

Uoos the Faithful

by Kali Chung

Two of the smaller boys dragged the stump into the middle of the gathering. The first harvest bonfire was already burning as the people of the stead settled themselves for an evening meal in the fields. All the children gathered round Grandmother Rowen as she sat on the stump, eager to hear her story...

A thousand harvests ago, there lived a boy named Uoos from the High Hills. He came from a family whose bloodline was pure and flowing with the magic of animal mastery. As with all animal masters, they, as well as the animals, protected and loved their village. The tradition goes that one would know which animal he was drawn to by age ten. So when Uoos reached the Age, the whole village gathered around to see which animal would emerge from the shadows. For Uoos wanted to be the best animal master of his village.

"I wonder if the Aal will come tonight," Uoos' grandmother said admiringly.

"No, I want to see the Lnwa visit Brother," said Uoos' little sister in a commanding tone.

"As long as it's not the Viabeoo," said Uoos' father hopefully.

For the next several minutes everybody waited in silence as they fixed their gaze into the dark forest. The long minutes turned to long hours. The people started to grow restless and even Uoos himself started to worry. Where was his animal? What was he going to do if it never showed up?

Slowly, everyone started to head back to their homes, but Uoos grabbed on to Grandmother's robes and asked, "Can we stay a bit longer?"

Grandmother replied in a gentle manner, "Uoos, perhaps your animal will show its face tomorrow. Do not worry. Sometimes this happens." She put her arm around his shoulders to take him back home, but instead Uoos ran away into the woods. Grandmother called out to Uoos, asking him to come back, but Uoos had to go somewhere and be alone. He found a quiet place with soft leaves surrounding a circle of grass.

As Uoos collapsed onto the grass, he cried tears of sadness. Crying out to the gods he prayed, "May I find favor in your eyes, oh gods of Gallidon. Tonight I was to be an animal master, but my animal has not shown its face. I have failed my family and my village. Please, oh gods have mercy and send me my animal quickly!" After saying his prayer, he went back home.

Everyday for the next three years he prayed faithfully before he went to bed. However,



no great and wonderful animal showed up, and Uoos was still no animal master. Regardless, Uoos continued to protect and love his village faithfully, and he grew in wisdom and strength.

One night, Uoos' village was attacked by a band of rebels. As people and animals ran everywhere, fear and panic spread through his village. Uoos did the best he could, but without the help of an animal, he couldn't do the magic the animal masters were doing. To see his village in chaos and trouble, Uoos was heartbroken and desperate. He lifted his eyes to the heavens and prayed, "Gods of Gallidon! My village is in trouble and I want to help, but I'm not yet an animal master and cannot do the things they do. Send my animal tonight to save my village. Redeem me, and put fear into the hearts of our attackers. In exchange, I will be your servant in your courts forevermore."

As Uoos finished his prayer, a strange sensation overcame his body. His shoulder arched as wings fought to take form. Golden hair sprouted into existence as the face he knew grew lean. All eyes turned towards him as he finished his transformation.

Uoos let out a mighty cry that caused the ground to shake. So fearsome and terrifying was he that all the attackers fled immediately. As the last of the rebels disappeared into the horizon, one by one the people turned to look at this magnificent animal whom none had ever seen.

Uoos looked at his village with love. In the distance, he saw with his eagle eyes the gods of Gallidon waiting for him at the entrance to the heavens. They had kept their end of the promise, and now, so must he. Uoos gathered himself and flew away.

The gods of Gallidon had heard Uoos' prayer. He had sacrificed himself for the village. Not only that, but he became the first of his kind and brought forth the Griffin Clan. They set up a memorial on his behalf and shared the story of Uoos for generations to come.

Legend has it that Uoos himself may visit to comfort those who have not yet met their animal.



This Work set in Runes of Gallidon – runesofgallidon.com.

Available under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

First Published January, 2009.

