



# There's a Wolf at the Door

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**There's a Wolf at the Door** Zoe B. Alley , R.W. Alley (Illustrator)  
FIVE CLASSIC TALES ALL STARRING ONE PUT-UPON WOLF

in an oversized gift-ready package Wolf, a rather fine dresser and intelligent creature, just can't catch a break. All he wants to do is eat some pig, lamb, a gosling or two, a loud sheperd...or that little girl wearing a red hood, but for some reason none of them will cooperate. Five classic tales morph into one ongoing yarn as Wolf bumbles his way through each of them. Told in graphic novel style in an oversized picture book package, this is the gift for kids of all ages for happily-ever-after holidays.

## There's a Wolf at the Door Details

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Author : Zoe B. Alley , R.W. Alley (Illustrator)

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# **From Reader Review There's a Wolf at the Door for online ebook**

## **Marie Cahill says**

I am hungry. I am resourceful. And I am on the prowl. What wolf could resist trying to capture those delectable Three Little Pigs? But, alas that house of bricks was much more trouble than they were worth. The Boy Who Cried Wolf proved to be more cunning than I anticipated and my plans for a lunch of lamb with mint jelly were foiled. Little Red Riding Hood was much more clever than I thought. But, one small girl is hardly a meal after all I have been through. Dressing in sheep's clothing seemed like a great plan, but pretending to be someone you're not sure is exhausting. What a hassle! It's been a looooong day. You know what they say, fifth time's a charm! These Seven Little Goslings seem like an easy target. Mmmm... goose dumplings! I'm sure this will be a snap... or will it?

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## **Laura Rumohr says**

### **Summary-**

There's a Wolf at the Door was written for students in upper elementary school (grades 3-5). This book contains 5 stories in graphic novel format based on traditional fairy tales about wolves. The Little Red Riding Hood begins with a little girl names Rhonda. Rhonda loves pretty clothes and specifically the color red. Rhonda's parents were irritated with her because all she cared about in life was clothes. They decided to send her to her grandma's cottage to bring cookies and to teach her a lesson. As she walked through the woods a wolf came out to eat her cookies. Of course Rhonda wore a red hooded cape. The wolf was wearing red just like Rhonda and they complimented each other on their attire. The wolf ran ahead and scared Rhonda's grandma. When the wolf ran in the grandma ran out. The wolf then tried to fool Rhonda by saying she was her grandma, but Rhonda wasn't fooled. When Rhonda realized her grandma was outside Rhonda yanked her stylish shoes off and threw them at the mean wolf. For the first time Rhonda cared about someone other than herself.

### **Response-**

This version of the Little Red Riding Hood was very closely linked to the original tale. I loved that the story was written in graphic novel format. The illustrations worked beautifully together as each scene flowed smoothly into the next. The main character, Rhonda, was a fashionista, which I found hilarious! I had never pictured Little Red Riding Hood as a stylish character, but the author did it well! Rhonda was a very interesting character because of the conflict she had with her parents and attitude towards life that was so beautifully solved at the end with a life lesson. I think most kids would enjoy reading this because of the format and the additions to the traditional story.

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## **Julie says**

My kids love big books. Like, dimensionally large. They're a challenge to read in bed and they don't always fit in my canvas Trader Joe's bags, but this one was worth it. My kids noticed straight away that this book is formatted like a comic - bonus. I also enjoyed watching my son tackle the sporadic challenging words in the book: extraordinarily, companionship, shallowness, ridiculousness. I wish more authors would employ polysyllabic words. Kids can handle it! They spurred great discussion and now my son has a whole new

arsenal of words. He used "ridiculousness" twice this morning at breakfast.

As for content, the stories were fun. I like that they can be read individually or all in one shot. This is definitely a book we'll renew from the public library until I can find a copy for our own library.

Oh, and the very last line of the book made my little vegetarians super stoked.

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## **Beverly says**

The illustrations are in panels like a graphic novel.

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## **RLL220 Kendra says**

I really did enjoy this book. It was basically traditional literature that composed of five different fairytales with their own twists. I enjoyed that the wolf was the main character throughout the entire book and how the story flowed with each other. It wasn't the typical The three little pigs, Little red riding, hood, The boy who cried wolf, Wolf in sheep clothing and The wolf and the seven little goslings and that's what mad this book interesting and a great read for children.

