

Prod. #76613

HERCULES

"The Unchained Heart"

Written by  
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Directed by  
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HERCULES

"The Unchained Heart"

Cast List

HERCULES  
IOLAUS  
SALMONEUS

PYLENDOR  
OLD HUNTER  
DARPHUS  
XENA  
VILLAGER  
WARRIOR #1  
QUINTUS  
LIEUTENANT  
SURVIVING WARRIOR  
CAMP BOSS  
ENOS  
SENTRY

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HERCULES

"The Unchained Heart"

Set List

INTERIORS:

TEMPLE \*  
UNDER THE AVALANCHE  
DARPHUS' HEADQUARTERS

EXTERIORS:

ELYSIA -  
TAVERN GARDEN \*  
TEMPLE \*  
CAMPSITE  
WOODED AREA \*  
FARMER'S COTTAGE \*  
DARPHUS' HEADQUARTERS  
RUGGED TERRAIN  
AVALANCHE  
NEW CAMPSITE  
DIAMOND MINING CAMP  
COUNTRY ROAD  
ROAD TO ELYSIA  
HILLTOP OVERLOOKING ELYSIA \*

HERCULES

## "The Unchained Heart"

TEASER

FADE IN:

## 1 EXT. ELYSIA - DAY

A ragtag band of hunters and trappers has set up camp against this beautiful backdrop. The scrawniest trapper in the bunch -- call him PYLENDOR -- is trying to drag the mule that is carrying his hides out of a mud puddle. The trapper has an audience of giggling CHILDREN as he tugs futilely on the rope around the mule's neck.

PYLENDOR

You're not getting any dinner if you don't get out of there right now...  
Do you hear me, Bathsheba?... Move...

But the mule just digs its heels a little deeper in the mud and the children's giggling turns to outright laughter. It looks like a Grecian standoff until:

A MAN (O.S.)

Instead of all that vinegar, you should try a little honey.

Pylendor turns and finds himself looking at an OLD HUNTER who has the air of a benevolent schoolmaster.

OLD HUNTER

And if you don't have any honey, a carrot usually does the trick.

He takes a carrot from behind his back and offers it to the mule, who, naturally, walks right over and eats it out of his hand. The old hunter grins amiably at Pylendor.

OLD HUNTER

Works every time, my friend.

But as he goes to slap Pylendor on the back

AN ARROW HITS THE OLD HUNTER IN THE HEART

and drives his instantly lifeless body back into the mud puddle with a sickening splat.

Pylendor's jaw drops in amazement, his terrified mule runs for parts unknown, the screaming children scatter every which way, and the rest of the villagers are looking up the hill toward the sound of blood-curdling battle cries.

CONTINUED

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2.

1 CONTINUED:

1

THEIR POV

Charging toward them on horseback is a band of 50 marauding WARRIORS, unwashed, unshaven and unencumbered by the need to prolong any lives except their own. The warriors thunder into the camp with a vengeance, leap from their horses and begin wiping out the men, dragging off the women and knocking down the children.

Only one of these heathen invaders stays on his horse, and that is as it should be. For he is DARPHUS, their leader, back from the dead to serve as Ares' killing machine.

DARPHUS

You!

He points at the petrified Pylendor with his sword.

PYLENDOR

Don't kill me. I'm just trying to get to Elysia.

DARPHUS

I beat you there.

(off Pylendor's look)

Now go find Hercules. Tell him that Darphus rides again. And if he doubts that it is me, say you saw the scar that the traitorous bitch Xena left me with.

Darphus tears open his tunic to reveal the mottled red slash on his chest. Pylendor recoils at its ugliness.

DARPHUS

What are you waiting for? Go!

Pylendor takes off running, weaving through the slaughter that would have included him if fate hadn't intervened.

CUT TO:

2 EXT. TAVERN GARDEN - DAY

2

A jug of wine, a bowl of stew -- and SALMONEUS prattles madly to HERCULES and XENA about his latest scheme.

SALMONEUS

It'll be the first celebrity biography in history, and it'll be about you, Hercules. Come on, the public's begging for it.

(CONTINUED)

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3.

2 CONTINUED:

2

HERCULES

Sorry, I don't think of myself as a celebrity.

SALMONEUS

Try it. We'll get rich.

HERCULES

We?

XENA

Of course. Salmoneus has to do the writing. All you had to do was take the risks.

SALMONEUS

(to Xena)

Don't worry, you'll get the same 60-40 split as Hercules when I write your bio.

(to Hercules; hopefully)

So, 60-40 -- sound good?

Before Hercules can reply, Pylendor lurches up to the table, breathless after running all the way from Elysia.

PYLENDOR

Hercules...

SALMONEUS

Do you mind?

PYLENDOR

Hercules, you've got to go to Elysia.

HERCULES

What's wrong?

PYLENDOR

Invaders... Led by a warrior called Darphus.

SALMONEUS

(blanching)

Darphus?

XENA

That can't be. He's dead.

PYLENDOR

By your hand if you're Xena. He showed me his scar.

Hercules, Xena and Salmoneus trade a look.

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4.

2 CONTINUED:  
*Ares*

*Ares*

HERCULES

Only the Gods have the power to bring Darphus back from the dead. I can bet which one it is.

XENA

~~The Gods~~ means nothing to me. I'm still going to Elysia to stop Darphus. I won't fail this time.

HERCULES

No, we're going to stop him.

SALMONEUS

I want to watch -- for strictly literary reasons, of course. (to Pylendor) Coming with us?

PYLENDOR

Absolutely not. You don't know what you're going up against. I do.

SALMONEUS

Hey, no problem. (to Hercules and Xena) Is there?

When he sees the doubt and anxiety on their faces, you can almost hear his knees start to knock.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. ELYSIA - DAY

3'

The tranquility in this prosperous village has been turned into a nightmare. Darphus and two of his myriad scowling warriors drive the point home as they drag a terrified VILLAGER through the bodies and rubble. Looming ahead of them is the village's temple.

DARPHUS

VILLAGER

Why are you taking me to the temple?

*Lock the others up + take that one to the Temple*

DARPHUS

I want you to get religion.

VILLAGER

You know nothing of religion. You're going to sacrifice me.

DARPHUS

Don't jump to conclusions.

When they reach the temple, the front door opens ominously.

(CONTINUED)

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4A.

3 CONTINUED:

~~AK~~

~~Go [redacted] [redacted]~~

Darphus  
Throw him in!

(CONTINUED)



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5.

3 CONTINUED: 2

3

~~VILLAGER~~  
~~I... I... I don't want to...~~

~~DARPHUS~~  
~~Do it, or we'll bury you where you~~  
~~stand.~~

~~The villager glances at the warriors, who would kill him in~~  
~~a heartbeat. When, ever so slowly, he stops inside.~~

*The Villager is thrown in.*

CUT TO:

4 INT. TEMPLE - DAY

4\*

The light in here is dim. The villager <sup>tumbles down stairs.</sup> ~~is more frightened-~~  
~~than ever as he moves forward slowly, carefully. Suddenly,~~  
 from out of the shadows

GRAEGUS, THE DOG OF WAR

appears. The dog is bigger than ever -- think of a  
 Clydesdale on steroids -- but he is still lightning fast as  
 he leaps for the villager's throat with a fearsome snarl.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. TEMPLE - DAY

5\*

The Dog of War's snarl and the desperate cries of the dying  
 villager are music to Darphus' ears. He looks into the  
 distance with hate in his eyes.

DARPHUS  
 Come and get it, Hercules.

FADE OUT.

SMASH CUT TO MAIN TITLES

END OF TEASER

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6.

