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THIS BOOK BELONGS TO

BONGO'S BOOKS PRESENTS

Billy & Bella Bongo's

USA ADVENTURE

VOL. I



Visiting the "Cereal Bowl of America" State...

Written By Shilpa Patel ~ Illustrated by Zoe Ranucci

Billy & Bella Bongo's USA Adventure Vol. 1

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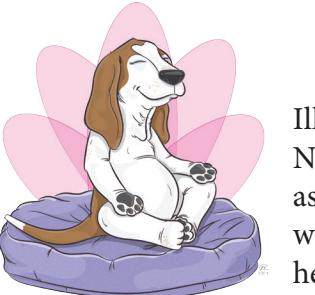
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Illustrator Zoe Ranucci, has an independent graphic design and illustration studio in Belmont, North Carolina (just outside of Charlotte). She has illustrated several full color children's books as well as instructional and educational guides. Zoe enjoys character development most of all, watching each her creations come to life in the pages of her books. Please take a moment to visit her portfolio website at www.gooddharma.com to view more of her work.

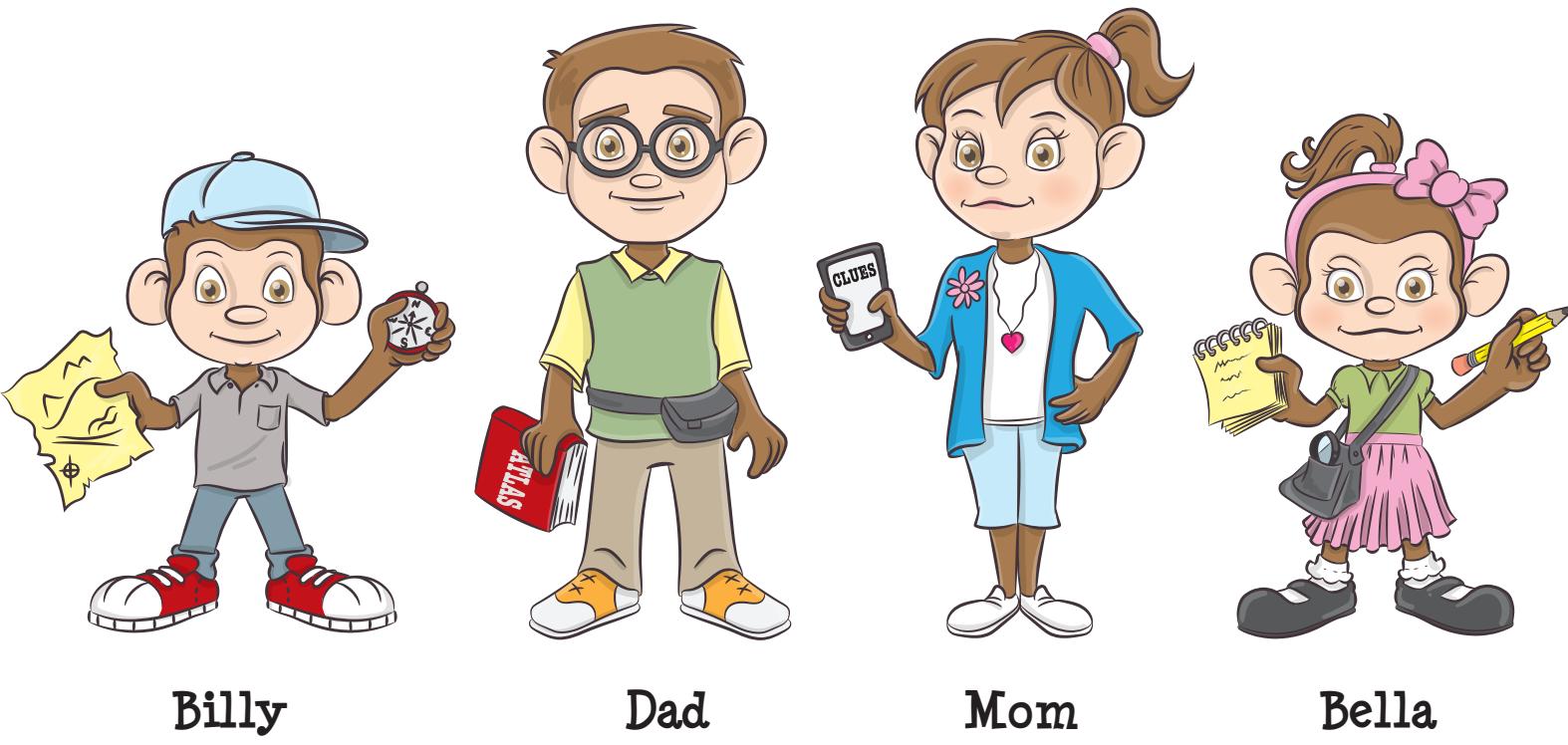
This book is dedicated to my beautiful, loving daughter Maya, who inspired me to turn my dreams into a reality and helped turn my reality into a dream. I love you dearly. May you always find peace and happiness with the simple things in life.

*Eternally yours,
Mom*



This is the inspirational drawing by the authors daughter at age 7.

Meet the Bongos



Billy

Dad

Mom

Bella

Join this fun family on an adventurous tour of the United States! Billy and Bella Bongo are a brother and sister team who love mysteries. A Greedy Goblin has stolen their cherries. Join in and see if you can help solve the mystery and find out in which state the Greedy Goblin is hiding.

