



# BLUE DAISY

Helen Frost

Pictures by  
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To seven-year-old Lloyd

**BLUE DAISY**

..... Part One .....



**THAT DOG**

In a time and place where everyone knows who's home, who's not, who comes and goes, who's passing through, who's here to stay—a dog shows up one summer day.

# LET'S FOLLOW IT

## SAM

I've never seen that dog before.  
It walks through Katie's yard to mine  
just as I open my back door.

Katie must have seen it too—  
here she comes. *Hey, Sam,* she yells,  
*I don't know that dog. Do you?*

I shake my head. *Let's follow it,* I say.  
It turns a corner, disappears. *Over there,*  
says Katie, pointing. We head that way.

It's sure skinny. I wonder where  
it came from. *Does it have a collar?*  
I ask Katie. We can't tell from here,

so I say, *Let's get closer.* Katie agrees.  
*But not too close,* she says. *That poor  
dog is filthy. It probably has fleas.*





# WHOSE DOG IS THAT?

## KATIE

Sam and I are following the dog when it goes into the Wilson sisters' flower garden before we have a chance to warn it about them.

Uh-oh—it starts digging. The two sisters come charging out.

*Shoo! Scram!* yells short Ms. Wilson.

*Whose dog is that?* her taller sister shouts.

The dog runs back and forth between the two of them.

*Git out of there, you ugly mutt. Quit that digging! Stop trampling our impatience!* They're both so mad by now, I don't know who yells what.

*If you ask me, I whisper to Sam, those two never had much patience to begin with. Let's go.*

Tall Ms. Wilson shakes her broom at that poor skinny dog, which takes off running. It gives Sam and me one quick glance as it goes past.

*It's headed toward the park, says Sam. Come on!*



# MEANEST KIDS IN THE WORLD

## SAM

Katie thinks we should be taking the shortcut to the park, to get ahead of the dog. But this is Mr. Jenkins' baking

day—*he'll have cookies*, I remind her. *Let's stay here in the alley and see if he's outside.* When we get near his house, we can tell right away

that he's in a bad mood—he's tossing out a whole batch of snickerdoodles. Uh-oh—we're not the only ones who know about

Mr. Jenkins and his cookie-baking habits. It's Michael and Miranda Tracy—on their bikes. We turn and run like scared rabbits.

From a distance, Katie glances back. *Sam, look,* she says. *Michael hopped off his bike to pick up burned and dirty cookies—he took*

*three handfuls!* We don't want to be seen by the Tracy twins—they're the biggest kids in our grade at school, and they are mean.

*Duck behind this garbage can, I say. We try to hide, but the space is small, so we scrunch together and peek out. Katie nudges me and points. Sam, she whispers, that dog turned around—it's coming this way. Miranda turns her bike and chases it. Michael pockets the burned snickerdoodles, stands up, and throws something—a rock?—at the dog! Miranda whizzes by, yelling, Hey, dog! She knows most dogs can't run as fast as kids ride bikes. I'm pretty sure that dog is trying to escape. It flashes past our hiding place and slides through a hedge. Ha ha—the Tracy twins can't follow it. Then Miranda rides straight at our hiding place, and Katie jumps out. You're the meanest kids in the whole world! she yells. That dog never did anything to you! I shout.*

Miranda swerves around us. *Ooohhh*, she mocks, *meanest kids in the whole world!* When she's gone, I say to Katie, *If that dog could pick up rocks*



*and throw them back, I bet it would.*

Katie stamps her foot and says, *I'm tempted to do that myself.* Maybe we should.

# IT LOOKS HUNGRY

## KATIE

*Who knows where that dog is now, says Sam. I'm going home for lunch.*

*See you later, I say. As I walk to my house, I keep thinking about the dog.*

*Who does it belong to? Where did it come from? Why is everyone so mean to it? Is it the dog's fault it's so dirty? What if we gave it a bath? Maybe we can feed it so it won't be so skinny.*

*Mom, I ask when I get home, do we have any dog food?*

*No, Katie, she says. Since we don't have a dog, we don't have any dog food.*

*I wish we did have a dog, but Mom and I have been through all this before, and her answer is always the same: No.*

*Why are you asking? she wants to know.*

*There's a dog outside and it looks hungry.*

*You be careful, Katie. I know you love animals, but a hungry dog might snap at you. Or even bite.*

*It doesn't look like that kind of dog to me. Even though it's hungry and dirty, I still think it looks nice.*

# LUCKY FOUR-LEAF CLOVER

## SAM

After lunch, Katie wants to look for the dog again, but Dad wants me to help him paint our old gray table. *It won't take long*, he promises. *When*

*it's done, it will brighten up the kitchen. You see how scratched up and ugly it is now? It will look much better, painted blue.*

In a sunny spot near some daisies in our yard, Katie sits and searches for a four-leaf clover while I help Dad paint. *Hey! That wasn't hard,*

*she says. Look, Sam, I found one! I bet it will help us find that dog.* Dad sets down his brush and looks at me. *Sam, he says, I can get*

*this done myself. Clean your brush, then you two go find that dog you're worrying about. I'm sure it could use some friends like you.*