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

5A ON A SERIES OF SHOTS

5A

that show Hercules and Xena hot on Darphus' trail. Salmoneus is following at what can best be described as a lukewarm pace. He's burdened by a backpack full of items that are utterly useless on a mission like this and he's busy scribbling notes in the journal he plans to turn into his celebrity biography of Hercules. No way he'll notice that they're going:

-- Across a field;

-- Through a wooded area;

-- Up a hillside;

-- And along a ridgeline that leads them to:

6 OMITTED

6

7 EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

7

Our intrepid travelers have set up camp beside a stream. Hercules and Xena watch in amusement as Salmoneus pulls a tablecloth out of his pack and spreads it on the ground with a flourish.

SALMONEUS

It doesn't really have an outdoorsy motif, but it'll do.

Then he digs back into his pack and comes up with three plates and three goblets. He breathes a sigh of relief.

SALMONEUS

I was worried they'd get broken.

(CONTINUED)

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7.

7 CONTINUED:

7

HERCULES

Salmoneus, can I ask you a couple questions?

SALMONEUS

At your service.

HERCULES

Number one: Do you think we're on a picnic?

SALMONEUS

Well, no, of course not. I just don't think we should deny ourselves creature comforts because... because...

Xena's stare stuffs the words back down his throat.

HERCULES

And number two: What do you think you're going to put on those plates?

SALMONEUS

(hopefully)  
Roast quail?

HERCULES

If you want quail, you'll have to catch it yourself.

SALMONEUS

(annoyed)  
Fine, I'll do it.

HERCULES AND XENA

(incredulous; in unison)  
You will?

SALMONEUS

I come from a great family of Quail Hunters.  
But somebody else will have to cook it.  
Great hunters don't cook.

XENA

Well don't ~~be~~ looking at me.

Hercules can't believe the corner he's been painted into.

HERCULES

(after a beat)

All right, I'll handle the cooking.

XENA

Guess that leaves the scouting to me.

(CONTINUED)

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7A.

7 CONTINUED: 2

7

HERCULES

Some people have all the fun.

Off Xena and Salmoneus smiling at him benignly --

CUT TO:

8 EXT. WOODED AREA - DAY

8

As Salmoneus roots around in the bushes for dinner, he does what he assumes is a perfect imitation of a quail's mating

(CONTINUED)

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8.

8 CONTINUED:

8

call. He sounds like an owl with emphysema. But when he hears a rustling on the other side of a nearby tree, Salmoneus figures he has succeeded. He readies the burlap bag in which he's planning to capture his feathered quarry. Then he skulks toward the tree. The rustling is growing louder and louder. Salmoneus' heart is beating faster and faster. He's getting closer and closer until

A SHADOWY FIGURE LEAPS OUT OF THE TREE

and pounces on Salmoneus, who reacts with a startled squawk as the two of them go tumbling. When they finally come to a stop, the shadowy figure is straddling Salmoneus' chest, using his knees to pin the small-game hunter's arms to the ground. Salmoneus stares up at the shadowy figure, trying to cover bewilderment with bluster.

SALMONEUS

Enjoy yourself now, buster, because I'm a friend of Hercules; and when he finds out what you've done...

The shadowy figure -- all we've seen of him thus far is his back -- breaks into laughter that confounds Salmoneus.

SALMONEUS

What's so funny?

HIS POV

The shadowy figure turns out to be none other than IOLAUS, who has a quick answer for Salmoneus' question.

IOLAUS

You.

WIDE TO INCLUDE BOTH

SALMONEUS

I'm a lot funnier when I don't have someone using my chest for a chair. Now get off me or I really am going to call Hercules.

IOLAUS

You act as though you actually know him.

SALMONEUS

Know him? I'm his official biographer.

(CONTINUED)

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9.

8 CONTINUED: 2

8

IOLAUS

Funny, Hercules never struck me as the kind of hero who wanted to blow his own horn.

SALMONEUS

If you don't believe me, ask him yourself. He's not far away. I might even show you where if you'd get off me.

IOLAUS

Sure, why not?

With amusement overriding his need for caution, Iolaus climbs off Salmoneus and offers him his hand.

CUT TO:

9 EXT. WOODS - DAY

9A

Salmoneus and Iolaus are approaching the big meeting with Hercules. Salmoneus is offering some tips on decorum.

SALMONEUS *Now when you meet him →*

→ Whatever you do, don't say, "You're Hercules?", like it's a big surprise that he's not that much different than ordinary men. I mean, he's bigger and he's got more muscles and... well, you know what I'm talking about.

IOLAUS

Absolutely.

SALMONEUS

Promise?

(off Iolaus' nod)

Okay now...

9A EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

9A'

When Salmoneus and Iolaus enter the camp, they find Hercules tending the fire.

SALMONEUS

There he is.

IOLAUS

You're Hercules?

(CONTINUED)

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9A.

9A CONTINUED:

9A

SALMONEUS

(mortified)

What are you doing? I told you...

Then Hercules turns around and breaks into a huge smile.

(CONTINUED)

9A CONTINUED: 2

9A

HERCULES

And you are?

IOLAUS

Iolaus

HERCULES

Your Iolaus!

IOLAUS

The last time I checked , it was.

HERCULES

That's good enough for me.

They embrace in the fashion of manly men!

SALMONEUS

I don't believe this.

HERCULES

Iolaus is my best friend.

SALMONEUS

but you never mentioned him.

IOLAUS (to Hercules)

Holding out on your official biographer, huh?

HERCULES

It's a long story. (off Iolaus' look)  
Never mind. What brings you to these parts?

IOLAUS

Xena.

The name chills Hercules and Salmoneus for a reason Iolaus doesn't yet fathom.

IOLAUS (continued)

She's still on the loose.

SALMONEUS

She's not on the loose, she's .....

HERCULES (to Salmoneus)

Don't you have quail to catch.  
(to Iolaus) It's not Xena we have to worry about. Our real  
problem is Darphus. He's slaughtering everyone in sight  
for the greater good of Ares.

IOLAUS

Then we'll stop them both (Grins)  
It's good to be with you again Herc.



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10A.

9A CONTINUED: 3

9A

AA

~~HERCULES~~

~~There's nothing I'd like better~~

SALMONEUS

(nervous)

~~I'd better get back out there  
and catch our dinner. But can't be  
deflected on an empty stomach, you  
know~~

(As lib)

And he hurries away, carrying Hercules' secret with him.

(CONTINUED)

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11.

9A CONTINUED: 4

9A

CUT TO:

10 EXT. FARMER'S COTTAGE - DAY

10\*

Xena is on her scouting mission when she chances upon \*

FOUR OF DARPUS' CRUELEST WARRIORS \*

robbing the bodies of a freshly slain farmer and his wife. \*  
 A fifth warrior, young and tender by Darphus' pagan \*  
 standards, is tending to their horses a short distance \*  
 away, listening to their burbling greed: "I want his \*  
 boots" ... "Her bracelet ought to be worth something" ... \*  
 "Let's cut off their fingers and make a necklace out of ... \*  
 them." \*

XENA

(enraged) \*

Vultures! \*

And she charges them fearlessly, kicking, punching, \*  
 swinging her terrible swift sword. She's like a thresher \*  
 going through a field of grain, but there's nothing she can \*  
 do about the fifth warrior. \*

Too far away to get swept up in the fray, he leaps on a \*  
 horse and starts to gallop away. Only when Xena hears the \*  
 sound of hoofbeats does she realize that he's escaping to \*  
 carry word back to Darphus. But she still hasn't finished \*  
 with the warriors she's fighting, so it's all she can do to \*  
 get the bolo off her belt and hurl it at the rider. \*

She would hit him if it weren't for the tree he rides behind

(CONTINUED)

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12.

10 CONTINUED:

10

an instant before the bolo gets there. The bolo snaps the tree in half, but the rider is safely off.

Now Xena is really angry. She turns back to the warriors she's fighting and wipes them out in a matter of seconds. Then she turns to stare at

THE ESCAPING RIDER

as he disappears into the distance.

