



## The Christmas Spryte Encounter: Second Chance

**Nanette Crighton**

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*The Christmas Spryte Encounter: Second Chance* by Nanette Crighton is an enjoyable story about Santa with a couple of very important life lessons woven into the plot.

This brief story is about a little boy who is teased by his peers for believing in Santa and decides to pass on his anger and grief by telling his younger brother that Santa is not real. Before he can destroy his sibling's belief, a tiny spryte on a tiny ATV shows up and whispers in his ear that he had better rethink his behavior or he will get nothing but a hickory switch for a present.

The story is told in rhyming couplets that are carefully crafted and move the story forward smoothly. The anger and grief that a nine-year-old might feel when he is picked on, and his desire to pass that pain on to a younger sibling, feels very authentic.

The spryte, who is not yet fully grown and so has to travel by ATV rather than flying, is whimsical and creative. The lessons she imparts—about believing in more than the eyes can see and about taking responsibility for the effect that one's behaviors have on other people—are important and clear.

The book is intended for young children, and parents should be aware from the outset that it does raise questions about the existence of Santa Claus. The idea of threatening the “gift” of a hickory switch, presumably to be used for whipping, may also be a point of concern.

Illustrations are computer generated and ably convey activity and emotions, if they are not distinct beyond that. There is a significant amount of text on each page, but it comes in a reasonable font size and is highlighted against a blue background, so it's comfortable to look at. Little snowflakes set against the background add a nice touch.

*The Christmas Spryte Encounter: Second Chance* is a pleasant story with a solid lesson for children. Parents will definitely want to preview this book, but it can offer a great opportunity to discuss some important ideas.

CATHERINE THURESON (April 26, 2018)

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