

# READBEAST

## BEASTIALITY STORIES



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Akorax returned from the hunt, following the blazes of his gang's trail, up into the wooded foothills that were prelude to the rocky mountains beyond. Behind the quiver of arrows and his bow that he carried from his brawny human back, and his spear that he carried in his left hand, was the full carcass of a buffalo to share with his men. He made light of his burden, his huge body scarcely straining under the near two-ton load. Curion, son of Indorex, appeared over the hill, cantering in his direction. Akorax had no sons, although he was old enough to have had tens. A centaur sired his offspring on the two-legged woman unlucky enough to be near when a stallion could not manage to foreswear his own desires. The sons lived with the mother's human tribe for awhile, and then were taken, when they became old enough to be wonton, into the gangs to gallop with them on the range. The centaur-colts remained alive and whole mostly due to the intimidation and coercion of the centaur gangs nearby.

On the other hand, centaur daughters from human mothers were no different than their mothers. The centaurs did not care for them — until they grew up, of course. So there were no female half-horses — that is, four-legged women with the lower body something like that of that rare curiosity, the horse. Oh, there were legends of girl centaurs, and legends of their grace and beauty and prowess in making love; but Akorax had always put those stories down as wishful thinking. Wishful thinking by stallion's who did not like the outlaw life, of having every human man's hand raised against them, of having to seduce (when they could), or abduct and — yes — rape (when they had to) human women to sustain their kind. The rumors of such centaur females — semi-vir/semi-fer — grew outrageous over time, of course. There were stories that a single centaress could satisfy dozens of males. And that they were prodigiously fecund. Akorax smiled to himself bitterly as he trotted forward, and shook his head sadly. The tales were as ridiculous and as useless as the Ghost Dance had been to the ancient Native Americans. He sighed. Yet they were seductive. From time-to-time, a single man-stallion would gallop away — North, South, East or West, it didn't seem to matter — taken with the urge to search for the elusive four-legged female centaur — and he was never seen again. Alive, at least. As Curion came closer, Akorax noticed a light in his nephew's eyes. Was the boy up to some prank? He was known for devilish tricks, like tying together a stallion's hind legs with his own feathers; but no one teased Akorax, especially not the boys, and not Curion, who, though the tallest of the young, and taller than many of the adult males, had eyes that faced his uncle at the middle of his human chest. He knew that Akorax would beat him to a bloody pulp if he even tried one trick.

"Uncle." He saluted, respectfully.

"There is wonderful news. A human tribe has come down out of the mountains. And they have — three — female centaurs with them. And —"

Akorax raised his thewed right hand.

"Begone with your jokes, boy. I will follow you to camp in my own good time."

"But -but it's -"

And here Curion saw the menace in Akorax' eyes, and he turned tail, and ran his gangling body away, back the way he'd come. Akorax approached the encampment, in a wooded clearing, near a stream fed by the distant mountains. The first oddity was not that there were human pickets about; but that they were friendly. Akorax wondered if their old muskets even worked — he preferred the certainty of his bow. The second oddity was the fact that the fifty stallion's and colts of his gang

were clustered within the human encampment, amidst the women and children (none of the boys of the tribe were centaurs, Akorax noted). The final oddity was that he saw Orexen, the gang's elderly shaman, and sire to half the adult males in the gang, speak companionably with a human, old and grizzled himself in age.

"Ah, come here, Akorax, and be welcome."

The old cob had a delighted smile on his face — far more impish than Akorax had ever seen him.

"Curion I sent, and he returned quickly, saying that you did not believe his message."

"Yes. All that is true."

"And so was his message, Akorax. Meet Odilon, chief of this tribe of humans from out of the mountains."

"Greetings." Akorax said stiffly. Was the old shaman taken mad?"

"Oh, you'll have to see them to believe, from the look of your eyes, stallion. Two are comported yonder, beneath the trees, so that they may be shaded. Odilon tells me that the skin of their undressed foreparts are as delicate as a human girl's."

Akorax saw the cluster of the rumps of dozens of couchant stallion's. He stepped to one side, still carrying his load of dead buffalo, to gain a glimpse of their faces. Their eyes were rapt, and their hands together in the gesture of submissive courtship. Their attention was directed absolutely to one or both of the young woman's faces that emerged before them. One had hair that was a glorious sunny blonde, the other had silver white hair. From this distance, Akorax knew these to be the head-ends of two female centaurs: no human woman would be so beautiful, with perfect skin, large eyes, fine features, perfect, regular symmetry of visage, with slender necks that supported the huge child-like heads. The gold laughed and the silver smiled with a twinkle in her eye.