It was the first day of summer vacation – the perfect time for adventures and exploring!

It was a beautiful day outside. Twins Billy and Bella were excited because summertime meant fun...AND VACATION!

“Let’s explore the United States!” cheered Billy.

Bags were packed, snacks were picked, and everything was ready... except for one thing –

where were their cherries?



Billy and Bella gathered up their things, climbed into the car, and buckled their seatbelts.

"Dad, do you know where our cherries went?" Billy asked.

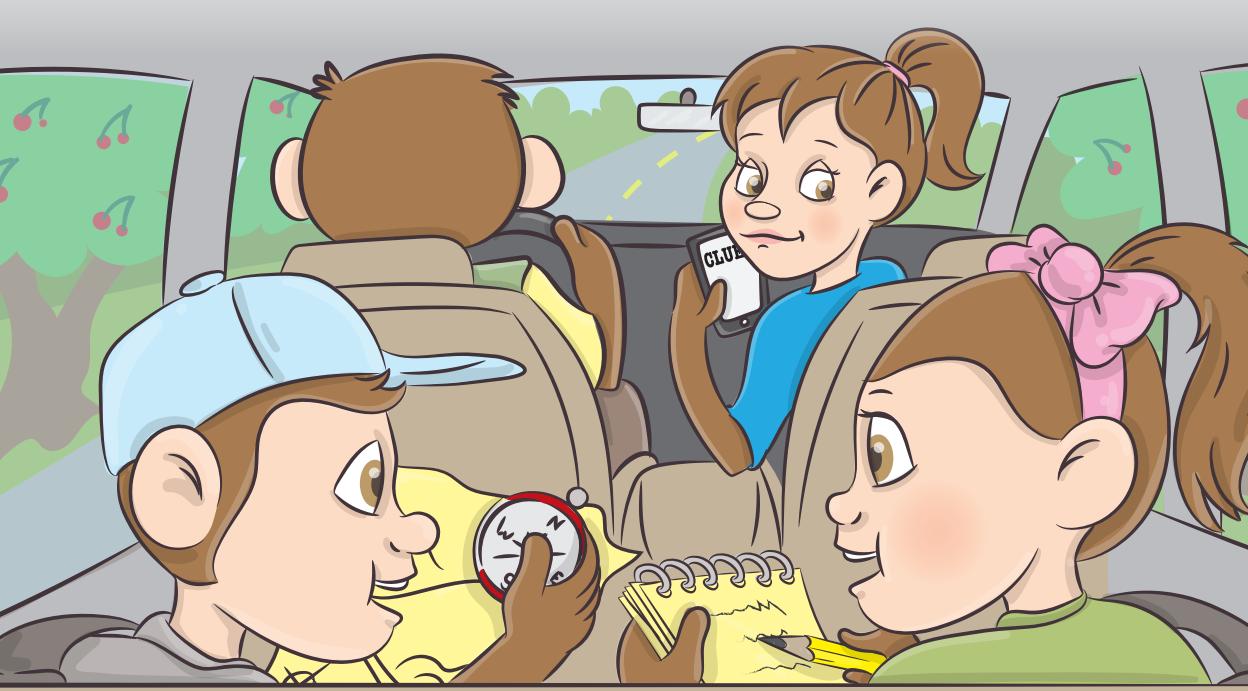
"I don't, but I think Mom heard about a Greedy Goblin snatching fruit in our neighborhood," said Dad.



"Yes kids, the Greedy Goblin crept in and stole our cherries! But he's agreed to give them back if you two can solve his riddles and find him!" Mom explained.

"When you answer each riddle correctly, I'll give you some letters. These letters will be your clues in solving a mystery! At the end, you will need to unscramble the letters to spell out the name of the state where Greedy Goblin is hiding!"

Billy took out his map and compass. Bella got her notepad and pencil ready.

