

Tired of Trying



by Callie Raab

IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T
SUCCEED,
TRY, TRY AGAIN

"If at first you don't succeed, try, try again," read the needlepoint proverb over Katy's bookshelf, a gift her great aunt Ada had made her. It was the first thing she saw every morning and the last thing she saw before she closed her eyes every night.

And as if that weren't enough, her mom said it, her dad said it, and every teacher she'd ever had said it.

"But I'm tired of trying!" cried Katy, who couldn't tie the laces of her roller skates one morning, no matter how many loops she made.

So she went out skating with her laces flying—and no sooner did she round the first corner than she tripped over them and fell smack down on the sidewalk.



"Oh, I'm tired of trying!" she sniffled as she stuck a Band-Aid on her skinned knee, remembering all the other times she'd gotten scrapes trying to learn to skate. "I'm never going to roller skate again!" she said.

And she dumped her skates in her bedroom closet—and slammed the door.



Then she pulled her coloring book out of a drawer and started to color a picture of a fairy. And even though she tried as hard as she could to stay inside the lines, when she was coloring the hair her black crayon slipped and drew a line right through the fairy's eye.

"Oh, I'm tired of trying!" cried Katy. "I'm never going to color again!"

And she threw her coloring book into her bedroom closet, along with her roller skates—and she slammed the door.

Then she went outside to shoot a few baskets. She took careful aim and tossed her basketball as high as she could, but it bounced off the rim of the net and banged her on the head.

"Oh, I'm tired of trying!" cried Katy. "I'm never going to play basketball again!"

And she threw her basketball into her bedroom closet, along with her coloring book and her roller skates—and she slammed the door.



Then she went outside again. She tried to climb into her brother Andy's tree house, but the first step was too high for her to reach with her foot, just like it was yesterday and the day before. She was supposed to be growing, but it seemed like she never did, enough.

"Oh, I'm tired of trying!" cried Katy. "I'm never going to climb a tree again!" And she sat on the ground under the tree and sulked.

Next she went inside to play a tune on her toy piano. And she played it perfectly till she got near the end. Then her little finger, the one that always made mistakes, missed the right note and hit the wrong one and ruined the song.

"Oh, I'm tired of trying!" cried Katy. "I'm never going to play the piano again!" And she shoved her toy piano into her bedroom closet, along with her basketball and her coloring book and her roller skates—and she slammed the door.



Then she got out her printing workbook and did a page of *T*s. They looked fine while she was doing them, but when she held up the workbook after she was done, she noticed that all of the tops were crooked.

Of course, she tried to erase those crooked tops, but when they were gone, she saw that she'd rubbed holes right through the paper.

"Oh I'm tired of trying!" cried Katy. "I'm never going to print again!"

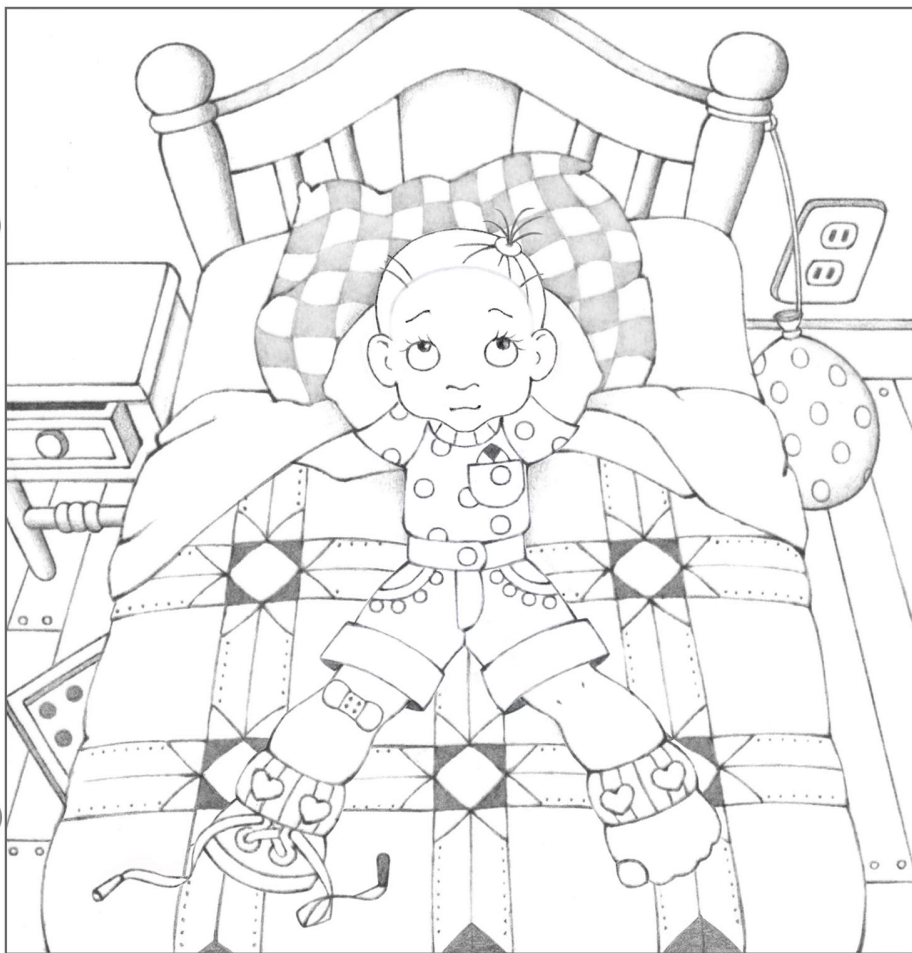
And she crammed the workbook into her bedroom closet, along with her toy piano and her basketball and her coloring book and her roller skates—and she slammed the door.

