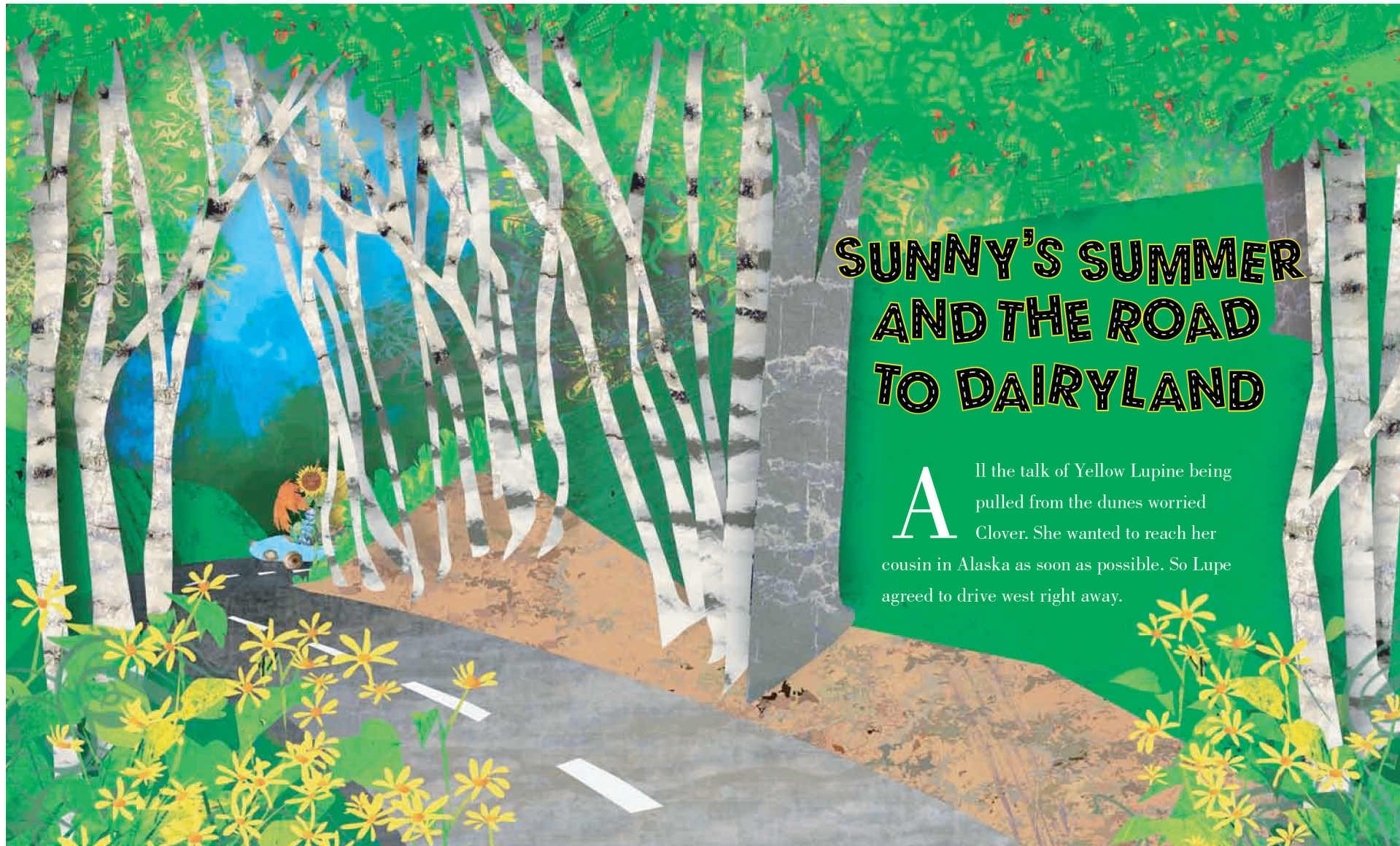


## Between Earth and Sky



# SUNNY'S SUMMER AND THE ROAD TO DAIRYLAND

All the talk of Yellow Lupine being pulled from the dunes worried Clover. She wanted to reach her cousin in Alaska as soon as possible. So Lupe agreed to drive west right away.



