

Prod. #76902

**XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS**

"Chariots of War"

a.k.a. "Sins of The Father"

Story by

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**Revised pages:** 13A, 19

**Executive Producers**  
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SHOOTING DRAFT  
June 26, 1995  
Rev. June 27, 1995 - Pink  
Rev. June 28, 1995 - Blue  
Rev. July 03, 1995 - Yellow  
Rev. July 06, 1995 - Green  
Rev. July 15, 1995 - White

XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

"Chariots of War"

SET LIST

INTERIORS:

TYNUS' BARN  
DARIUS' HOUSE  
    BEDROOM  
    LIVING ROOM  
DARIUS' BARN  
TAVERN  
INN  
WARRIOR ENCAMPMENT  
    ABANDONED BARN/STABLE  
    TENT  
TOWNHALL

EXTERIORS:

BARN  
LONELY STRETCH OF ROAD  
DARIUS' FARM  
DARIUS' HOUSE  
DARIUS' WAGON  
WARRIOR ENCAMPMENT  
ROAD NEAR TOWN  
FARMLAND  
HILLSIDE

Prod. #76902 - 7/6/95 - Green

**XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS**

"Chariots of War"

**CHRONOLOGY**

DAY 1	SCENES # 1 - 11	*
NIGHT 1	SCENE #12 - 15	*
DAY 2	SCENES #16 - 50	

XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

"Chariots of War"

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. TAVERN - DAY - ON MUG

1

PULL BACK as it is refilled by a TAVERN KEEPER. XENA and GABRIELLE sit in this lowlife tavern. This joint is full of raucous, bawdy types. Gabrielle is totally involved with telling Xena a myth.

\*  
\*

GABRIELLE  
(with dramatic flair)  
...and so Zeus in his appreciation  
turned the two lovers into oak trees.  
And then you know what happened?

\*  
\*

XENA  
Somebody built a boat out of them.

GABRIELLE  
(exasperated)  
No! Their branches intertwined and  
they spent the rest of their days in  
each other's embrace.

She finishes with an emotional flourish and waits expectantly for Xena's reaction.

XENA  
What's the point?

GABRIELLE  
Oh come on, Xena. I believe everyone  
will find their tree in the forest  
someday. Even you.

XENA  
Gabrielle, I've found that the  
strongest trees in the forest stand  
alone.

GABRIELLE  
You don't have to be strong all the  
time, Xena. Sometimes it's good for  
the soul to be soft.

XENA  
It might be good for the soul but it's  
not good for the life expectancy.  
(MORE)

\*

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

XENA (cont'd)  
I'm gonna ride up ahead and see if we  
can ford the Miletus river. If we  
can't, we'll have to double back around  
the North range. Let's find some  
place for you wait for me.

GABRIELLE  
What's wrong with this place?

XENA  
It's a snake hole.

GABRIELLE  
I'm not a child, you know. I'll get  
along fine here. I'll just blend in  
and everything will be --

She notices a greasy, ugly brute drooling over her,  
lecherously.

GABRIELLE  
(to Xena)  
Another place sounds fine.

CUT TO:

2 EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

2

Xena gallops her horse out of town along a grassy hillside.

3 EXT. ESTABLISHING - BARN - DAY

3

Wide on a beautiful valley where a barn is being rebuilt.

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2A.

3 CONTINUED:

3

DARIUS  
Watch your hand, Son.

(CONTINUED)

3A EXT. BARN STRUCTURE - DAY

3A\*

A community of SETTLERS are busy working together. Men raise heavy beams, auger holes into the mortice, tendon joints and hammer home wooden pegs.

\*  
\*  
\*

ANGLE INSIDE THE BARN STRUCTURE

\*

as we watch DARIUS, 30's, handsome, showing his sons, ARGOLIS, 11, and LYKUS, 9, how to wield a hammer without smashing their fingers. His little, sweet-faced daughter, SARITA, aged 6, tries to help as well.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Argolis whacks his thumb with a hammer.

