



## Lynne Rae Perkins

**Snow Music**  
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I was taking our dog Lucky for a walk early one morning. A fresh snow had fallen during the night and, so far, only one car had made tracks. The intricate pattern of the tire treads traveled down the road ahead of us in two long, skinny lines.

A little farther on, they were joined by another set of tire tracks, along with the tracks of a deer, a squirrel, a rabbit, some birds. And Lucky's tracks, and mine. I think it was watching Lucky meander, his paw prints rambling all over the straight lines of the tire tracks, that reminded me of notes on a music staff. Maybe it was also the bouncy way he moved along, like the bouncing ball in those old sing-along

cartoons, that made me think it would be fun to see the tracks as each creature or vehicle made them, while hearing music that changed with each character. Sort of like *Peter and the Wolf* without a plot.

A sound track . . . Sound Tracks.

As I was making some watercolors of the animals and the car and thinking about this idea, the sound track started to invent itself in my mind in the form of words. I think the first one to appear was the squirrel's:

*"I think—I think I left it—I think I left it here— Somewhere . . ."*

It just seemed like what the squirrel might think as it scampered back and forth in its short, erratic spurts. Our kids loved this one. They'd come into my studio every day and say it.

The dog's song wrote itself and led to his expanded starring role as The Escaped Dog. A role Lucky was born to play. He is a sweet and exuberant dog whose philosophy is, "Never let them know you understand the word 'Come.'"

When I was a child, snow was a pure pleasure. This feeling stayed with me into adulthood, I think, because I managed not to own a car until I was twenty-five or so. In recent years, I realized that while our children and my husband (skiers all) were still completely joyful about snow, at least until March or April, there have been times when I've thought about it largely as an impediment to driving. My walk with Lucky down the snowy road on a sunny morning, over four-fifths of a music staff made by car tires, took me back to the joy of snow.

I found other joys while making *Snow Music*, too, among them the joy of having a nest, the joy of sharing the world with other creatures, and the joy of words. And music. I think these are joys grown-ups and children can share and have fun with. I hope so.