As the flowers traveled into the sunset, Clover turned to Lupe. "I know you didn't want to leave Maine so soon," she said.

"That's OK, Clover," said Lupe. "Once we're in California, I'll be a very happy flower."

Just then Lucy and Ace flashed their lights. They had something to say.

"Just remember: We won't be much good out West," Lucy said.

"That's right," chimed in Ace. "We fireflies live all over the world. But not in California."

"Why is that?" Lupe asked.

"We're not sure," Lucy said. "No one really knows."

"Well, you're missing out on some nice weather," Zinni said. "In California, I can wash my petals and they dry right away. That's a real plus for a petal head like me!"

## Fireflies by Day, Fireflies by Night!

Nearly 2,000 kinds of fireflies live in the world. More than 170 kinds live in the United States. But none live west of the Rocky Mountains.

Can you find the Rockies on the map on pages 94-95?



Lucy and Ace flashed their lights in agreement.

As the flowers traveled along, the miles began to add up. A road sign soon appeared: "Pittsburgh, next exit."

"Pittsburgh!" yelled Zinni. "Isn't that where Sunny, the sunflower, is spending the summer?"

"Yes," said Clover. "She said she was 'getting the lead out.' What did she mean?"

## Nature's Cleaning Power!

Like sunflowers, scented geraniums are good at cleaning soil.

So are willow trees and corn and pumpkins.

Do sunflowers or other plants grow near you? Maybe they're cleaning! Ask around! Share what you learn!



### How Sunflowers Clean the Soil

Sunflowers pull lead out of the soil and into their roots. Then the lead moves up to the flower's stem and leaves. That way, the lead is above ground and out of the soil. Then the sunflower is pulled from the soil. Sometimes the sunflower's seeds, which have no lead in them, are made into fuel. That fuel can power lots of things.

"Sunny is cleaning the soil in Pittsburgh so more gardens can grow there," Lupe explained.

"Sunny is being very helpful," said Zinni.

"Yes, indeed," agreed Lupe. "Sunflowers are good at removing bad things, like lead, from soil. Did you know that Pittsburgh used to have really dirty air, too? It was so dirty that morning was as dark as night! That would have kept Lucy and Ace busy!"

The two fireflies flashed their lights. "Let's stop and say hello," Lucy said.

"Maybe Sunny will join our road trip," said Ace.

"I hope so," said Lupe. "Her leaves make such nice wind sails for my petal-power car."

And then she turned off the highway and drove into the city of Pittsburgh.



Gardens were everywhere. “How will we ever find Sunny?” Zinni asked.

“Just look up,” Lupe said. “She’s so tall, we can’t possibly miss her. And she’ll be with lots of other sunflowers.”



As the petal-power car turned the bend, the flowers saw an amazing sight: the city surrounded by water. They were looking at the place where two rivers—the Allegheny and the Monongahela—come together to form the mighty Ohio River.

As soon as the car turned the next bend, the flower friends saw a huge wall of sunflowers.

“Sunny!” the flowers cried all at once. “Down here! It’s Lupe, Zinni, and Clover! And Lucy and Ace!”

“What a nice surprise,” said Sunny, bending low to greet her friends. “I wasn’t expecting any visitors.”

“We’re going to Alaska,” Clover said.

“Alaska!” cried Sunny. “I’ve always wanted to go there. You know, I’ve been working so hard. I could use a rest. May I join you?”



WORDS FOR THE WISE

**DAIRYLAND** is named for all its dairy farms. Milk from the farms' cows is made into cheese, and butter and ice cream, too!

"We'd love to have you,"

Lupe said. "We're stopping next in Wisconsin, America's **Dairyland**.

We hear the cheese is good."

"Well, then, move over!" Sunny said, as she hopped into the car and buckled her seat belt.

With strong winds and Sunny's big leaf sails, it wasn't long before the flowers reached Dairyland.

They stopped to enjoy the rolling hills dotted with farms and black-and-white cows.

"You know, these dairy farms used to be wheat fields," said Lupe. "But growing wheat season after season wore out the soil."

"Taking care of soil is so important," said Sunny. "That's why I was in Pittsburgh."





“And now that I’ve been in this bucket seat with its fresh soil for a while, I feel so much better,” Sunny added. “How about we go taste some delicious Dairyland cheese?”