CUT TO:

11 EXT. DARPBUS' HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

11

Once this was the inn in Elysia. Now it's command central for the blood-thirsty Darphus.

DARPBUS (V.O.)

Your message pleases me so much...

CUT TO:

12 INT. DARPBUS' HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

12

With his three most trusted LIEUTENANTS watching closely, Darphus is bestowing a cruel smile on QUINTUS, the warrior who escaped from Xena.

DARPBUS

(continuing)

...that I may spare your life, Quintus.

QUINTUS

But why would you think of killing me?

DARPBUS

You abandoned your comrades when they were fighting Xena.

QUINTUS

I had no choice. You needed to learn that Xena was near.

DARPBUS

Yes, and probably Hercules as well. The bastard son of Zeus and a traitorous harlot. But there is still the matter of loyalty...

In the distance, Graegus howls menacingly. Quintus stiffens with fear. Darphus' eyes grow colder, harder.

(CONTINUED)

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13.

12 CONTINUED:

12

DARPHUS

The Dog of War is hungry. The more  
flesh and blood he consumes, the  
bigger he gets -- and the bigger he  
gets, the closer he is to helping Ares  
rule the world.

QUINTUS

I was loyal to you, Darphus. You know  
I was.

DARPHUS

All I know is you ran once in battle  
you could run again.

Quintus bolts for the door, but the lieutenants grab him.

QUINTUS

No! No, you can't do this!

Darphus smiles as if to say he can do anything he wants to,  
and Graegus howls again, hungry for another appetizer.

CUT TO:

13 EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

13

Hercules, Iolaus and Salmoneus are dining on roast quail  
around the campfire. One quail is still on the spit,  
waiting for you know who. Hercules glances at it  
nervously.

IOLAUS

To look at you, I'd never guess you  
were a hunter, Salmoneus.

SALMONEUS

Life is full of surprises.  
(to Hercules)  
Isn't it?

HERCULES

Yeah, it is.  
(a beat; to Iolaus)  
You know, there's something I've been  
meaning to tell you.

IOLAUS

Let me guess. We've got to play  
Rock, Dagger, Parchment for that last  
quail.

(CONTINUED)

*A whole page*

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14

13 CONTINUED

13

HERCULES

No, it's about ... It's about ....

IOLAUS

About what?

HERCULES

It's about Xena

IOLAUS

What about her?

XENA (O.S.)

Hello Iolaus

The three men turn to see Xena, who has approached silently, step out of the darkness.

Iolaus scrambles to his feet, grabbing his sword for protection. Hercules & Salmoneus are up a beat later, and Hercules moves to make sure Iolaus doesn't attack Xena.

HERCULES

Take it easy, Iolaus.

IOLAUS

What's she doing here?

HERCULES

We're on the same side.

XENA

Look Darphus knows we're coming. I ran into a party of his warriors, but one of them got away.

IOLAUS

(to Hercules)

Are you crazy? She tried to kill us!

HERCULES

You don't understand

IOLAUS

Yes I do. You're falling into the same trap I fell into -- and I'll fry in Hades before I stick around to watch you do it.

Iolaus storms off into the darkness, leaving Hercules upset, Xena sad, and Salmoneus mystified.

CUT TO:

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15.

14 EXT. WOODED AREA - NIGHT

14

Iolaus angrily crashes through the trees and bushes, not knowing where he is, not caring that he doesn't know. Behind him he can hear footsteps and:

HERCULES (O.S.)

Iolaus?... Where are you, Iolaus?

As Hercules' footsteps come closer, Iolaus tries to pick up the pace. But it's no use. Before he has gone much farther, Hercules' giant hand reaches out and grabs him.

HERCULES

Iolaus...

Iolaus turns around and throws his best right-hand punch at Hercules, who catches it in the palm of his left hand.

~~HERCULES~~

~~What are you doing to fight this time?~~

IOLAUS

~~Just~~ let me get out of here.

HERCULES

Not before I tell you how Xena has changed.

Iolaus wrenches his fist free of Hercules' grasp.

IOLAUS

Hercules, listen to yourself. Do you realize what you're saying about a woman who swore she'd make history by killing you?

HERCULES

That part of her life is over.

IOLAUS

Is that what she says when the two of you are rolling around in bed?

HERCULES

(coldly)

I don't roll around in bed with her. Now just hear me out, would you?

~~IOLAUS~~

~~If you're going to tell me that Darphus used to be a chief lieutenant, I already know that. And I know that he overthrew her, too.~~

~~HERCULES~~

~~But you know why.~~

(CONTINUED)

AK

HERCULES

Darphus used to be Xena's Chief Lieutenant, she wouldn't let him kill women and children. She even saved a baby, and for that, he made her run the gauntlet. He almost destroyed her.

IOLAUS

So you took pity on her.

HERCULES

Xena doesn't accept pity. She's a warrior in the truest sense of the word. That's why ~~I'm going after Darphus with her.~~ she wants to go after ~~before~~ Darphus again, she ~~is too tough~~ ~~for me to handle.~~

A

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

He waits for Iolaus to laugh. Iolaus doesn't.

HERCULES

Look, I'm going, too. I'd like you with us.

\*  
\*

IOLAUS

Nothing I say is going to change your mind, is it?

HERCULES

No. It's the right thing to do.

IOLAUS

(after a beat)

Then count me in. But let me tell you something, Hercules: Both of us better watch our backs.

Off his uncompromising distrust of Xena --

CUT TO:

15 EXT. RUGGED TERRAIN - DAY

15

Our fearsome foursome is on the road together for the first time, although together may be too extravagant a description at the moment. Hercules is several paces in front of everybody else, walking point as they head toward a mountainous area. Iolaus is hanging far in the rear. Xena and Salmoneus are feeling isolated in the middle.

(CONTINUED)

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16A.

15 CONTINUED:

15



SALMONEUS

Sheesh, if we want to get a message to  
~~Heracles~~ Iolaus, we'll need a  
carrier pigeon. It's not my breath,  
is it? It certainly couldn't be  
yours. The only fragrance I ever  
smell around you is roses.

(CONTINUED)



15 CONTINUED: 2

15

He gives her a big smile and gets a frown in return.

**AA**

XENA *You're not*  
~~have up your mind. So you want to be~~  
a biographer ~~or~~ a bad comedian. Or  
have you dreamed up ~~some~~ some other get  
~~some~~ rich quick *scheme*

SALMONEUS  
You make it sound like it's a bad  
thing to be versatile.

XENA  
(cuttingly)  
I call it wishy-washy.

Then she sees Hercules drop back.

XENA  
Is something wrong?

HERCULES  
I'll tell you when I get everybody  
together.

Annoyed by the distance people have put between themselves,  
he signals Iolaus, who hustles their way:

XENA  
(re Iolaus)  
I didn't tell him to stay back there.

IOLAUS  
What's the problem?

HERCULES  
That canyon up ahead looks like a perfect place  
for an ambush. So lets stay close together and be  
quiet.

SALMONEUS  
Why are you looking at me. My lips are sealed.  
I can be quiet.

IOLAUS  
Shut up!

With that, they head toward the canyon. Just before they enter it, Hercules holds up his hand  
to stop everybody while he scans the top of the canyon's walls.

(CONTINUED)

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17A

15 CONTINUED: 2

15

HIS POV

No signs of life up there, just lots of huge boulders.

(CONTINUED)

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19.

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

16 INT. UNDER THE AVALANCHE - DAY

16

Hercules is struggling to hold up a rock the size of Texas. Xena and Iolaus are on their knees, trying to tunnel out.

HERCULES

Can you go a little faster?

IOLAUS

What's the matter, not enjoying yourself?

HERCULES

~~I'm worried about all of us getting a big headache.~~ Well my back is hurting - a little

XENA

~~You're not... Iolaus~~  
(glancing)  
... ~~funny~~ your head...  
(glancing at Iolaus)  
... is bleeding...