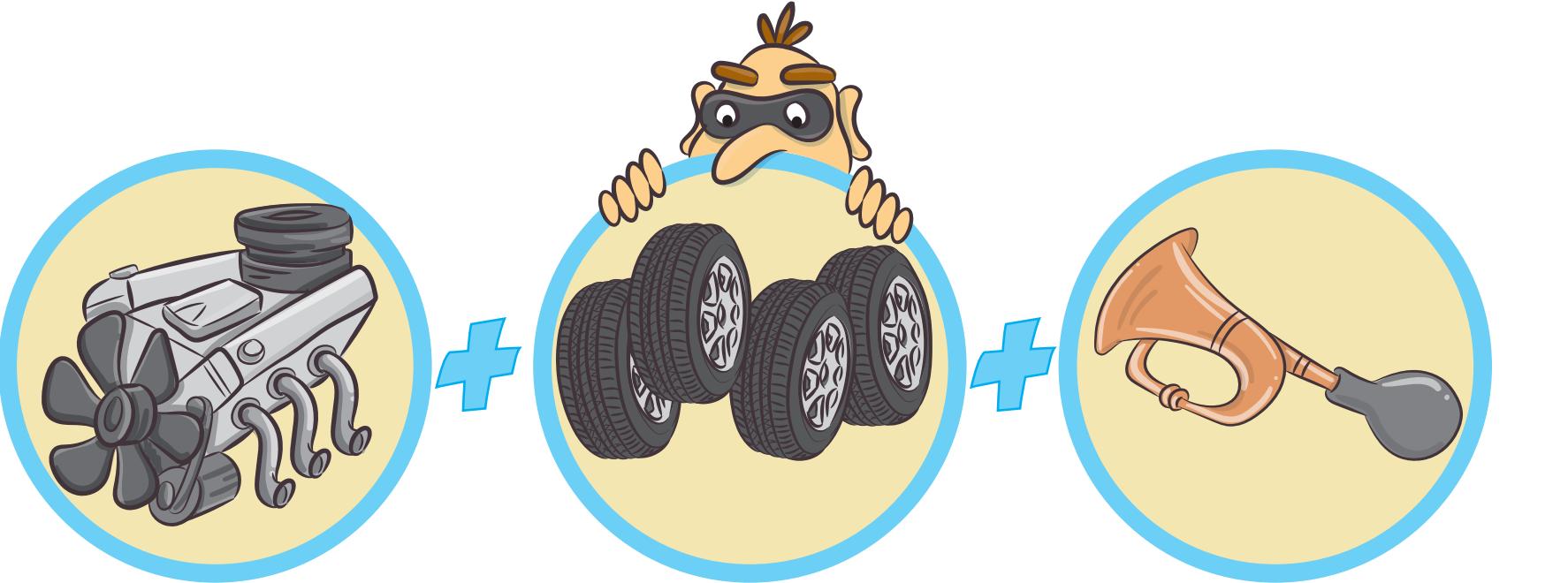


Readers, you can help Billy and Bella solve the mystery by writing down the letters as you get them, too! Once you get them all, don't forget to unscramble them!

"Are you ready for your first riddle from the Greedy Goblin, kids?" asked Mrs. Bongo.

"We sure are, Mom!" Billy and Bella cheered.

"Okay, what has an engine, four wheels, and toots a horn?"



"A car! A car!" yelled Bella.

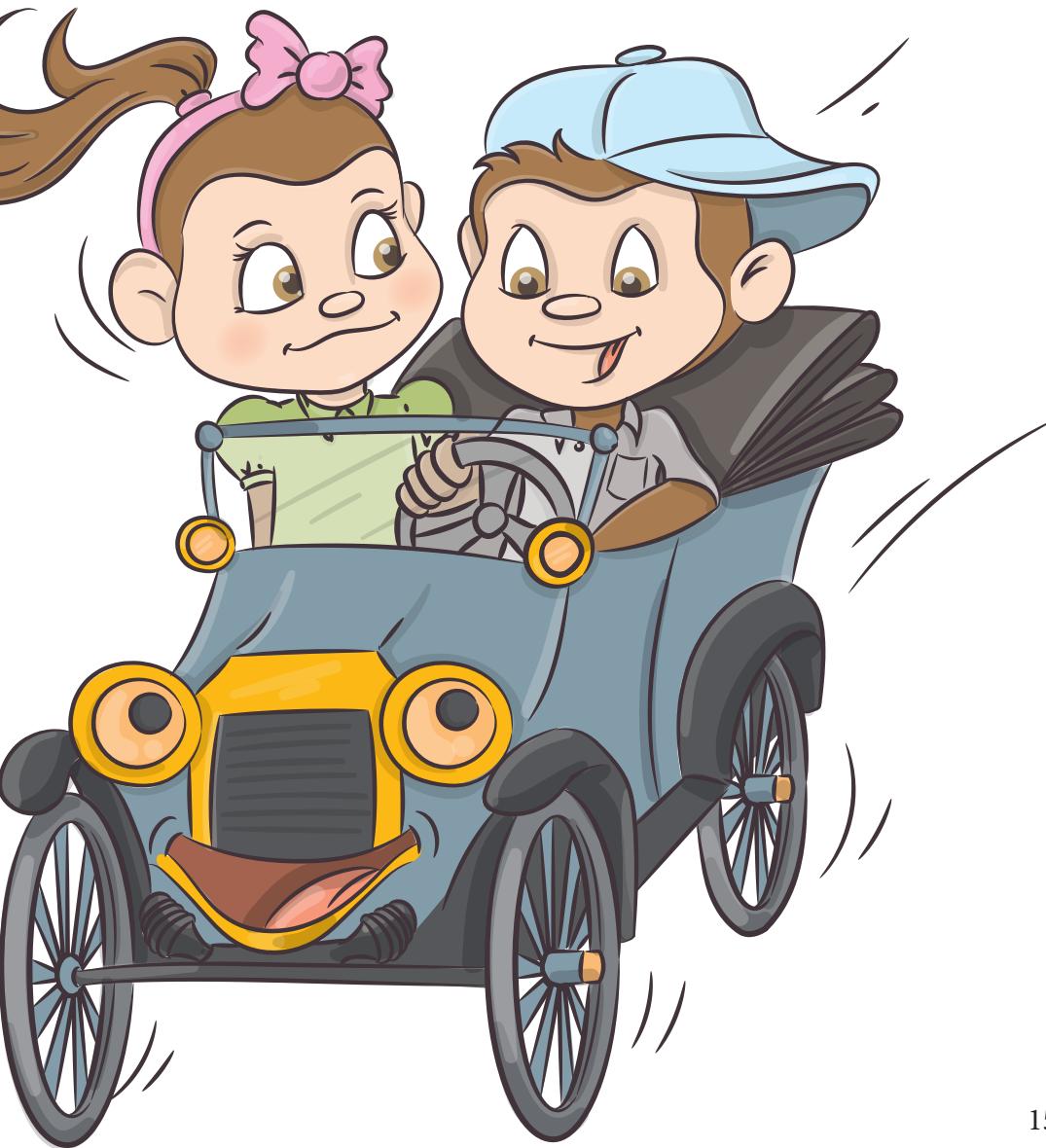
"That's right. Good job! A famous man named Henry Ford made a factory for cars in the state we're headed to. There is a huge museum where some of these cars are on display today," said Mr. Bongo.

