

Prod. #V0116

HERCULES

"When A Man Loves A Woman"

Written by

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Directed by

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Executive Producers
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SHOOTING DRAFT
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HERCULES

"When A Man Loves A Woman"

Cast List

HERCULES

IOLAUS

(ee O luss)

SOLDIER ONE

SOLDIER TWO

ARES

(AIR es)

STRIFE

HIND/SERENA

(suh REEN uh)

MERCHANT

JOXER

(JOX er)

AGITATOR

KLONUS

(KLO nuhs)

ILEA

(ih LAY uh)

DEIANEIRA

(DAY eh nair uh)

AESON

(AY suhn)

HERCULES

"When A Man Loves A Woman"

Chronology

DAY 1	SCENES #1 - 12
NIGHT 1	SCENE #13
DAY 2	SCENES #14 - 15
NIGHT 2	SCENES #16 - 17
DAY 3	SCENES #18 - 28

HERCULES

"When A Man Loves A Woman"

PROLOGUE

FADE IN

1 EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

1

IOLAUS, arm in a sling, laboriously cranks up a bucket of water from a very deep well. SIX SOLDIERS approach.

SOLDIER ONE

I still think there's a way to take The Golden Hind. For the gold in those horns and hooves, it's worth a little risk.

SOLDIER TWO

If you think going against The Hind and Ares is a little risk, go ahead. I want no part of it.

The soldiers arrive at the well and shove Iolaus aside.

SOLDIER ONE

Move over, "Lefty".

IOLAUS

(with patience)

Sure. Be my guest.

He grabs Iolaus' bucket; drinks; eyes Iolaus:

SOLDIER TWO

You're the one The Hind shot.

SOLDIER ONE

Yeah, then he and Hercules waled on us. I think an apology's in order.

IOLAUS

(still holding back)

Don't apologize. I forgive you.

The six surround him. Iolaus peels off his sling.

IOLAUS

(continuing)

Really, it's okay. No hard feelings.

Iolaus leaps onto bucket winch beam like a high bar. He does a swing/fly over into a dismount that clocks two of them, then dances on the edge of the well, whirling and kicking, knocking one guy into the well.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

The soldier grabs the bucket and falls. "Whoooooaaa".
SPLASH.

HERCULES (O.S.)

He said he forgives you.

HERCULES wades in. He and Iolaus are back to back. The Soldier who fell in the well pulls himself up by the rope. Iolaus hammers him. Down he goes again. "Whooooaaa". SPLASH. They toss a guy in the water trough. They send one flying. Just as the "well soldier" again reappears at the top, Iolaus whams soldier one. He and the "well soldier" go down together. "Whooooaaa". SPLASH. Iolaus flexes his body.

IOLAUS

All's well that ends in the well.

HERCULES

Looks like Serena's medication really worked. You should be grateful.

IOLAUS

I am, but considering it was her best friend, the arrow happy hind, who shot me in the first place, you could say Serena owed me.

HERCULES

(dissembling)

You could say that.

IOLAUS

Anyway, I'm ready to head to Thessala.

HERCULES

I'd like to stay a little longer.

IOLAUS

You still want to try and save The Hind? Forget it. She can take care of herself.

HERCULES

It's more complicated than that.

IOLAUS

(realizing)

It's not just The Hind. It's Serena.

HERCULES

Maybe both.

2 EXT. ARES' TEMPLE - DAY

2

Two Temple Maidens adorn the altar with fruit offerings.
ARES and STRIFE appear.

ARES

Strife, have you seen Serena?

STRIFE

Point blank, Uncle Ares. Your brother Hercules. Saw him shoot the gift with Serena. Played you like a sucker.

ARES

Don't push it. That's not possible.

STRIFE

Here it is, loud and proud. Remember Xena? He left you standing. Guess what? He did it again.

ARES

That was different. Serena, The Golden Hind... belongs to me. I won't give her up.

STRIFE

I'm with that. She's got the bad blood. Every god on Olympus knows you could whack and sack.

ARES

That's only part of it. The other part...

STRIFE

... is Hercules.

ARES

Sometimes, you show promise.

(beat)

Hercules will never have her. See to it.

STRIFE

I'm on the case, cuz.

The two maidens come back in. Strife casually waves a hand over them. Instantly, a CAT FIGHT breaks out. They claw and tear at each other, ripping clothes. Strife smiles.

3 EXT. FOREST - DAY

3

THE HIND fires an arrow at a stump for practice; splits a previously shot arrow; shoots again; splits the other two. She senses something behind her; spins, ready to shoot.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

HIND
Hercules! Sorry.

HERCULES
Shoot first, ask questions later?

HIND
Sorry. It's my Ares training.

HERCULES
I recognize the style.

She morphs into SERENA.

HERCULES
(continuing)
That's still a miracle... to see.

