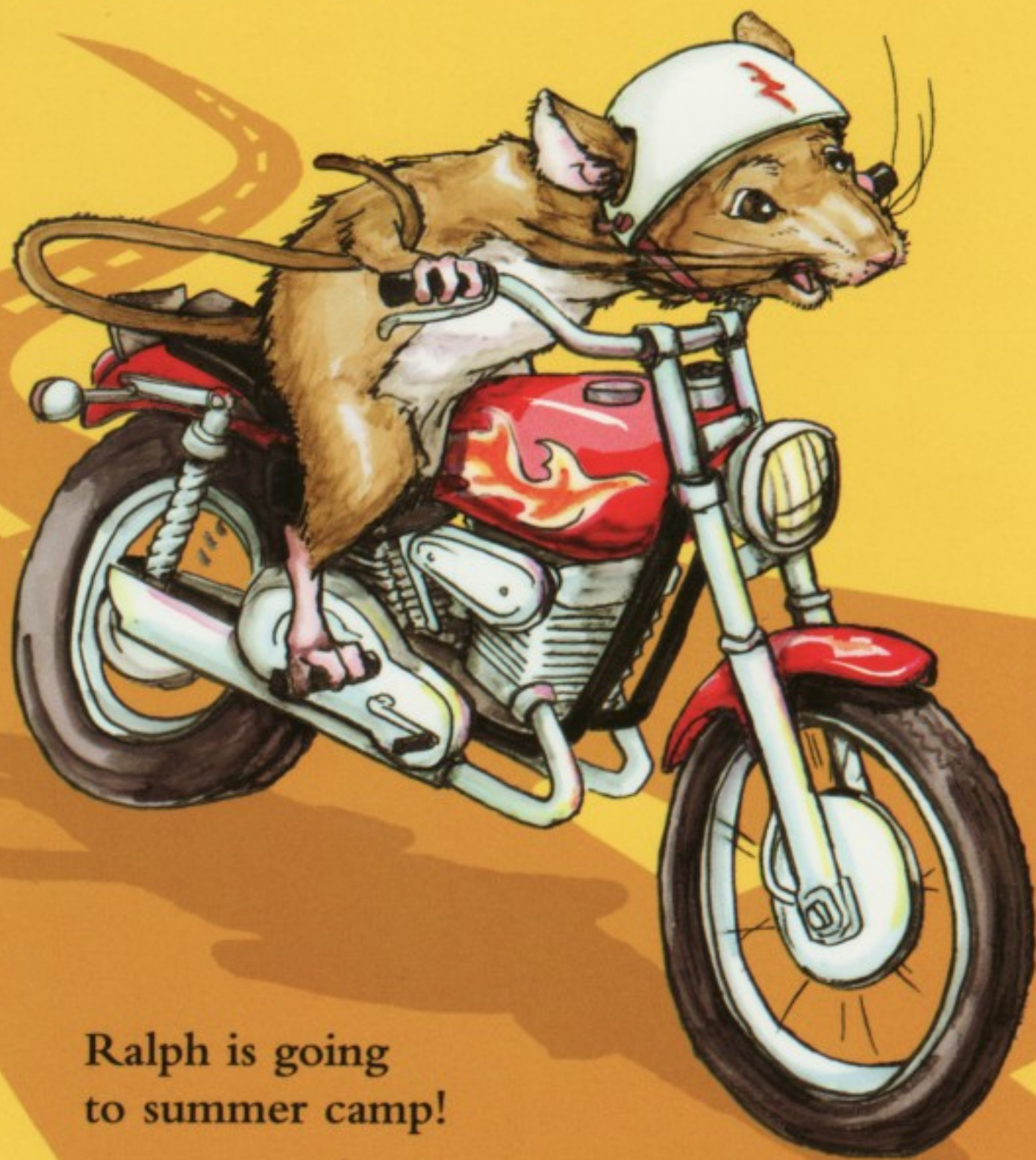


RUNAWAY RALPH



Ralph is going
to summer camp!

Beverly Cleary

1

RALPH HEARS A DISTANT BUGLE

The small brown mouse named Ralph who was hiding under the grandfather clock did not have much longer to wait before he could ride his motorcycle. The clock had struck eight already, and then eight thirty.

Ralph was the only mouse in the Mountain View Inn, a run-down hotel in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, who

owned a motorcycle. It was a mouse-sized red motorcycle, a present from a boy named Keith who had been a guest in Room 215 over the Fourth of July weekend. Ralph was proud of his motorcycle, but his brothers and sisters said he was selfish.

“I am not,” said Ralph. “Keith gave the motorcycle to me.”

That evening, while Ralph waited under the clock and watched the television set across the lobby, a man and a woman followed by a medium-sized boy walked into the hotel. They had the rumpled look of people who had driven many miles that day. The boy was wearing jeans, cowboy boots, and a white T-shirt with the words *Happy Acres Camp* stenciled across the front.

