



STONE SOUP



by
**Marcia
Brown**



STONE SOUP

AN OLD TALE



TOLD AND PICTURED BY
MARCIA BROWN

ALADDIN PAPERBACKS

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Summary: When three hungry soldiers come to a town where all the
food has been hidden, they set out to make soup of water and stones,
and all the town enjoys a feast.

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Three soldiers trudged down a road in a strange country. They were on their way home from the wars. Besides being tired, they were hungry. In fact, they had eaten nothing for two days.

"How I would like a good dinner tonight," said the first.

"And a bed to sleep in," said the second.

"But all that is impossible," said the third. "We must march on."

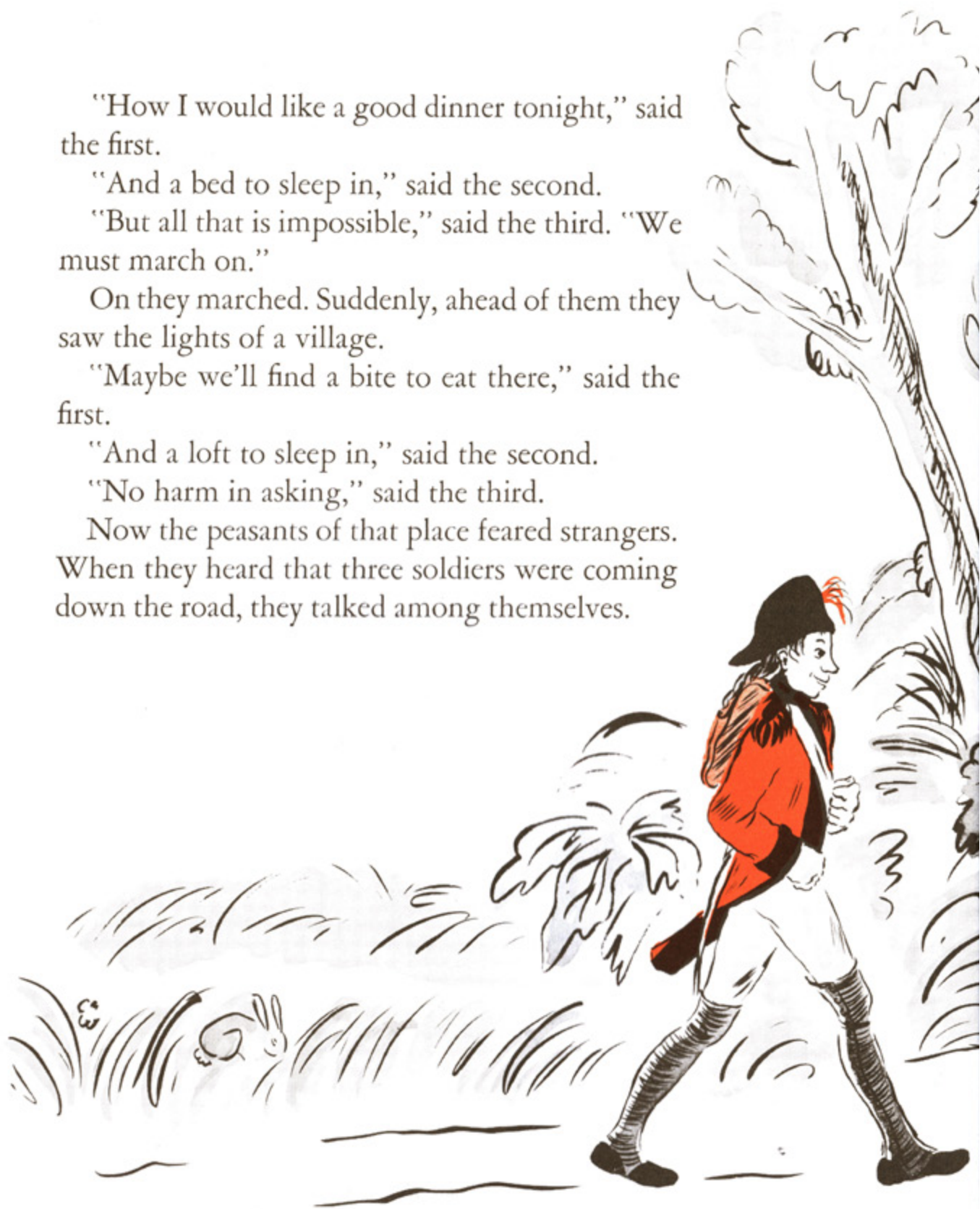
On they marched. Suddenly, ahead of them they saw the lights of a village.

"Maybe we'll find a bite to eat there," said the first.

"And a loft to sleep in," said the second.

"No harm in asking," said the third.

Now the peasants of that place feared strangers. When they heard that three soldiers were coming down the road, they talked among themselves.







"Here come three soldiers. Soldiers are always hungry. But we have little enough for ourselves." And they hurried to hide their food.

They pushed sacks of barley under the hay in the lofts. They lowered buckets of milk down the wells.



They spread old quilts over the carrot bins. They hid their cabbages and potatoes under the beds. They hung their meat in the cellars.

They hid all they had to eat. Then — they waited.



The soldiers stopped first at the house of Paul and Françoise.

"Good evening to you," they said. "Could you spare a bit of food for three hungry soldiers?"

"We have had no food for ourselves for three days," said Paul. Françoise made a sad face. "It has been a poor harvest."



The three soldiers went on to the house of Albert and Louise.

“Could you spare a bit of food? And have you some corner where we could sleep for the night?”

“Oh no,” said Albert. “We gave all we could spare to soldiers who came before you.”

“Our beds are full,” said Louise.



At Vincent and Marie's the answer was the same. It had been a poor harvest and all the grain must be kept for seed.

So it went all through the village. Not a peasant had



any food to give away. They all had good reasons. One family had used the grain for feed. Another had an old sick father to care for. All had too many mouths to fill.

The villagers stood in the street and sighed. They looked as hungry as they could.

The three soldiers talked together.



STONE SOUP

A CALDECOTT HONOR BOOK

First published in 1947, this picture book classic has remained one of Marcia Brown's most popular and enduring books. This story, about three hungry soldiers who outwit the greedy inhabitants of a village into providing them with a feast, is based on an old French tale.



"Marcia Brown brings out the humor inherent in this old tale with the touch of a skillful story-teller and gives to her bright red double-page pictures a real feeling of fete."

—*The New York Times Book Review*



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Ages 4–8

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