Iolaus checks himself for blood, finds it and shrugs. Xena keeps on wrestling with a large, stubborn rock.

XENA

~~Why don't the two of you just stick to business?~~

She punctuates her sentence by pulling the rock free. As she and Iolaus move forward a few feet, Iolaus looks back at Salmoneus, who is cowering like a beaten puppy.

IOLAUS

You <sup>going to</sup> ~~going~~, Salmoneus?

SALMONEUS

~~What does it matter? He is all going to die.~~ I can't (Ad lib)

HERCULES

~~Who said anything about dying?~~ We're practically out of here.

IOLAUS (to Salmoneus)

Give us a hand. It'll take your mind off things.

SALMONEUS

~~...~~ I can't.

(CONTINUED)

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20.

16 CONTINUED:

16

He starts to crawl forward, but as he does, the rocks above them shift and the load on Hercules becomes heavier. His legs are shaking and sweat is pouring down his face.

SALMONEUS

Oh...

He's frozen by panic as rocks and dust fall everywhere.

CUT TO:

17 INT. DARPUS' HEADQUARTERS - DAY - CLOSE ON A WINE BOTTLE

17

The man holding it smashes off its neck on a table.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL

Darphus raising the bottle to his lips and drinking deeply as the overflow splashes onto his face and down his tunic. He's in high spirits, as are the lieutenants and warriors who are crowded in here with their own wine bottles.

DARPUS

Drink deeply, drink well! Hercules is dead!

In the distance, Graegus howls gleefully. Then there is the cry of a terrified villager, followed by the sound of the Dog of War crunching his bones.

DARPUS

Do you hear that? Every bite makes *Graegus stronger.*  
~~.....~~! Soon he'll be too big to stop, and we will join with him to fulfil the mighty Ares' destiny! The God of War will rule the world!

Darphus raises his bottle high.

DARPUS

To Ares!

LIEUTENANTS AND WARRIORS

To Ares!

Off Darphus and his warriors guzzling more wine as Graegus' howls and growls become more terrifying --

CUT TO:

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18.

15 CONTINUED: 3

15

RESUME SCENE

Hercules looks back at Xena, Iolaus and Salmoneus.

A

~~HERCULES~~~~Once we're in there, move as fast as  
you can without getting lost.  
(See their looks)  
Okay, let's go.~~

They enter the canyon. Xena and Iolaus have no trouble keeping pace with Hercules, but Salmoneus has to move as fast as his legs will carry him. Deeper and deeper they go until they've passed the point of no return. And then:

A SINGLE STONE

lands a few feet in front of Hercules. When he looks up to see why it fell, a thunderous roar fills the air.

HIS POV

Hundreds of boulders are crashing down on them.

RESUME SCENE

Hercules dives to push Xena, Iolaus and Salmoneus to safety.

HERCULES

Look out!

But his warning is drowned out by the sound of the boulders landing with enough force to squash all of humanity. When the din subsides, we hear cruel, triumphant laughter.

AT THE TOP OF THE CANYON WALL

Darphus strides into view, laughing harder than ever as he beholds what his treachery hath wrought. And rising behind him to underscore his evil intentions are the EYES OF ARES.

\*  
\*

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

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21.

18 INT. UNDER THE AVALANCHE - DAY

18

The boulders overhead are shaking badly, Hercules is sagging under the load he's holding, Xena and Iolaus are tunneling as fast as they can, and Salmoneus is still a puddle of emotional goo.

SALMONEUS

I don't want to die... I don't want to die...

HERCULES

(re the boulder he's holding)

This thing isn't getting any lighter.

XENA

Look!

She's pointing at

A SHAFT OF LIGHT

pouring in through a crevice that she and Iolaus have made.

IOLAUS

We're almost out!

Xena and Iolaus start tunneling faster than ever. But no sooner has he said that than the boulders overhead shift ominously, showering our intrepid group with more rocks and dirt. Salmoneus lets out a terrified yelp.

HERCULES

Hang on, Salmoneus.

(to Xena)

How much longer?

XENA

One more rock...

She and Iolaus finally dislodge that big sucker. Now there's an opening half the size of the doorway. Beyond it

THE OUTSIDE WORLD

beckons with sunshine and fresh air.

HERCULES

(to Xena and Iolaus)

Get out of here! Go on!

IOLAUS

What about you?

XENA

And Salmoneus?

(CONTINUED)

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22.

18 CONTINUED:

18

HERCULES  
Just go! We'll be fine!  
(Xena and Iolaus  
hesitate)  
Go!

IOLAUS  
(reluctantly)  
All right.

He and Xena crawl for daylight. But the boulder Hercules is holding looks like it's going to get the best of him. Suddenly, he bends his knees like a weightlifter doing the clean and jerk and throws the boulder into the air.

CUT TO:

19 EXT. AVALANCHE - DAY

19

The boulder flies into the air as Xena and Iolaus scramble into the sunlight. But the avalanche is shaking so forcefully that Hercules and Salmoneus seem sure to be crushed beneath it.

CUT TO:

20 INT. UNDER THE AVALANCHE - DAY

20

The whole damn thing is starting to come crashing down as Hercules reaches for the cowering Salmoneus.

HERCULES  
Enough of this place! Come on!

He grabs Salmoneus and hustles him toward the escape hatch. When they get to it, he looks up at

THE BOULDER

and sees that it's whistling back down at them.

HERCULES  
You first!

He shoves Salmoneus through the escape hatch and dives after him just as the boulder hits and the place collapses. But there's no telling if they got out in time.

CUT TO:

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23.

21 EXT. AVALANCHE - DAY

21

A huge cloud of dust obscures the avalanche and a deafening roar fills the ears of Xena and Iolaus, who are watching in horror. For a long beat, they are consumed by the terrible thought that Hercules and Salmoneus have been killed. Then they hear someone coughing. Then the sound of someone being slapped on the back. And then, shrouded by the dust:

HERCULES

Take it easy, you'll be all right.

At last Hercules appears, leading Salmoneus, who is doubled up in a coughing fit.

HERCULES

Iolaus, give him some water.

IOLAUS

Right away.

He takes a water skin and offers it to Salmoneus. Xena takes the opportunity to approach Hercules.

XENA

That was the bravest thing I've ever seen.

HERCULES

Everybody had a hand in getting us out of there.

SALMONEUS

Everybody except me. All I did was prove what a coward I am.

HERCULES

You're nothing of the sort, Salmoneus. I remember how you stuck by me when I had to battle Nemis the Centaur without my sight.

SALMONEUS

Save your breath.

(gesturing at Xena and Iolaus)

They're never going to believe you. And, quite frankly, I'm starting to wonder if it ever happened myself. \*

Salmoneus hands Iolaus the water skin, then slumps away. Xena starts after him only to be stopped by Hercules.

HERCULES

Let him go. He needs some time alone.

(CONTINUED)



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24.

21 CONTINUED:

21

XENA

Have it your way.

She turns to Iolaus, whose head wound is still bleeding.

XENA

What about you? Want me to bandage your head?

IOLAUS

~~I can take care of it myself.~~ No.

His icy tone makes it clear that he wants nothing to do with Xena. When Hercules hears it, he rolls his eyes.

HERCULES

There ought to be a lot of laughs around the campfire tonight.

CUT TO:

22 EXT. NEW CAMPSITE - NIGHT

22

The fire is crackling. On one side of it, Salmoneus is curled beneath a blanket, sleeping or doing a first-rate job of feigning sleep. On another side, Iolaus has been trying to sleep and not having any luck. There's just too much turmoil inside his head. Finally, he rises and looks at Hercules, but not at Xena.

IOLAUS

I'm going to check our perimeter, make sure everything is all right.

