

# ***Princess Cynisca***

## ***LASSIE AND THE CENTAUR PART 2***

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### ***Chapter 7***

Prince Leonidas was hunting alone on foot, he had ventured far from Sparta. He was an Olympic victor and liked to practise running. Suddenly he heard the sound of hooves and wild laughter. He quickly

climbed the nearest tree to avoid ambush.

Four galloping centaurs came into view , they were armed with swords and bows and arrows .When they came closer , he saw there were two centauress

First a mahogany mare with a red hair and tail , another was platinum blonde growing out white mare , the other three were centaurs , first one growing out of a dappled stallion the second a brown stallion The third centaur was a coal black stallion .The wild laughter was coming from the lips of a beautiful young woman sitting astride on the back the handsome black centaur and holding his broad torso tightly . The centaur was trying to buck and throw her off , the horse play continued for some time. Soon it became obvious to Leonidas that the black centaur was not trying to hard .

The dappled centaur came closer and teased the woman by pulling her golden tresses . At this point the woman jumped onto his back and continued to stand while he trotted.

The third brown centaur came near and caught her as the woman began to slip then she jumped on his back and sat on his broad back.

"Enough Lassie ! you will break your neck !

"shouted

the beautiful centauress ,the mahogany mare with

a red hair and tail, Then the second centauress [platinum blonde growing out white mare .] began to comb the woman's tangled hair and braid them . Prince Leonidas held his breath , the young woman was beautiful yet so childish and full of life. All the women he had loved paled in her comparison , her bright blue eyes held secrets and her laughing lips were imprinted on his heart .

He felt an intense jealousy when she hugged the centaurs.

Her innocent actions made him wild and he knew he must possess her.

The many Greek tales he had heard were that nearly all centaurs are a wild race who were always violent, lustful, and usually intoxicated, preferring to avoid contact with humans.

No one ever laughed at a centaur and that no one who valued his life would ever saddle one . Centaurs the wild creatures have two stomachs— one human and one equine— which means they eat quantities of both human and equine food. In contrast, here were centaurs as the wisest and noblest of creatures , living in societies called herds and are skilled at archery, healing and astrology. a fierce and valiant race always faithful creatures.

He remembered the greek centaur, Chiron, who, unlike all the other centaurs, was a noble, wise, and powerful being, gifted at stargazing, prophecy,

healing, and warfare

Prince Leonidas eyes filled with tears of annoyance as the centaurs galloped away with the beautiful young woman. He watched from the treetop as they disappeared in a cloud of dust, he guessed maybe the girl was abandoned as an infant and brought up by these centaurs. Lassie, the adopted daughter of the centaurs appeared in his dreams and his waking thoughts.

Herakles, the son of Zeus. after completing his labors, established an athletic festival the festival at Olympia to honor his father. Due to constant wars between centaurs and humans ,the games were discontinued

Oenomaus, became the king of Pisa, Greece, who had a beautiful daughter named Hippodamia. According to an oracle, the king would be killed by her husband. Therefore, he decreed that any young man who wanted to marry his daughter was required to drive away with her in his chariot, and Oenomaus would follow in another chariot and spear the suitor if he caught up with them. Now, the king's chariot horses were a present from the god Poseidon and were therefore supernaturally fast. Pelops was a very handsome young man and the king's daughter fell in love with him. Before the race, she persuaded

her father's charioteer Myrtilus to replace the bronze axle pins of the king's chariot with wax ones. Naturally, during the race the wax melted and the king fell from his chariot and was killed. At the same time the king's palace was struck by lightning and reduced to ashes, save for one wooden pillar that was revered in the Altis for centuries, and stood near what was to be the site of the temple of Zeus. Pelops was proclaimed the winner and married Hippodamia. After his victory, Pelops organized chariot races as thanksgiving to the gods and as funeral games in honor of King Oenomaus, in order to be purified of his death.