\*

DARIUS

\*

Are you alright?

\*

Argolis nods.

\*

DARIUS

\*

Hold the nail like this and you won't hit your thumb.

\*  
\*  
\*

LYKUS

\*

Dad?

\*

DARIUS

\*

What?

\*

LYKUS

\*

How come those warriors destroyed Tynus' barn?

\*  
\*  
\*

DARIUS

\*

They don't want us to settle in this valley.

\*  
\*  
\*

ARGOLIS

\*

Does that mean we have to go back to Troy?

\*  
\*  
\*

DARIUS

\*

No. No matter what happens this is our home now.

\*  
\*  
\*

LYKUS

\*

(to Argolis)

\*

Told you.

\*

TYNUS approaches Darius.

\*

TYNUS

\*

Darius! How's it coming with the little carpenters?

\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

3A CONTINUED:

3A

DARIUS

Don't worry, Tynus. We'll have your  
barn back up in no time.

\*  
\*  
\*

Tynus moves on. Darius turns to his daughter.

\*

DARIUS

Come on, Sarita, let's cut some more  
boards.

\*  
\*  
\*

Darius and Sarita walk to a work bench, leaving Lykus and  
Argolis hammering.

\*  
\*

ON SARITA

\*

as she hears something.

\*

DISTANT HILL - SARITA'S POV

\*

A War Chariot is approaching.

\*

RESUME SARITA

\*

She rushes back to Darius and tugs on his leg.

\*

DARIUS

What is it, Sarita?

\*  
\*

She points. Darius looks.

\*

DARIUS' POV

\*

but there is nothing there. The War Chariot has descended  
into a depression and is not visible.

\*  
\*

RESUME DARIUS

\*

DARIUS

Don't worry, sweetheart, there's  
nothing there.

\*  
\*  
\*

Darius goes back to work.

\*

ANGLE ON SARITA

she HEARS a RUMBLING and SEES --

\*

A GREAT WAR CHARIOT

leads a charge of THUGS on horseback over a hill. Sarita's  
eyes cloud with fear. She tugs at Darius' leg.

\*  
\*

The Thugs draw their weapons. Sarita clings to her father.

(CONTINUED)



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3B.

3A CONTINUED: 2

3A

DARIUS  
What is it this time?

\*

She points. Darius turns to SEE --

A WAR CHARIOT

(CONTINUED)

3A CONTINUED: 3

3A

charging right for them.

ANGLE ON SPHAERUS

the Chariot driver, mid 20's, with a fierce, chiseled face. He whips the backs of his TWO POWERFUL, RED-EYED STEEDS. His Thugs let out a FIERCE WAR CRY, adrenaline surging.

DARIUS

(calling to the others)

Take cover!

Defenseless against the well-armed Thugs, the Homesteaders flee in panic. But Argolis and Lykus are trapped within the structure. Argolis manages to run out, joining Darius and Sarita. Lykus, however, is frozen in fear. Darius calls to him.

\*  
\*  
\*

DARIUS

Lykus! Come on, son!

\*

But he is forced to retreat as Thugs, armed with GRAPPLING HOOKS and CHAINS, destroy the barn. Sphaerus charges, swinging a large weapon into the support PILLARS. Two of the pillars give way and the roof begins to collapse.

ON LYKUS

\*

He looks helpless as the structure around him sways.

\*

CUT TO:

4 EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

4

Xena rides towards the crest of the hill. As she reaches the top, she SEES the battle below. Her eyes focus on Lykus, trapped inside the collapsing structure. She charges into the fray.

\*

CUT TO:

5 EXT. BARN - DAY

5

A HOMESTEADER spots Xena and points.

HOMESTEADER

Look, there!

The REST turn to SEE Xena ride in.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

ON LYKUS

\*

Lykus hangs on, but the beam, fastened by TWO NAILS, starts to give way. The FIRST NAIL bends, then pulls out!

