Of the time before

In the time before, there was no pony, no pegusi, no unicorn, no cow, no pig, no bison, no buffalo, no zebra, no giraffe, no gazelle, no yak, no alpaca, no deer, no reindeer, and no llama.

There were dragons.

But it was not dragons that ruled, but the *Others*. The *Others* were unlike any other beings. They were force and might, hatred and malice, lands and worlds unto themselves, with power beyond any. Cruel and uncaring they would create and cast down the races of the world, as was their whim. As so they would continue, for years beyond years, and eons beyond eons.

Of the contest

At that time the sun hung over Creation.

One day it came that the *King* of the *Others* decided that the sun should move, for at the time it hung still in the sky. He then declared that a being as great as he (for the sun was of him, and he of the sun) should have a magnificent steed to carry it. And so he declared a contest, with glory to the *Other* that could create the finest stead, a being worthy of carrying the sun, which was of his greatness. At once did all the land hear the proclamation, for the *King* was everywhere and no-where at once, as he was both the chaos and the command.

And so did the *Others* each plan to enter the contest, and each worked to fashion the greatest steed possible.

The *Mountain* stood in silence and contemplated the perfect steed, and so it fashioned Oeg. “Behold, the finest steed in the land. My steed is strong and steady. It will never tire, and will be able to carry even your greatness. There is no path it cannot travel, no mountain it cannot climb, no river it cannot cross. I am the *Mountain*. I am perfection. Ride it and you will surely declare mine the finest.”

The *Desert* watched the sun from afar, and she thought on what steed would befit its perfection, and so she fashioned Prospecta. “Behold, the finest steed in the land. My steed is sturdy and stoic. It will never tire, and needs neither food nor drink. There is no path it cannot travel, it can even transcend even my vast reaches. I am the *Desert*. My vastness is as your greatness above all *Others*. If this steed can traverse even the difference between you and them, then how can any other compare? Ride it, and you will surely declare mine the finest.”

The *Sea* raged and spat, for she had already borne the king once before and felt she should be honored already. Still, she would not lose this contest, and thus sought to birth the perfect steed, and thus was Tidalos born. “Behold, the finest steed in the land. My steed is tough and swift. It can withstand even my depths, and will have no trouble seating your glory, it can swim against

even the river itself. I am the *Sea*. This steed is born of my foam and my struggle. Ride it and you will surely declare mine the finest."

Vision looked across creation, seeking that which would make the perfect steed. But *Vision* could find nothing, for the *Others* knew *Vision* was watching, and jealously hid their work. So did *Vision* turn inward, and craft a steed in his own image, but it was not himself, for the *Others* were vain and could not stand to see their creations as them, and so he fashioned Ramus, which was like him but not him. "Behold the finest steed in the land. My steed is swift and elegant. It can dance through forest, and mountain, and river. Behold its fine horns, whose elegance reflects the glory of the sun. I am *Vision*. I have looked over all of Creation and have seen no more beautiful steed. Ride it and you will surely declare mine the finest."

The *River* traveled across Creation, and beyond its borders, in search of the perfect steed, and so she fashioned Zephyr. "Behold, the finest steed in the land. My steed is swift and tall. It shall outrun all others, it legs are long yet strong. No path shall be a barrier to it, for its head rises above all others and so that it will never be lost. I am the *River*. I have traveled the length and breadth of creation and the outer reaches beyond its borders, and even now separate the two. I know travel above all others. Ride it and you will surely declare mine the finest."

The *Forest* twisted its roots with worry and its leaves began to lament, "How can I create perfection? I have no artistry, only that which others have. How can I create a steed? I am a forest; I know nothing of riding and travel." And so did the *Forest* sink into despair, but then he felt his roots being trampled, and his branches snapped as the *Behemoth* ran through him.

At once the *Forest* gave a great cry of joy and set to work immediately, and so it fashioned Isadora. "Behold, the finest steed in the land. My steed is strong beyond measure. The forest cannot stop her, for she will uproot the trees. The ocean cannot stop her, for she will drive through it. The desert cannot stop her, for she will never tire and never give in. She is a vision of strength and power, as befitting the sun. I am the *Forest*. Ride it and you will surely declare mine the finest."

Of the three

As the others worked on their steeds, *Language* heard their shouts of joy and triumph, and knew he could not compete. And so he listened, to hear those who had also not completed their task, and summoned both *Earth* and *Storm* with subtle whispers, so that none but they could hear. "We cannot hope to compete, for I have heard our brethren. I do not know what manner of steeds they have created but I can hear their triumph. Listen to me: we did not create Creation alone, nor what came before. Let us work together, for shared triumph is better than no triumph at all."

And so *Earth*, who was the kindest of the *Others* agreed, while *Storm* turned and tossed, but it suited her mood to do so, for even she saw the benefits. And so the three set about to create a

steed. *Earth* gave the steed strength and form, a strong base from which to hold all other traits, and legs and power with which to hold the sun. *Storm* gave it wings with which to fly, and the ability to govern the lesser storms, so that no cloud would impede its progress nor diminish the glory of the sun. Finally, *Language* gave it speech; not merely the speech of old, but the language of the universe, which is magic, and a horn upon which to work its magic.

The three looked upon their creation and were almost satisfied. “But what shall we call it?” asked *Earth*. And so *Language* searched within himself, trying to find the word. And for days and nights did he search, until the time of judging was almost at hand, and *Storm* and *Earth* waited nervously.

Finally, *Language* emerged from within himself. “Behold, I have searched my length and breadth and know her name. She is a creature of beauty and grace, so her name must be graceful. But she meant to support and glorify the sun itself, not the focus of attention. Thus her name shall be Luna, and she shall ever reflect the sun’s glory.”

And *Earth* and *Storm* were satisfied.