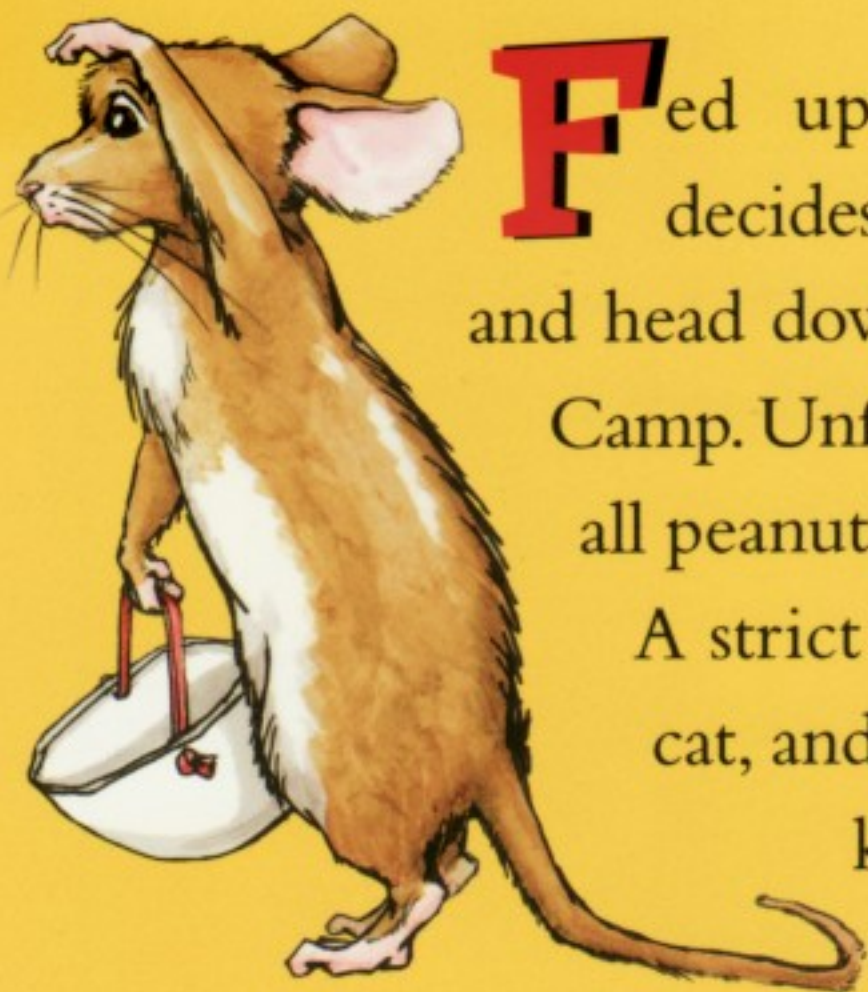
Ralph observed the boy with interest. He was the right kind of boy, a boy sure to like peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. Since the day Keith had left the hotel, Ralph had



longed for crumbs of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

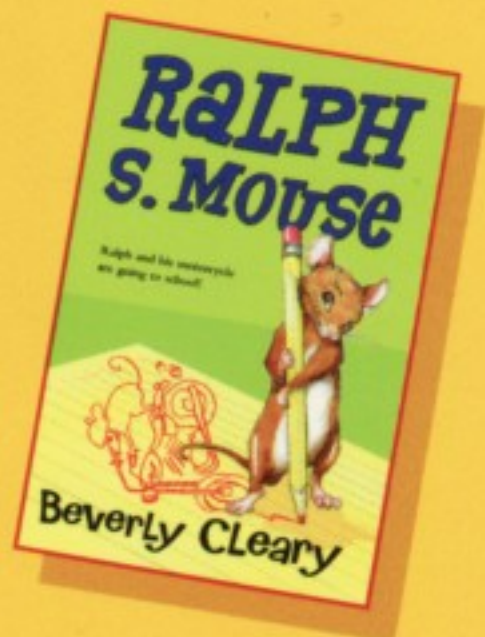
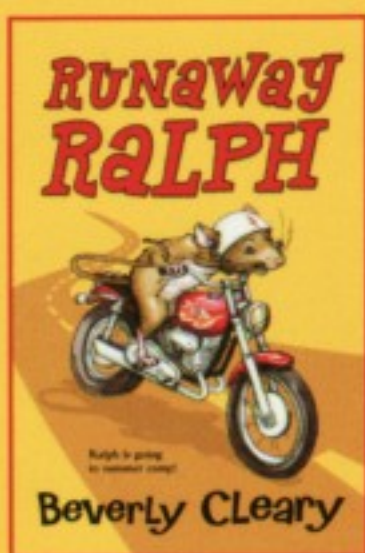
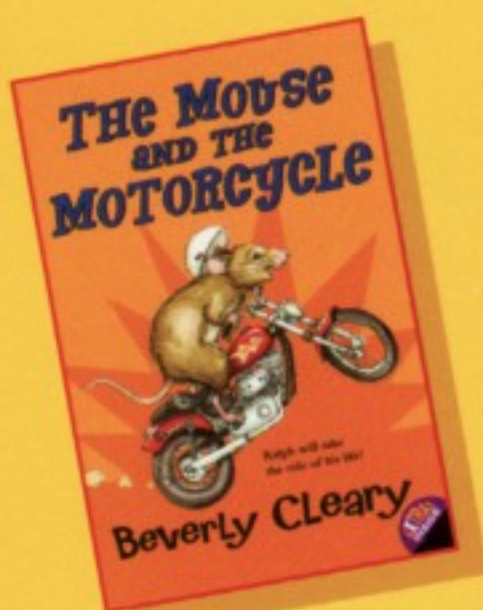
A grating, grinding noise came from the works of the grandfather clock. Ralph clapped his paws over his ears. The clock

RALPH IS ON THE RUN!



Fed up with his family, Ralph decides to hop on his motorcycle and head down the road to Happy Acres Camp. Unfortunately, life at camp is not all peanut butter and jelly sandwiches! A strict watchdog, a mouse-hungry cat, and a troubled boy named Garf keep Ralph on his toes and away from his precious motorcycle. Perhaps home is not such a bad place to be, if only Ralph can find a way to get there again!

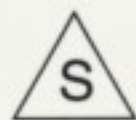
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