Little Laura was 7 years old when she saw that all her friends had learnt how to ride a bicycle. She used to ride piggyback on her friend's bicycle or simply watch the others cycling.  During the school break, she loved to listen to all her friends’ stories about the secret faraway places that they discovered while bicycling. It made her wonder how great it would be if she could join them in their little bicycle adventures.

When the summer holidays began, Laura asked her friends to teach her how to ride. They agreed, and they went to a huge patch of grass in the centre of the park. Poor Laura was so terrible at cycling, she couldn't keep her balance and kept falling. Laura used to think that bicycling would be an easy thing, but after that day, Laura started to doubt of her own capability.

When she went home, her mother welcomed her at the front door and asked, ‘How was your day out with your friends?’

Laura did not even look at her mother, she was embarrassed, ‘It was terrible. My friends taught me how to ride a bicycle, but I was terrible at it.’ She replied,

Laura's mother gave her a warm hug and said, ‘Most people are terrible at their first try at anything, so don’t feel bad. Just keep trying!’ Laura nodded.

‘Why don’t you take Edward to the park tomorrow and see if he can help you learn better?’ her mother advised her because Edward, Laura’s brother, was much older than her, and most importantly, he was a very good cyclist.

Laura thought about her mother's words before she went to bed that night,

*“Most people are terrible at their first try at anything, so do not feel bad”*. She decided to give it another try with her brother's help.

The next week, Laura went out to the park with her brother to try again. Even though she tried harder this time, she kept failing. This time she couldn’t control herself and rammed into a tree and the kids at the park laughed at her.

Laura cried her way back home. Her father was reading a newspaper in the living-room when he saw Laura crying.

‘What's the matter, my dear? Who made you cry?’ he asked, Laura wiped her tears and said, ‘Nobody hurt me, it was me. I tried to learn how to ride a bicycle, but I hit a tree and the kids in the park laughed at me.’

Laura's father put the newspaper on the table and said, ‘Look at me, my dear.’

Laura looked at her father carefully.

‘Have you tried it many times?’ her father asked.

Laura shook her head, ‘It was my second time.’ Laura's father smiled and said, ‘The second time can be like the first time. If you try many times and still fail, then you can feel bad about yourself”

Laura nodded,

“But even so, keep trying!’ her father added before Laura left.

Laura wiped her tears and thought about her father's words.

*Second time can be like the first time. Keep trying!*

Laura spent the next 7 days with her father learning how to ride a bicycle. She got better at it but still felt bad that her father had to hold the bicycle the whole time while she was trying to ride it, otherwise she’s going to fall.

She went home looking bitter. Her grandmother was in the front yard, feeding a bird. She asked Laura, ‘How was your day?’

Laura shrugged. ‘I shouldn't even learn to ride a bicycle. I couldn't do it without anyone holding the bicycle while I was pedalling.’

Her grandmother looked at her sympathetically. ‘Oh dear, is this your first day trying?’

Laura shook her head and burst in anger, ‘Why do people keep asking me the same question? No Nana, it is the 9th time I tried.’

Knowing that her granddaughter sounded really upset, Grandma Ellie smiled at her and said, ‘There is a time for everything. Some things take more time to learn than others. It may seem difficult at first –but it is doable. Just keep trying. Give it a little bit more time, and you'll see— the miracle can happen.’

Laura thought about Grandma Ellie's words before she fell asleep.

“*Some things take more time to learn than others. Give it a bit more time and you'll see the miracle happen”.*

The next 7 days Laura spent trying again, this time with her friends. She concentrated on her balance and tried harder not to repeat the same mistakes. However, the harder she tried, the more she lost her balance. She got angry and started blaming everyone.

She went home looking so frustrated that her grandfather couldn't help but ask her,

‘What happened to your beautiful face? Who put the dark cloud in your sky?’ he was being sweet; Laura knew how much her grandfather loves her but she couldn’t hide her disappointment.

She sat down next to him and sighed, ‘I failed at keeping my balance while I was pedalling my bicycle. It's all because of my friends who did not know how to properly teach me. And today is my 16th attempts’.