SERENA
When you're the last of your kind, a
little miracle can help to survive.

They kiss; a hungering embrace.

HERCULES
Ares trained you to be ready for
surprises, but I may have one for you.

SERENA
(sadly)
You're here to say goodbye, aren't
you.

HERCULES
No, I'm here to ask you to marry me.

He produces a beautiful pendant necklace; slips it around
her neck. Off her astonishment:

FADE OUT

END PROLOGUE

ACT ONE

FADE IN

4 EXT. FOREST - DAY 4

Serena, still stunned, pulls away from Hercules.

SERENA

You're right. Nothing I learned from Ares prepared me for that.

(beat)

I cherish the thought, but... it could never be. And you know why.

HERCULES

What I know is that I love you.

SERENA

And I love you, but I could never live in the world you live in. If a mortal touches me, I turn into The Hind. It would happen, sooner or later.

HERCULES

We'll find a way. It can work, Serena.

SERENA

That would be a miracle. But you're forgetting, I belong to Ares.

HERCULES

I'm not forgetting it, I'm denying it. You belong to yourself. He may have saved your life and taught you to survive, but one life can't belong to another.

She touches the pendant, lovingly, wistfully; wants to believe.

SERENA

I realize... how you feel toward Ares. He's told me about your resentment.

HERCULES

I don't resent him. If he weren't so... Ares, he'd be pitiable. But you can't believe what he tells you.

SERENA

But why would he lie to me?

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

HERCULES

Because he's Ares. And because you're his weapon against all the other gods. You know the legend... the blood of The Hind can kill a god. Why do you think the other gods put up with him?

SERENA

Even if all that's true, I owe him my life.

HERCULES

Then tell him "Thank you very much" and marry me.

He pulls her close; she kittens to his touch; longingly:

SERENA

If only it could be. But it can't, and we both know it.

5 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

5

Much activity around the elevated irrigation system and its main component, the cistern, what amounts to a huge half-barrel to collect incoming water and distribute it through a network of troughs. The cistern has to be raised to an elevated position to let gravity make it all work. Iolaus, several villagers, and the merchant move to the task.

MERCHANT

This water system is a wonderful thing. Water for our crops, for the village... where's Hercules?

Iolaus threads a long rope through a block and tackle.

IOLAUS

He said he'll be here. He'll be here. But let's go ahead and get started. Ready, now. Pull!

The men pull. The huge demi-barrel goes up about a foot. In mid-strain, someone taps Iolaus' shoulder. It's JOXER.

JOXER

Excuse me. Where can I find Hercules and his partner what's-his-name?

IOLAUS

(grimaces, still pulling)
That'd be me.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

JOXER

You're Hercules? Somehow, I thought you'd be taller.

IOLAUS

No, I'm "what's-his-name".

JOXER

I am, of course, Joxer the Mighty.

IOLAUS

Ah. Joxer the Mighty. Never heard of you.

(to men)

Pull!

The villagers huff, puff, and tug as hard as possible.

JOXER

Does the name Xena mean anything to you?

IOLAUS

Her I know.

They're all straining. It's up maybe two feet.

JOXER

You're only looking at her mentor, trainer, and former master.

IOLAUS

I wish I was looking at you on the end of this rope, helping, pulling and not talking.

JOXER

You got it.

Joxer gets behind Iolaus. The men are making a little progress. Three feet off the ground.

JOXER

(continuing)

Xena's great, but she was a little slow. I figure Hercules is more in my league.

Joxer backs into the horse trough. FALLS IN. Iolaus throws him a glance, then keeps pulling.

6 EXT. ARES' TEMPLE - DAY

6

The Hind drops incense into a flaming urn at the altar.
Ares appears, silky calm.

ARES

What am I to do with you?

He wafts some incense, savoring it.

HIND

Have I displeased great Ares?

ARES

No, I'm actually quite pleased. I saw
the way you handled Hercules, refusing
his proposal without saying "no".
Stringing him along. It made my day.

HIND

I spoke the truth. I can never repay
my debt to you.

ARES

True. It's true. And now that that's
over, you and I... I have plans.

HIND

You mean Serena?

ARES

No. I mean you.

His leer is unmistakable; The Hind reads it like a book with
big print.

HIND

I've come to ask you for my freedom.

ARES

You really know how to make the
moment.

(beat)

I'm not in the mood to give it to you!

HIND

(flaring)

I'll take it anyway. I know I can.

ARES

(aroused)

And I... could do the same. I could
take you. Your anger excites me.
The possibilities, the two of us...
you don't make this easy.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

HIND

Then, you'll give it?

ARES

Let's just say, I'll give you some leeway. A little "personal time." To find out how boring my brother Hercules really is.

HIND

I'll always be grateful...

ARES

(waves her away)

Don't get tiresome.

She leaves; a beat later, Strife appears.