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## **Sarah Sammis says**

There's a Wolf at the Door takes five fairy tales that feature wolves and retells them. They are illustrated in a manner similar to a graphic novel and the book did make it to the finals of the graphic novels panel for the Cybils this year.

The five retold stories are: The Three Little Pigs, The Boy Who Cried Wolf, Little Red Riding Hood, The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing, and The Wolf and the Seven Little Goslings. While I applaud the attempt to retell these well known classic fairy tales, I think they could have been better.

First and foremost, the layout of the panels lacks the necessary unity between text and illustrations. Typically in graphic novels and comic books the text is hand lettered or set in a typeface that mimics hand lettering. In other words, the text looks like it is part of the illustration as the two are telling the story together. Here, the typeface is a generic looking serif font; it looks like a Times variant. Regardless of what the typeface is, it jumps off the page in a very jarring fashion, pulling my attention away from the illustrations. Every so often, though, some of the lettering is done by hand which makes the presentation all the more bizarre.

Each story has a moral as many children's stories do. The message though seems to be emphasized at the expense of the humor of the story. Sometimes the moral is literally screamed by a character in ALL CAPS. Subtly is often a more effective teacher than a lesson shouted on a bull horn.

The one thing though that really does work are segues between stories. There is just one wolf looking for a meal and failing each time to get what he wants. Each story takes off where the last one ended proving a seamless transition through five very different stories.

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## **Kimberly says**

This is a very clever book! Five fairy tales about are interconnected through the character of the wolf. He encounters the three little pigs, the boy who cried wolf, red riding hood, and five smart goslings. He also has a misunderstanding involving a white woolly blanket on the way.

The pages are pretty text-heavy, so I didn't think this one worked too well for reading aloud. I did, however, enjoy the sarcastic asides made by some of the characters. Adults should give this one a look!

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## **Jen says**

Fairy Tale Book:

There's a Wolf at the Door retold by Zoe B. Alley is a newer version of the Three Little Pigs. The book looks like it is in comic book form, where there are many different boxes on the page containing illustrations and words. For example, the first page has 7 different pictures.

It has the same story line, where there are 3 little pigs. The first pig builds his house of straw, the second pig builds his house of sticks, and the third pig uses bricks. When the wolf came to blow the house in, the first two pigs run away. The wolf could not blow the 3rd house in, because it was made of bricks. The wolf thought he would be able to convince the pig to leave his house by going to the vegetable patch, the apple orchard, and the fair, but the pig ended up tricking the wolf instead! In the end, the wolf was scared and hungry and ran away. The 3 pigs came together and lived happily ever after.

I love this version of the classic tale. It is very similar to the original, except it is happier because the pigs and wolf do not die. The theme remained the same. The first two pigs wanted to finish working quickly so they could play. They did not spend time building their house, and they lost it. The 3rd pig spent a lot of time on his house, and the wolf was not able to destroy it. Hard work pays off.

I really liked the illustrations because they are very detailed. This book is great for a K-2 teacher to read aloud or to read during a fairy tale unit.

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## **Brooke Snyder says**

Summary: There's a Wolf at the Door is a book of five classic tales—The Three Little Pigs, The Boy Who Cried Wolf, Little Red Riding Hood, The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing, and The Wolf and the Seven Little Goslings. I'm going to focus on the first tale- The Three Little Pigs. This is the classic tale of the three little pigs- three pigs who make three different houses (straw, sticks, and brick) in which they try to make strong enough so the hungry wolf doesn't blow it down and eat them.

Personal Response/Critical Response: I really enjoyed this book. One of my favorite characteristics of this book is the size of it. It's big! The pictures on the pages look like they are in comic strip form, in sequential order. I really like it! The only flaw I have is that this book is a great book that could be read at home, not

necessarily in a classroom and that most children already know these tales.

Description of Illustrations: The illustrations are vibrant. They look as if they are colored with colored pencil and crayons even. They are creative.

Classroom Connections: This is a great book for a read aloud in class. I would probably read one of the five tales a day (during a week time) and have a less. I will make charts and talk about the characters, problem, and resolution after each read aloud. At the end of the five tales, I will have each student draw their own scene of a big, bad, hungry, scary wolf doing something he shouldn't be doing (like trying to blow houses down, eating grandma and her granddaughter, et.)