He moves off into the darkness before Hercules can reply. After a beat, speaking softly so she won't wake Salmoneus:

XENA

Every time Iolaus looks at me, I feel his hatred. He acts as though I'm out to drive a wedge between you again.

HERCULES

When it counts, the only thing he'll worry about is Derphus.

XENA *what about you?*

~~But he's not about you.~~ Could you go back to hating me, to thinking of me as an enemy?

No

HERCULES

~~of a~~ You're too good ~~of a~~ person to hate.

(CONTINUED)

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25.

22 CONTINUED:

22

XENA

But I've done terrible things, killed so many men that I'll never wash their blood from my hands.

HERCULES

*You've already started*

~~You've already started~~ You saved that baby and you ~~defeated~~ ~~defeated~~

XENA

~~Defeating him doesn't seem to have~~  
~~come back from the dead~~

HERCULES

~~What's the point of this? You're~~  
~~bringing me back to life when you'll~~  
~~think about your own mortality.~~

Xena studies his face, as if it contains the answer to the questions she still has about her new role in life.

XENA

*But*

~~I don't know.~~ When you help people, you honor the wife and children that Hera stole from you. There's nothing in my life that moves me that way.

HERCULES

You're wrong. There's the goodness in your heart.

XENA

Do you really believe that?

HERCULES

I wouldn't say it if I didn't.

Off Xena, who would embrace Hercules, maybe even kiss him, if she didn't live by such a strict warrior code.

CUT TO:

23 EXT. ELYSIA - DAY

23

There's an evil gleam in Darphus' eyes as he addresses his 12 fiercest warriors, all of them, like him, on horseback and armed to the teeth.

*DARPHUS is waiting to be pillaged*

The diamond mine ~~is ready to be pillaged~~  
~~pillaged~~ We'll use the diamonds to pay tribute to Ares, and we'll feed the bodies of the miners to Graegus.

(CONTINUED)

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25A.

23 CONTINUED:

23

In the distance, the Dog of War howls hungrily. The sound heightens the blood lust in Darphus and his men.

DARPHUS

When Graegus is finished, he'll be at full size -- an enormity to guarantee that Ares' will is fulfilled. The rivers will flow with blood and chaos will reign.

(CONTINUED)

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26.

23 CONTINUED: 2

23

The warriors roar lustily.

DARPHUS

Death to all who stand before us!

Yelling for blood, they thunder out of the village.

CUT TO:

24 OMITTED

24

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27.

25 EXT. DIAMOND MINING CAMP - DAY

25

The look on the face of the crusty CAMP BOSS says he isn't impressed with the warning that Hercules and Co. have delivered. Neither are the other MINERS, most of whom are still at work in this hardscrabble setting.

CAMP BOSS

Who do you think you are, walking in here, telling us we've got to leave?

*He's* ~~HERCULES~~ IOLAUS  
~~He's~~ Hercules.

CAMP BOSS

That's a fancy name you're throwing around. But you still can't make me forget the diamonds we're taking out of this land, so save your breath.

*Maybe* IOLAUS ~~Save your breath~~ →  
 → ~~Save your breath~~ Hercules should pound  
 some sense into that thick head of  
 yours.

HERCULES

(to Iolaus)

Take it easy.

(to the camp boss)

If Darphus' name doesn't scare you,  
 maybe Ares' will.

CAMP BOSS

(sneering)

Ares? There's not a man in this camp  
 who hasn't paid tribute to him by  
 fighting in a war somewhere along the  
 line. He bears us no ill will.

Suddenly, Hercules the unmistakable whistling sound of an arrow in flight. He whirls and catches the arrow just before it burrows into the camp boss' chest. Then he looks at the camp boss almost mischievously.

HERCULES

~~As you were saying~~ *As you were saying*

Just like that, the camp is attacked by warriors on horseback, all of them screaming and cutting down every poor bastard who gets in their way. Some miners are running, others are futilely trying to fight back. Hercules, Xena and Iolaus rush to help them. Salmoneus simply cowers.

(CONTINUED)

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25 CONTINUED: 2

25

DARPHUS

~~That's just what I want. When~~  
~~you're out of the way, the rest of the~~  
~~world will be the world!~~ I'll be waiting

With a disdain that borders on arrogance, Darphus pulls the knife from his chest, defiantly hurls it to the ground and sneers at Hercules and Xena. Then he and his killers ride away.

XENA

If a knife in the heart won't stop  
Darphus, what will?

HERCULES

We'll find something.

But the look on our hero's face suggests that he's just as worried as Xena. Fortunately, he can change the subject by turning to Iolaus.

(CONTINUED)

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28.

25 CONTINUED:

25

XENA

Hercules, look! It is Darphus!

She's using her sword to point at Darphus as he leads the charge against the mining camp. When he sees Hercules and Xena, he returns their stare as the battle swirls around them.

DARPHUS

You're not supposed to be alive!

HERCULES

Neither are you!

DARPHUS

Don't you know? You can't kill me!  
Ares is on my side! Your own  
half-brother, Hercules!

He punctuates his message by using his sword to chop down a miner. Enraged, Hercules and Xena both try to get at Darphus, only to be intercepted by six of his warriors. While they fight those killers, Iolaus is taking on three other warriors who are on the verge of killing him. And Salmoneus is still cowering.

Suddenly the business end of a bullwhip wraps around a warrior's throat, jerking him off his feet. As Iolaus resumes his fight against the two warriors still standing, he glances in the direction the whip came from.

IOLAUS

Thanks, Her-- ...

He can't believe it when he finds Xena staring back at him. But there's no time to talk now, so Iolaus goes back to kicking his oppressors' butts. Meanwhile, the totally unnerved Salmoneus gets swallowed by the chaos.

Meanwhile, Hercules and Xena are laying waste to the warriors in their path. Darphus doesn't like what he sees. He doesn't like the knife that a miner throws into his chest, either. But he never falls from his horse, never even flinches.

DARPHUS

(disgusted)

Retreat! ... Retreat! ...

The two warriors he has left are only too happy to obey his order. As they flee:

HERCULES

We're coming after you, Darphus!

(CONTINUED)

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29.

25 CONTINUED: 3

25

HERCULES

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Everything ok?

IOLAUS

Just one problem as far as I can see.

(beat)

Salmeoneus is missing.

Off the shock that registers on Hercules and Xena --

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO



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30.

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

26 EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF MINING CAMP - DAY

26

Hercules is combing the area for clues as to what happened to Salmoneus. He hopes he doesn't find the tireless schemer's body as he studies the ground for footprints and the trees and bushes for a shred of clothing that might have been torn in a struggle. And then he sees

SALMONEUS' NOTEBOOK

lying on the ground in the shadow of a large rock.

Hercules hurries over and kneels to pick it up. When he starts to read it, we hear:

SALMONEUS (V.O.)

As warriors, Hercules and Xena have always been a perfect match -- strong, fearless, resolute -- but since they wound up fighting on the same side, there has been a different kind of attraction between them. I find myself wondering about them falling in love... getting married... having children... hiring me to handle their finances...

Hercules smiles, shakes his head wearily, and stands.

HERCULES

My friend, I hope your imagination is the only thing that ran away with you.

Then he tucks the notebook inside his shirt and sets off back to the mining camp.

CUT TO:

27 EXT. MINING CAMP - DAY

27

Iolaus and Xena are helping tend to the wounded miners.

IOLAUS

(to the miner he's bandaging)

There, that should hold you... All right, who's next?

XENA

I think everybody who didn't die has been taken care of.

(CONTINUED)

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31.

27 CONTINUED:

27

That means it's just the two of them until Hercules gets back. There's a beat of obvious discomfort before:

IOLAUS

Good, we need to get going.

XENA

You're right. I hope Hercules finds Salmoneus in a hurry.

IOLAUS

Yeah.

