

# Tough Times



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著者:Meltzer, Milton

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Joey's life is quickly changing. His 2 A.M. milk route is getting shorter and shorter as people leave town to find work elsewhere. And his pa has fewer windows to wash after being given the choice between a new job for less pay and no job at all. Joey's immigrant family is suffering--as are many others. Joey's girlfriend Kate's father, a journalist, has been fired for wanting to publish an article on the bank failures and business closings that are rapidly spreading throughout their part of Massachusetts. When veterans of World War I plan a protest march on Washington, D.C., to gain the bonuses promised them for their service in the war, Joey and his father join the marchers. Once in the nation's capital, they, like thousands of others from across the country, set up a makeshift tent in one of the "Hoovervilles." But their hopes are shattered as the president calls in federal troops with rifles, tear-gas, and flaming torches. Stricken with fear, Joey runs away, and ends up riding the railroads with a group of homeless young people. Skillfully blending historical fact and fast-paced fiction, Milton Meltzer brings alive a period when families desperately tried to cope as hopelessness gripped the nation.

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