STRIFE

You played yourself, Uncle. Peep it out. You slip your skeezer to go play with your brother, you snooze, you lose. Ad-vantage, Hercules.

ARES

You misunderstand my gift to my brother. Remember the Trojan Horse?

7 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

7

Two boys play kickball. Iolaus, the villagers, and soaking wet Joxer, have the cistern up four feet off the ground.

IOLAUS

Come on, guys, pull!

They do. And suddenly, the cistern begins to rise effortlessly. They're all surprised.

JOXER

(behind Iolaus)

This time, I'm using both hands.

HERCULES (O.S.)

So am I.

They all look around to see Hercules at the end of the rope. The men let go as Hercules continues to pull alone.

HERCULES

(continuing)

Sorry I'm late.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

IOLAUS

Late? Who's late? We were just warming up.

Iolaus senses, can see, Hercules' dejection.

IOLAUS

(continuing)

Something's wrong. What's the matter?

HERCULES

(still pulling)

Nothing.

IOLAUS

Were you late because you were with Serena?

(Herc shoots him a glance)

Shoulda known. The only times a guy looks like that, his dog just died or he's got woman trouble. Relax, she'll come around.

HERCULES

Can we just finish this and go?

The cistern is almost all the way up. The crowd watches in awe. Joxer taps Iolaus on the shoulder.

JOXER

Excuse me. Exactly when do you expect Hercules to get back?

Iolaus looks at Joxer in disbelief; juts his thumb.

IOLAUS

That would be him.

JOXER

Him? Somehow, I thought he'd be stronger.

ANOTHER ANGLE (ACROSS THE SQUARE)

A very tentative Serena makes her way, her eyes full of trepidation and wonder. She wistfully watches the boys playing ball; she spots Hercules; he sees her.

RESUME SCENE

HERCULES

Serena...

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: 2

7

IOLAUS

See, what did I tell you?

Hercules wraps the rope around the well to hold the weight of the cistern and hands the end to Iolaus.

HERCULES

Hang onto this a second.

IOLAUS

No problem.

RESUME SERENA

One the boys kicks the ball; the other runs to catch it; his eyes on the ball; headed straight toward Serena. An instant before he crashes into her, Hercules nabs him with an arm around his waist, lifting him clear, and catching the ball in the other hand.

HERCULES

Let me kick one.

He does. The boys run off. Herc leads Serena aside.

SERENA

They're having such a good time.

(looking around)

I always wondered what it would be like in the village. People living their lives. I like it here.

HERCULES

It's dangerous for you to come here.

SERENA

I thought it was worth the risk.

She hands him the pendant. He's crestfallen.

HERCULES

All right... I understand. I wish I could change your mind.

SERENA

You can't. I had to bring this back to you...

(beat)

...so you can give it to me at our wedding.

HERCULES

You mean... "yes"?

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: 3

7

SERENA

Yes.

They kiss; several villagers see them; applaud the lovers.
Hercules and Serena react modestly.

ANGLE (THE CISTERN)

Iolaus is holding the rope, but the rope starts to fray.

IOLAUS

(calls)

Anytime, Hercules. But sooner is
better.

RESUME HERCULES AND SERENA

HERCULES

Iolaus!

(to Serena)

Be right back.

He races off.

ANGLE (THE CISTERN)

The rope snaps, and as the cistern starts to fall, Hercules
steps under it and takes the weight on his shoulders.
Iolaus gets under there with him.

HERCULES

Sorry.

IOLAUS

(teasing his pal)

Late again, because of the girl.
Could get to be a habit.

HERCULES

She changed her mind.

IOLAUS

So what else is new?

HERCULES

She said "yes."

IOLAUS

That's great. Everything's working
out.

(beat)

What do you mean, she said "yes."

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: 4

7

ANGLE (ACROSS THE SQUARE)

Serena starts toward the cistern. Joxer blocks her path.

JOXER

Hold it right there. This is no place
for a lady.

SERENA

I'm a friend of Hercules.

JOXER

Rightrightright, everybody's a friend
of the big fella. We're very busy
here. You'll have to keep back.

He grabs her hand. She pulls away.

SERENA

No!

Too late; she starts to morph.

JOXER

Whoa! What is this?!

ANGLE

Iolaus can see what's happening; Hercules has his back
toward it; can not. Suddenly Iolaus' face drops, stunned.

IOLAUS

(shocked; sotto)

Serena! The Hind?!

ANGLE (IOLAUS' POV)

The Villagers, who moments before had applauded the lovers,
react in a rage, crowding around The Hind.

BG, Strife watches his handiwork unfold with a cruel grin.

The Hind panics; rears up. The AGITATOR rushes toward her.

AGITATOR

It's the hind! Kill her!