Now Xena is getting uncomfortable, too. After a beat:

IOLAUS

You know, the only other person who ever saved my life was Hercules. What I can't understand is why you did it.

XENA

We're on the same side now.

IOLAUS

That's it?

XENA

According to the code I live by, it is.

IOLAUS

But it wasn't that long ago you were ready to kill me to get at Hercules.

XENA

I'll go to my grave regretting that. I was all twisted up by hate -- probably the same thing you're feeling toward me.

IOLAUS

Not anymore.

XENA

You're a forgiving man, Iolaus. Would you also be brave enough to call me a friend?

She holds out her hand.

IOLAUS

I would.

When he takes her hand, they are bonded as warriors.

(CONTINUED)

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32A.

28 CONTINUED:

28

DARPHUS

The rage you hear in Graegus is a  
measure of how badly you have failed  
Ares.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

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33.

28 CONTINUED: 2

28

DARPHUS (cont'd)

~~My 12 best warriors didn't get him because they ran from Hercules and Xena like craven cowards.~~  
~~My 12 best warriors didn't get him because they ran from Hercules and Xena like craven cowards.~~  
~~My 12 best warriors didn't get him because they ran from Hercules and Xena like craven cowards.~~  
 Graegus needs ~~the~~ flesh and blood that  
 My 12 best warriors didn't get him  
 because they ran from Hercules and  
 Xena like craven cowards.

One of the two warriors who escaped with Darphus eyes him with a mixture of disdain and disbelief.

SURVIVING WARRIOR

But you fled with us.

Darphus responds by sinking a dagger into the warrior's chest. The rest of the warriors, though they are hard and cruel, can't believe it.

DARPHUS

I never flee. I only live to fight another day.

In the distance, Graegus growls louder than ever.

DARPHUS

(to two hulking warriors; motioning toward the dead man)

Feed this one to Graegus.

The two hulking warriors drag the dead man toward the temple.

DARPHUS

(to the remaining warriors)

The rest of you, prepare for the arrival of Hercules and Xena. Kill them and you will regain your honor. Fail and Graegus awaits you.

As the Dog of War's fierce growl echoes in their ears --

CUT TO:

29 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY - ON WAGON TRACKS

29

OLAUS (O.S.)

The only people who come around here with wagons...

(CONTINUED)

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33A.

29 CONTINUED:

29

PULL BACK TO REVEAL \*

Xena studying the tracks as Hercules and Iolaus watch her. \*  
For the moment, though, our hero seems more interested in \*  
her beauty than he is in what she's talking about. \*

(CONTINUED)

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35.

30 CONTINUED:

30

ENOS

Don't be so sensitive, sonny boy!

He pokes Salmoneus playfully in the ribs.

SALMONEUS

Cut that out!

ENOS

You need some ocean air, that's what you need. It'll improve your sense of humor.

Salmoneus looks around: Nothing but landlocked landscape.

SALMONEUS

Enos, we're not near any ocean.

ENOS

Of course we are.

He squints blindly into the distance.

SALMONEUS

You can't see past your donkeys, can you?

(off Enos' loony smile)

I knew it, I knew it. I'm doomed.

ENOS

Don't be such a worrywart. My eyes may not be so hot, but my donkeys' eyes work just fine.

SALMONEUS

(looking heavenward;  
dead serious)

This is the price I pay for my cowardice, isn't it?

ENOS

Maybe you just aren't cut out to be hitchhiking in the middle of nowhere.

Then Enos laughs crazily. All Salmoneus can do is slouch in his seat, feeling like more of a sadsack than ever.

CUT TO:

31 EXT. WOODED AREA - DAY

31

Hercules, Xena and Iolaus press on.

CONTINUED

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35A.

31 CONTINUED:

31

XENA  
Not much farther now.

(CONTINUED)

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36A.

32 EXT. ELYSIA - DAY - SALMONEUS AND ENOS' POV

32

The occupied village doesn't look very glorious from a distance, particularly with a small herd of sheep on the far side of it.

ENOS (O.S.)

Small that ocean? That'll cure those blues for you.

CUT TO:



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37.

33 EXT. THE HILLTOP OVERLOOKING ELYSIA - DAY

33

Salmoneus stares at Enos incredulously.

SALMONEUS

Since when do sheep smell like the ocean?

ENOS

What sheep? There are no sheep here. Fish, that's what they have in a fishing village.

SALMONEUS

Well, this isn't a fishing village. It's Elysia.

ENOS

Is not.

SALMONEUS

Is.

ENOS

Is not.

SALMONEUS

Is.

They're so wrapped up in this insane argument that they don't notice one of Darphus' lieutenants closing in on them with a six-warrior patrol.

ENOS

Is not.

LIEUTENANT

Sorry, old man, it is.

Off Salmoneus and Enos, so surprised they could defecate cupcakes.

CUT TO:

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38.

34 EXT. WOODED AREA - DAY

34

Hercules is sitting with his back against a tree. Xena stands before him, her face radiant with the kind of happiness we have never before seen on it.

XENA

 You know, I've been in a hundred other battles, and the only thing that ever came over me ~~was a~~ was a cold rage. But now ~~the~~ . . .

(a beat)

Is this how it feels to be you, Hercules?

HERCULES

I think you're just finding out how good it feels to challenge the forces of evil.

(CONTINUED)

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39.

34 CONTINUED:

34

XENA

I wouldn't be doing it if you hadn't given me the chance.

HERCULES

Whatever I did doesn't count. You made the decision on your own.

Xena kneels beside him.

XENA

There's another decision I've made.

HERCULES

(shyly wary)

What's that?

XENA

To let you know how I feel about you in case I die fighting Darphus.

~~HERCULES~~

~~What's she going to do, Xena?~~

~~She looks not dead. She's shocked by his heroic escape.~~

~~XENA~~

~~Well, you still have to listen to me. Tell you how much I love your sense of honor, your decency, your...   
 ~~honor, your decency, your...~~~~

~~HERCULES~~

~~(amazed)~~

~~I don't know what you mean.~~

~~XENA~~

~~Then why don't you just kiss me?~~

And they melt in each other's arms, kissing with all the passion that has been building between them since they wound up on the same side.

CUT TO:

35 EXT. THE OUTSKIRTS OF ELYSIA - DAY

35\*

(CONTINUED)

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40.

35 CONTINUED:

35

Iolaus creeps into view. Ever so carefully, he peers out at the village from his hiding place. \*

HIS POV

Most of the activity in the village is centered around Salmoneus. Darphus watches with undisguised pleasure as one of his warriors feeds the tireless schemer a sumptuous repast of roast boar, luscious grapes and fine wine. When Enos tries to get in on the grub, some warriors pull him away roughly. And Salmoneus, even though he doesn't look particularly happy, goes on eating.

RESUME SCENE

Even though he's too far away to hear what Darphus and Salmoneus are saying, Iolaus has no doubts about what has happened.

IOLAUS

Traitor...

Suddenly, Graegus howls, chilling Iolaus to the bone and driving all thoughts of Salmoneus' imagined betrayal from his mind. \*

IOLAUS

Now we've got trouble. \*

And with a worried look, he slips away. \*

CUT TO:

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41.

36 EXT. WOODED AREA - DAY

36

A far different emotion consumes Hercules and Xena as the former enemies make love. In the distance, Graegus can be heard howling ever so faintly, but for the moment, their feelings for each other come first.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

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42.

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

37 EXT. WOODED AREA - DAY

37

Still angered by the thought of Salmoneus' betrayal, Iolaus makes his way through the trees. But he's stopped in his tracks when he comes upon

HERCULES AND XENA

radiating post-coital tenderness. Not speaking except with their eyes. Not touching, but joined at the heart.

IOLAUS

senses instantly what has happened. He needs a beat to come to grips with it, but when he sees how happy Hercules is, he can't help smiling himself. Then he clears his throat loudly enough for the new lovers to hear him and steps into the clearing.

