

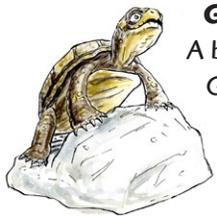
The Cast of Characters

The Animals



Sky Heart The eagle. Sky Heart spoke to Rain that Dances when he was a small boy, teaching him about ways healthy food and physical activity can help the people to prevent type 2 diabetes. Now that Rain is older, he speaks to him only in dreams. In this story, he warns Rain about threats to the community and asks for his help in restoring its harmony.

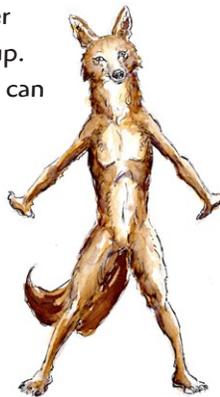
Thistle The rabbit. Thistle advises Sky Heart about an old box turtle's cry for help and cautions him about the coyote's tricky ways.



Grandmother Turtle
A box turtle elder.

Grandmother Turtle is frightened because the resting place of an ancient relative has been disturbed by a thief—causing the water on the reservation to dry up.

She knows that she must do everything she can to restore the long sleep of her ancestor.



Coyote The trickster. Coyote entertains himself by entangling the human and animal characters in a game that is won only when the reservation's creeks flow once again and friends and family are safe.

The Kids



Rain (*Rain that Dances; also called "RD" by his friends*) The boy chosen by the eagle. Every day, Rain tries to spread the eagle's messages about eating healthy and being active. At school, the kids call him "Veggie-Man," but Rain doesn't mind because preventing type 2 diabetes is all-important. When the eagle asks for his help in a dream, Rain must draw upon all his courage to face down a real "bad guy" who threatens his family and the health of his Tribe.

Hummingbird (*Bird*) Rain's confidant.

A great friend, Hummingbird listens carefully to Rain's innermost thoughts about the eagle's messages. Like Rain, she is totally committed to helping the community become healthy. Smart and popular, she can be bossy at times, but the boys count on her clear thinking and determination.



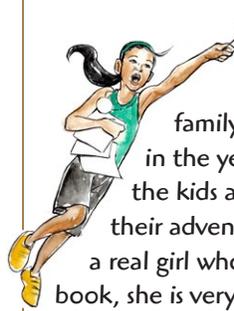
Boomer (Thunder Cloud) Rain's best pal. Friendly and loud, Boomer is the joker always ready for excitement and a game of basketball. When Rain gets too serious, Boomer can snap him out of it with his good humor. Although he often speaks

before he thinks, Boomer is very resourceful when the kids get in a tough spot.

Simon Rain's "nerdy" buddy. Simon's family has recently returned to the reservation after spending several years in the big city. Now, he is reconnecting with his friends. All of Rain's friends are considered a bit un-cool because they hang out with "Veggie-Man," but Simon is the biggest egghead. He loves comic books and reads *everything* about dinosaurs.



Arianna Hummingbird's new "sister." Arianna is temporarily living with Hummingbird's family. She is from an Hispanic family that will be moving to the community later in the year. Arianna has type 1 diabetes. She teaches the kids about this form of diabetes and joins them in their adventures. (The character of "Arianna" is based on a real girl whose name is Arianna. Like the character in the book, she is very active and loves sports.)



The Villain

Vernon Smeed The Fossil Poacher. Smeed is a shady character who is looting fossil sites on the reservation. Rain and his friends uncover his illegal operations and ruthless pursuit of bones belonging to an ancient turtle. When Smeed threatens Rain's great-grandmother, who knows where the bones lie hidden, he sadly underestimates the resourcefulness and courage of his young opponents.