Her grandfather shook his head. ‘Look sweetie pie. They already helped you, but you must help yourself too. You should not be blaming anyone when you failed to try. The key to the door of success is not in their hands but in yours. Instead of blaming others, just keep trying to learn.’

Laura repeated her grandfather's words before she fell asleep. *“The key to the door of success is not in their hands but in yours. Instead of blaming others, just keep trying to learn.”*

Laura woke up feeling enlightened, at school she apologised to her friends for being angry the other day and decided that she would keep trying.

The summer holidays were almost over, and she had spent the last 3 weeks learning to ride a bicycle without success. She went home one afternoon with a sad face when she saw Miss Woodstone, her favourite teacher, waving at her from the other side of the road and approached her. Miss Woodstone asked her why she was looking upset. Laura told her that she had been trying to ride a bicycle for three weeks now, but she was still terrible at it.

Miss Woodstone bent down and said, ‘My dear, do you love to read?’

Laura nodded.

‘Do you find it easy to read your favourite books?’

Laura nodded, smiling – Reading was her favourite habit. ‘If you like to do something, everything about it seems easy. But if you don’t like it, everything seems difficult and takes a lot of time.’ Miss Woodstone added, ‘Learning is not simply about studying and practising. You have to like and enjoy what you learn and it will be easier. Stop counting the days, and eventually it will work out for you.’

For the next few weeks, Laura kept telling herself to love what she was learning in order to make it easier, and stop counting. Days went by and everything became easier when she started to love bicycling. But still, something was missing.

On a Sunday afternoon, Father Jonah was sitting in the park when he saw Laura was pushing her new small bicycle angrily instead of riding it. Father Jonah had heard from the people that little Laura had been practising so hard to ride her bicycle so he rose from his seat and approached little Laura.

‘Good afternoon, Laura, I see you have a new bike now.’ Laura looked at him then replied reluctantly, saying, ‘Yes, Father Jonah. I have spent almost my entire summer vacation learning to ride a bicycle, but I am still terrible at it. This bike is no use as I couldn’t even ride it’

‘I see,’ Father Jonah nodded. ‘Have you put your best efforts into it?’, he asked.

Laura shrugged this time. “I thought I did but—"

“Do you believe that you can do it?” Father Jonah asked, Laura shrugged in doubt.

Father Jonah bent down and smiled. ‘Listen, child. I believe you have tried your best, but what is trying without believing? It will be meaningless. You must believe in yourself, and the world will go along with what you believe.’ He put a small rock onto Laura’s palm and said, ‘Even a small belief, as small as this rock, may change everything. Miracles don't happen without you believing in them”

Laura looked into the small rock and nodded,

“So, keep trying, and believe in yourself.’

Something hits Laura so hard this time. Yes, that could be the last missing piece in all of her attempts; believe in herself.

“But how do I do it?” asked Laura, frowned.

“You may start it by stop being too hard on yourself. Tell yourself that you can do it”

At night Father Jonah’s words kept reverberating in her ears.

“*Trying without believing is meaningless. You must start believing in yourself, and the world will go along with what you believe”*

It’s been a long journey to get to where she wanted to; and everyone has been supporting and believing in her. Everyone, but herself. It is time for her to stop being too hard on herself and start believing in herself.

The next three days were the last three days of the summer holidays. Laura begun to plant a strong belief in herself. She hid behind a big tree and told herself, ‘I can do it.’ Then she ran to get her bicycle and started pedalling slowly. She didn't fall, so she went a little bit faster.

Her friends cheered, ‘Stay straight. Do not hit anything.’ She nodded and stayed focused until she reached the end of the ground. She couldn’t believe that she had finally done it!

‘I did it!’ she exclaimed joyfully. All her friends ran towards her and congratulated her. She thought about how Father Jonah was right when he said that even a small belief can change everything.

Few weeks later, finally after numerous practises, Laura could proudly go everywhere without piggybacking on her friend's bicycle. She could experience the joy of bicycling that she had dreamt of. All she needed was patience, hard work and belief in herself.

Well, no matter how hard the obstacle is, keep trying till you succeed!