

# My Mama Had a Dancing Heart

BY LIBBA MOORE GREY

My Mama had a dancing heart and she shared that heart with me.

With a grin and a giggle, a hug and a whistle, we'd slap our knees and Mama would say: "Bless the world it feels like a tip-tapping song-singing finger-snapping kind of day. *Let's celebrate!*" And so we did.

When a warm *spring rain* would come pinging on the windowpane, we'd kick off our shoes and out into the rain we'd go.

We'd dance a frog-hopping leaf-growing flower-opening hello spring ballet.

High-stepping and splashing, *the rain* running down our faces, I'd slip-swish behind Mama through the newly green grass.

And afterward we'd read rain poems and drink sassafras tea with lemon curls floating.

And in the summer when the waves would come splash-splashing on the shore, out we'd go into the red-orange morning with kites and balloons tied to our wrists.

We'd do a seabird-flapping dolphin-arching hello summer ballet, with me following Mama, the *sand* stuck between the toes of our up-and-down squish-squashing feet.

And afterward we'd seashell-pile the windowsill and drink lemonade cold.

And when the cool autumn winds would come puff-puffing through the clouds, and the hold-on-tight leaves *would finally let go* and float-flutter to the ground, out we'd go into the eye-blinking blue air, with Mama leading in a leaf-kicking leg-lifting hand-clapping hello autumn ballet.

And afterward we'd wax paper-press leaves red and gold and drink hot tea spiced.

And when the winter snows came softly down shawling the earth, out we'd go and do a body-flat arms-moving-up-and-down snow-angel hello winter ballet.

And then we'd stand up, Mama first, and dance in slow motion, like hand-mittened galoshes-galumpling funny old snowmen.

And afterward we'd cut snowflakes paper-white delicate and sip cocoa with marshmallows floating.

And now after satin-ribboning my feet and listening to the violins sing-swelling around me, onto the stage I go air-daring leap-flying wing-soaring letting the spring rain summer waves autumn leaves winter snow carry me along until the music slows and I feather-float down... down to the ground.

And afterward I imagine that I hear my mama saying: "*Bless the world it feels like a tip-tapping song-singing finger-snapping kind of day. Let's celebrate!*"

My Mama had a dancing heart and she shared that heart with me. ■