FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Picture Books

Cajun Night After Christmans
Amy Jackson Dixon
Jenny Jackson
Moss Jackson
James Rice, illustrator
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> *Twas the night after Christmas an' poor ole Boudreau, His wife*
> *she dun spent mor' money den he know.*

Boudreau couldn't take it anymore. His children were loudly playing with their Christmas toys, his head was hurting, and he wanted to get away. Boudreau stepped onto his skiff and floated down the bayou enjoying some peace and quiet. As he did so, an alligator passed him floating in his own skiff sipping a drink. Obviously, this was no ordinary alligator. This was Pierre, who helped pull St. Nicholas's "sleigh." But "?dat gator he dun got kinda fat, An' de skiff couldn't fly wit' a body like dat." Boudreau decided to rescue Pierre and brought him home before he ended up in a zoo. Boudreau explained to his family that St. Nicholas "dun' left his good gator, Pierre, behind!" The children were thrilled.

Good-natured Pierre allowed the children to poke and tease him and even dress him up to look like a bunny! After a while though, Pierre felt he had had enough and decided to run away. Before he could do so, along walked "de gator Louise—she checkin' Pierre an' she like what she sees." While on a date, Pierre confessed his love for Louise. They married and soon there were many little alligators running around their house. Each Christmas, after all the toys have been delivered, St. Nick takes time to visit with Pierre and remember the good ole days.

Moss and Dixon are not only sisters but both are visual artists. They wrote this story after reminiscing about a particularly hectic Christmas they had shared together. Rice is a prolific illustrator and writer, with more than fifty books to his name and a million and a half copies in print. The detail in each drawing ranges from the facial expressions of both humans

and alligators to the mixed media, featuring line drawing.

This Cajun tale, written in verse, tells the hilarious story of one of St. Nick's alligators who was left behind after the toys were delivered one Christmas Eve.

Judi Oswald