"I love cars!" said Billy, smiling.

"That makes two of us, son," agreed Billy's dad.

"Great job, kids. Your first clues are the letters C and A," Mrs. Bongo said.

Bella wrote down **C** and **A** in her notebook.



The kids were eager for their second riddle.

"What is a popular breakfast food that makes a crunchy sound?" asked Mrs. Bongo.

"Fried bugs!" shouted Billy.

"No way! Gross! It's cereal.
I love cereal," Bella said
with a big smile.



"Correct again! This state is known as the Cereal Bowl of America, because it makes most of the cereal in the United States."

"Mmmm...now I'm getting hungry. I sure wish we had those cherries back," mumbled Bella.
"We'll get something to eat soon, kids. Your next clues are the letters M and I," said Mom.

Bella wrote down the letters **M** and **I**, next to the letters **C** and **A** in her notepad, while Billy peeked at his map.

"We're ready for our third riddle," said Bella.

"You kids are going to catch that Greedy Goblin for sure! Here's your next riddle: Where is somewhere that people like to go fishing?" asked mom.

"Ooh, I know! I know! On the lake! That's where Dad likes to fish the most!" answered Billy.

"That's right," chuckled Mr. Bongo.

"We're going to a state that's connected to four of the biggest lakes in America. These lakes are so big and deep that they look like oceans, and that's why they're called the Great Lakes! There's even a mail boat which delivers mail to all the freight ships that pass through these lakes," Mrs. Bongo explained.



"That's cool! You mean I can mail a letter to Grandpa and go fishing with Dad at the same time?" asked Billy.

"Oh, Billy, you're so silly!" giggled Bella.

Mrs. Bongo smiled at her children as she said,
“According to the Greedy Goblin, your next clue is the letter G.”

As Bella wrote down the letter **G** in her notepad, Billy scratched his head, trying to figure out which state had the letters

C A M I G

“This is a tough one,” sighed Billy.

(Readers, have you figured out where the Bongos are going yet?)

As Billy worked hard trying to solve the mystery, Mrs. Bongo was ready to give Billy and Bella their fourth riddle.



“What’s tall, has a head and foot, and sails on the water?” asked Mrs. Bongo.

“A giraffe on a surfboard?” giggled Bella.

“Now that’s funny! A giraffe on a surfboard!” exclaimed Billy.

“Ooh! Ooh! I know the answer. My teacher taught us that the sails on a ship have a head and a foot,” remembered Bella.

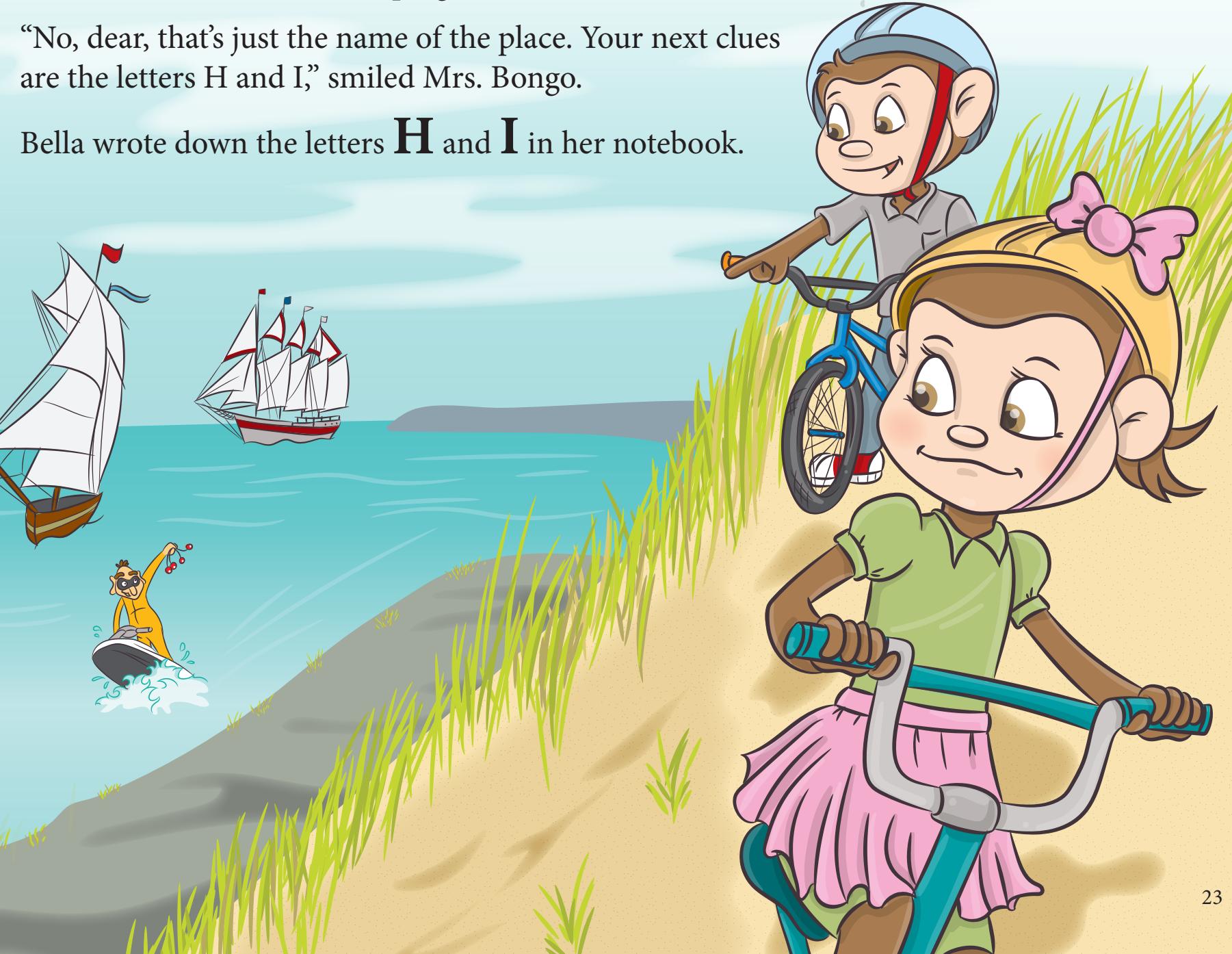
“Your teacher is correct! This state is one of the few states where you can watch big wooden ships with large sails race across the water during the Tall Ships celebration. People can even visit the ships while they’re docked. Nearby, there’s also a place called Sleeping Bear Dunes, with beaches, sand dunes, and trails to explore,” explained Mom.