"Those two are Tania and Alula,"

Odilon spoke, quietly.

"We have raised them all since childhood in the mountains. We have bathed them, and fed them. That is hard when our tribe has little enough for itself from the sparse nuts we gathered and small game we managed to hunt. And we gave them shelter whenever they wished to get out of the rain or the cold — which was rare, I admit. Now they have just reached nubility, and they now insist on finding proper mates. They would not be stopped when they heard that the centaur stallion's roam the high plains. They carried us, us and our baggage, mind you, among the three, to this place, and we would have gone farther if not a raiding party from your gang encountered us. Fortunately, no one died in that encounter."

He smiled grimly at what must have been a terribly taut moment.

"It seems that at least two of our strange daughters are happy with your lot. I say, let the half-sisters mate with whom they will. We, in our part, wish a benefice for our investment."

"Oh. So you have a bride-price in mind?"

Akorax looked absently at the two young, nubile centaur women. Each held a doe-skin vest and cotton shirt (rare and imported!) in her hands, and flaunted undressed shoulders (broad and well-

molded) with long and slender arms attached. Neither needed a halter to support their charms — nor would there be halters big enough among the humans to hold them. From there the two centaur women's muscular torsos tapered to hourglass waists, and their lower bodies were obscured by their admirers. So Odilon's tribe had pampered them. It made sense, if the legends were true.

"An alliance," Odilon announced, his finger pointed upward. "We wish to hunt on the plains, for there the buffalo are many and the humans there are few. Our centaresses can carry us all now, but our tribe would grow, and we would need more true centaur's daughters to carry on our nomadic existence. We would have you hunt with us and protect us — I am sure centaurs not of your gang would attack us, if only to rape our women. We, in turn, would supply you with a place of refuge and protect your mates. Although a centaur can cast his spear much farther than our men, they are good fighters, and your companions would protect you at close distances, in the woods and the hills —"

A woman, Akorax judged that she was advancing to middle age, yet still beautiful enough to stir him, approached. She walked with determination, a plain need overcoming her fear. Odilon saw her.

"Anaya. This is Akorax. Orexen tells me that he is their Hunt Chief and War Chief. What say you?"

"That if he were smaller and I younger, he would have had no need to rape me."

Akorax stood rooted to the ground by all four legs, apoplectic at this left-handed compliment.

"And I say that Talitha will not join her sisters, and has taken to the hills, and to a little lake from which the stream issues. She says she will not come down until the stallion who sires only fillies comes to her."

"That's you, I think," growled old Orexen.

He pushed his finger into the giant centaur's human belly-button. He knew very well that if Akorax weren't his son, he would have been throttled.

"Does she know that a monster lives in the lake?" Odilon was alarmed.

"Yes. She took her bow, arrows, spear and sword with her." Akorax had to interject —

"A warrior centaress?" Anaya nodded. "She has always been high-spirited. She continued her training with the armsmen of our tribe even when they pointed out to her it was almost impossible for her to defend herself."

"By the Methodist God, she'll be killed! She went upstream?"

"Yes. It's about a mile up the path." Anaya pointed, and — with an abruptness that surprised even himself — Akorax set out in that direction. Oh damn! he thought as he tried to push himself into a canter. He'd forgotten the carcass! Oh well, let it bounce off if it must — but the trail was too twisty to follow at a canter anyway, and he was forced back into a trot. Where had this Talitha heard about Akorax's disability? Simple — from the other stallion's! He swore he'd crack a few heads — later. Just then, the thought came buzzing through his enraged mind that he'd actually never seen this girl. Ha! She could be ugly as a flying monkey for all he knew. When the shore of the lake came into view, he knew he was too late. The huge front half of a somnolent water dragon rested on the rocks. It was certainly big enough to eat a female centaur. It's eyes were closed. Akorax walked closer, sweating a bit in the sunny afternoon, lungs breathing deeply. Here was a shaft of a spear broken at the head. And here were half-a-dozen arrows, pricking nose and the corner of an eye. No, the dragon

was not sleeping. It was dead. He guessed that the iron point of the spear was resting in the monster's brain. But was Talitha all right? Akorix walked toward the lake — the path seemed to be the only way to it. On a rock next to a tree were a bulky cotton blouse, a doeskin vest (with only the lowest eyelets strung), a nicked sword half out of a scabbard, and archery equipment — the quiver was half-empty. The stallion looked over the lake's surface, and there she was near the middle, or at least there was her head-hair — the most prodigious display of glossy red (some would say dark strawberry blonde) he'd ever seen, floating on the water's surface. It was only a little less impressive than the tresses of the mermaid, frolicking in the upper Missouri, that he'd glimpsed as a boy.