XENA

rides through the ruffians, kicking them into unconsciousness as she goes.

\*  
\*

ON STRUCTURE

\*

It's about to give way. Lykus is going to be crushed.

\*

XENA

rides closer, but TWO MORE mounted THUGS confront her.

XENA

Why don't you two sit this one out?

With that, she lands a kick to both Thugs at once as she rides by.

SPHAERUS

notices Xena, and arms himself with a CROSSBOW.

ON STRUCTURE

\*

The LAST support is about to give way. Lykus is terrified.

\*  
\*

XENA

just as the support breaks free, leans into the structure and pulls Lykus free as everything collapses.

\*  
\*

LYKUS

Who are you?

XENA

A friend.

SPHAERUS

with Xena in his sights, lets an arrow fly.

XENA

sees the arrow and turns her body, protecting Lykus. She is HIT by Sphaerus' arrow. She doubles in pain. Darius takes Lykus from her arms, then watches in horror as Xena falls off her horse, landing at his feet, arrow in her side.

ANOTHER ANGLE

(CONTINUED)

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

6 OMITTED

6\*

7 EXT. DARIUS' FARM - DAY

7

A small farm. A barn, a silo and a cozy farmhouse. We PUSH IN toward one of the house's windows...

8 INT. DARIUS' HOUSE (BEDROOM) - DAY

8

Xena lies in bed, writhing in pain, the arrow lodged in her side. Darius and the children are nearby, noticing something she wears -- her weapons belt.

DARIUS  
(reaching for them)  
I'll take these.

XENA  
(weakly; stopping him)  
No. I need them...

DARIUS  
Not here. Not in my house.

Xena tries to get up, only to be stopped by the pain. She surrenders her weapons: sword, knife, bullwhip, and Chakram. Darius carries them outside. Alone, the awe-struck children stare at Xena for an uncomfortable beat, then:

XENA  
Boo!

They jump about two feet. Xena smiles, but the effort costs her. Darius returns and nervously helps Xena pull her tunic away from her wound. The children watch. Darius notices:

DARIUS  
Everyone! Out!

ARGOLIS  
All right.  
(to Lykus; exiting)  
We miss everything good.

Darius turns back to Xena, then hesitates.

DARIUS  
I've never done this before.

XENA  
It's all right. I have. Put that metal poker in the fire.

Darius puts a metal poker in the fire.

XENA  
So, who was I fighting back there?

DARIUS  
They work for Cycnus. A Warlord. He's made claim to our lands.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

XENA

Looks like he's doing more than that.  
(examining her wound)  
The arrow didn't pass through...

DARIUS

Oh, good.

XENA

No, it's bad. Pulling it out the way  
it came in would tear me apart. You'll  
have to push it through.

DARIUS

I... I don't think I can.

XENA

Trust me, it's gonna hurt me a lot more  
than it hurts you.

\*

She takes off her upper garments to give him a good view of  
the wound. She's naked from the waist up. Darius is very  
uncomfortable with the situation.

\*

\*

\*

XENA

Do it!

Realizing he has no choice, Darius pushes with all his might  
until the arrowhead shoots through her skin.

XENA

(breathless from pain)  
Now. Break off the arrowhead.

He does.

XENA

Pull the shaft out.

He does.

DARIUS

(relieved)  
Thank the gods that's over.

XENA

Not quite. Get the poker. It should  
be hot enough by now. And a piece of  
wood.

\*

\*

Darius gets the poker and the piece of wood and brings them  
over. She puts the piece of wood in her mouth, takes the  
poker and presses the point up against her wound.

\*

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: 2

8

DARIUS

Wait. You're not going to...

Before he can finish, Xena bites down on the piece of wood and pushes the red hot poker through her wound. Darius' mouth drops open, as we HEAR the SIZZLE of burning flesh. \*

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: 3

8

Xena removes the poker when she's satisfied that her wound is cauterized. Then, she closes her eyes to rest. Off Darius' incredulous expression;

CUT TO:

9 EXT. WARRIOR ENCAMPMENT - DAY

9

An abandoned barn/stable is surrounded by a makeshift camp. TWO WARRIOR CHARIOTS, sans horses, are parked to one side.

