

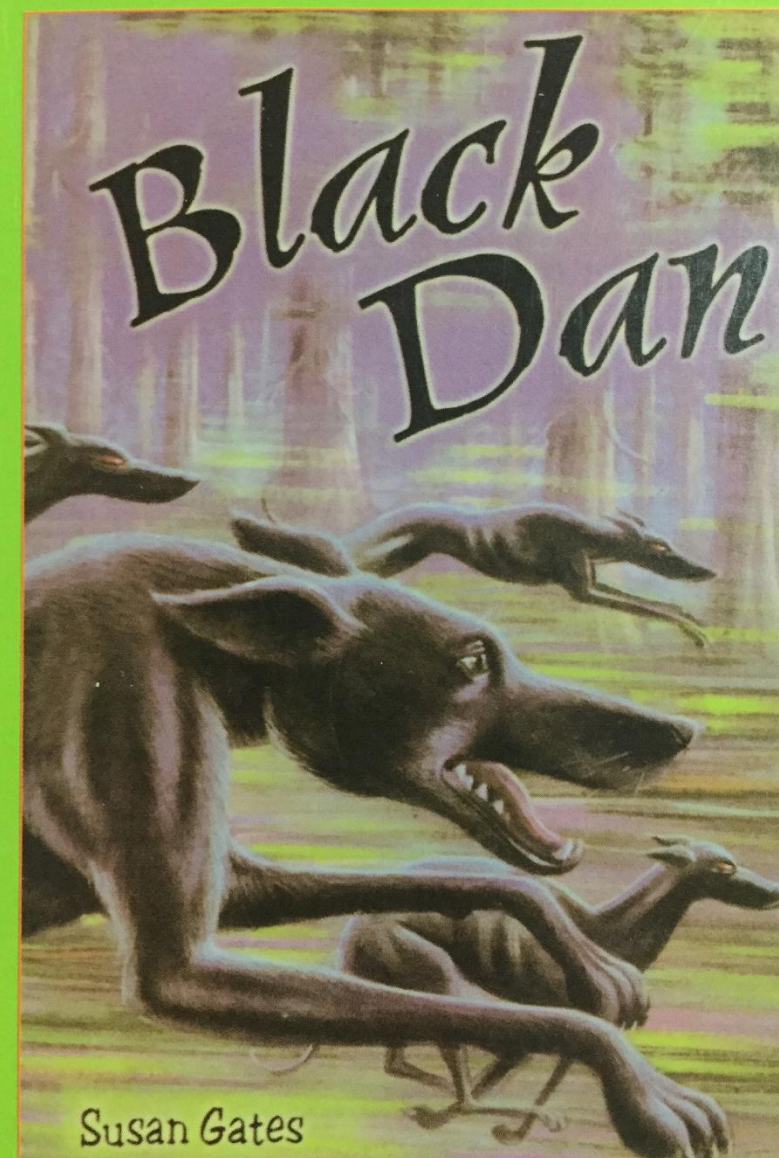
# Black Dan



## The writer:

### Susan Gates (English)

Susan Gates is best known as the author of children's books, like *Dangerous Trainers*, *Waiting for Goldie*, *Black Dan*, *The Wolf Cupboard*, *Viridian*, etc. She has won the Sheffield Book Award (谢菲尔德图书奖) and been short-listed for both the Carnegie Medal (卡内基奖章) and the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize (卫报儿童小说奖).