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## **Betsy says**

I admit it. I tend to root for the well-dressed baddies. I always have. When I was a child I would secretly root for Captain Hook over that snide, arrogant Peter Pan boy. And Cruella de Ville? Sure, I couldn't support her love of puppy-wear, but that lady knew how to wrap a stole, that's for sure. So when I see a villain with a certain personal flair and sense of style, I feel an odd sort of sympathy and connection. A sympathy and connection that definitely came up more than once while reading *There's a Wolf at the Door* by Zoe and R.W. Alley. Expertly weaving together five different fairy tales with a single (unlucky) villain, Alley & Alley create a product that's part picture book, part graphic novel, and pretty amusing from start to finish.

Little known fact: You know that wolf that pops up in The Three Little Pigs? How about the one in The Boy Who Cried Wolf or Little Red Riding Hood? Would you believe that it was a same guy who also appears in The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing or The Wolf and the Seven Little Goslings? Turns out that this wolf has had a fairly rough and tumble day. After losing out his delicious pig dinner the furry fop tries his hand at a boy and his sheep. When the sheep prove to be smarter than the boy (no great feat) the wolf moves on to Little Red (getting a snoutful o' shoe), the sheep again (in disguise), and a houseful of goslings. Each time the wolf is thwarted in his attempts, finally deciding on a life of peaceful vegetarianism... and potential thrashing at others' hands.

We are definitely dealing with five distinct fairy tales here (with some double backing for good measure) so you may feel a little bit surprised when you find that there are only 34 pages of text here from start to finish. It feels like a whole lot more, and that may have a lot to do with the sheer amount of material Alley & Alley have been able to cram in. For one thing, you're looking at a 14-inch book that's taller than its average 10-inch fellows. On top of that is the whole comic paneling appeal. You can work in a ton of text and dialogue if you've a panel or two to place them in. So while it might remain as trim and slim as any other book found in a picture book collection *There's a Wolf at the Door* makes for a long read. Bear this in mind when your canny kidlets attempt to coerce you in reading the whole thing before beddy bye.

R.W. Alley's illustrations first came to my attention when he took the helm of the Paddington illustrated empire. His recent work on Paddington Here and Now so perfectly captured the little Peruvian bear's personality and charm that I was utterly thrilled to find his name gracing the cover of this book too. The choice to make it a comic was unexpected. Due to the sheer amount of text I suppose it could have gotten away as a young reader or early chapter book. But this suits it better, I think. There aren't any wordless passages, which I found interesting. Usually a graphic format will allow its artist a little leniency once in a while. A chance to stretch their artistic muscles. And while I enjoyed the cut aways and select panels, I did

wish that there had been a bit more change in terms of angles of perception. It seems to me that everything in this book happens dead on. You rarely see things from anything but the side of the action. How much cooler it would be to look down on things or to watch them from below. Ah well. A quibble, a quibble.

I've heard Ms. Alley's storytelling compared to the snarkiness one would find in a *Shrek* movie. Honestly, I don't think that this is the case. Yes, the book attempts to rejigger the storylines of individual tales by adding a whole host of different personalities into the mix. Now the Boy Who Called Wolf has attention issues and his sheep are prone to touchy feely displays of emotion. Little Red is a fashion maven (which gives her something in common with the wolf) and the three pigs are pretty much par for the course. I was fine with most of these changes, though I found the inclusion of the story *The Wolf and the Seven Little Goslings* to be one tale too many. Street smart goslings aren't my cuppa tea, you see.

Librarians may wonder whether or not the book can be read aloud to large groups of kids in its current format. And the answer is . . . maybe. It's certainly not impossible, and the advantage to a title this tall is that it will read far better across a room than similar picture book/comic titles like the wordless *The Red Book*. Even so, the sheer length of the thing suggests that this would be better suited to good old-fashioned one-one-one reads.

