

# BETSY McCALL VISITS THE JOFFREY BALLET



Last week, our ballet teacher (she used to be a ballerina) took a bunch of us to the Joffrey Ballet. And guess what! Mr. Joffrey invited us to his studio in the American Ballet Center. It was an ENORMOUS room, with mirrors and ballet bars and dancers in leotards reaching and bending like flowers swaying in the wind, just *lovely*. I told Mr. Joffrey I couldn't *wait* to be a toe dancer! "You'd better wait," he said, smiling. "Keep on with ballet, keep off your toes until you are at least twelve years old, or you could seriously harm your back and your legs. That's what we tell *our* youngest dancers." Could I ask him a terribly big favor? "Like what?" he questioned. Like being in

the ballet *Petrouchka*, just to see what it felt like, up there? He thought: "Hmm! Our youngest little girl is out with a cold. You can take her place if her costume fits you." IT DID!!! One of the ballerinas rehearsed me. I didn't really *dance* . . . just held hands with my partner, and scampered when she did, and waved when she did—and clapped my hands and jumped for joy (*which she didn't do*), because I just could not help myself, it was all so wonderful and exciting! Afterwards, Mr. Joffrey signed my autograph album. And you know what he wrote? "To Betsy, the ballerina: Never apologize for jumping with joy, especially when you do it in time to the music!"



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