Then she got out her new storybook and started to read, till she came to a word she couldn't sound out—the word was *circle*, but she'd forgotten that *c* has two sounds, and so she pronounced it *kirkle*. And since she didn't know what a *kirkle* was, she couldn't go on.

"Oh, I'm tired of trying!" cried Katy. "I'm never going to read again!"



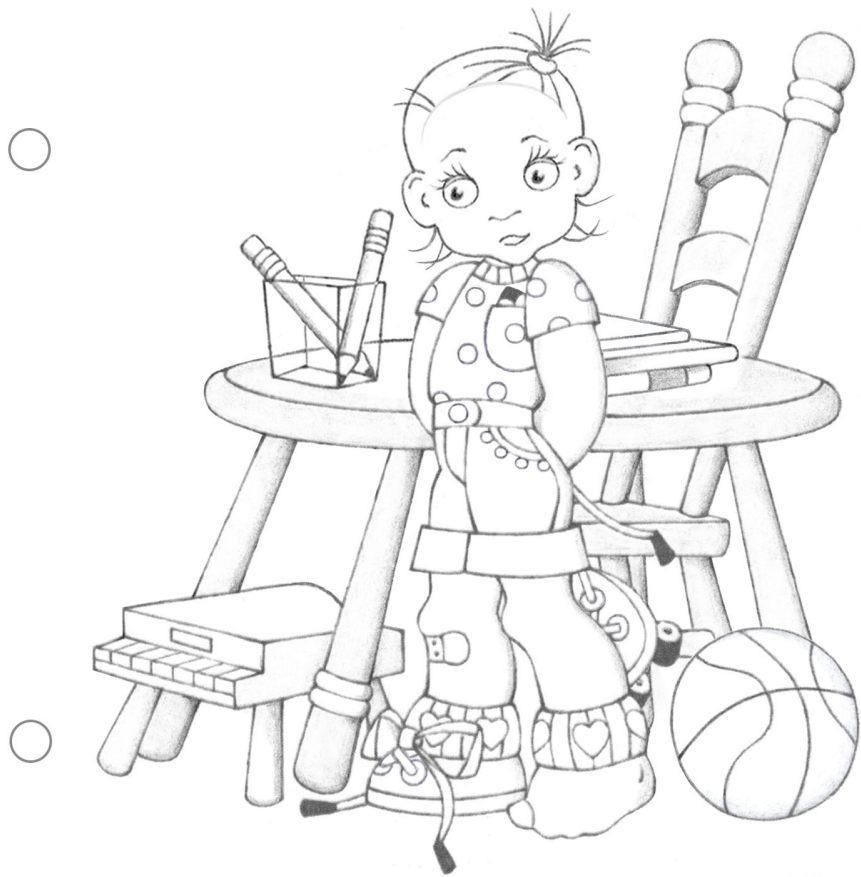
Then she went and sat on her bed and watched the second hand of the clock ticking time away. Later she lay on the floor, studying an ant that was climbing up and down over the fringe on her rug. Still later, she sprawled on her back in order to keep her eye on a crack in the ceiling just to see if it would widen.



The sun had gone down and it was nearly supper time, when all of a sudden she jumped up and threw open her closet door—and grabbed her storybook and her workbook and her toy piano and her basketball and her coloring book and her roller skates.

"What are you up to?" her mother asked when she saw Katy setting everything out neatly on her desk. The toy piano and the basketball she put under it.

"I'm getting everything ready for tomorrow!" Katy cried happily. "Because I'm TIRED of being tired of . . .



... trying!"