# Plot analysis

Chapter1 Black Dan the Seventh

Chapter2 Fiery eyes

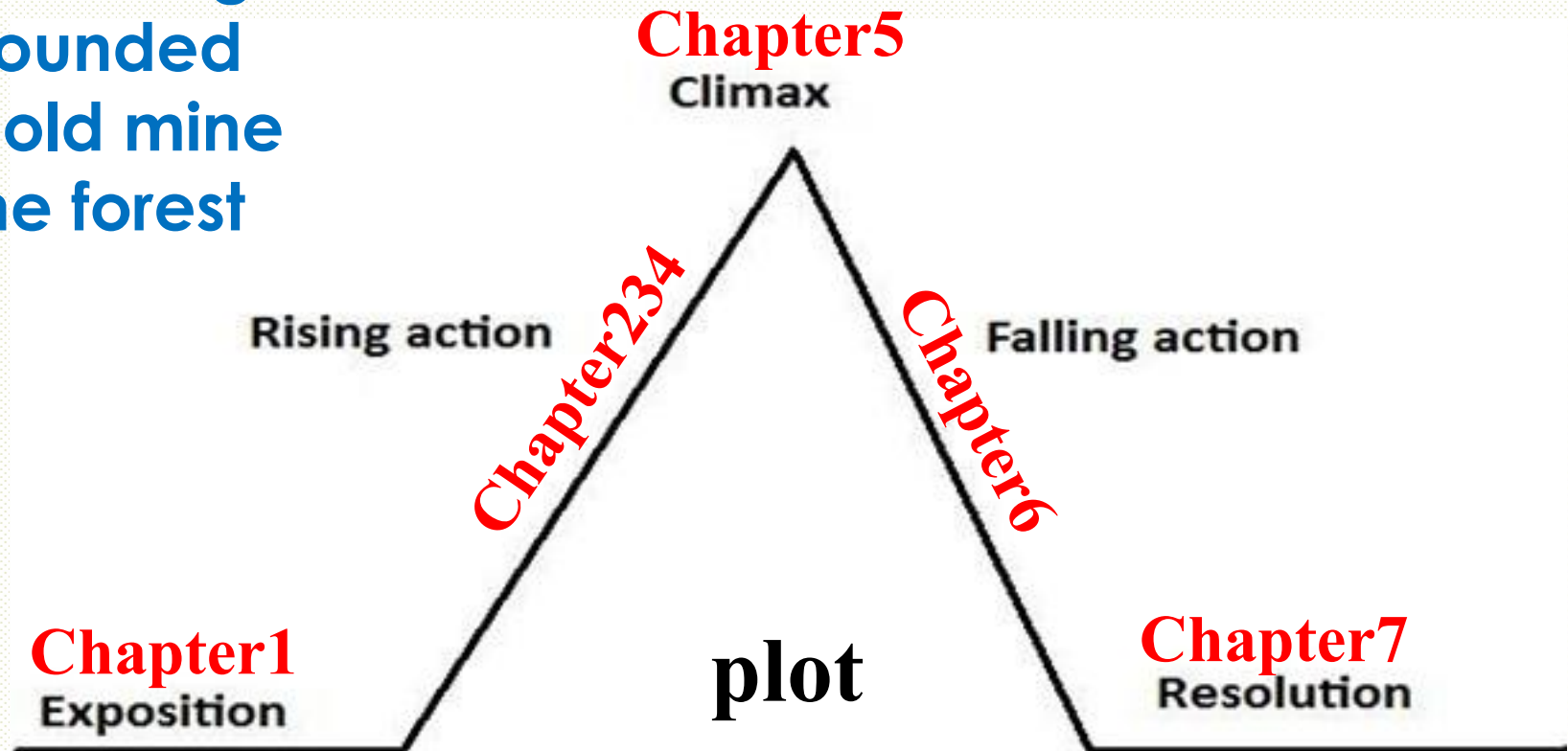
Chapter3 That dog should be dead

Chapter4 The howling

Chapter5 Surrounded

Chapter6 The old mine

Chapter7 In the forest

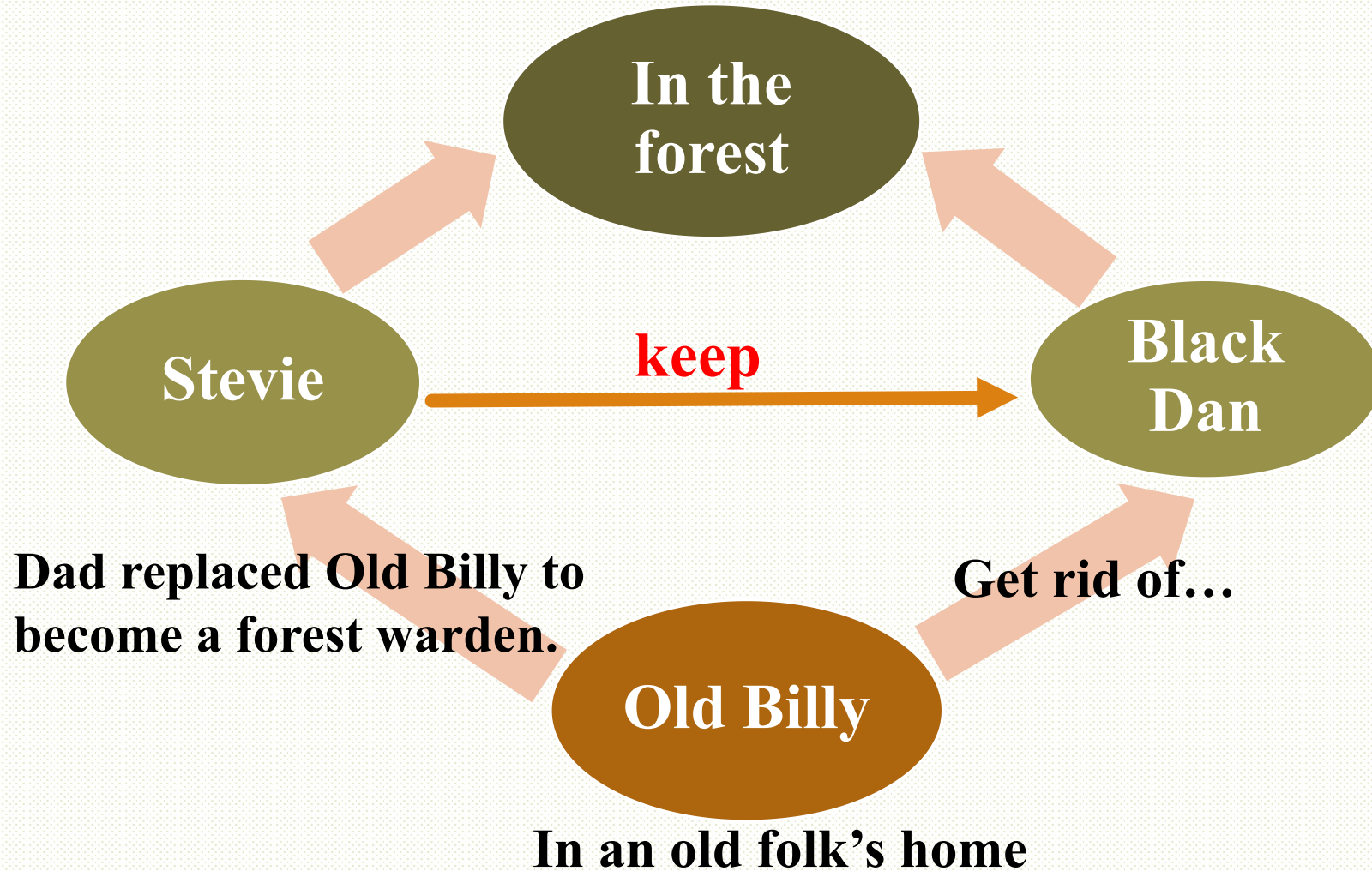


# Exposition

## Chapter1 Black Dan the Seventh

main characters

setting





# Exposition

## Chapter1 Black Dan the Seventh

—main characters/setting/suspense

- Why does the writer mention “he trembled all over”, “The dog trembled” ? Set a suspense/The beginning of the conflict.

indifferent

- What can you infer from the following:

cruel

The forester shrugged. “Well, I don’t know who else will want it. It’s past its best. It’s not winning races any more. Old Billy was going to get rid of it anyway.”

kind/sympathetic

...

“Dad, Dad,” I pleaded. I tugged at his arm. “I want this dog. I really, badly, want him.”

Bring out people’s characters by contrast.



## Rising action

## Chapter2 Fiery eyes

more suspense

### ● What did Stevie hear and see?

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Heard:</b><br>(Weird noises) | Trees creaked/rustled/groaned<br>Owl hooted<br>Dogs howled: terrible, lonely, creepy |
| <b>Saw</b>                      | Dan's unusual action<br>Six red, fiery eyes  |

### ● What did Dan react when hearing the howling?

- He went crazy.
- His paws were raking at the wood. He was desperate to get out there...
- Then shivered and whimpered in my arms.

## Rising action

## Chapter3 That dog should be dead

cruel

more suspense

- What did the forester tell Stevie?

Then he laughed, a cruel sort of laugh. "He had a lucky escape, that dog," he said. "The very day he was rushed to hospital, Old Billy was going to get rid of him."