Loud, O.C. MEN'S CHEERING propels us to:

10 INT. WARRIOR ENCAMPMENT - ABANDONED BARN/STABLE - DAY

10

Sphaerus, swiftly maneuvers across a narrow beam perched several feet off the ground. He and another Thug, stripped to the waist, fight with long poles as Spectator Thugs cheer them on. Then, a hush falls over the crowd. Sphaerus turns to see CYCNUS -- an arrogant, powerful man, mid 40's, with a dark, war-ravaged face. He is accompanied by a huge man named DIOCLESE.

Sphaerus turns back to his opponent and, with new determination, punishes the Thug mercilessly and sends him flying off the beam. The Spectator Thugs cheer and pay off bets as Sphaerus looks at Cycnus. But the older warrior has no reaction. Cycnus shouts to the others:

CYCNUS

Leave us!

The Spectator Thugs quickly exit, leaving the two men alone except for Dioclese. Cycnus looks up at Sphaerus and, in a spectacular move, he jumps up effortlessly and lands squarely on the beam. Dioclese tosses Cycnus a fresh pole. Sphaerus takes a defensive stance.

SPHAERUS

Hello, Father.

Cycnus strikes at Sphaerus with his pole. He blocks it.

CYCNUS

You are growing more powerful, my son.  
Ares will be pleased.

Cycnus strikes again, lunging this time. Sphaerus retreats, avoiding the blow. Dioclese watches silently.

SPHAERUS

My warrior education is complete. I am  
ready to take your place.

(CONTINUED)



10 CONTINUED:

10

Sphaerus counters with a fast move that nearly clocks Cycnus. But Sphaerus holds back.

CYCNUS

No. There is still something missing.  
The desire to kill.

SPHAERUS

You're wrong. Today, I killed a great warrior in the valley.

CYCNUS

Who?

SPHAERUS

She fell before I could ask her name.

CYCNUS

A woman?! Do you think that will impress the god of war?

SPHAERUS

But she was a...

CYCNUS

(silencing him)

The honor of keeping Ares' horses falls to the mightiest warrior. He will not choose you merely because you are my son. You must prove worthy.

SPHAERUS

I am.

CYCNUS

Then why haven't you conquered this valley? These farmers dishonor the god of war with their peaceful ways. Strike them down.

(striking a blow)

If your brother Stentor were alive...

SPHAERUS

(interrupting)

I am not my brother.

CYCNUS

Yes. Every time I see you in battle, I am reminded.

Angered, Sphaerus goes on the attack. Cycnus fends off the vicious assault. Then, in an unexpected move, Sphaerus lands a blow to his father's legs, sending him to the ground. Sphaerus quickly jumps down and presses his long pole into his father's chest.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: 2

10

SPHAERUS

Now am I worthy of Ares?

Cycnus grins. Then, in a split second, his HANDS SNAP his son's weapon in TWO! Just as quickly, he grabs Sphaerus and flips him to the ground:

CYCNUS

(in his face)

Almost.

Off Cycnus' demented smile;

CUT TO:

11 INT. DARIUS' HOUSE - DAY

11

Sometime later, Xena rests in bed. Her eyes closed. We HEAR a faint whisper as we;

WIDEN TO -- ARGOLIS AND LYKUS

standing near the end of the bed, watching Xena sleep.

LYKUS

(a whisper)

Did you see the way she finished off those guys?

(in mock battle)

Zing! Pow!

(then, sobering)

You think she's gonna die, Argolis?

ARGOLIS

If she does, I get her horse.

LYKUS

Do not.

ARGOLIS

Do so. I'm the oldest. Besides, you're too little to ride.

LYKUS

Am not.

ARGOLIS

Are too.

The bickering brothers are stopped when they HEAR:

XENA (O.C.)

