

The Christmas Spryte Encounter: Package Peeking

Nanette Crighton

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With the principle of being honest as its clear message, The Christmas Spryte Encounter: Package Peeking is a valuable (and enjoyable) tale.

It's the rare adult who doesn't remember searching stealthily for their holiday presents. In Nanette Crighton's *The Christmas Spryte Encounter: Package Peeking*, a little boy is caught doing just that, but he is quickly put in his place by a no-nonsense magical creature.

Patrick just can't wait for Christmas to arrive so he can open all his presents, with the key phrase being "just can't wait." He not only attempts to uncover all of the places where his gifts are still unwrapped, but he also unwraps the ones already packaged and tied with a bow. However, there is someone stewing while watching Patrick: the unforgettable Adam the Spryte (full name: Adam P. Bobby).

From his official badge to a baseball cap that says APB, kids can tell that Adam takes his job very seriously. But this police officer also has wings and a small wand. Adam is part of the Peeking Police, sent by Santa Claus himself. He solemnly tells Patrick that if he continues peeking, he will receive only a bundle of switches this year. Will the excitable youngster promise to give up peeking? How will the duo get the presents wrapped up again so Patrick's mother is none the wiser?

Right off the bat, the back description gives children the idea of what kind of story they're about to read ("Caution: This story contains magic and fairy dust."). The clarity continues inside with its easy-to-read font; the number of words on each page is also very kid friendly. The story itself is written in inconsistently rhymed quatrains. Some lines rhyme, and others do not (for example, attempting to rhyme "family" and "tree"), which distracts from young readers' love of routine.

The pictures are oversized, colorful, and detailed. The depiction of Adam, dressed as a police officer with fairy wings, is especially eye-catching, though the illustrator is not named.

With the principle of being honest as its clear message, *The Christmas Spryte Encounter: Package Peeking* is a valuable (and enjoyable) tale to share with family around the holidays.

KELLY THUNSTROM (April 26, 2018)

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