"What, you mean give him away?"

Six Black Dans were poisoned by Old Billy because they couldn't win the race.

innocent

treat Dan as a friend

- What did Stevie say to Dan ?

"Don't worry," I said to my Black Dan. "You're alive. Old Billy didn't take you into the forest. And now you're mine."

comfort

**Bring out people's characters through what they do or say.**

## Rising action

## Chapter3 The howling

- What was the howling like?

simile

It was such a dreary, lonesome sound.  
**Like** the end of the world had come.

- What did Black Dan do when hearing the howling?

specific verbs  
&  
simile

- **Howled back**
- **Nosed** the door **open**
- **Shot down** the stairs
- **Flew past** me **like** an arrow
- **Headed straight for** the forest
- **Vanished into** the trees

more suspense

Illustrate a vivid scene by rhetorical devices and specific verbs.



## Climax

## Chapter5 Surrounded

- Why did Stevie go out to look for Black Dan?

Of course I didn't have a choice, did I? I had to go looking for him. I had to go after my dog.

reliable  
responsible

- What did he hear in the pitch black?

I could hear my own breathing. It sounded really loud.  
Click, click, click. It was my teeth, chattering.

scared

- How did Stevie do when surrounded?

I was frozen up — I couldn't move. **But** my mind was suddenly clear **as** an ice cube.

helpless

I was shaking **like** I had rubber bones. **But** I got some strength from somewhere. I shouted into the dark.

brave

You can't outrun greyhounds. **But** I ran anyway, bashing into bushes, falling down, staggering to my feet, running on.

onomatopoeia

contrast  
simile

Illustrate a vivid scene by rhetorical devices.

## Falling action

## Chapter 6 The old mine

onomatopoeia  
repetition

- Why did Stevie get into the old mine? Was it a safe place? Then, **clang**, I **crashed** into an iron grill. “Get in!” my brain screamed at me. “**Hide! Hide!** Get inside!” But Dad once told him it was a death-trap, for there were many shafts.

- How did Black Dan save Stevie?

He dragged Stevie back, stopping him from falling down the shaft. Also, Dan stood by his side, barking to the ghost dogs, scaring them off.

**Black Dan:**  
**faithful,**  
**brave**

metaphor  
simile

- What happened to the ghost dogs at last? They sort of shrivelled away. Their burning eyes shrunk to **red pinpricks**. Then they just vanished, **like** genies sucked back into a bottle.

**Illustrate a vivid scene by rhetorical devices.**

## Resolution

## Chapter7 In the forest

- What did Stevie do when he found Black Dan heading towards the forest?

He went after him, hobbling as fast as he could, **crashing through** branches, calling his name, ...

**onomatopoeia**

- What was the forest like?

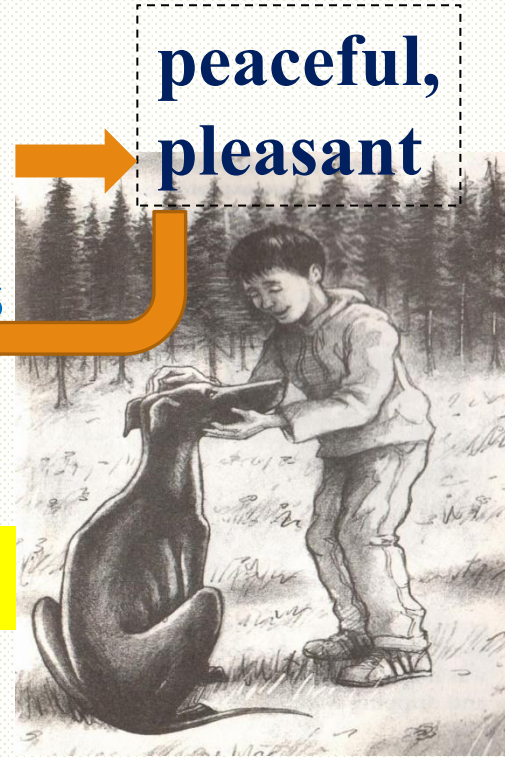
Little birds were twittering. **Sunlight was dancing** all around us. It felt like our forest.

**personification**

**enjoy themselves**

**peaceful,  
pleasant**

**Create a pleasant atmosphere through surroundings.**



## Theme analysis

- Why do you think Black Dan headed for the forest?