The Hind deftly kicks at a pile of staves, sending them like
mini spears at her attackers. Three men grab ropes. The
Hind keeps running within the tightening circle of
villagers, looking for an escape.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: 5

7

AGITATOR

(continuing)

She's a man killer. Kill her before
she kills us!

A rope loop is thrown around The Hind's neck. She's bucking and resisting. The Agitator grabs a spear. Another man gets a pitchfork. Two more loops ensnare her, choking her. She can't call out, and she's surrounded by the crazed villagers. As the villagers close in for the kill:

FADE OUT

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

8 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY 8

The Hind struggles against the ropes.

ANGLE (IOLAUS AND HERCULES)

IOLAUS

Hercules! Serena's in trouble!

Hercules looks; ties off the cistern; runs toward the scene.

RESUME SCENE

The Hind rears up. The Agitator waves his spear.

AGITATOR

Get out of the way! Let me get her!

Hercules sprints toward them, grabbing a sack of flour on the fly, and flings it. Agitator goes down in a burst of flour. The Pitchforker lets rip. Hercules grabs a wagon wheel and gives it a whirl. It spins through the air, a perpendicular frisbee, and catches the pitchfork in mid-flight. Hercules jumps in front of The Hind, grabs the three ropes, and pulls hard and fast. The three guys on the other ends go flying overhead. The Villagers shrink back.

HERCULES

Anyone who wants her comes through me.

Iolaus joins him.

IOLAUS

And me.

JOXER

And me! Your worst nightmare!

The Villagers grumble and disperse. Strife, still staying in the background, drifts away. Joxer, like a policeman, ushers them off. Hercules gently frees The Hind.

HERCULES

I'm sorry that happened.

HIND

Maybe it is impossible after all.

The Hind gallops away. Before he goes after her:

HERCULES

Thanks for standing with me.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

IOLAUS

We're partners, we don't thank each other.

(with urgency)

Go! Go find her!

Hercules clasps Iolaus' arm in friendship, then goes after her. Off Iolaus, this just beginning to sink in:

9 EXT. FOREST - DAY (MOS)

9

Strife watches, cunning in his eyes.

ANGLE (STRIFE'S POV)

Hercules and Serena talking; she's upset, and anxious; he tries to calm her.

10 INT. TAVERN - DAY

10

At a table, a worried Iolaus picks at his food. Hercules joins him. Iolaus pretends to be upbeat.

IOLAUS

Find Serena?

HERCULES

She's in a safe place. She's okay.

IOLAUS

Did you kind of forget to tell me... Serena and The Hind... same person... thing?

HERCULES

I was going to. I wanted you to get to know Serena, first. You were... upset, that The Hind shot you.

IOLAUS

Well, yeah... just a little, bitty bit. Nearly killed me, is all.

(beat)

How serious is this thing with Serena?

HERCULES

It's serious.

IOLAUS

Didn't it kind of happen in a hurry?

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

HERCULES

I guess it did. You don't plan these things, sometimes, as you well know.

IOLAUS

Yeah, I guess I do.

(beat)

So, back there, before the ruckus, when you said... "she said 'yes'," did that mean... ?

HERCULES

I'm going to marry Serena.

Iolaus chews on this for a beat; he's torn.

IOLAUS

What makes you happy, makes me happy, you know that, right? I mean, that you've found someone... that's great.

HERCULES

I knew you'd feel that way.

IOLAUS

But, married... have you really thought it through?

HERCULES

Of course I have. What are you getting at?

IOLAUS

It feels like... look, I'm saying this as your friend... have you lost sight of your purpose here? What you do, for people? What we do?

HERCULES

Absolutely not. We're still a team, doing the same things, like always. Nothing's changed.

IOLAUS

Two's a team. Three is... three. I only want what's best for you, and I'm not sure this is.

HERCULES

Is it, you think she doesn't love me? Or that I'm imagining how I feel?

IOLAUS

I'm concerned that she belongs to Ares.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: 2

10

HERCULES

No longer. That's over. Serena and I belong only to each other. I'm glad we had this talk. I'll see you when I get back.

Hercules stands; pats his pal on the arm.

HERCULES

(continuing)

I'm going to the other side, to tell Deianeira. I owe her that.

IOLAUS

Be careful.

HERCULES

I will. And when I return, I'm getting married. And you're my best man.

IOLAUS

I can't promise you that. I think I'm going on to Thessala, like we planned.

HERCULES

I hope you'll reconsider.

IOLAUS

Yeah. I hope you will, too.

The gloom in the air is almost palpable, as Hercules leaves. Iolaus looks to his plate again; no use; no appetite.

11 EXT. WOODS - DAY

11

Hercules walks with Serena.

SERENA

I'm worried. If something happens to prevent your return...

HERCULES

Nothing will. I've made the journey to the other side before. So don't worry.

SERENA

What if Deianeira doesn't want you to do this? Or you want to stay there, with them.

HERCULES

I have to tell her.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

SERENA

I'll be waiting.