I don't know what you guys are fighting about.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

ON XENA -- sitting up and looking at the boys.

XENA

It'll take more than an arrow to get  
rid of me.

She manages a grin. Flustered, Argolis turns to Lykus.

ARGOLIS

Nice going, Cyclops breath.

LYKUS

(calling out)  
Father. She's awake.

CUT TO:

12 INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

12

Gabrielle is pacing nervously as she waits for Xena. The Tavernkeeper eyes her an impatient look on his face.

GABRIELLE

I'm sure she'll be back any minute.  
She's very dependable. Of course, she  
also takes a lot of risks. Still, I  
can't wait around here all day.

She looks out the door and sits at the bar. The Tavernkeeper places a glass in front of her.

TAVERNKEEPER

Ale?

GABRIELLE

Yes, thank you very much.

TAVERNKEEPER

It's not a gift.

GABRIELLE

What?

(realizing)  
Oh, yes. I have money.

He starts to pour.

GABRIELLE

Actually, I'm not a big drinker. Do  
you have any water?

The Tavernkeeper freezes mid-pour. He looks at Gabrielle with a stern look.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

GABRIELLE

At the current price of water, of course.

The Tavernkeeper grabs up another jug and pours the water. Gabrielle looks around.

GABRIELLE

You have a very nice establishment.  
(beat; then)

So nice, I've decided to spend the night.

\*  
\*

Off this Tavernkeeper's indifferent look, we;

\*

CUT TO:

13 INT. DARIUS' HOUSE - NIGHT - ON SARITA

13

her face is covered with fascination as she listens to:

WIDER

Xena tell a war story. Darius, Xena and the children, sit around the table. Dinner is over.

XENA

So this giant had me trapped in a box canyon.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

The children are fascinated with every word that comes out of her mouth. Darius on the other hand is concerned the story may prove to be too violent.

ARGOLIS

Did the giant try to step on you?

XENA

Sure, he tried. But I was ready for him. I jammed this big--

She's about to describe a gory scene when she notices Darius's concerned look.

XENA

Feather.

ARGOLIS

You mean you tickled his foot with a feather?

XENA

Not just a feather, you've got to remember, this guy had really big feet. I used a whole goose.

The children laugh. Darius does too. The family's wariness is replaced by genuine affection for Xena.

LYKUS

Tell us a story about a giant.

ARGOLIS

Dopus! That was a story about a giant.

(to Xena)

You got an exciting life.

LYKUS

Do you travel with your whole family?

XENA

I don't have a family.

ARGOLIS

I wish I could ride with you.

XENA

No you don't. The road is a hard place to live, not knowing where you'll sleep, what you'll eat. I don't often share a meal with such good company.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: 2

13

DARIUS  
(with a smile)  
Neither do we.

Xena and Darius look at each other for a long beat, a new found attraction. Sarita stands up and plays with Xena's hair. Xena turns to her and smiles.

XENA  
You like my hair, don't you?

ARGOLIS  
She doesn't talk.

XENA  
Oh?

DARIUS  
Since we lost her mother.

There is an uncomfortable silence broken by a KNOCK at the door. Darius opens it to reveal Tynus, the elder homesteader.

DARIUS  
Tynus.

TYNUS  
We have to talk.

Tynus enters, sees Xena and turns a corner. Darius follows.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Darius and Tynus are a short distance from the dining table.

TYNUS  
Why is that woman still here? She's not one of us, Darius. She fights. You saw it with your own eyes. Her kind makes enemies. She must leave your home. \*

DARIUS  
She saved my son. She'll be a guest in my house until she's well. \*

TYNUS  
There's talk, Darius. Your house has been without a woman for a long time. But this is not the answer. By keeping her here, you break your oath. \*

DARIUS  
What oath have I broken?

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: 3

13

TYNUS  
To live only for peace.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: 3

13

DARIUS

Caring for a wounded woman is not an  
act of war.