It is likely that he wanted to check whether it was safe for Stevie. Or maybe he wondered whether the ghost dogs were still waiting for him.

- Did parents know what happened?

Probably they didn't know, because Stevie never told them.



**Do you think the ghost dogs were real?**

It doesn't matter whether the ghost dogs were real or not. The author just wants to show us a kind boy and a faithful dog helped each other to overcome the great panic with their bravery.



# Language appreciation

## How to create a frightening atmosphere?

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <p><b>Sight</b></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I could see red eyes and black greyhound shapes, creeping up on me.</li> <li>• I saw something, black at the mine entrance....There were red eyes, burning in the darkness.</li> <li>• I crouched there, watching their red eyes come nearer, nearer.</li> <li>• I could see their slinky shapes, blacker than blackness, sliding down the tunnel towards me.</li> <li>• They came rushing in – eyes blazing, teeth snapping.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Hearing</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terrible, lonely howls like children lost in the night and crying for their mother. (simile)</li> <li>• It was such a dreary/creepy, lonesome sound. Like the end of the world had come.(simile)</li> <li>• Click, click, click. It was my teeth, chattering.(onomatopoeia)</li> <li>• I couldn't hear anything. Except my own heart thudding away. And the drip, drip, drip of water on the mine walls.(onomatopoeia)</li> </ul>        |

## Language appreciation

### How to create a frightening atmosphere?

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Feeling</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I could feel the hairs on my neck doing Mexican waves.</li> <li>• My spine felt like one big icicle.(simile)</li> <li>• I could feel my skin crawling.</li> <li>• I could feel its teeth, tagging at my jeans.</li> <li>• Straight away, my stomach clenched up tight.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Surroundings</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The forest was like a dark, wild wood .(simile)</li> <li>• Crunch, crunch. That was pine needles under my feet.(onomatopoeia)</li> <li>• It was pitch dark inside.</li> </ul>   |

## Language appreciation

### What did Stevie and Black Dan do when feeling scared?

- He was curled up on my rug, trembling in his sleep.
- Black Dan's ears started twitching like mad. Suddenly, his eyes shot open. He leaped up and ran to the bedroom door. He began scratching at it, frantic to get out. He was making little yelping noises.
- I grabbed him. He struggled a bit. Then shivered and whimpered in my arms.
- Black Dan trembled and huddled up close to me.
- But I ran anyway, bashing into bushes, falling down, staggering to my feet, running on.
- Panic took over. I just ran like a hunted animal. (simile)
- I crawled the other way, scrabbling at the rocks with my hand. Then suddenly, my hands were clutching at thin air!
- I rolled into a ball like a hedgehog and covered my head with my hands.

## Practice

**Choose one of the topic to write a short passage to describe what you would see, hear or think and how you would feel if you were in such a situation.**

**1. It was pitch dark one night and you happened to be in a forest alone. When you were controlled by panic you saw dim light in the distance.**

**2. One afternoon, you stayed home alone. There was a sudden power failure when a rainstorm came. You felt so scared that you didn't know what to do.**



## One possible version

**1. It was pitch dark one night and you happened to be in a forest alone. When you were controlled by panic you saw dim light in the distance.**

It was pitch dark in the forest. Hearing the weird noises, I felt my skin crawling. The wind howled around trees, like children lost in the night and crying for their mother. Click, click, click. It was my teeth, chattering. Suddenly, I saw a beam of light glowing in the distance. I went rushing towards it. Then I jammed on the brakes. My spine felt like a big icicle when I figured out what it was. Without thinking, I ran like a hunted animal, bashing into bushes, falling down, staggering to my feet and running on.

## One possible version

**2. One afternoon, you stayed home alone. There was a sudden power failure when a rainstorm came. You felt so scared that you didn't know what to do.**

There was a sudden power failure. I parted my bedroom curtains a tiny crack. It was darker than darkness outside. The lightning was flashing in the sky while the thunder was roaring, which made me feel sick and shivery. I yanked the curtains shut, curled up on the bed. However, it couldn't prevent panic creeping into my bones. Straight away, my stomach clenched up tight. My brain was like a scribble. Before I could think straight, the door was pushed open. Seeing Mom coming back, I sobbed with relief.



# Thank you!