“Cool! But are there *real* sleeping bears?” asked Bella.

“No, dear, that’s just the name of the place. Your next clues are the letters H and I,” smiled Mrs. Bongo.

Bella wrote down the letters **H** and **I** in her notebook.



"We're almost through the clues. You kids are doing great! We'll have those cherries back from the Greedy Goblin in no time!"

Here's your last riddle: Which bird has a red belly and likes to chirp outside our kitchen window every morning?

"A robin! A robin!" shouted Billy and Bella.

"Yes! Great job, kids" said Mrs. Bongo. "All of the 50 states have a state bird, and the robin is this state's bird. One of the best places to see birds in this state is at a nature center in Lansing, the state capital," explained Mr. Bongo.

Billy and Bella were given their final clue, the letter **N**.

"Alright, kids. You have all the letters of the state we're going to. Any guesses?" asked Mrs. Bongo.



Billy and Bella were quiet in the backseat as they worked together to unscramble the letters. Bella started writing all the letters down in her notebook in different orders, while Billy scanned his map to see which state had the letters they were given.

(Readers, can you help Billy and Bella unscramble the letters to solve the puzzle? Be sure to yell out the answer when you know it, so Billy and Bella can hear you!)

C A M I G H I N

No, that's not it!



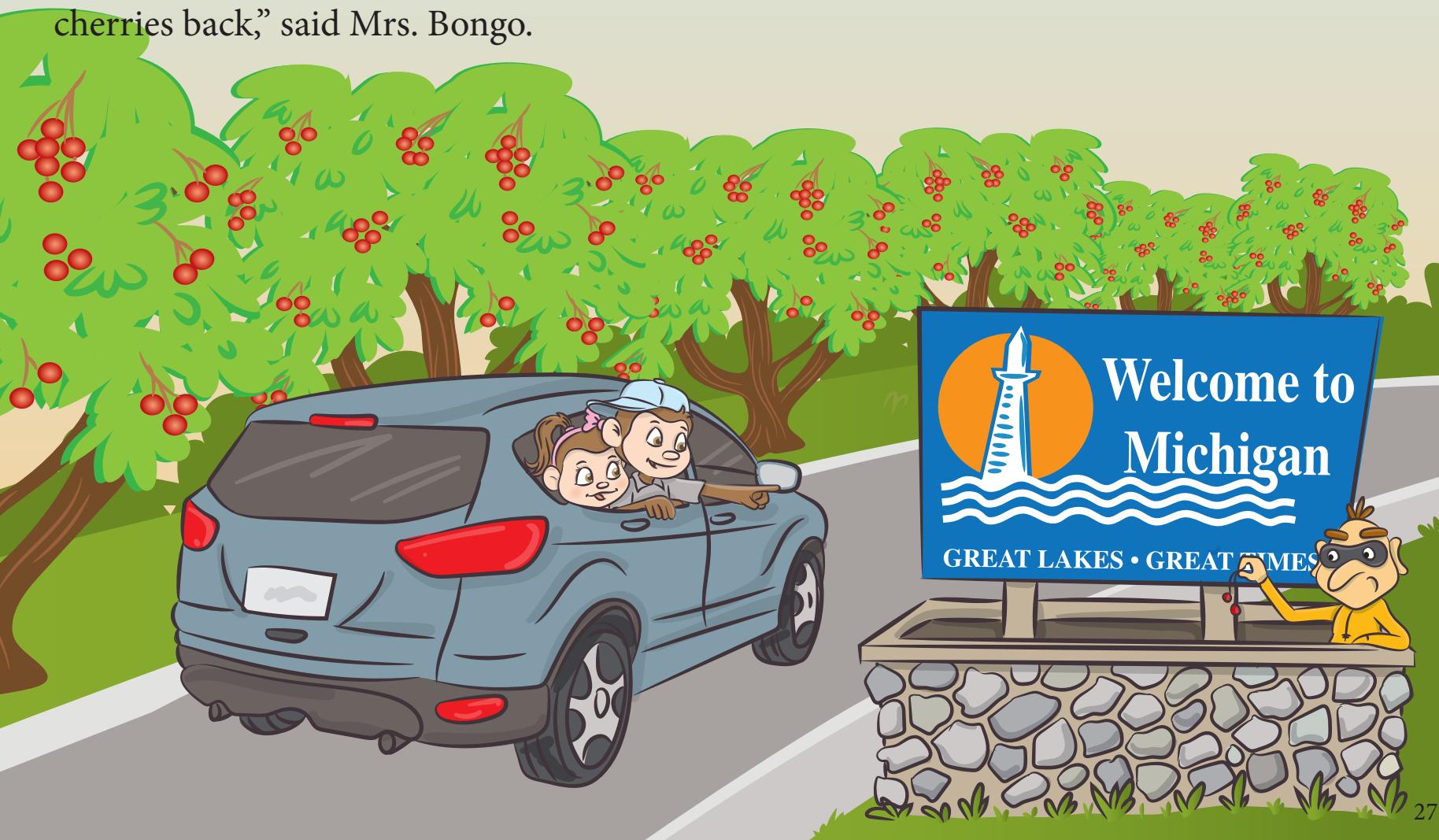
M I C H N I G A

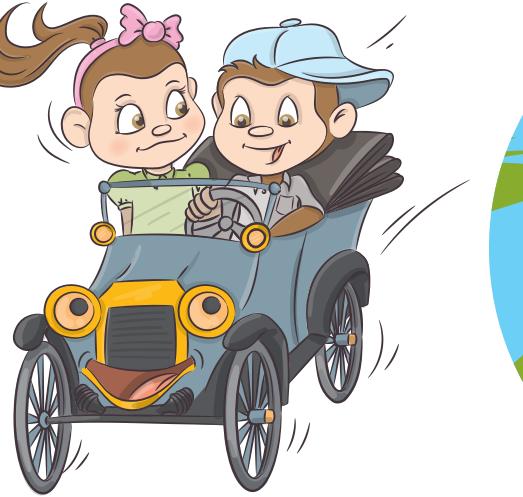
That's not it, either...

"Mom! Dad! We got it!" said Bella.

"Greedy Goblin's in Michigan!" cheered Billy, just as they passed a big sign that said, "Welcome to Michigan!"

"Great work, kids! Michigan was the 26th state to become part of the United States. We're going to have so much fun here. Plus, we can get those delicious Michigan cherries back," said Mrs. Bongo.





The next few days were filled with fun activities as the Bongos explored Michigan. They visited the Henry Ford Museum and saw cars and other great inventions from long ago; they toured the tall ships, looked out over the Great Lakes, and ate lots of cereal!

They even saw a real mail boat! Billy and Bella also rode bikes in the Sleeping Bear Dunes; went bird watching and saw robins; and learned that the state flower is an apple blossom (which doesn't look anything like an apple).

When their visit was over, the Bongo family was on the road again. Billy and Bella were in the backseat of the car, sharing a bag of juicy Michigan cherries.

