

The Road Trip Begins . . .

Two little girls sat very still under a tree in their yard and looked at each other. They were puzzled. They had never seen their Grammy so excited before. This must be a very special trip she had planned. She had been talking about it for years, but they still weren't exactly sure what it was all about. Now the time had come, and they were almost ready to leave.

Maggie turned to Valerie and said, "Where do you think we're going? I know Grammy said something about an eclipse, but *where* is an eclipse?"

Just then, Grammy came outside.

"Where is an eclipse?" Valerie asked.

"Oh, an eclipse can be anywhere on Earth," Grammy answered. "You just have to be in the right place at the right time."

"But where are *we* going?"

"We are going to travel into the future!"

"Oh, that's silly," Valerie said. "We're always traveling into the future. We can't help it. Now if we were going into the past, that would be exciting!"

"Well, I promise you, this will be a very exciting trip—one of the most exciting trips you will ever take. A *total solar eclipse**, when the Sun is completely hidden by the Moon, is such a wonderful thing to see that I've traveled all over the world just to see one."

"Really, the *whole* world?" Maggie exclaimed.

"Yes," Grammy said. "Grampy and I have gone to all seven continents to see a total eclipse, even to Antarctica! But this time, we won't have to go that far. The eclipse path goes from Oregon all the way across the country to South Carolina, like a big banner across more than 10 states. There are lots of places to go, and all you have to do is get in the car and drive."

*See the Glossary on page 34 for more information about this and other terms marked with an asterisk.

Just then, Mom, Dad and Grampy came out of the house. “Is everyone ready?” Mom asked. “Are you excited?”

“We’d better get started, because we have to drive for 2 days to get there,” Dad reminded everyone.

Once they were in the car and on their way, Valerie asked, “But why do we have to be on the road for 2 days, Grammy? I heard it’s going to be a 70 percent eclipse right here. Isn’t that good enough? Couldn’t we just stay home?”

“Oh, no! Even 99 percent isn’t good enough. It’s like the difference between looking at a picture of an ice cream cone and *eating* an ice cream cone. They are not the same at all. We *have* to see 100 percent. **TOTAL Eclipse Or Bust!**”

