics in Vancouver is the setting for Michael Slade's thriller "Red Snow." It is part of his Special X series on the Canadian Royal Mounted Police and while it does have characters that are in Slade's other books of the series, this reads fine as a stand-alone and the reader does not have to read the other books in order to gain an understanding of the story or characters.

A narcissistic, psychotic killer known as Mesphisto has a diabolical plot that would ultimately wipe out 90% of the world's population. He chooses this setting and time for two reasons. One is that because security around the Vancouver Games would be focused on the Games themselves, he would be better able to launch his plan. The second is more personal, because the chief of the Special X division of the RCMP, Robert DeClerque, along with a few other people can indentify Mesphisto and they must be eliminated before the plan can be done.

There is not a lot of description about the sport of skiing or snowboarding, although a couple of the murders do take place on the slopes. The book opens with the murder of a snowboarder while on the course, and another one takes place in a chair lift. I felt this book would still be appropriate for inclusion on this site as it is a sporting event in which the story is set and some of the action takes place there. There won't be any descriptions of the sport. However, many of the chapters do begin with a historical or geographical reference that is important in helping to set the mood or context of the events to take place in that chapter.

All of the usual aspects of a murder mystery or thriller are in this story: revenge, murder (this story does have a high body count), sex, character development, personal reflection on "what if" or "what will happen if" and a wide variety of both villains and protagonists. I thought it was an entertaining read, although at times I felt that there were too many characters, historical references and murders to tie everything together that I got confused. But by the end of the story, it all came together which is what a good story should do.

Did I skim?

No

Were the characters realistic?

I didn't think so. Whether it was the mastermind behind the murders and mass genocide plot, his minions who were doing the work, the Canadian Mounties or the young girls, they all had an unrealistic sense about them. This isn't to say that they were portrayed or developed poorly. I just didn't get the sense that these characters are someone I would meet in regular life, especially the three "snow bunnies" in the lodge.

Pace of the story:

Very good. The historical references to start most chapters slowed it down slightly, but they were very

important to the overall story.
Allan says
Way to wipe out a lot of main characters. Very interested to see how the next book in series will look like
Lynn Bornath says
Those who like their thrillers bloody won't be disappointed. Read the full review.
Chris says
loved it so had to put down.

Shawn Bird says

Wow. That was gory. I really like that it was set in BC, and full of familiar sites and activities that are portrayed accurately, being as Slade is from Vancouver. I don't normally read thrillers. I don't like gore and I don't like gratuitous sexual encounters, which pretty much ensures this genre isn't going to ever get 5 stars from me. On the other hand, Red Snow probably holds its own in its sphere. It read like a fast paced American action movie from start to finish, with grisly, blood in the snow carnage all the way through. If you like that stuff, you'll like this one far more than I did.

Tina Stanton says

I started and finished this book yesterday. It's been awhile since I last read a Slade book and I wasn't disappointed. I could not put it down; it was fast paced from the get go and didn't stop, even at the end. And the ending, aarrgghhhh Michael when is the next mephisto story dueeeeee!!!

Michael Slade is one of most top fav authors and i think I'm going on a re-read of all the books because for most of them it's been many, many years since I read them and Michael's been diligently working on getting all his books into e-format. <3

Robjr73 says

Slade is unique. It would not surprise me if you walked into a library and found his books scattered amongst

four different bookshelves in different corners of the room. Sure, you'd find his books in the the "thrillers" aisle (if there is indeed such a thing) His books are thrilling to to say the least. I wouldn't be shocked if you told me his books were filed within the "horror" department. His killers are some of the creepiest, nastiest and most horrific characters you could ask for in a horror novel. And with book titles such as Ghoul and Headhunter? Yeah, those are horror novels for sure. You could also throw his books onto the "mystery" shelf. Every Slade book has a whodunit twist, often with endings that rival your favorite Scooby Doo episode. "Zoinks!! Like..it was old man Jeeves running around butchering those women all along Scoobs!" I'm not exaggerating here. Once you find out who the killer is in a Slade book, you'll find yourself going back and rereading scenes wondering "why the hell didn't I see that coming??"