"You're Akorax?" said a small mouth below a button nose and large green eyes peering up from the surface. The voice was throaty. The face was no hag's. Akorax nodded. "Are you hurt?"

"No. But that beast's breath stank filthily! I was a fool to come up here without an escort. I'm certainly glad he came at me head-on. What's that on your back?"

Oh, damn, again! She'd spotted the buffalo carcass on his back. By now it was a little smelly, to say the least.

"Meat for the tribe's table."

"You are going along with Odilon's proposal?" Talitha asked bluntly. When he nodded, she eyed him, and seemed to compare him with the branches of the tree he stood next to, and then muttered coolly, "Good."

Then she took two steps towards the shore. "Venus rises from the waves," Akorax said as gallantly as he could, fighting his aroused state. If she kept up this teasing, he'd pass out. She gave him a wicked smile, and just as suddenly, looked at him suspiciously.

"You do only sire females, don't you?"

"Yes. Or nothing at all."

"Well, we'll find that out soon enough I expect. I only want to dam daughters, and most centaur stallion's sire many, many more boys than girls, I'm told. Genetic survival trait, I suppose. You've seen my sisters?"

"At a distance. I'm seeing as much of you now as I did of them. If you are fishing for a compliment — yes, you are at least as pretty as they are." Talitha smiled.

"So you don't really know what I look like, er, down there?" She pointed at the surface of the water, and smiled again. "You don't know about the female centaurs in Walt Disney's Fantasia, do you?" She shrugged at Akorax' blank stare.

"Never mind. I'll have plenty of time to correct your lack of knowlege of the ancient culture. Could you toss me that hair-tie? This wet hair is heavy; but you know that my hair's my pride and joy. When you see it, you'll note that my tail-hair's even more impressive. I just keep it edged; wouldn't cut it for the world."

Suddenly, Talitha was sounding utterly domestic. Her human foretorso was almost completely out of the water, and the appearance of the top of her pseudo-hips showed that her equine body was generously endowed with the same color pelt.

"Yes. Sorry. I am teasing; but you do have the advantage of me, Akorax. Toss me the blouse and I'll

emerge.”

Casually, Talitha walked her front end to the upwater side of the lake, near a tumbling rapids.

“You know, what the ‘legends’ say about us are true. Normally we’d take dozens of men-centaurs as mates. My mother was a centaress that had over 200 lovers — not all at the same time! And had at least as many sons. But daughters — only us three. She was a small centaress — though she had our species’ true female form, as we have — and she had us all at once, unfortunately, and we — I in particular — was too big: she died in childbirth.”

Talitha paused, staring at the water, sadly, with a look of regret, as if she were personally responsible for her mother’s death. “Anyway, that’s why there are so few of us, and why many people believe that there are no such creatures as female centaurs. Of course, female centaurs don’t look exactly like males — at least in this world.”

She hesitated, and then the tenor of her voice changed to something more — good-humoredly impish.

“Boy, this lake’s really deep. I have to walk on myself to keep my head above water. Just a moment.”

Akorax watched her front end climb out, and wondered what she was talking about. But in the next few seconds, he reached a sudden revelation as to why female centaurs were insatiable. And why the tribe’s armsmen considered them unable to defend themselves, and how the three of them literally did carry the tribe, bag and baggage — and in one trip! And even though Talitha giggled with self-knowledge as her head-end approached him on the shoreline, Akorax could not help but be pop-eyed and speechless. And in a gesture he thought he’d never ever be able to do — even but an hour ago — he clasped his hands together before his division, a suitor courting his lady.

“I am Agorax, son of Orexen —” and here he broke off his formal introduction “How — how many —” “— legs?”

Talitha finished for him as she brushed her hair from her eyes. Those green eyes met his levelly, as she considered him. “Two hundred and sixteen,” she eventually pronounced, slowly and distinctly. As she reached down for her vest, her first pair of legs, which carried her human torso with ease, performed a graceful curtsy. “One hundred and eight in front, and one hundred eight in back.”

Talitha draped her quiver about her pseudo-hips and her bow over her human back.