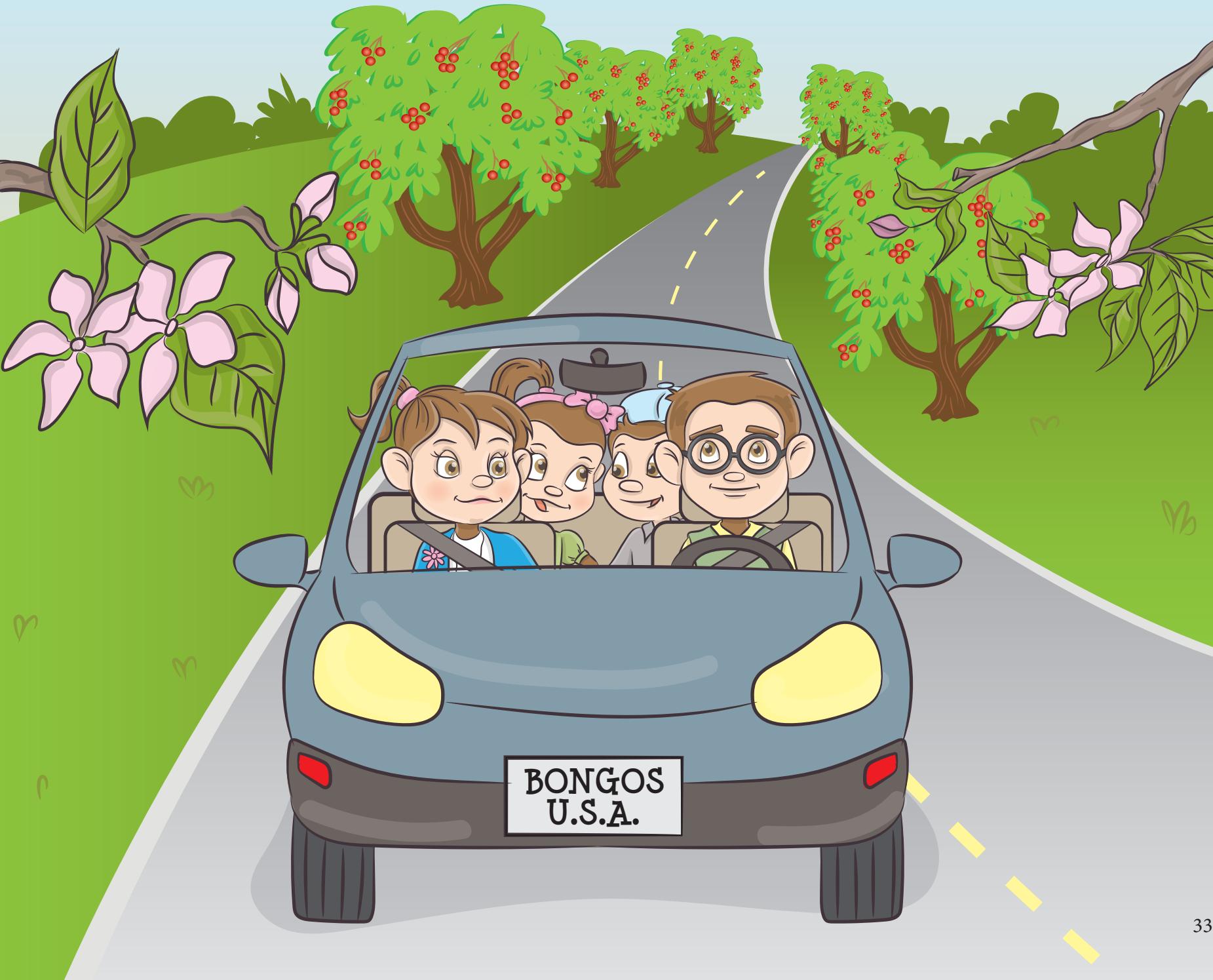
"Mom? Dad? Where are we going next?" asked Bella.

"Glad you asked, Bella. We just heard that the Greedy Goblin is on the run again, and we need to track him down. Are you both ready for your next clue?" smiled Mom.



Readers, where do you think the Bongo family's next mystery destination will be?

Visit us at www.bongosbooks.com to tell us what you love about your state and why the Bongo family should visit you next!