And finally, what makes Slade most unique is the amount of history he throws into his novels. Yes his books are sick and twisted but ya know what? They're also educational. I'm not shitting you. Now sometimes he does go off on a tangent for too long with his little nuggets of historical fact and I think that's sometimes a turnoff for readers. I'll also say that it's important you read his books in order somewhat. Red Snow is his latest book and if you aren't already familiar with his Special X characters and villains, this book could lose you fast. Red Snow is a solid entry to the series and while it doesn't compare to earlier works like Headhunter and Ghoul, I highly recommend for those who've read most of the previous books.

Joe Hempel says

I should start the review by saying that when it was sent to me, I had no idea it was part of a series. While the book can be read stand alone, there is quite a bit of knowledge that the author assumes you have. You'll get more from the experience if you have read the previous Special X novels.

With that out of the way, this book is quite a ride. You have several types of mysteries all in one. You have the over-arc'ing story of finding the killers, you have locked room mysteries, and you have the whodunit type of mystery all rolled into one fine story.

With each revelation, you gain more questions, and with each question, more bodies pile up. Michael Slade doesn't skimp on the gore here either. These folks are killed by some seriously vicious and deranged people. Imagine just going down the slopes when all of a sudden you lose your head and feet at one time.

The investigation is spear-headed by Chief Superintendent DeClercq, a character in the previous entries. This is where sometimes I get lost. Apparently, this Mephisto has some beef with DeClercq, and is targeting him specifically. This is due to other instances that happen in other books. While Michael Slade does give you the information you need there is still much to know, in my opinion, by reading the previous novels.

Due to this being a book in a series, the characters aren't as fleshed out as I would have liked. Again, this isn't due to an author deficiencies, it's just my own ignorance of the other novels in the series. When characters are part of a series, you get to know them over time, and so it's expected that when you read this installment, that there is a certain bit of knowledge. It's the same reason that when main characters die, it didn't hit me as hard.

The Bottom Line: If you've read the Special X books before, this one should be an incredibly exciting entry into the series. Michael Slade has a way with words, and can tell a tight, well thought out story with several layers to the mystery. If you've not read the Special X books, this may or may not work for you, it really depends. It was entertaining for me even without knowing all the ins and outs, and that's a testament to Michael Slade's writing ability. Click the cover at the top of the review to pick this sucker up!

James Bradley says
Great book
Beverly Brooks says
I thought the way the story was heading maybe the Special X series was done, but with the ending I hope not. Could not put the book down, had to to get to the end.
Claire says
Loved it. Gory but good. A peek at what can go wrong with security issues in an Olympics setting.
Kay says
Very enjoyable book.
Doug says
A good read. Fun, engaging, well plotted.
James Jr. says

In 1984, I discovered - quite accidentally - a horror novel that would not only change my reading life forever, but help to push me toward a life of writing. That book was Headhunter by Michael Slade. Slade writes of the exploits of the Special X Division of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. I describe the series as the television show "Criminal Minds" meets HBO. It isn't PG-13 and certainly not for the faint of heart. Slade took a detour with 2008's Crucifide - a stand alone book having nothing to do with Special X. So it was that 4 years had passed since we last heard from DeClerq, Chandler, Craven and all of the other cast of characters. The novel is Slade's first e-book, so it was that I was stumbled upon it a few days ago. That made it 6 years since I had last visited Special X. Therefore, I was uncertain what to expect after all this time. Let me assure you that this is vintage Slade. We have the return of Mephisto (one of the division's major adversaries), nearly all the charcters, the same level of page-turning action and a high body count. I can't give you much info without giving away too much. All I will say is bodies pile up...and they have rank.

13 Special X novels later, Slade still has it.