12 INT. CAVE - DAY

12

Hercules leads Serena in.

HERCULES

I'll only be gone a while. After that, we have our whole lives to be together.

He takes her in his arms.

SERENA

Please be careful.

HERCULES

I will. Nothing can stop me from coming back to you.

He kisses her; walks down a tunnel. She watches as he enters a large, gaping hole. He's swallowed up.

SERENA

Hercules...

13 INT. HOLE, PASSAGE TO TARTARUS - NIGHT

13

Hercules is falling...falling....falling.

14 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

14

Joxer stands at a utensils stall. He holds an extremely tiny pan. Four soldiers approach.

JOXER

You call this an omelette pan? For what, the eggs of a very small chicken?

SOLDIER ONE

You! We heard The Hind was here in the village.

JOXER

Yeah, you missed all the excitement. I saved her from a mob lynching.

Soldier One whirls Joxer around and grabs him by the shirt, manhandles him, pulls him in, nose to nose.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

SOLDIER ONE

Where is she?!

JOXER

You just made a huge mistake. And
whew, have you been chewing on your
socks?

Soldier One pitches Joxer into the stall. Joxer is covered
in pots and pans.

IOLAUS (O.S.)

Leave him alone.

Iolaus approaches the activity.

SOLDIER TWO

Look who's back, and he doesn't have
Hercules to do his fighting for him.

IOLAUS

I don't need Hercules.

JOXER

Not when Joxer the Mighty is at hand!

Joxer rises from the pots and pans, his foot stuck in one,
his head caught in another. He struggles to get them off.
The Soldiers roar with LAUGHTER.

JOXER

(continuing)

Give me a second here.

Soldier One bangs his sword on Joxer's "hat". Joxer reels.
Iolaus launches a flying kick at Soldier One, then takes on
the other three. A nice punch-up. During this, Joxer
stumbles around trying to get the pot off.

JOXER

Don't worry, Iolaus. I got your back.

Iolaus dispatches the last guy into another stall. Then
Joxer frees himself and surveys the scene.

JOXER (CONT'D)

Good. My plan worked perfectly.

Iolaus rolls his eyes, walks away.

15 EXT. ELYSIAN FIELDS - DAY

15

Hercules sees DEIANEIRA having a picnic with KLONUS, ILEA,
and the DOG. The dog pricks up his ears; bounds over.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

HERCULES

Hey, did you miss me, big fella?

Ilea and Klonus come running.

KLONUS

Dad's here!

ILEA

Daddy! You're home!

They tackle him and smother him with kisses. Hercules rolls with them as Deianeira comes over, smiling.

DEIANEIRA

I thought about you this morning.
Somehow, I knew you were coming.

Herc rises, the kids still hanging on him. He hugs her.

HERCULES

Where's Aeson?

KLONUS

Down by the creek.

DEIANEIRA

Go tell him his father's here.

Klonus and Ilea run off. Deianeira takes Hercules' hand and they start to walk.

DEIANEIRA

I'm so happy you're here.

Hercules looks at her, then quickly looks away. This is really difficult.

DEIANEIRA

(continuing)

What is it? Is something wrong?

HERCULES

No, nothing's wrong, but I have something to tell you.

DEIANEIRA

What is it? You could always tell me everything.

HERCULES

I know, but it's harder than I expected.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: 2

15

DEIANEIRA

Please don't anguish over whatever it is. It'll come when it's time.

HERCULES

It won't ever be easy.

DEIANEIRA

(realizing; calmly)
You've fallen in love.

Before Hercules can answer, Klonus runs up.

KLONUS

Help! Mom... Dad!

HERCULES

What is it?

DEIANEIRA

What's wrong?

KLONUS

Aeson... is gone. Somebody took him to Tartarus.

DEIANEIRA

Aeson!

Off Hercules' look of shock... and anger:

16 INT. TARTARUS - NIGHT

16

Hercules makes his way down a rocky incline. He HEARS LOW, almost inaudible MOANS. BATS fly at him, tearing at his hair. The MOANS grow LOUDER. Something slithers up his leg. He pulls off TWO SNAKES and flings them.

Up ahead, Hercules sees Aeson, turned away from him. He rushes to him; grabs him; spins the boy around.

HERCULES

Aeson.

(embraces him)

I'm here. You're safe. Let's go home.

AESON

Leave me alone.

HERCULES

What?

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

AESON

I'm never going anywhere with you.

HERCULES

Aeson...

AESON

You don't care about me! You don't care about any of us. You never did. We wouldn't have died, if you cared.

HERCULES

Don't say that. I love all of you very much.

AESON

Right. You love us enough to go and marry somebody else.

HERCULES

Who filled your mind with these terrible thoughts?

AESON

You did.

He grabs a sharp piece of obsidian and swings at Hercules. Cuts him on the arm.

