

Return of the Pakakosh: Part Two

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Months passed since the strange incident at the Arcand barn dance. Rosemary is still in a coma. Her best friend, Carol was having horrifying nightmares. They were so bad that she had to be hospitalized in the evenings.

This morning, as Rosemary's Kokum came to visit. She stood by Rosemary's bed before saying good morning. Rosemary seemed to have gone thin and pale overnight Kokum thought to herself. It didn't look good. Kokum told Rosemary that she couldn't stay for a long time since she had some errands this morning. Kokum slowly got up and held Rosemary's hand, kissed her cheek, and said she would return tomorrow.

Tears filled Kokum's eyes as she made her way to the ward entrance doors. She could not control any of her emotions any longer. As she cried, the pain and sadness of losing a loved one subsided. Kokom continued to walk again down the street. Next thing she knew, she was by the church and graveyard. She went to her Mother's grave, and placed an offering. She asked her mother to help her pray to the Creator to spare Rosemary's life. She asked her mother to help her to remember the things that she was told as a child.

When Kokum reached her house she was feeling much better. She had a little nap, and made supper for her and Rosemary's mother after she got home from work. After supper, Kokum sat by the window playing solitaire. The sound of wind chimes crashing against the window startled her right out of her chair. A glimpse of something shining made shivers run down her spine, the back of her hair felt like it was standing. Kokum knew what it was, the wind chimes kept hitting the window harder and harder. As long as the lights were on, and she didn't look out the window Kokom would be okay.

She walked to her room, closed her bedroom door, lit her sweet grass, said a prayer, and went to bed. In the wee hours Kokum began to dream. She was nine, and there was a bad winter storm. They were low on food so her father went to get the supplies, but due to the weather he couldn't leave the store. It was almost 10 days and the storm wouldn't let up. The cupboard was empty. Tomorrow they would have little to eat between the three of them. Her little brother was constantly asking for something to eat.

Kokum's mother told her children to watch the prairie chickens roosting under the snow-covered evergreen trees. The children watched the prairie chickens quickly eating the last of the bread crumbs, their mother had put out there. That evening their mother hung some little snares outside the window. The very next morning they looked and there were three little prairie chickens. They would be eating today. Kokum's mother said, "Remember to give and you shall receive. Always remember the prairie chickens that saved us from starving."

Kokum opened her eyes, it was morning. She slept late. Kokum was very happy: she remembered her dream. She quickly ran for the fish line and began to fix little snares. She hung them by the window and in the rosebushes.

Rosemary's mother came home for supper. She told Kokum that she would be staying at the hospital tonight. With her daughter gone for the night, Kokum put a dish of offering outside by the window, and quickly came in. She went to her room and put on her sweater. She placed her protection whistle around her neck, hidden under the sweater.

As Kokum came to the table to finish her solitaire game, she poured herself a cup of tea. She sat there for quite some time. Just as she started getting into her game, the screeching and jingling of the wind chimes began. It soon became so fierce that she thought the window would break. She finally heard the screeching laughter sound of the Pakakosh, the flying skeleton. It was so piercing that her ears became sore. Kokom knew it was really angry. She couldn't look so she quickly went to the door and put her whistle in her mouth. She turned the light on, and began to blow her whistle. She blew and blew 'till her ears throbbed. Her eyes started to tear up, but Kokum kept blowing. She was now on her knees, but

wouldn't give up. The Pakakosh was all caught up in a ball, but Kokum kept on blowing, finally there was stillness. Kokum still kept blowing like crazy. Then out of nowhere a huge gust of wind circled them.

When she opened her eyes everything had been picked up by the wind. All that remained in a little pile was Rosemary's protection whistle. Kokum picked it up, and put it in her sweater pocket. The snares and offering had all vanished in the wind. With a throbbing head and rubbery legs, Kokum crawled into the house. She locked the door and went right to bed exhausted.

Rosemary's mother was standing looking at Kokum, pale, ashen-faced and sound asleep. She began to cry, "Mom ... mom, wake up!" Slowly, Kokum held her daughter. "Rosemary woke up! We can go and visit her. Then you can tell me about you battle." Everyone was happy that Rosemary woke up. Carol quit having nightmares. However, traces of the memories remained.

Weeks later, when Rosemary was at home, Kokum remembered the necklace. She went to get it. To her surprise, there was a smaller necklace weaved into the protection whistle. Kokum wondered, "Who owns this golden ring necklace?"

To Be Continued