ANOTHER ANGLE

At the table, Xena and the children can hear everything.

TYNUS (O.C.)

She lied to you. Others have heard of  
this woman. She is no warrior. She is  
a butcher! A murderer.

The children stare at Xena, part curious, part afraid.  
Ashamed, she looks away.

RESUME ANGLE

Darius looks at Tynus, not wanting to believe him.

DARIUS

As soon as she is able to ride, she  
will leave.

TYNUS

I hope for your sake, she recovers  
quickly.

Darius sees Tynus to the door, then turns back to the table.  
Xena is gone.

CUT TO:

14 INT. DARIUS' BARN - NIGHT

14

Xena, weakened from her wound, puts her saddle blanket on  
the horse. Darius enters.

DARIUS

You can't be thinking of leaving in  
your condition.

XENA

I left someone back in the last  
village. She depends on me.

DARIUS

Your friend can take care of herself  
for a few days. You need more rest.

(then)

Look, if what Tynus said...

(CONTINUED)



14 CONTINUED:

14

XENA

What Tynus said is true. I've done  
some horrible things in my past.

DARIUS

Your past is just your past. The Xena  
I kn w risked her life for my son.  
That's who I invited into my home.

XENA

And I appreciate it. But now it's time  
for me to go.

She throws the saddle up on the horse and winces in pain as  
she does, leaning against the horse in agony. Darius rushes  
to her aid. Xena raises her hand to stop him.

XENA

No! I'm alright.

Darius looks at her in disbelief.

DARIUS

Are you so brave that you fear someone  
caring for you?

Xena turns to the one man who's asked the right question.

Then, the SOUND of HORSES. Xena reacts.

DARIUS

What is it?

XENA

(looking out the door)  
Trouble.

Xena rushes out. Darius follows.

CUT TO:

15 EXT. DARIUS' HOUSE - NIGHT

15

Sphaerus drives his Chariot through the shadows of  
torchlight, charging towards Darius' house. A number of  
menacing THUGS ride behind him on horseback. They circle  
for a beat, then launch FLAMING ARROWS at the SILO, lighting  
it on fire. As Xena and Darius exit the barn, Sphaerus and  
the Thugs disappear into the darkness.

DARIUS

They're burning the silo... and our  
grain. Without it, we'll starve!

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

Darius quickly grabs a bucket of water and rushes to the fire. Xena follows him, her eyes searching the darkness. Off her determined look to find these Thugs, we;

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

16 INT. INN -- DAY

16

Sphaerus and a number of THUGS crowd a table, boasting of the previous night's raid. The mood is jubilant, except for Sphaerus who sits apart, lost in thought.

GABRIELLE

enters, a sheep among wolves. She sits at the bar. \*

GABRIELLE

Barkeep? Do you think I could have a glass of -- \*

An UGLY RUFFIAN slides onto the stool next to her.

UGLY RUFFIAN

(lecherous)

Your best ale. I'm buying. Then you'll owe me. \*

The Ruffian smiles; he's missing all but two teeth.

GABRIELLE

How generous. Of course I have to decline. What would people think? Me, a young innocent girl, taking gifts from a swarthy stranger. The gossip alone would send this town reeling.

UGLY RUFFIAN

(confused)

Is that a "yes?"

GABRIELLE

Well, not in the customary sense of the word. But maybe you can help me. I'm looking for a friend of mine...

UGLY RUFFIAN

(leering)

I can be your friend.

GABRIELLE

I'm serious. And you'd better back off before I find her. It's Xena!

UGLY RUFFIAN

The Warrior Princess?

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

GABRIELLE

(smug)

Yes.

UGLY RUFFIAN

(thinking. Then;)

I like it! I can be a friend to  
both of you!

GABRIELLE

(oops)

Uh... and I'm looking for my boyfriend,  
too. Big, strong... jealous type...  
Ah! There he is now!

The Ugly Ruffian looks over to where Gabrielle is gesturing  
and sees Sphaerus.