*Can you guess the
Michigan Flag?*



A



B



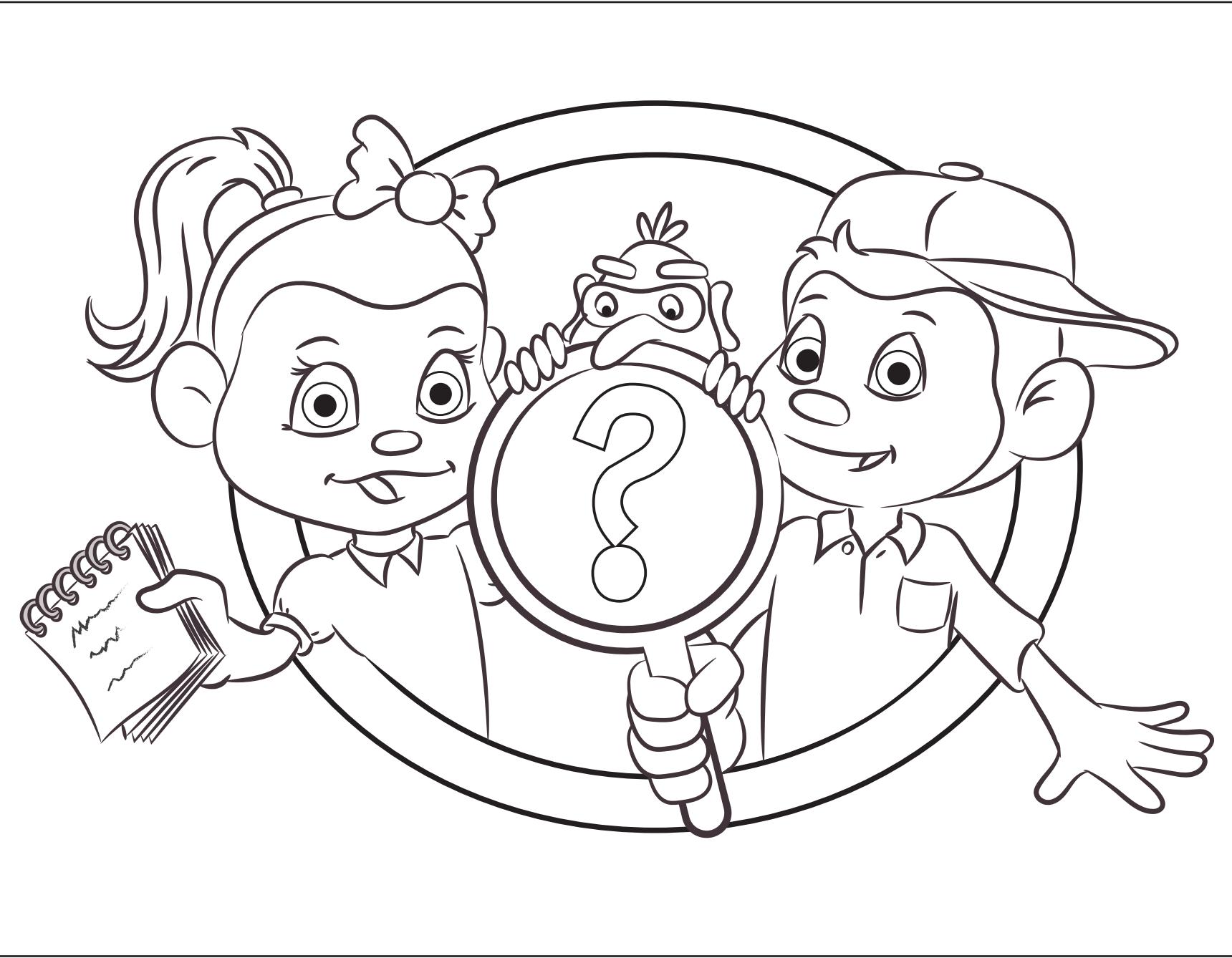
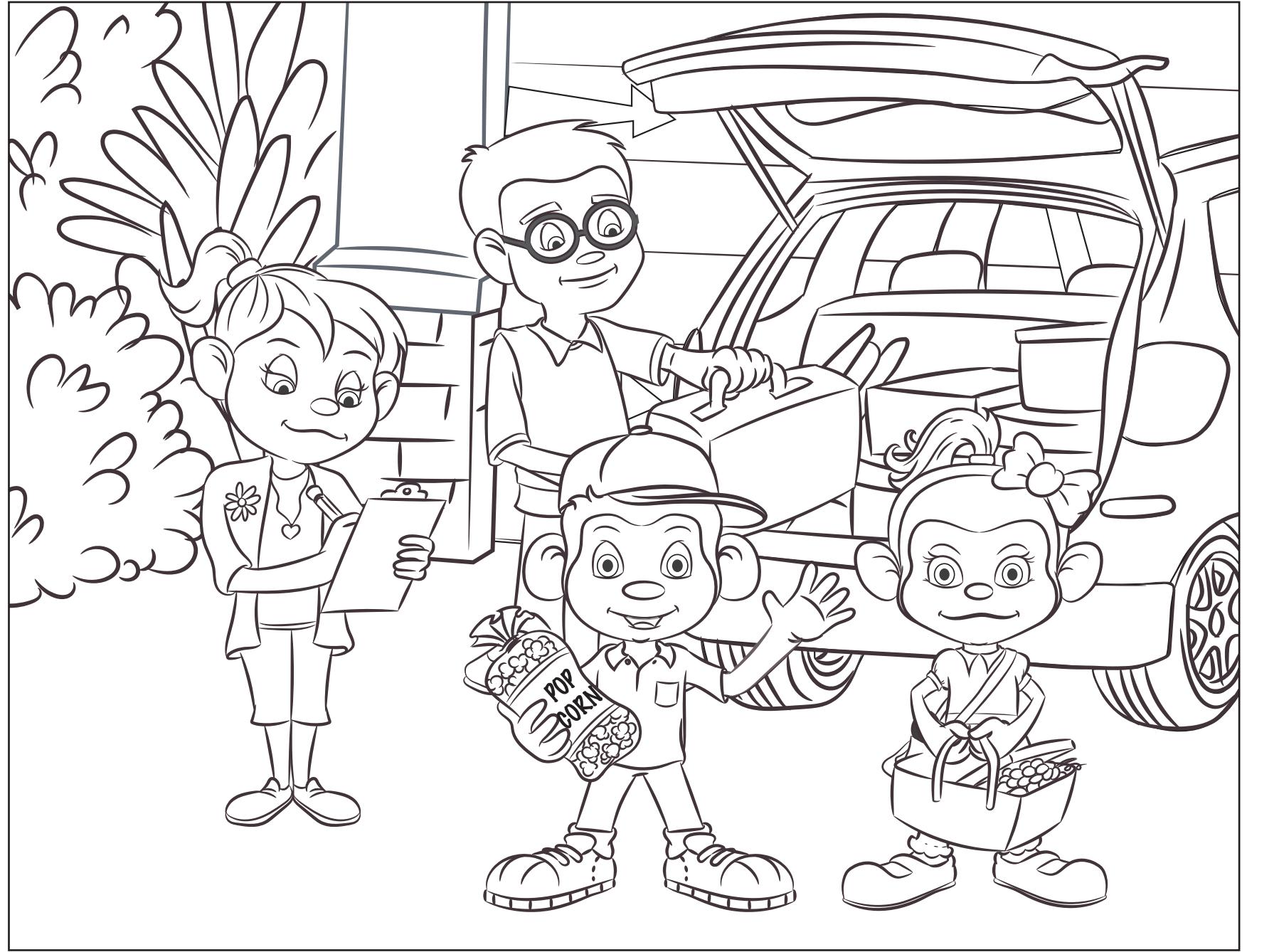
C

ANSWER (B)

YOUR NAME

GREAT LAKES

A large, stylized title "MICHIGAN" is centered at the top, flanked by two circular symbols with crosshairs. Below it is a cartoon illustration of a girl and a boy looking through a magnifying glass at a question mark. The word "YOUR NAME" is written in a bold, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the words "GREAT LAKES" are written in a bold, sans-serif font, flanked by two circular symbols with crosshairs.



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