AESON

(continuing)

I hate you. I want to kill you!

Off Hercules, his arm bleeding; his heart breaking:

FADE OUT

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

17 INT. LOWER TARTARUS - NIGHT

17

Aeson again slashes at Hercules.

HERCULES

Why are you saying these things? I would do anything for you.

AESON

(sneering)

Would you? I wonder. Would you give up Serena?

Aeson throws the sharp knifelike rock at Hercules' face. Herc merely head slips it. Then he realizes...

HERCULES

How do you know about Serena?

AESON

Never mind! I know.

HERCULES

You're not my son.

Instantly, "Aeson" morphs into Strife, laughing.

STRIFE

Slammin', man. You got it goin' on.

As Hercules grabs for him, he disappears.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Aeson is chained to a rock.

AESON

Dad!

Hercules rushes to him; frees him; hugs him.

HERCULES

Aeson, I thought I'd lost you.

AESON

I was scared.

(beat)

I love you, dad.

HERCULES

I know you do, son. I know you do.

18 INT. CAVE - DAY

18

Serena sits by a small fire. She tosses on a branch or two.

ARES (O.S.)

You're wasting time and twigs. He's not coming back.

SERENA

He promised.

ARES

Half gods tell half truths.

SERENA

Then I'll go to him. To the other side.

ARES

If you wish. You may find it a little crowded in the house of Deianeira.

SERENA

What are you saying?

ARES

One look at his real wife, and... that was it.

SERENA

I don't believe you.

ARES

Would I lie? He never loved you. It was a way to get at me.

(beat; sincerely)

Everything can be as it was between us, Serena. You can come home, if you want to.

He disappears.

19 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

19

At the cistern, Iolaus makes a cursory inspection of the work; killing time; stalling. The Merchant approaches.

MERCHANT

I think we can finish it from here on, thanks to you and Hercules. Tell him for us.

IOLAUS

Tell him yourself. I'm off to Thessala.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

MERCHANT

Without Hercules?

A beat as Iolaus realizes this.

IOLAUS

Yeah. Looks like.

MERCHANT

When's he coming back?

The question manifests one of Iolaus' concerns.

IOLAUS

Good question. He's overdue.

20 INT. CAVE - DAY

20

Serena turns, startled. Iolaus comes in cautiously.

IOLAUS

You're not going to fire a salvo at me, are you?

SERENA

No. And I'm sorry that I hurt you.

IOLAUS

The arrow? Forget it. You made it right.

SERENA

Is this a long time for him to be gone?

IOLAUS

(dissembling)

Not really. Crossing over to the other side isn't the easiest thing to pull off.

SERENA

(after a beat)

Ares was here. He said Hercules wouldn't come back.

IOLAUS

There's a reliable source.

SERENA

He gave me my freedom. Why would he lie?

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

IOLAUS

He'll lie, cheat, and steal baklava
from a baby. Look, if Hercules told
you he's coming back, he'll be back.
He never breaks his word.

(beat; tough for him)

Hercules loves you, and believe me, he
wants to be with you. You've got to
believe that.

A shared smile; of relief for her, of resolution for him.

SERENA

I needed to know that.

IOLAUS

And I needed to admit it.

From a distance, outside the cave...

JOXER (O.S.)

Iolaus!

IOLAUS

Gotta run.

21 EXT. ELYSIAN FIELDS - DAY

21

A pastoral setting; Hercules and Deianeira. BG, the kids
play around on a big rock.

DEIANEIRA

I know how much you love this, but
you're not part of it anymore.

(she stops short)

I didn't mean it, the way it sounded.

HERCULES

I know what you meant. I won't be
part of it in days to come. Even as
I'm not now. But it doesn't mean I
don't still love you.

DEIANEIRA

Of course it doesn't. But you're
still part of the world above, and
you're needed there. What we had
we'll always have. And I hold it
dear.

HERCULES

I could never have again, what we had.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

DEIANEIRA

No, but you can have happiness. I have the children. I've got a wonderful, full, happy life with them. And that's what I want for you.

(beat)

I know you're lonely back there. And I'm happy you've found someone.

HERCULES

I'll always love you.

DEIANEIRA

I know.

As they share a warm embrace:

22 INT. CAVE - DAY

22

Serena looks up; Hercules stands nearby. A beat. Neither moves. Her eyes fill with emotion. Then, wordlessly, she goes to him. Holds him. Finally:

SERENA

It was painful, wasn't it?

HERCULES

Yes.

SERENA

She must be an extraordinary woman.

HERCULES

Yes, she is. So are you.

SERENA

Remember, I'm here for you, always.

HERCULES

I guess that'll be long enough.

He hugs her.

SERENA

The past is gone, for both of us. We have to let it go.

HERCULES

Yes, but first, there's someone I have to see.