GABRIELLE

(winging it)

He's... resting, after polishing his  
giant, lethal, sword collection.

UGLY RUFFIAN

(figuring it out)

He's not your boyfriend.

GABRIELLE

You don't think so?

In a last ditch effort, Gabrielle crosses to Sphaerus, sits  
next to him and, with all the courage she can muster, KISSES  
HIM on the lips. Then:

GABRIELLE

Pretend you know me.

SPHAERUS

(surprised; pleased)

No problem.

CUT TO:

17 EXT. DARIUS' FARM - DAY

17

The previous night's raid is evident from the burned silo.  
Tynus and Darius stand on a hill talking. After a moment,  
Tynus walks away and Darius walks toward the barn.

\*  
\*

CUT TO:

18 INT. DARIUS' BARN - DAY

18

Determined, Xena furiously searches the barn. Darius walks up.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

XENA

Where are my weapons?

DARIUS

We don't need you to fight.

XENA

Who else? Somebody has to stop them.

DARIUS

I meant we don't want you to fight. Tynus just told me... They've made us a peace offer. We're meeting them in town.

XENA

Was burning the silo a peace offer? Don't be foolish. A man like Cycnus respects power. If you want peace, you'll have to fight for it.

DARIUS

Maybe Tynus was right. You're as eager to do battle as the rest of them.

A silent beat. These words hit home with Xena.

XENA

Only when there's no other way.

DARIUS

But there has to be. I went to war once at Troy. When I finally returned, I found my house burned down and my wife murdered. It took me three days to find my children hiding in a cave, cold and hungry.

(then)

I went to war. And I lost everything I'd been fighting for.

XENA

I'm sorry. But you can't make peace with war-makers. I know these people. Darius, I was these people.

DARIUS

And I have to try! Something changed you, Xena. Maybe we can change them. It's our last hope before the bloodshed. Isn't it worth it? Please?

He isn't questioning. He's almost pleading. Xena is saddened by his pain.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED: 2

18

XENA  
(relenting)  
Tell me more about this meeting.

CUT TO:

19 INT. TAVERN - DAY

19

Enjoying themselves, Sphaerus teases Gabrielle good naturedly.

SPHAERUS  
So, how long have we been seeing each other, uh...?

GABRIELLE  
Gabrielle. And you fell madly in love with me the moment we met.

SPHAERUS  
It's no wonder, the way you kiss.

They laugh. She blushes. He takes a drink and studies her.

SPHAERUS  
What brings you to a place like this?

GABRIELLE  
I'm looking for my best friend. Dark hair, lots of leather, six feet tall, fights like the Harpies in a bad mood. Name's Xena. Have you seen her?

Sphaerus' face darkens as he realizes the warrior woman he killed earlier is Gabrielle's best friend.

SPHAERUS  
(lying)  
Uh, no. Sorry. This friend of yours, you were close?

GABRIELLE  
Are you kidding?  
(crossing her fingers)  
Like this.  
(then)  
What am I worried about? If anyone can take care of herself it's Xena.  
(then)  
So, you work around here, or what?

A beat as Gabrielle waits for a reply.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

GABRIELLE

Is it something I said?

Sphaerus struggles with his guilty conscience.

SPHAERUS

(then; staring off)

I work for my father. Took over for my brother after he died in battle. He makes me do things I never thought I would.

(to Gabrielle; pointedly)

Things I regret.

GABRIELLE

I can understand that. Just a few weeks before I left my village, my mother kept telling me that they wanted me to stay, to get married, have kids... and I remember telling her "Mom, I'm always going to be grateful for the way you've raised me, but don't expect me to pay for it with my future".

\*

\*

SPHAERUS

Very insightful.

GABRIELLE

It's a gift. Anyway, I had come to a point in my life where I had to make a choice. I thought about who I really was, and I made it.

\*

\*

He contemplates the possibilities, then a dejected Sphaerus flips a coin on the table and gets up to leave.

