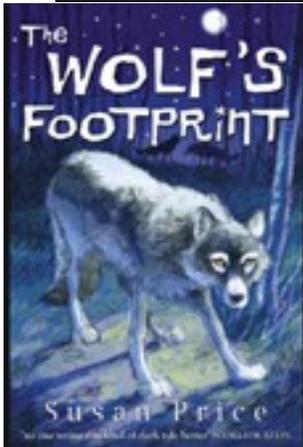


# The Wolf's Footprint

By Susan Price



## Blurb:

In the darkness, a shadow moved, and something green glinted in a patch of moonlight. Another shadow drifted among the trees. Green eyes and grey shadows, all about them, watching. Abandoned in the forest by parents who can no longer afford to feed them, Daw and Elke are full of fear as night falls and animals surround them. But, instead of attacking, the circling wolves offer them a chance to join the pack

'No one writes this kind of dark tale better than Price... brilliantly reworks folk themes... an atmospheric and poignant story. Not a word is wasted.' Books For Keeps.

## Key Information:

**Plot:** An enthralling story for younger readers, from double award winning author, Susan Price. A bad summer, and the crops didn't grow. Now winter is coming. Everyone is hungry. People search desperately for the last of the nettles and acorns. Elka and her little brother Daw huddle under their blankets, trying to keep warm. Elka is too hungry to sleep. Awake in the dark, she overhears her parents whispering. "I don't want to watch them starve. Take them into the wood and leave them. Take them far in, so they won't find their way back, and leave them." The next day their father takes them into the wood, to look for mushrooms. Daw goes along innocently, holding his father's hand. Elka follows because she doesn't want Daw to be alone. The light fades. Their father vanishes into the darkness among the trees. He doesn't come back. And then come the wolves

**Setting:** Folk Tale story. Forest

**Themes:** A tale of tragedy, magic, redemption and celebration. A coming-of-age story in which two children begin to discover who they really are and what it really means to find home.

## Key Characters:

Elka	Older Sister of Daw. Caring, wise
Daw	Younger brother of Elka, Curious, clingy
Lead Wolf	Head of wolves Persuasive, caring

## Author Voice:

Susan Price is an acclaimed, prize-winning author who won the Carnegie Medal in 1987 with *Ghost Drum* and the 1998 Guardian Children's Fiction Award for *The Sterkarm Handshake*.

She wrote her first book aged 16 and became a full time writer aged 22. She now has over twenty children's novels to her name and has been described as 'one of the best contemporary writers for children' by Susan Hill in the Daily Telegraph.

## Key Vocabulary:

grind	Reduce to small particles
rooting	Looking for something by turning things over
game	Hunted animal
fretful	Feeling or expressing distress or irritation
glint	Reflect small flashes of light
pack	A group of wild animals
forester	Person living or caring for a forest

## Key Quotes:

Take them into the wood and leave them. Take them far in, so they won't find their way back, and leave them."

## Discussion Points:

- Where do these lost children belong – in the village with the people who left them to starve? Or, in the wood, with the wolves?