SMASH CUT TO

23 EXT. ARES' TEMPLE - DAY

23

Hercules stands before the altar.

HERCULES

ARES!

(beat; nothing)

Come out and face me!

(no response)

Show yourself. Don't send Strife to fight your battles.

Ares appears from the FLAMES.

ARES

You are a singular annoyance, Hercules.

HERCULES

Are there no limits, even to your treachery?

ARES

Why have limits? They're so... limiting.

HERCULES

Hereforth, leave my family alone. And that includes Serena. We are to be married. Don't interfere.

ARES

Why would I? I don't think it'll happen, given the cost to you. And what that will do to your crusade of protecting the worthless mortals.

Hercules stops.

HERCULES

What are you up to?

ARES

It's not me. It's the decision of the gods. Your sacrifice for marrying the last of The Hinds.

HERCULES

Fine, name it. Nothing is too great.

ARES

Surrender your power. Give up your strength. That's the tradeoff.

Hercules is in a stunned silence.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

ARES

(continuing)

Oh. I thought you said, "Nothing is too much."

HERCULES

They can't ask that.

ARES

They can and they have. Lose her or lose your power. Which is it?

(beat)

Cat got your tongue? Not so hot for her now, are you?

HERCULES

I choose Serena.

ARES

You let me win?!

HERCULES

No. I win.

In a blindingly swift move, Ares wraps his arms around Hercules, who is powerless to resist.

ARES

Nothing like a loving, brotherly embrace.

Ares puts the kiss of death on Hercules' cheek. Not from the strength of Ares' hug, but from the weight of Olympian disapproval, Hercules can't breathe. With a wail, he passes out and drops to the floor, unconscious.

FADE OUT

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

24 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

24

Iolaus stands on a beam at the top of the cistern, inspects the block and tackle. Some MEN do final shoring up underneath. Iolaus keeps glancing toward the entryway to town.

ANGLE (IOLAUS' POV)

The road into town is deserted.

RESUME SCENE

Joxer, wearing a knapsack with pots and pans hanging all over it, calls from below.

JOXER

Another side benefit. I'm an excellent cook. How do you like your steak?

IOLAUS

Alone.

JOXER

How many times are you going to check those ropes? I say, on to Thessala. Fortune, fame and glory await.

IOLAUS

Good idea. Go. Don't keep them waiting.

Iolaus steals another look at the entrance to town.

JOXER

Quit looking. Hercules isn't coming back. Even if he does, he's marrying the... womander. Where's the ceremony? The chapel at the zoo?

IOLAUS

(glowers at Joxer)

I'm staying here 'til I know he's all right.

JOXER

Of course he is. Just your normal, carefree, casual commute to the Other Side and back.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

IOLAUS

Hercules!

Hercules walks unsteadily toward him. Iolaus jumps down.

JOXER

He keeps turning up like a bad dinar.

Hercules and Iolaus embrace.

HERCULES

Sorry I kept you waiting. I thought you were leaving.

IOLAUS

No, not really. I... had to give this the final once over. Last look and all. It'll hold.

HERCULES

(reads him)

That doesn't surprise me. Good. Does this mean you've changed your mind about staying for the ceremony?

IOLAUS

Ehhh... I don't think so.

HERCULES

I still need a best man.

Joxer steps up to bring this reunion to a stop.

JOXER

All right. A quick group hug, and then my partner and I hit the road.

HERCULES

(looks at Iolaus)

You and him?

IOLAUS

No, he's completely deluded.

JOXER

Is it my cunning, my strategizing, my fighting ability that you doubt? Fine. A brief demonstration.

He pulls a hatchet from his knapsack.

IOLAUS

Forget it, Joxer.

Joxer points across the square.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: 2

24

JOXER

See that post?

IOLAUS

Don't bother.

Joxer throws; misses the post; hits the main rope holding the cistern and cuts it cleanly.

JOXER

Oops.

The cistern groans and begins to lean. Two villagers are trapped underneath. Hercules instinctively rushes into position, the same as he did earlier. But he's powerless.

HERCULES

Iolaus... help me.

A puzzled Iolaus quickly joins him. Hercules and Iolaus barely hold up the cistern platform. They're being crushed. Another rope snaps. They'll be cobblestones in seconds.

IOLAUS

Give us a hand!

Six villagers who've been watching in stunned surprise spring to get their backs under it. Finally, one of them throws a key joist into place and the project stabilizes. The two trapped workmen scramble out from underneath.

Off to the side, Hercules falls to the ground, and Iolaus goes to help him.

IOLAUS

What's wrong? You lifted that thing by yourself this morning.

HERCULES

I've done something that's weakened me.

IOLAUS

In Tartarus?

Iolaus helps him up.

HERCULES

No. Here. My strength is gone. Ares took it.

IOLAUS

I was afraid of this. Didn't I tell you what would happen if you crossed Ares? How long will this last?