Pelops became a great king, a local hero, and gave his name to the Peloponnese. It was from this funeral race held at Olympia that the beginnings of the Olympic Games were inspired. His son Diagoras Rhodes (Olympiad boxing champion) and his sons Akusilaos and Damagetos (Olympiad champions of boxing and pankration) and Leonidas Rhodes (running: stadion, diaulos and hoplitodromos)

King Diagoras Rhodes wanted peace between the all kingdoms. Peace between Mystical creatures and demigods and all human beings. Confronting the centaurs was fighting a war which his father was trying to avoid. until

The games of previous millennia were discontinued and then revived at the behest of the Oracle of Delphi who claimed that the people had strayed from the gods, which had caused a plague and constant war. Restoration of the games would end the plague, usher in a time of peace, and signal a return to a more traditional lifestyle.

The Greeks believed the games had their roots in religion, that athletic competition was tied to worship of the gods, and the revival of the ancient games was intended to bring peace, harmony and a return to the origins of Greek life. The winner of an Olympic event was awarded an olive branch and often was received with much honour throughout Greece, especially in his home town, where he was often granted large sums of money (in Athens, 500 drachma, a small fortune) and prizes including vats of olive oil. Sculptors would create statues of Olympic victors, and poets would sing odes in their praise for money.

## Chapter 8

Prince Leonidas came to know through his spies that the centaur king did not like the adopted girl Lassie since Yonder spent more time with her than with the centaur princess Nephele.

But to his chargin his daughter loved Lassie even more and guarded her like her own offspring. He had

banished her for 15 years to some unknown place ,but she had returned .

King Orion had not shown his displeasure openly, he was planning to wed Nephele to her

betroth Yonder Both were now of age

The prince decided to send an envoy secretly to King Orion to avoid an confrontation with the five guardian centaurs.

The centaur king welcomed the envoy and the prospect of a royal son in law . The peace treaty he had envisioned will finally happen.

He had never approved of Lassie because her presence endangered the lives of his centaurs since they bore the stigma of kidnapping women.

The legend was that Pholus an Arkadian Kentauros (Centaur) who made his home in a cave on Mount Pholoe. He once entertained Hercules who was passing through the region in search of the Erymanthian boar. But when Pholos opened his wine-skin to serve the hero the other Kentauroi (Centaur), driven into a mad frenzy by the aroma, attacked. Hercules slew most of them with his arrows and the rest fled south. Pholos himself also suffered a mishap--for as he was examining the hero's poisoned-arrows he dropped one on his foot and died. The gods rewarded him for his show of hospitality by placing him amongst the stars as

constellation Centaurus and his wine-cup as the adjacent Crater.

During this battle Nessus carried Deianeira across the river. After carrying Deianeira, the wife of Hercules, across the river, Nessus attempted to force himself upon her. Heracles saw this from across the river and shot a Hydra-poisoned arrow into Nessus's breast. As a final act of malice, Nessus told Deianeira, as he lay dying, that his blood would ensure that Heracles would be true to her forever.

Deianeira foolishly believed him. Later, when her trust began to wane because of Iole, she spread the centaur's blood on a robe and gave it to her husband. Heracles went to a gathering of heroes, where his passion got the better of him. Meanwhile, Deianeira accidentally spilled a portion of the centaur's blood onto the floor. To her horror, it began to fume by the light of the rising sun.

She instantly recognized it as poison and sent her messenger to warn Heracles but it was too late. Hercules lay dying slowly and painfully as the robe burned his skin—either in actual flames or by the heat of poison. He died a noble death on a funeral pyre of oak branches. Hercules was then taken to

Mount Olympus by Zeus and welcomed among the gods for his heroic exploits.

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King Orion said to Lassie, " We need to talk my human daughter "

Lassie followed her King into his chamber [stable].

Her beating fast in her chest today he had acknowledged her as his daughter .

"Listen carefully ! My human daughter and donot rush to any conclusions.

I had always resented you because I feared you , my visitor from the future . You spoke of strange magical things and events .

I always had a foreboding that you are the reason of some change.

A frightful event !

I was mistaken, I was wrong !

My human daughter you are the ambassador of peace.!

A great peace treaty between Sparta and Centaurs.!