HERCULES

Iolaus...

IOLAUS

Not back too soon, am I?

(bad question)

I mean, I didn't think I'd be back this soon.

Hercules and Xena share a private smile. Then:

XENA

What did you find?

IOLAUS

(his smile vanishing)

Salmoneus for one, but not the way you'd think he would be. I can't explain it, but he was eating with Darphus having a good time.

HERCULES

Salmoneus is a lot of things, but I have a hard time believing that a traitor is one of them.

XENA

Darphus hates him!

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED

37

IOLAUS

Hercules. (A Beat) Graegus is there.

XENA

Who's Graegus?

HERCULES

Ares' pet, the Dog of War - he'll feed on Darphus' victims until he's bigger than any creature that ever walked.

IOLAUS

If that happens Ares will rule the world.

XENA

So, How do we stop them?

HERCULES

Sometimes you can only defeat evil with evil.

Iolaus and Xena wait for Hercules to explain as we ---

CUT TO:

38 EXT. ELYSIA - DAY

38

As his warriors watch with savage amusement, Darphus grabs a greasy piece of meat and menaces Salmoneus with it himself.

DARPHUS

You must have been sick. You've lost weight since ~~you were feeding them~~ we last met. ~~with this nonsense about changing~~ ~~your image~~. Come on, open up. Eat.

SALMONEUS

(lips sealed)

Mmm-mmmh!

(CONT. JED)

38

38

Darphus is running out of patience.

DARPHUS

How many times do I have to tell you? I want you nice and plump so Graegus will have lots to chew on.

SALMONEUS

(terrified; lips still sealed)

MMM-MMHI

DARPHUS

(exploding)

Eat it!

And he pries Salmoneus' mouth open with one hand and jams the meat in it with the other. As Salmoneus chokes it down, Darphus tears off another hunk from a nearby roast.

SALMONEUS

No more please . . . I've got heartburn, indigestion . . .

(menacingly)

Gas . . .

DARPHUS

Don't make me kill you before I feed you to Graegus. I want you kicking and screaming so Hercules and Xena can watch.

Off Darphus' hatred and Salmoneus' upset stomach --

CUT TO:



39 EXT. THE HILLTOP OVERLOOKING ELYSIA - DAY

39\*

Hercules puts his finger to his lips. Iolaus nods. They move toward the abandoned wagon. Suddenly a SENTRY posted by Darphus steps out with his sword drawn.

SENTRY

Stop right there.

HERCULES

Whoops.

He raises his hands. Iolaus follows suit.

SENTRY

(sneering)

The mighty Hercules. How does it feel to be...

WHAM! Xena has crept up behind the sentry and coldcocked him with a tree limb.

XENA

How does it feel to be unconscious? You'll have to tell us when you wake up.

IOLAUS

Look out!

In a flash, he draws his knife and throws it past Xena's left ear, into the chest of the WARRIOR sneaking up on her.

Xena checks out the dead warrior, then feels to make sure her ear is where it's supposed to be.

XENA

Any closer and my ear would be stuck to his chest.

IOLAUS

You didn't give me much of an angle.

XENA

I knew you could handle it.

All of a sudden Iolaus feels like a warrior again.

HERCULES

Come on, we need to move fast. Iolaus, you know what to do.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

IOLAUS

One burning wagon coming up.

He produces the short sticks he'll use to start the fire as Hercules and Xena slip away.

CUT TO:

41 EXT. ELYSLIA - DAY

41\*

The warriors seem edgier, no doubt because Darphus is glaring hatefully at Salmoneus.

DARPHUS

Where are they? They should be here by now.

SALMONEUS

How would I know? They never write, and all I do is . . .

(burp)

. . . eat.

CRACK! Darphus slaps Salmoneus.

DARPHUS

It's time to teach you some manners.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

SALMONEUS

Wait a minute, don't get me wrong. Your food is great. If you get me a nice sorbet to cleanse my palate, I could work my way through another six or seven courses.

Darphus doesn't appreciate his sense of humour.

CUT TO:

40 EXT. THE OUTSKIRTS OF ELYSIA - DAY

40\*

Hercules and Xena are edging ever so carefully toward the rear of the compound. They stop when they hear the Dog of War growling ferociously. Hercules and Xena look at each other, filled with uncertainty.

HERCULES

Ready?

XENA

This is no time to say I'm not.

HERCULES

Then I'll see you when it's over.

XENA

Make sure of that, would you?

They kiss quickly. They hold hands a beat longer. Then, after taking what may be the last look at each other they ever have, they head in different directions.

CUT TO:

40A EXT. ELYSLA - DAY

40A\*

Darphus looks at his warriors.

DARPHUS

(gesturing at Salmoneus)

Graegus can eat this one. Maybe your screams  
will convince Hercules and Xena to come out  
of hiding.

SALMONEUS

Wouldn't a written invitation be nicer?

DARPHUS

(to his warriors)

Into the temple with him!

SALMONEUS

If it's all the same to you, I'd rather eat  
myself to death.

Off Darphus' glowering countenance --

CUT TO:

42 EXT. THE HILLTOP OVERLOOKING ELYSIA - DAY 42\*

The wagon is teetering on the edge of the hill. Iolaus is still rubbing his short sticks together and lights a small fire. He is excited for a moment, but looks frustrated as the fire goes out.

43 EXT. TEMPLE - DAY 43\*

Darphus is dragging the petrified Salmoneus towards his grim fate. The warriors follow, eagerly anticipating blood. Inside the temple, the Dog of War is howling.

DARPHUS

Hear that? Graegus is hungry.

SALMONEUS

There's plenty of roast left. Let me get him some.

He tries to leave. Darphus yanks him back him place.

DARPHUS

After he's finished, he'll be big enough to obliterate anyone who stands in Ares' path.

Graegus growls, signifying the Dog of War's approval.

DARPHUS

He smells your fear.  
(to his warriors)  
Take him down.

Salmoneus whimpers as the door begins to open.

CUT TO:

44 EXT. HERCULES' HIDING PLACE - DAY 44

Our hero is within striking distance of the temple. He motions to Xena across the courtyard.

CUT TO:

45 EXT. XENA'S HIDING PLACE - DAY 45

Xena motions back, waiting to strike.

CUT TO:

46 EXT. THE HILLTOP OVERLOOKING ELYSIA - DAY 46\*

Iolaus throws his worthless sticks aside in disgust, then summons all his might to push the wagon down the hill. As it begins to move, he jumps on and rides it toward the village gates.

IOLAUS

Fire! Fire! Fire!

CUT TO:

47 EXT. TEMPLE - DAY 47\*

Salmoneus is led inside pleading. Suddenly, Darphus hears Iolaus' screams and a thunderous CRASH. He turns to see the cart exploding through the gates of the compound.

DARPHUS

Well, well. The son of Zeus has finally arrived.

Several warriors head off towards the wagon.

CUT TO:

48 EXT. COURTYARD - DAY 48

Using the distraction, Hercules and Xena charge out and begin battling Darphus' remaining warriors.

XENA

I thought it was supposed to be on fire.

HERCULES

Old hunter's tricks don't always work!

Darphus sees them approaching.

CUT TO:

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49A.

47B CONTINUED:

47B

DARPHUS

You've got it all wrong. It's you who  
dies this time. You and Hercules.

(drawing his sword)

And Ares will rule!

Let the rumble begin.

CUT TO:

49 INT. TEMPLE - DAY - CONTINUING

49

PER STORYBOARDS

Salmones is shackled to the floor as the sentries high tail it out of the temple. He looks up fearfully and sees something stirring in the shadows. Something huge and growling. Salmones' life is passing in front of his eyes.

SALMONEUS

Nice doggy.