“I am Talitha, Ayacanora’s daughter, raised by the Boulder Tribe of the Two-Legged,” she said formally, as she placed her delicate left hand upon her slender human belly with its young, smooth and healthy fair skin. And then conversationally, as if her self-introduction had never occurred: “And if you do the arithmetic, that means that a centaress can be pregnant 54-fold — I am the equivalent to 54 mythical horse-mare’s in heat, and — ” at that moment, at about her tenth massive equine pair of forelegs behind her front, four or five forequarters passaged a step or two up onto the higher rocky beach, anxious to approach Agorax so much as to violate the protocol of her body’s procession.

Talitha twisted her torso about (with a move of magnificent torque), and eyed the disarray of her rebellious body, obviously concerned about her lack of control.

“— as of right now, that mass of mare’s within me are clamoring for one stallion. It is a dangerous business for a girl-centaur to dam only girls of her own kind — but that is what I believe I must do. I must be careful to become only a little bit pregnant — to hold back and to remain unfulfilled — for to try to carry many daughters at once will surely kill me as it did my mother. And that’s where your

self-control and restraint — even against my own animal desires — and your physical dominance over other stallion centaurs — so that you will defend me against certain mutual attractions with the others — are important. You may never have any sons, Akorax; but if you are as strong of will as I think you may be, I shall live a long time, and you'll certainly have a lot of grandsons."

Agorax did manage to tilt his head down. Talitha took that as an acceptance of her stated conditions, and their courtship continued. She winked at him, and fit the sword in its scabbard and muttered something like "worthless piece of junk" and threw it into the far end of the lake.

"Yes, my business parts and half my chests are still underwater, so you'll just have to admire the succession of my well-spaced forequarters for awhile. Oh — don't worry, I'm not where the sword is falling."

The centaress reassured the benumbed War and Hunt Chief as he watched her continue to draw equine forebodies from the water, and then, eventually, the start of her series of huge boned and muscled hindquarters.

" — oh, and don't worry about me coordinating all this — " she leaned way back and propped herself up with a delicate long-figured hand on her second equine shoulder " — I've grown up with it, and believe me, your nephew, Curion, is far clumsier than I am."

Then she blushed as a number of hindquarters, just out of the water, sidled their flanks into Agorax's distant view — and now Talitha's belly muscles uprighted her human portion abruptly, and she blushed bright red — "I must admit, though, that recently my body seems to have a mind of its own, being so hungry for a — certain stallion."

She stopped and exhaled, and then drew breath for such a long time that it concerned Agorax. More than just that tiny nose and delicate mouth must service her numerous and voluminous lungs, but he did not immediately see the mechanism — and when he did see her collar-like trachea flare as she drew another breath, and the processes continue back under her jaws, on either side, to openings hidden behind her neck's hair — he could only marvel that such a necessity might be so elegant and lovely. And then, a moment later, as she ended her breath, it disappeared sans any trace that he could see.

"Why is it you seem so shocked, O Great Chief of the centaurs?" she mocked to hide her chagrin at her forwardness. Agorax indeed had said nothing for a long time, but somehow they both knew that that was the male's tendency in courting — it was his still-dazed eyes that prompted her, as Talitha considered her own question — "Oh — you mentioned that you saw only my sister's human portions — so you did not see all of Alula and Tania at the camp?" Akorax shook his head up and down. Talitha laughed quietly.

"So, I have been a surprise to you — although I am sure that you have heard the legends — and probably disbelieved them. Each of my sisters are the same as I — complete with 216 legs apiece — although they're a bit more — delicately built — than I, and certainly they don't have my brains. When she was younger, Anaya, who raised us, called us centaurpedes. But we are your centaur females, Akorax."

Akorax was still paralyzed motionless as Talitha's hand ran a delicate finger down the sternum of his huge human chest. Some part of Akorax' brain recognized that she was pleased with him, but he was still silent.

"I hope those magnificent lungs of yours will someday find their voice again," she smiled.

“Perhaps when we clasp our four hands together before our people this eventide — ” And suddenly, she twitched the legs of her first few forebodies into the air and back onto the beaten ground of the path.

“Now, please, let’s go back down the trail — she glanced again behind herself — I am out of room on the shoreline, and I want to get the rest of me out of the lake. I do want to brush out and show off my beautiful tail to you. Besides, having a body like this requires an awful lot of nourishment, and you bet I’ll cook and eat all of that buffalo on your back — and every one you can catch from this day on! By the way —” and here Talitha eyed the defunct monster with a hungry look, “- are lake-dragons good to eat?”