Again I say , donot rush to any conclusions.

You came to Greece at the age of 18 the correct time to enter into wedlock. After 15 years you are still an unwed virgin .

You were an orphan , a castaway but my Centaurs gave you your identity in your village , your future here in Greece is also bright

I'm your centaur Father I offer you the life of a queen

A royal life with centaur gold as your dowry.

Remember marriage is duty all have perform in Sparta.

Nephele and her betroth Yonder will never understand.

Prince Leon himself has requested your hand in marriage

Today you are 33 years old its now or never ""

I give you a new name Princess Cynisca

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## Chapter 8

Lassie and Nephele entered the gigantic hall and spotted The Prince Leonidas and his men immediately. They occupied the far right of the receiving hall, meant for guests. The centaurs and the other members of the royal family gave the group a wide berth, seemingly disturbed by their presence, yet no less fascinated by the encounter with the Human species . The prince paid them no heed. He stood, with his back erect and his head held high, piercing eyes fixed upon the entrance. On her. She could feel his gaze boring into her very soul as he studied every minute part of her. Shifting a little self-consciously under his unabashed stare, she returned the favour.

The Prince Leonidas' body was stunningly impressive. His chest was broad and the arm muscles well-defined. She spotted a six-pack abdomen at the juncture where his torso merged with his lower half of the body. A set of matching warrior bracelets decorated his wrists, with sharp pikes sticking out. He also wore a large silver pendant in the shape of a warrior axe that reflected the sunlight streaming into the castle. Although he looked slightly forbidding, with his high forehead and thick eyebrows drawn in concentration, the prince was actually quite handsome, she decided. Golden curls framed his face, softening his strong military stance slightly. The high cheekbones complemented his sharp Anglican nose. His lips were wide and when he parted them to whisper to one of his men, two rows of white pearly teeth flashed at her. Their eyes met, and she caught sight of a fleeting, mocking smile, so swiftly gone that she thought she had been imagining it. Her eyes swept past the prince to the ten other soldiers in the room. They flanked her future husband. Some were armed with crossbows and longbows, while others had lances meant for short-ranged attacks. From the way they stood in a protective circle around their leader, it was clear where their loyalties lay.

“Nephele, my sweet child,” King Orion greeted Nephele with his hands outstretched. His eyes were puffy and swollen, with dark eye rings rimming the edges due to drinking grape wine .She'd always been his beloved daughter and Lassie's return was a terrible blow to him.He was happy to have to send her off with the prince

Two beautiful centaress Hera and Nephele had hoped against hopes that the prince would choose the other maidens they had kidnaped instead. to have to send Lassie with the prince After all, Lassie wasn't the most beautiful woman in the selection of candidates presented to the Prince Leonidas . As it was, once the prince laid eyes on her, he'd asked the King Orion for her hand in marriage. He could not be persuaded to accept an alternative girl.

Lassie hastened towards her The Centaur King. She reached out and accepted King Orion's proferred hand. Bending low and kissing her King Orion's ring, she allowed one drop of tear to fall onto the ground. “My King,” she uttered, perhaps for the last time, “Thank you for bringing me up. I am forever indebted to you. May this small sacrifice bring many years of peace between the centaurs and the humans.”

“Lassie Child, I know not what to say. Except that I hope that someday, I will see you again.” He put his hands under her elbows and guided her to a standing position.

“Prince Leonidas .” The King spun on his heels and addressed his potential Ally . “I present to you my favourite daughter Lassie and your future wife. As my daughter has expressed, we hope that with this marriage, our kinds will have lasting peace and will not return to the bloody violence of the long past.”

Prince Leonidas inclined his head slightly. When he spoke, his rich, crisp voice filled the entire hall. “Fear not, King Orion, for I will assure you of that. Thank you for gifting me with your daughter. I swear upon my life to take excellent care of her. She is free to return if she wishes to visit. Rest assured, King Orion, that today will not be your last meeting with my wife.”

A quiver skipped down the Lassies spine. Already, he was claiming her as his.

