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I Wish I'd Written? Wolves

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I Wish I'd Written

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Jeanne Willis chooses Emily Gravett's **Wolves**.

Jeanne Willis on a picture book with a violent twist guaranteed to upset the grown-ups?

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I tend not to read new picture books for fear that they might be so much better than mine. This avoidance technique makes it hard to choose a book I wish I'd written, unless I pick one from yе olden days, in which case there are too many to mention, mostly penned by friends.

Much as I'd like to, bigging up one's literary chums smacks of favouritism, so I decided to review a book written in this century, by someone I've never had the pleasure of sharing several bottles of wine with. Totally unbiased, therefore.

To save me the agony of thumbing through the masterpieces of young upstarts, I asked the Buyer at Waterstone's (who knows me only too well) which book *she* thought I wished I'd written. It was **Wolves** by Emily Gravett. Dear Reader, I am bed-ridden with jealousy. **Wolves** has everything I look for in a picture book apart from my name on the title page; wickedness, wit, meaty illustrations, great novelty elements and a violent twist guaranteed to upset the grown-ups. And it's sugar-free. There's an alternative ending which should have been a cop-out but isn't, because it's so tongue in rabid cheek; the wolf ate the rabbit. Get over it!

Wolves by Emily Gravett is published by Macmillan (978 1 405 05362 4, £5.99 pbk). Jeanne Willis's latest book **Shamanka** is published by Walker (978 1 84428 649 2, £7.99 pbk).



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