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: 3

24

HERCULES

From now on. I gave it up willingly.

IOLAUS

You gave it up for Serena. Hercules,
I told you, I had a bad feeling.

HERCULES

Don't say it.

(shrugs Iolaus off)

Thanks, I can make it on my own from
here.

Iolaus watches Hercules move gamely on.

25 EXT. FOREST - DAY

25

The Hind runs; exhilaration. Suddenly, Ares appears ahead.

ARES

Even more than I'll miss you serving
at my temple, I'll miss this vision of
you running free.

HIND

This was my home.

ARES

And now, a dreary hovel, living like a
peasant, a life worse than death.

SERENA

Whatever my life with Hercules holds,
I look forward to it.

ARES

(coldly)

Go to him, then.

Serena knows this side of Ares; the less said, the better.
She starts away.

ARES

(continuing)

But... you don't leave as the hind.

(she stops)

Oh, no. You'll be mortal. You'll
experience sickness, you'll grow old,
and you'll die. Like they say, it's a
wonderful life.

SERENA

But I'm the last of my kind.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

ARES

Were. Not anymore. Unless you wish
to reconsider.

SERENA

No. Whatever it takes, I'll do.

ARES

True love. How I despise it.

He points a finger; a fireball leaps into her chest, then
disappears. She stands human and naked. Ares looks at her.

ILEA

Yes, I will miss you.

A robe appears on his arm. He extends it. Serena grabs it
defiantly, covers herself, and strides away.

Off Ares stolid face:

26 EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

26

Iolaus exits the tavern, starts for the road.

HERCULES (O.S.)

You're leaving?

Iolaus stops, turns; trying to make light:

IOLAUS

How can you miss me if I don't go
away?

HERCULES

But without even saying good-bye?

IOLAUS

I think I've said too much already.

An awkward beat; what can they say who've been through so
much?

HERCULES

Well... we've had some wild times
together. Hydra... I guess that was
the worst.

IOLAUS

No way. Echidna and Typhon the giant.
Still, they turned out to be not so
bad.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

HERCULES
How about the Enforcer?

IOLAUS
Both Enforcers. Lucky we survived.

HERCULES
Guess we were pretty good together.

IOLAUS
Yeah. We were. Well...

Nothing more to say.

A beat. They embrace. Then break.

HERCULES
Promise you'll visit.

Lumps in their throats.

IOLAUS
Sure. Sure I will.

HERCULES
Little Iolaus will want to know his namesake.

IOLAUS
And he will. That's a promise.

Iolaus walks away, throwing a last wave over his shoulder.
Off Hercules, watching him go:

27 EXT. ROAD - DAY

27

A heavy hearted Iolaus moves along. A loud clanking noise captures his ear; he knows without looking who it is, and picks up his pace. But Joxer runs up, the large knapsack banging and clanking away.

JOXER
Oh. One tiny mistake, and you're breaking up the partnership?

Iolaus stops.

IOLAUS
Listen. I'll speak slowly. There never was a partnership. That was all in your mind, what little there is of that.

Iolaus resumes walking.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

JOXER

All right. Fine. But you'll rue this day, especially since there's no chance of you hooking back up with that has-been, Hercules. Talk about a world class loser. Without his power, what good is he?

Iolaus grabs Joxer.

IOLAUS

Never, ever, speak of Hercules that way in my presence. Make him as weak as an infant, and he's still ten times the man you are.

Iolaus hurls Joxer into the ditch along the side of the road and walks off.

JOXER

Oh, now he's the best bud you ever had all over again. Will you make up your mind?

Off Iolaus, brought up short:

28 EXT. MOUNTAIN LAKE - SUNSET

28

Hercules paces alone; did she change her mind? A rustle in a nearby copse; Serena, in a simple white gown, emerges. He smiles, extends his hand. They come together.

HERCULES

I'm afraid the trees will have to be our witnesses.

SERENA

They're family.

HERCULES

Ready?

She nods. He takes her hand; looks into her eyes; puts the pendant around her neck.

HERCULES

(continuing)

We ask the force that created the sun, the earth, the seas and the skies to bless this union between us.

SERENA

Make us one, inseparate...

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

IOLAUS (O.S.)
Stop! Wait for me.

Iolaus comes up, huffing and puffing.

IOLAUS
(continuing)
What's the rush?

HERCULES
I'm glad you came.

SERENA
So am I.

IOLAUS
I wouldn't miss it. What's a wedding
without a best man?

Hercules pauses; a warm little breeze blows through,
scattering flower petals; he senses something.

Watching are the unseen images of Deianeira, Aeson, Klonus,
and Ilea, who strews petals. Deianeira smiles her blessing.

SERENA
Shall we go on?

HERCULES
Yes. And everything is going to be
fine.

He takes her hand in his.

FADE OUT

END ACT FOUR