

Title: Feast of the Winter Moon

Type: FPGen

Characters: Théodred, Eomer, and the other people of Rohan.

Rating: G

Beta: Alex

Disclaimer: Not mine.

Author's Notes: My assumption here is that Rohan and its people have ties to our world's Norse mythology. Some authors disagree with this assumption and have done pages of writing to disprove it. I don't care. I like the idea that the people of Rohan have some Viking traditions and mythology. The holiday, Feast of the Winter Moon, was my own take on Thor's Feast: Full Moon of January.

I read about Thor's Feast here: <http://www.wizardrealm.com/norse/holidays.html>

Any of the customs I've included for this feast are purely my imagination, I make NO claims of getting anything 100% accurate. And just for the record, Eowyn hasn't been born yet.

Also, I assume that the children of Rohan can ride almost before they can walk, so a three year old is comfortable around horses.

Summary: Sixteen-year-old Théodred and three-year-old Eomer at Eomer's first official feast.

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Théodred grimaced as a child's piercing voice cut through the almost silent main hall. It wasn't that he disliked Eomer, it was just that the boy was so awfully loud when he was excited. And he was always excited when he got to see Théodred.

Eomer wriggled out of the nurse's arms and when she finally let him go, he ran as fast as chubby baby legs could carry him, screaming at the top of his lungs for his favorite cousin.

"Thee-dred!! Thee-dred!! We is goin' to be in a feasting!!"

Théodred could only shake his head, and laugh, then he bent down to catch a flying bundle of Eomer, who wrapped his arms tightly around his cousin's neck but finally quit screaming.

"Will you be able to sit still and be quiet when you need to? We can't talk while they're making speeches."

Eomer nodded vigorously and opened his mouth to speak, but Theodred put a finger over his lips to quiet him. "But there is some time yet, should we go down to the stables so I can show you my horse? We can take some apples to feed him."

He didn't wait for Eomer's answer before he started on the way out of the main hall toward the stables. Once they got outside, he set Eomer down, and the little boy ran ahead, then realized he had no idea where the stables were, so he ran back and grabbed Theodred's hand, tugging him, trying to make him hurry.

A relatively short time later, the two boys were back in the main hall, Eomer looking only a little worse for the wear, considering he'd fallen down twice. He only had a small smudge of dirt on each knee and they'd gotten almost all of the straw off his clothes and out of his hair. Eomund had chuckled when they returned, and assured Theodred that Eomer was fully capable of getting his clothes dirty, even with his heavy winter cloak on. Presently, Eomer sat between his father and Theodred, trying hard to sit up straight and not shout and talk too much.

He even managed to be relatively behaved until Theodred had to stand and give his own prayer, asking for the storms to be driven out of Rohan, so they could begin their spring planting, and the new foals weren't born during a blizzard. He was almost finished when Eomer jumped up on his own chair, and tugged at Theodred's sleeve.

"Thee-dred! Be quiet!! You said I had be quiet!! You be quiet too, Thee-dred!!" With that, he sat back down and gave his father a triumphant look. He'd not only stayed quiet, but he'd reminded Thee-dred too!

Theodred wasn't sure if he should run away or just sink into the floor. He was saved from much further humiliation by his father, who stood and clapped a hand to his shoulder, announcing that the prayers were over and the feast could begin. It took a few minutes for Theodred's face to go from bright red back to a more normal color, and during the whole time, he tried to ignore Eomer as much as possible. He was just glad that his cousin didn't actually live there with them, or he had a feeling that Eomer would do a lot more things that would embarrass him.

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The next few days felt like much longer to Theodred as Eomer took to following him around, every minute of the day. Theodred was used to looking after himself, and having a three-year-old tagging along wasn't much fun. For one thing, he couldn't saddle up and ride out to one of the soldiers' camps to join in some of their patrols or the informal competitions they held. He could hardly go to the stables at all, after one day when Eomer had felt sorry for the horses and let most of them out of their stalls. It took two hours to get all of them back, and Theodred got yelled at for not watching the boy closely enough.

Near the end of Eomer's visit, Theodred was sure he'd gotten away from him, and could finally have some time to himself. He thought maybe he'd go riding. When he reached the stables though, he found them in an uproar. Theodred groaned, thinking that Eomer had loosed all the horses again. He was relieved when he looked inside and it seemed that they were all accounted for. Except one. He grabbed one of the stable boys and asked what had happened. Eomer had somehow convinced one of the younger stable hands to let him sit on a horse and maybe walk it around outside. Once they'd cleared the stables, Eomer had leaned as close as he could to the animal's ear and screamed at the top of his lungs. It was a miracle, but the boy held on when the horse bucked and started running for its life. They were just getting men out after him. Theodred didn't stop to saddle his horse after all; he opened the

door to his stall and vaulted onto his back, setting out at a gallop in the direction that the stable boy yelled to him as he left.

Eomer had gotten a remarkable distance away out onto the plains before the horse finally stopped. Theodred slowed his own mount so as not to scare the other horse, or his cousin, again.

"Eomer? Aren't you cold? You don't have your cloak."

Eomer nodded yes, and held his arms out to Theodred. "Wide wif you back."

"Why did you come out here all by yourself? You aren't big enough to have your own horse and ride it alone."

"Fought you leaved me. You said you wide by self, Thee-dred. Wanted you wait for me."

Theodred sighed as he pulled Eomer off the now-calmed horse and tucked him into his cloak.

"I guess I just can't get away from you, can I? I'll wait for you, Eomer. I'll always wait 'til you come, from now on."

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Twenty-five some years later

It was nearly an execution. The Orcs—Uruk-Hai, all wearing the white hand, were intent on getting to the Crown Prince, determined to kill him, no matter how many of their own were killed in the process.

When his men came to him, to bear his body back to Edoras, they found that he still lived, but only long enough to speak his last words,

"Let me lie here....to keep the Fords until Eomer comes!"<sup>1</sup>

~End~

<sup>1</sup> This comes directly from Tolkien in the Unfinished Tales. In fact, the entire last scene was taken from 'The Battles of the Fords of Isen.' (Summarized and paraphrased, except for the last line which was a direct quote.)