

Cristo by Cristo

Anonymous

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This allegorical retelling of Christ's travels offers an overview of his accomplishments.

Cristo is a wanderer—a Jewish, fatherless man on the outskirts of society. On his travels, he is accompanied by nothing but his own thoughts on the world, people, philosophy, and lessons learned on the journey. In the anonymously-authored *Cristo by Cristo*, the narrative jumps forward and backward in time. Cristo, an obvious allegory for Christ, faces many trials, which he deals with through heavy introspection.

Rather than focusing on specific moments, *Cristo by Cristo* is related in broad strokes, and is told from start to finish without a line of dialogue. The result is a story that moves rather quickly, and at times is difficult to follow. The book would benefit from a more traditional narrative, as Cristo's character seems rather flat.

The text assumes that readers know who Cristo is and what he's like, rather than using the narrative to convey and further develop this information. The story tells where Cristo goes and vaguely describes who he meets, but there is little in the way of how the character feels about or reacts to the situations he's in. The style of the narrative simply cannot do that, and at times, it seems much like an outline. This prevents audience immersion.

The book contains phrases like "our hero" and several sentences that include "us," "we," or "you." This is problematic, as it presumes to know how the audience feels. A more effective approach would be to present Cristo as an unknown character, allowing for the author to give a unique spin on the events in the novel.

Each one of Cristo's travels could, in itself, be an entire book, from his journey to India to his time in the Roman Empire. Presenting the events as they unfold, rather than as an overview, would help deepen the content. In terms of conflict, Cristo faces few challenges; he goes from place to place, from situation to situation, and handles each one easily and without opposition. When he does face adversity, it's easily pushed aside, such as when he conjures a storm to defeat an entire fleet of ships.

This book has big aspirations but could benefit from focusing in on the story to better share Cristo's experiences with the reader. That said, juxtaposing the way Christ is thought of in the present with the way he was perceived in the past is an interesting concept that does set the volume apart. Christians looking for a new narrative describing Christ's life may enjoy this novel.

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