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## When I Was a Wolf

Outlaw Takes on Fables and Fairy Tales

by TERAYAMA Shūji

Translated by Elizabeth L. ARMSTRONG

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First published in 1982, this delightful collection of essays and rewrites reinterprets, from a nonconformist perspective, such well-known and canonical Western stories as Grimm's Fairy Tales, Mother Goose stories, and Aesop's fables.

Like Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber*, the author "breaks open classic fairy tales to find new things in them." Both Carter and Terayama give the tales a radical twist laced with dark taboo-violating undertones. The first half of this book includes Terayama's subversive analysis of such stories as The Emperor's New Clothes, The Bremen Town Musicians, Pinocchio, and Puss in Boots. In the latter half, he offers his own rewrites of Thumbelina, Little Red Riding Hood and Cinderella. In every case, he turns the story on its head, and then having thrown the reader off balance, asks them to follow him into new territory of unorthodox interpretation, arguing that the conventional interpretation of a story we have read for pleasure since childhood is ill-conceived and thoughtless.

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