CUT TO:

50 DELETED

50

51 EXT. TEMPLE - DAY

51

Xena engages Darphus in a fierce battle on the temple steps, allowing Hercules to barrel through the temple doors. Salmones' screams lead the way.

XENA

I'm going to make sure you stay dead this time, Darphus.

DARPHUS

(evil smile)

You've got it all wrong. It's you who dies this time. And Hercules will be dessert for the Dog of War! Ares will rule!

CUT TO:

52 INT. - TEMPLE - DAY

52

PER STORYBOARDS

We finally get a good look at what Salmones has been screaming about. The Dog of War is nothing short of terrifying. Just as Graegus is about to pounce on Salmones, Hercules hurls a massive log to his head, knocking the dog silly. The effect is only temporary, but gives our heroes a slight advantage.

SALMONEUS

Hercules, that was great!

HERCULES

We're not out of this yet.

The dog is shaking off his headache and poised to lunge again. Hercules picks up a spear from the floor.

HERCULES

I wonder if he knows how to play fetch.

CUT TO:



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50A.

49B CONTINUED:

49B

DARPHUS

So did I.

And they begin their fight to the death.

(CONTINUED)

53 EXT. ELYSIA - DAY

53

Iolaus continues to battle Darphus' men. They seem to keep on coming.

CUT TO:

54 EXT. TEMPLE - DAY

54

Xena looks like she's done for. Two warriors have grabbed her, one by each arm, and Darphus is ready to run her through.

DARPHUS

You're mine!

But Xena does a backward flip, then swings the startled warriors in front of her so they're the ones Darphus kills.

XENA

Take them instead.

And her battle with Darphus resumes. He gets the upper hand and drives Xena into the temple.

CUT TO:

55 INT. TEMPLE - DAY

55

PER STORYBOARDS

Hercules continues to battle the dog. Xena and Darphus enter and continue their fight. Xena manages to free Salmoneus who runs for the door.

CUT TO:

56 EXT. ELYSIA - DAY

56

Salmoneus runs for the gates of the compound, but stops when he sees Iolaus fiercely battling a whole legion of soldiers. Salmoneus grabs a frying pan off of the cart and motions to Iolaus to send some people his way. One by one, Salmoneus bonks several soldiers on the head, allowing Iolaus to get the upper hand.

IOLAUS

Thanks!

SALMONEUS  
(flexing his muscles)

I'm the man!

CUT TO:

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51A.

49D EXT. TEMPLE - DAY

49D\*

Xena looks like she's done for. Two warriors have grabbed her, one by each arm, and Darphus is ready to use his sword on her. \*

DARPHUS

You're mine!

But Xena does a backward flip, then swings the startled warriors in front of her so they're the ones Darphus kills.

(CONTINUED)

57 INT. TEMPLE - DAY

57

PER STORYBOARDS

Hercules and Graegus continue to fight. Hercules manages to chain up the dog.

CUT TO:

58 EXT. ELYSIA - DAY

58

Salmoneus and Iolaus finish off the last of the soldiers.

IOLAUS

C'mon. Our friends need our help.

SALMONEUS

Right.

As they take off, four more guards cross their path. Iolaus raises his sword while Salmoneus raises his skillet to the ready.

CUT TO:

59 INT. TEMPLE - DAY

59

PER STORYBOARDS

In the midst of all this, he glances at Xena, who is battling Darphus down the stairs.

HERCULES

Xena!

When she looks his way, he motions her toward him and Graegus. What follows is the beautiful, almost sexual choreography that Hercules and Xena employ to get Darphus and Graegus where they want them. Darphus and Graegus think just the opposite when Hercules and Xena are back-to-back. Graegus opens his horrifying mouth and Darphus raises his sword two-handed, as if it were an ax.

Xena makes a spinning move, Hercules dodges Graegus and -- presto! - - Graegus mistakenly consumes Darphus in one bite. He must taste bad, though, because Graegus starts choking on him almost immediately. But it doesn't look like the Dog of War is going to die when he splits in two. Xena raises her sword.

XENA

Great, one for each of us.

(CONTINUED)

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52A.

49E CONTINUED:

49E

Together, they watch Graegus split again. And again. And again. He doesn't stop until he's dust at our hero's feet. \*

Enos squints in disbelief at what's happening.

ENOS

I'm getting while the getting's good.

He runs for his life while Salmoneus tries to get a closer look. But a whirlwind springs up, making the dust impossible to examine.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: 2

59

Hercules puts his arm up to stop her.

HERCULES

Wait.

Together, they watch Graegus split again. And again. and again. He doesn't stop until he's dust at our hero's feet.

Iolaus and Salmoneus run into the temple and watch in amazement.

IOLAUS

I've never seen anything like that. What happened?

HERCULES

He choked on the poison that was inside Darphus.

SALMONEUS

And I thought I had indigestion.

The whirlwind grows stronger. The dust begins to blow away.

XENA

But Darphus had Ares on his side.

HERCULES

It didn't matter. Evil always cancels itself out.

Suddenly, the wind reaches full force, scattering the dust that once was Graegus and signalling Ares' defeat, at least for the moment.

DISSOLVE TO:

60 EXT. ELYSIA - DAY

60

Salmoneus is still overflowing with excitement. Hercules and Iolaus are just glad the battle is over.

SALMONEUS

Did you see those turkeys fall when Iolaus pushed them over to me? They were like tenpins.

(off his friends' puzzlement)

You know what tenpins are. Anyway that was an incredible experience. I'd write about it if . . .

Salmoneus is empty-handed until Hercules dips into the top of his boot and pulls out the tireless schemer's notebook.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED: 2

60

HERCULES

Is this what you need?

SALMONEUS

My notebook! Oh, thank you, thank you,  
thank you. . .

IOLAUS

(to Hercules; teasing)

The problem with Salmoneus is, you never  
know how he feels about anything.

HERCULES

He'll have to work on that.

SALMONEUS

Go ahead, laugh. But you two are going to  
miss me.

HERCULES

Where are you going?

SALMONEUS

Nowhere. I'm staying right here. If my  
celebrity biography of you doesn't work out, I  
can always sell the real estate.

IOLAUS

Don't count on me buying any. I'm heading  
for home. You with me, Hercules?

HERCULES

There's someone I need to talk to before I can  
make any decisions.

Off a look that can only be called wistful -

CUT TO:

61 EXT. WOODED AREA - DAY

61

In the place where she and Hercules made love, Xena is getting the  
horse Darphus rode ready to travel. Hercules is at her side, but for the  
longest time, neither of them can speak. Finally:

XENA

You're going to make this tougher for me  
than it already is, aren't you?

(CONTINUED)

JAN-19-1995 20:14 FROM

HERCULES

TO

NEW ZEALAND P.012-213

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54A.

51 CONTINUED:

51

Hercules needs another beat to recover from that one.

(CONTINUED)



61 CONTINUED: 2.

61

HERCULES

If I knew what you were talking about, I  
might be able to give you an answer.

XENA

I'm talking about leaving.  
(a beat)  
Without you.

Hercules needs another beat to recover from that one.

HERCULES

It doesn't have to be that way.

XENA

Don't, please. You're going to make me cry,  
and I haven't done that since I was a child.

Tears are starting to trickle down her cheeks.

HERCULES

Xena. . .

He takes her in his arms and they kiss.

XENA

Just let me go. There's so much in my life I  
need to make amends for, and I have to get  
started.

HERCULES

I wish you'd let me help.

XENA

You already have. You unchained my heart.

They kiss one more time. And then:

XENA

Goodbye, Hercules.

She climbs aboard her horse and rides away without looking back.  
There's nothing Hercules can do but watch her as his face becomes a  
study in sadness. He doesn't even hear Iolaus walk up beside him.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: 3

61

IOLAUS

Are you going to be alright?

Hercules ponders the question for a long beat.

HERCULES

Yeah, I think so. After all, the good guys did win.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR