



Don't Give Up, Josephine!

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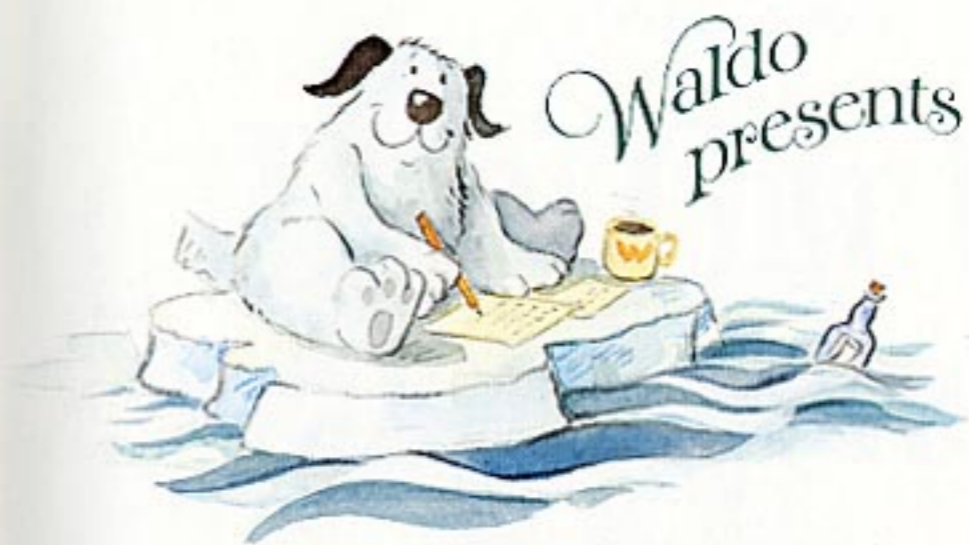
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Don't Give Up, Josephine!

It's fun to learn new things, especially when they are things you really want to do, like ice-skating or riding a two-wheel bike. But there are some things that you really must learn whether you want to or not. Sometimes it's hard, and you worry that your friends will make fun of you if you fail or that you'll disappoint your parents. And believe me, I understand why that's enough to make you want to give up!

That's how Josephine, the little penguin in this story, feels. She is very good at a lot of things, but there is something new that she must learn—something that's very hard for her to do well. She thinks she'll never learn it. Never! But never is a long time!

Your friend,



Waldo

A MERITALE™ Book

Don't Give Up, Josephine!

Written and illustrated by
Hans Wilhelm



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Josephine was a young penguin who lived where there was always ice and snow. Even in summer.

Many penguins lived there, but Josephine spent most of her time with other animals. The other animals knew so many exciting games. Her friends the snow bunnies taught Josephine how to ice-skate. She was surprised at how easy it was.



Sometimes after a speed-skating race, they would slide down an iceberg and into the water to cool off. That was fun too!

Josephine's friends could do all sorts of things, and she was not afraid to try them either. She learned quickly and in no time she was able to play all the games her friends liked.





Whether it was badminton . . .



or boxing . . .



or just racing across the ice, Josephine always had a wonderful time with her friends.

When Josephine went water-skiing, all the penguins watched. Her mother and father watched too. They shook their heads sadly. They wished that she would start being more like other penguins.



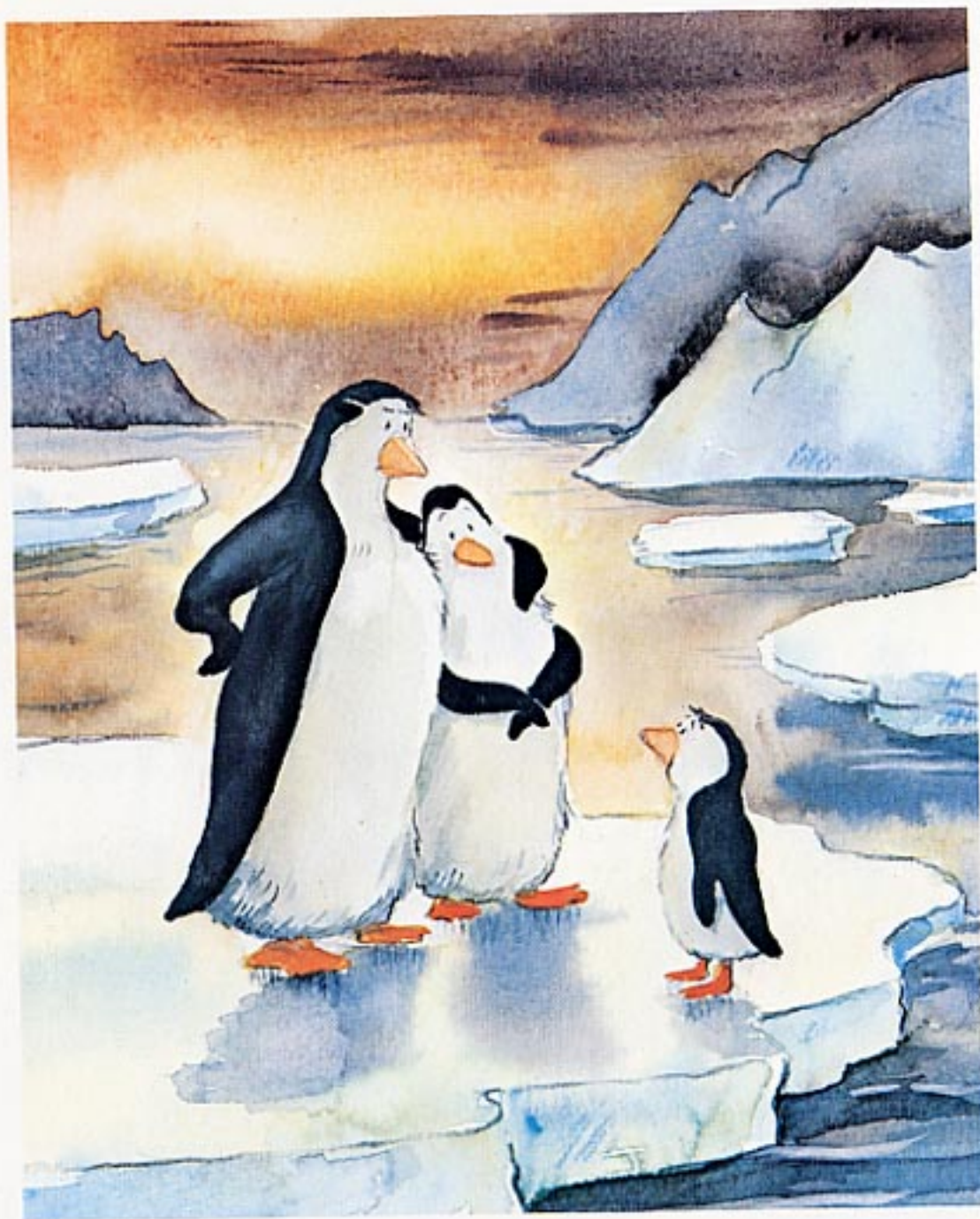


Then one day the penguins could hardly believe their eyes. Flying high in the sky were two big sea gulls—and Josephine!

"That does it! She's had her way long enough," said Josephine's father. "It's time she went to school to learn what every penguin must learn."

"I couldn't agree more," said Josephine's mother.





That evening Josephine's mother and father had a talk with her.

"We know how much you enjoy playing all kinds of games and how good you are at them," said her mother. "But there are other things you must learn."

"Tomorrow we are taking you to Madame Penguinova's school," said her father. "She is the best teacher of penguin ballet in the world."

"But Daddy, I don't want to go to school. And I don't want to be a dancer," said Josephine.

"You are going to school and that is that!" said her father, and he marched off.





Madame Penguinova was happy to have Josephine in her class. She thought Josephine could be a good dancer. "But you will have to work at it," she told Josephine.

"Work!" thought Josephine. "That doesn't sound like much fun."

"Today, class, we're going to do the butterfly dance," said Madame Penguinova. "Pretend you're a little yellow butterfly fluttering from flower to flower."

Josephine took a long time putting on her ballet shoes. She wondered how a butterfly flutters.



Finally she joined the class.



But as hard as she tried,



she was not very good at being a butterfly.

After school Josephine dragged her ballet shoes in the snow all the way home. She felt miserable. "What a stupid thing," she thought. "Pretending to be a butterfly!"

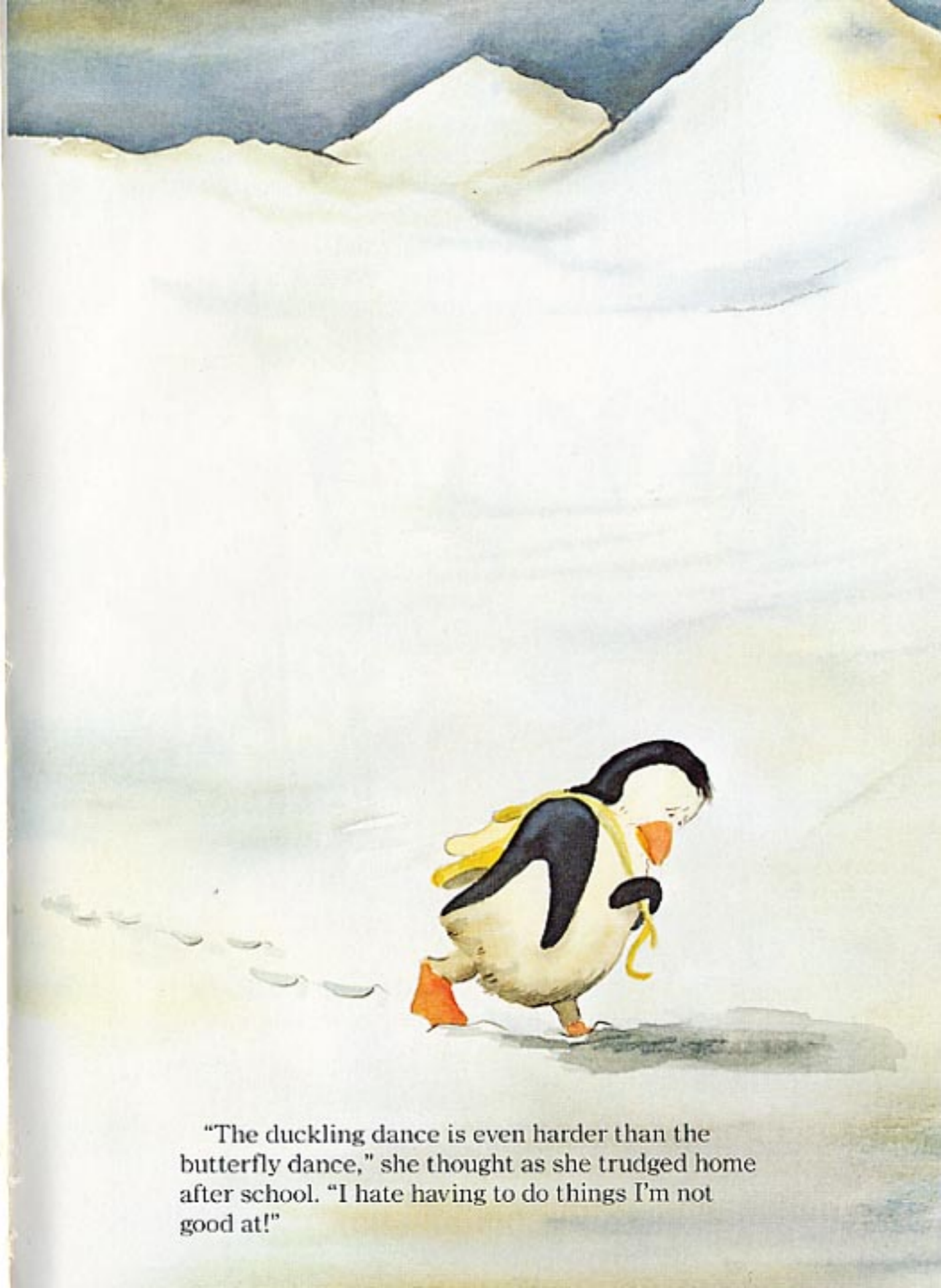




The next day the class did the duckling dance.



Josephine was not very good at being a duckling either.

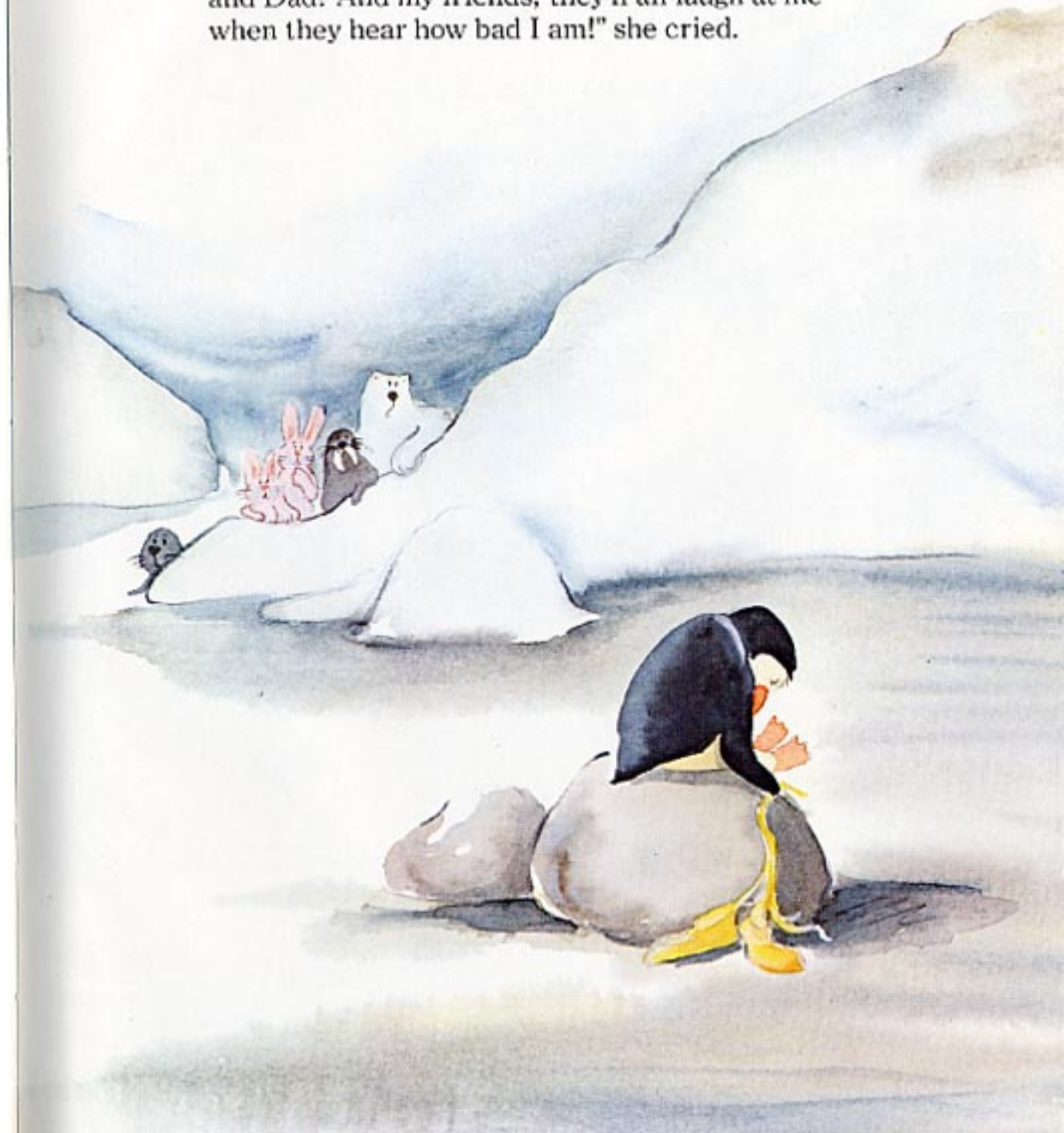


"The duckling dance is even harder than the butterfly dance," she thought as she trudged home after school. "I hate having to do things I'm not good at!"



The next day Josephine tried her best to do the dance of the flowers. But she felt more like a wilted weed.

She couldn't wait for the class to end, and the moment it did she ran off. She wanted to be alone. "I'll never be any good at school. I'm a failure. A real flop," she thought. She began sniffing and two big tears ran down her beak. "What will I tell Mom and Dad? And my friends, they'll all laugh at me when they hear how bad I am!" she cried.



"No, we won't!" barked the seal.

All of Josephine's friends gathered around her.

"You are trying your best and nobody can ask for more than that," the walrus said.

"It takes time to learn new things," said the polar bear.

"Don't give up, Josephine!" said a snow bunny.

"You can do it. We know you can do it!" they all said together.

Josephine was not sure she could do it, but she thanked her friends and began to feel a little better.





The next day Madame Penguinova said, "Today, class, we are going to be snow bunnies." She turned on the music and the little penguins lined up.



Josephine thought about her friends the snow bunnies. "I know how to be a snow bunny," she said.



"One, two, three, and one, two, three, now begin the snow bunny hop," said Madame Penguinova.



And she was the best snow bunny in the class!



Soon the other little penguins were following Josephine. Madame Penguinova was so pleased that she also joined in the snow bunny hop.

When the music ended everyone praised Josephine. "The snow bunny hop is the hardest dance of all," said her classmates. "If you can do it, you can do all the other dances too!"

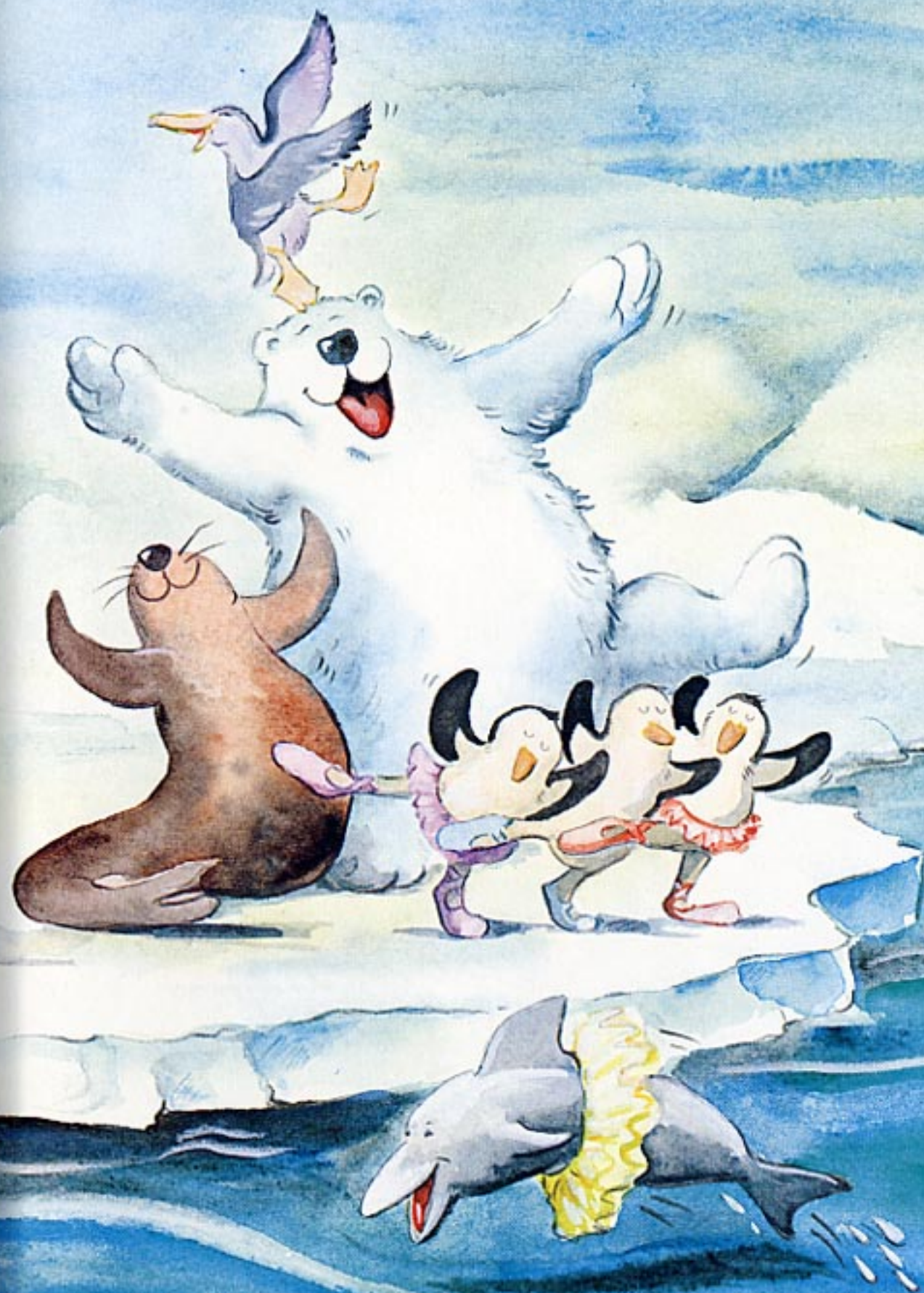
Madame Penguinova smiled at Josephine. "My dear, keep up the good work. You have a real talent."



After school all the little penguins wanted to walk with Josephine.

Josephine took them to meet her friends. She said to her old playmates, "I think it's time you all started learning something new. It may be hard at first, but it gets easier. And it's fun!"

Then Josephine and her penguin friends showed all the other animals how to do penguin ballet.



All the animals loved being dancers—all except
the walrus. He hated his tutu.