It might be a good idea to read *There's a Wolf at the Door* with a child and then follow that reading up with Mei Matsuoka's equally canny and lupine-centric *Footprints in the Snow*, for a full-on wolf to wolf readaloud experience. Both books offer a pretty sympathetic view of the plight of the antagonist (and his empty belly). Wolves are some of the best villains in humankind's history so it's nice to see Alley & Alley giving us a new way of looking at this dapper scourge in a new presentation.

Ages 4-8.

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### **Taylor Kundel-Gower says**

This would make such a fun play.

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### **Taurean Watkins says**

As the subtitle implies, this book is a retelling of five classic fairy tales from the Grimm's school of thought, but what makes this different is that titular lupine dressed to the nines is the through-line connecting these five (usually stand alone) stories.

Whereas in most fairy retellings, the wolf of "3 Little Pigs" fame is not necessarily be the SAME wolf from "Little Red Riding Hood" or the lesser known "Goslings" story.

In this book, one wolf does it all, with some expected results, brought about in a new humorous bent.

Well, for the reader, anyway...

As you might guess from the cover credits, like the Grimm bros. original tales, this book's a family affair between author Zo? B. and illustrator R.W. Alley, who's illustrated the iconic Paddington Bear (soon to be a motion picture later in 2014) and countless other books.

The comic panel presentation is not a mere gimmick, but a clever and fun twist to the Grimm's stories, and occasionally a subtle "4th wall breaking" snip of wit from our dapper anti-hero addressing the reader directly, a plot technique which sometimes puts me off as a reader but it works here.

With R.W.'s delightfully old-fashioned style, Zo? B.'s lively text mixed with contemporary comic panel format is a winning combo, and is the picture book equivalent of the various "Shakespeare" graphic novels for older readers, making classics more accessible/appealing to the modern pre-reader, and a great early non-superhero alternative introduction to reading in comic/graphic novel format.

When I first discovered this book years ago (when it first came out in 2008) the wolf's outfit stayed with me for YEARS until I finally had the chance to get my own copy of the book a few weeks ago.

Like I said in my review of "Big Mean Mike" this book took WAY longer to get crossed off my "To Be Read" list than I intended, but it was so worth the wait, and not only the book itself, This is one of those rare few anti-heroes I'd like to spend time with (and feed him something you can't hunt for), or at the very least, I want his outfit!

But that's another story I'll tell another time...

-An abridged version of the original review from TalkingAnimalAddicts.com

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### **Roxanne Hsu Feldman says**

This is a fun fractured fairy tale -- combining classic plot lines of 5 nursery stories featuring wolves and giving each a slightly humorous (and sometimes message-y) spin. Its handsome package (large size and beautiful layouts in comic book style) with appealing cartooning drawings will definitely entertain many young listeners/readers and their families. I really was prepared to be greatly impressed but for some reason (maybe because the stories are too sweet and without the kind of tension that I looked for in wolf stories?) I am just mildly amused.

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## **Becky says**

I never thought a graphic novel would be like this. That could be because I have never been a graphic novel fan. Though I have read some for class and I am becoming a fan. I think that is because I have been reading some non-traditional graphic novels. To the book though. Something I never realized about all the classic tales in this book, there are five, is that they all have wolves. It just makes a great connection. My favorite part of the book is that at the end of each tale there is a lead in to the next tale. Everything is connected. There is also a good sense of humor with this book. The characteristics of the characters are exaggerated wonderfully from their original version. The boy who cries wolf is just lonely and slightly selfish. Little Red Riding Hood is rather self involved. I just appreciated the humor. I recommend this book and it is a great choice for teaching some comparing and contrasting skills.

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## **Ch\_jank-caporale says**

A collaborative effort between long-time illustrator, R.W. Alley, and first-time writer, Zoe B. Alley, "A Wolf at the Door" links five classic fairy tales together through the antics of a hungry wolf. In the Little Red Riding Hood version, selfish, fashion obsessed Red, defeats the greedy wolf by launching a designer shoe at him, then stripping him naked of granny's ill-fitting gown as he runs from the house. The wolf grabs a sheepskin rug as he flees to hide his nakedness which leads to the story "The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing" and so on.

The tales are told in comic-strip fashion, each with a humorous new twist and each with a mild moral, including a wolf that considers going vegetarian by the end of the book. It is "cute" but also well-conceived, humorously written and illustrated, and enjoyable to read- to oneself or out loud.

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