

The Lynx's Snow Painting



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One cold morning, the lynx woke to a world of white. Fresh snow had fallen all night, soft and deep and quiet. Her thick tawny fur fluffed up against the chill, and her big amber eyes grew wide. Everything looked new and clean. She stepped out of her den and lifted her tufted ears to listen. The forest was hushed, waiting for something to happen.



The lynx padded forward on wide, soft paws. They sank into the snow with a gentle crunch. She lifted one paw and looked back. A perfect round print sat in the snow, like a little flower. She took another step. Then another. A trail of paw prints stretched behind her, neat and pretty. 'Oh!' she whispered. 'Look at that!'



She walked in a circle and made a ring of prints. She walked in a wavy line and made a squiggle. Each step made a different shape. The lynx's long tufted ears stood tall with excitement. Her spotted fur shimmered as she moved. 'The snow is like a big white page,' she said. 'And my paws are paintbrushes!'



The lynx wanted to share her discovery. She lifted her head and called, 'Hare! Hare! Come and see!' Her voice bounced off the snowy trees. Far away, a small grey-brown hare heard the call. She tugged her little red scarf snug around her neck. Then she leaped over the snow, her long hind legs kicking up puffs of white.



The hare arrived with a bound and a hop. 'What is it, Lynx?' she asked, her pink nose twitching. The lynx pointed to the trail of tracks. 'Look what our feet can do!' The hare's round dark eyes grew wide. 'Ooh!' she said. 'Let me try!' She hopped in a big curve, leaving a row of long, narrow prints.



'Your tracks are different from mine,' said the lynx. 'Yours are long and bouncy. Mine are round and wide.' The hare giggled. 'Together they make a pattern!' She hopped in a zigzag, and the lynx walked beside her in a straight line. Their tracks crossed and wove like a dance. The snowy meadow was turning into something wonderful.



The lynx had an idea. 'Let's make a gallery,' she said. 'A whole meadow full of art!' The hare clapped her paws. 'Yes! I'll find twigs!' She bounded off and came back with a mouthful of thin branches. The lynx used her big paws to pat them into the snow. They made a sun with twig rays and a star with twig points.



The hare dragged a long twig behind her, leaving a deep line in the snow. 'Look!' she cried. 'I can draw with this!' She made a big circle and a squiggly line. The lynx dragged another twig and made a wavy river. They hopped and skipped and ran, their tracks weaving in and out. The meadow was becoming a giant picture, all made of snow and tracks and twigs.



Other animals peeked from the trees. A squirrel watched from a branch. A fox tilted his head. The hare waved her red scarf. 'Come and see our gallery!' she called. But the animals were shy. They stayed back and watched. The lynx didn't mind. She was too busy making a big spiral with her paws. 'We can make art just for us,' she said.



The hare found a stick with many tiny branches. She dragged it in circles, making a fluffy snowflake shape. The lynx used her tail to brush a smooth patch. Then she pressed her paw prints all around it like a frame. 'This is my favorite part,' she said. The hare nodded. 'Mine too!' They worked side by side, their breath making little clouds in the cold air.



Suddenly, soft white flakes began to fall. They drifted down and landed on the tracks. 'Oh no!' said the hare. 'Our art is disappearing!' But the lynx watched closely. The snowflakes were filling in the paw prints, making them soft and round. The twig lines grew fuzzy. 'Wait,' said the lynx. 'It's not disappearing. It's changing!'



The hare stopped and looked. The snow was gently covering their gallery. The tracks became little white pillows. The twig star sparkled with new flakes. 'It's still beautiful,' said the hare. 'It's a different kind of art now.' The lynx smiled. 'Nature is painting over our painting,' she said. 'And that's art too.'



They sat together and watched the snow fall. The hare leaned against the lynx's warm fur. 'I'm glad we made it,' she said. 'Even if it doesn't last.' The lynx nodded. 'Me too. Art can be found everywhere, especially when you share it with a friend.' The hare's red scarf was dusted with white, and she giggled.



When the snow stopped, the meadow was smooth and fresh again. But the lynx and the hare remembered their gallery. They could still see the shapes in their minds—the sun, the star, the spiral, the river. 'Let's come back tomorrow,' said the hare. 'We can make a new one.' 'Yes,' said the lynx. 'Every snowfall is a new white page.'



They walked home together, leaving fresh tracks behind them. The lynx looked at her paws. They were just paws, but they could make art. The hare looked at her twig. It was just a twig, but it could draw. They had learned that nature is full of surprises. And the best surprise is sharing it with a friend.



Back in her den, the lynx curled up with her fluffy tail over her nose. She thought about the snowy meadow and the patterns they had made. She thought about the hare's red scarf and her giggle. Outside, the snow kept falling, soft and quiet. Tomorrow, there would be new snow. And new art. And a friend to share it with.