

= Lucky and Squash =

Lucky and Squash is an 2012 American children 's book written by Jeanne Birdsall and illustrated with watercolor paintings by Jane Dyer published by Harper . The two eponymous characters are dogs based on Birdsall 's and Dyer 's actual dogs , Cagney and Scuppers , a Boston Terrier and a Tibetan Terrier respectively .

Lucky and Squash received generally positive reviews . A School Library Journal article praises Birdsall 's writing , describing the story as funny , sweet , heartwarming , and suspenseful . A Publishers Weekly review refers to Lucky and Squash as almost being " Emma meets Ferris Bueller 's Day Off with wagging tails " and states that Birdsall 's " genial , intimate storytelling instantly establishes a bond with readers " . A Booklist reviewer compares the story 's dog characters to Pyramus and Thisbe , lovers in Ovid 's Metamorphoses who , frustrated by being separated by a wall , conspire to run away together . An article in Kirkus Reviews calls the illustrations charming and says that they " have all the clever details that are Dyer 's signature touch " .

= = Background = =

Lucky and Squash is a children 's book by Jeanne Birdsall , author of Flora 's Very Windy Day . It is illustrated with watercolor paintings by Jane Dyer , illustrator of more than fifty books , Lucky and Squash was published in 2012 by Harper . The book is appropriate for children between the ages of 3 and 7 . The eponymous characters are dogs , Lucky being a brave Lhasa Apso and Squash being a smart Boston Terrier . They are based on two real dogs who knew each other since they were puppies and often played together : Cagney , Birdsall 's Boston Terrier ; and Scuppers , Dyer 's Tibetan Terrier .

= = Plot = =

Lucky and Squash are neighbors separated by a fence that prevents them from playing together . Lucky 's owner , Mr. Bernard , and Squash 's owner , Miss Violet , are both single and have never spoken to each other because they are so shy . Lucky and Squash decide to run away hoping that , when their owners come rescue them , the two owners will meet , fall in love , and get married , thereby making the dogs " brothers " and allowing them to play together whenever they wish . Lucky and Squash escape from their respective yards three days in a row and go on adventures . The owners do meet and fall in love .

= = Reception = =

A Publishers Weekly review refers to Lucky and Squash as almost being " Emma meets Ferris Bueller 's Day Off with wagging tails " and states that Birdsall 's " genial , intimate storytelling instantly establishes a bond with readers " . An article in Kirkus Reviews suggests that Lucky and Squash is similar to a fairy tale in its narrative structure , language , and romantic wedding scene conclusion . This reviewer summarizes Lucky and Squash as a " gentle , entertaining story ... good for dog lovers and romantics alike " .

In a School Library Journal article , Anne Beier of the Hendrick Hudson Free Library in Montrose , New York gives the book a positive review , praising Birdsall 's writing and describing the story as funny , sweet , heartwarming , and suspenseful . Beier especially praises the climactic scene of the dogs ' capture by the bear , writing that the repeated story arc of running away is strong as a result of the increased tension . She calls the dog characters endearing and writes , " This title will be a hit at storytime or in a one @-@ on @-@ one setting " . Connie Fletcher of Booklist also gives the book a positive review , comparing the two eponymous characters to Pyramus and Thisbe , two lovers in Ovid 's poem Metamorphoses . In her review , Fletcher calls the book " a fun canine fantasy with humor , excitement , a happy ending , and , most important of all , two ridiculously adorable dogs that end up getting their way - as dogs tend to do " .

The Publishers Weekly reviewer is critical of Dyer 's illustrations , arguing that they do not provide the two dogs with sufficiently differing personalities . The reviewer calls the illustrations " pretty and sweet " , but argues that they are too understated in their depiction of the dogs going on improbable adventures , such as snorkeling at the beach and riding in a hansom cab in Manhattan .

Other reviews of the book 's illustrations were positive . Beier writes highly of the illustrations and states that Dyer 's paintings of the dogs ' faces are priceless , particularly in the scenes where they are looking at each other through the fence and those where they are in their owners ' arms . Similarly , the Kirkus reviewer calls the illustrations charming and writes that they " have all the clever details that are Dyer 's signature touch " , noting specifically the lavender frames of Miss Violet 's eyeglasses and the inclusion of the dogs ' names on their collars . Fletcher suggests that , apart from the " ominous grays and greens " in the illustrations of the forest scenes with the bear , the pastel @-@ colored illustrations in the book are evocative of 1940s picture postcards , which she considers " just right for such jolly capers " .