The King sent Prince Leonidas half-smile. “Thank you for your generosity, Prince Leonidas. Princess Nephele and I are truly appreciative of such a magnanimous gesture on your part. Will you be

staying the night so that we can hold a farewell feast?”

Prince Leonidas shook his head. “While we would dearly like to accept your gracious offer, Your Majesty, my father expects me to return within three days. It takes at least two days of hard, ceaseless riding to arrive at Athens. I presume that M'Lady will require rest-stops in between. We must leave by this evening if we do not wish M'Lady to travel uncomfortably.” Then he paused, as if he remembered something important. “One more thing. We understand that you wish to send a party of soldiers to escort my wife to Athens. But that is unnecessary. The soldiers I have brought along today are the finest ones amongst all the army. Adding more people to our party will only impede our progress. It is imperative that I reach Athens as soon as possible. I would advise you to send only one handmaiden as a companion, and no more.”

Centaur King contemplated the centaur prince's suggestion, and eventually nodded imperceptibly. “As you wish, Prince Leonidas. Daughter Lassie, will you go and prepare for the journey? Our guests will be taken to the Main Hall for refreshments.”

Lassie sank in a deep curtsy and once again lifted King's fingers to her lips. "I shall do as you say." She gathered the folds of her ivory gown and departed, all the while conscious of the Prince's eyes trained on her.

"Shall we?" She heard Nephele ask as she rounded the corner to climb the steps up to her bedroom for the last time.

"Let's," the prince replied, his voice oozing calm and confidence.

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The next two days passed like a blur for Lassie . Prince Leonidas was worried that a carriage would slow down their journey, so Lassie and her page ,Buddy, each rode a horse. Both horses were thoroughbreds, assured to be the fastest in the King's stables. The King also had the stable hands prepare the most comfortable saddles for the two . The ancient roads of Greece were mere rocky tracks, nothing could have prepared them for the exhaustion that set in just after two hours of being in the saddle. By the second night, Lassie and Buddy had developed saddle sores that had them slathering a huge amount of the Court Physician's cream to allay their discomfort.

They had set up a camp in the forest near Athens and were expected to reach Lassie's new home by mid-morning. Throughout the journey, the prince had been nothing but the epitome of politeness. He rarely spoke to her, but when he did, it was always in the manner of a stranger speaking to a new acquaintance and not as a husband speaking to his wife. She couldn't say the same for his companions, though. Although they didn't bother her, they feasted upon Buddy and made bawdy jokes. Prince Leonidas never partook in such activities, neither did he rebuke them for it. She felt grudging admiration build up within her for the prince. Although she resented him for selecting her, and making her leave the centaurs, he had the hallmarks of a capable and effective leader.

As she got ready for bed that night, Lassie felt chills travel down her spine. Tomorrow, they would reach Sparta. Tomorrow, she would be his wife in the truest sense of the word. She gulped, drew the covers of her thin blanket over her and squeezed her eyes shut. During the journey, he had been galloping in front of them, leading the way.

Just as she was about to drop off to sleep, she was woken up by the sudden sounds of an siege. "Die,

you Humans! Die! How dare you befoul our lands! You deserve death for all the pain you inflicted on our lands!”

Another voice, a centauress's this time, filled with anger, pierced the air. “I saw a young woman with you. You have abducted her, haven't you! Return her to us, you filthy greeks!”

Lassie rushed out in her translucent nightgown and was horrified to see a group of centaurs attacking the eleven soidiers . Noyat held a fire torch and were swinging it dangerously around; Centaur held a sword, aiming them at the soidiers. Despite having kept watch, the soidiers had been unable to detect the danger due to exhaustion.

“Lycurgus! Iphitos! Protect the princess!” Lassie heard Prince Leonidas holler, when he spotted her.

“No, m'lord! We're not going to abandon you!” She saw Iphitos brandishing his axe, getting ready for battle.

“Do you disobey the orders of your future king?” The prince knew just what to say to ensure compliance from his men. The two backed away from defending Prince and rode towards her, disgruntlement

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