SPHAERUS

Maybe I'll see you around sometime.

Gabrielle watches him go, puzzled by his sudden departure.

CUT TO:



20 INT. DARIUS' HOUSE - DAY

20

Xena stands at the door in full warrior garb, waiting for Darius and the kids. Darius enters the room and looks at her.

XENA

I'm hoping to find my father in town.  
There's a good chance...

(off his look)

What's wrong?

DARIUS

I don't think you should wear that to town.

Xena looks down at her warrior clothes. For a beat, she's embarrassed. Off Xena's look: \*

CUT TO:

21 INT. DARIUS' BEDROOM - DAY - CLOSE ON A TRUNK

21

The lid is opened, revealing a trunk full of women's clothes and accessories. Darius reaches in and pulls out a pretty blue dress, with soft, feminine lines. Darius holds it up to Xena.

DARIUS

This should fit you.

XENA

I've never worn anything like this.

DARIUS

It belonged to my wife.

Xena pushes the dress back toward Darius.

XENA

No, I couldn't wear it. It wouldn't be right.

DARIUS

But, it's either this or your warrior outfit. And I don't think the towns people will react very well to you in that.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

XENA

I doubt a dress will change their  
attitude toward me.

Darius smiles as he eyes the dress, conjuring up his own  
memories of it.

DARIUS

You'd be surprised the power of this  
dress. The first time my wife wore it,  
I fell in love with her.

Xena blushes, then so does Darius, realizing the  
insinuation.

XENA

Even more reason why I shouldn't wear  
it. I don't want to taint a beautiful  
memory.

DARIUS

My wife's memory lives on in my heart.  
(gently hands the dress back  
to Xena)  
Please... it's alright.

CUT TO:

21A INT. BEDROOM - LATER - CLOSE ON BED

21A

As a leather belt is dropped on it. Then, a jerkin. The  
clothes of Xena being discarded. Then we go to;

ANGLE - ON BLUE DRESS

A slightly UPWARD ANGLE as it is held in midair. It starts  
to shimmy a bit as it drops. Xena's arms appear, then her  
head, as we FOLLOW IT down around her body. It drapes  
almost casually over her form as we PULL BACK and see the  
result. It clings in all the right places and sways where  
we want it to. Xena looks down at it. She smooths the  
creases with her hands, indulging in the touch of the fabric  
against her bare skin. She touches the shoulder strap and  
kneads the fabric between her fingers. She looks at the  
garments of war that she discarded. A beat, then she looks  
off, thinking...

CUT TO:

22 INT. DARIUS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

22

Darius and the kids now wait for Xena.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

LYKUS

Father, since you're meeting with the men who burned our food, does that mean we're friends with them now?

DARIUS

Not quite. But, we are hoping for peace with them, if not friendship.

ARGOLIS

It might require a sacrifice, though, so we've decided to give them Lykus.

LYKUS

(mortified)

What...?!

DARIUS

Argolis, don't taunt your brother.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

ARGOLIS

But, it's so much fun. And so easy!

The boys are about to get into it until Darius stands up and stares. The boys stop and notice, too. All eyes are on:

XENA

She stands in the doorway of the living room, looking beautiful, soft and far from dangerous in the blue dress. She smiles awkwardly. Sarita steps up and touches the hem of the dress to her cheek then looks up at Xena with soulful eyes. Xena doesn't know what to say. Darius steps forward with an approving smile.

DARIUS

I think we're ready to go to town now.

Darius indicates the door and as they all exit:

23 INT. WARRIOR ENCAMPMENT TENT - DAY

23

Dioclese and with Sphaerus enter Cynus' tent.

SPHAERUS

You called for me, father?

CYCNUS

I have made things easy for you, Sphaerus.

SPHAERUS

How is that?

CYCNUS

I have arranged a meeting to talk peace with these simple farmers.

Sphaerus is thrilled.

SPHAERUS

You mean it? We are going to have a council of peace?

CYCNUS

Yes. And I want you to go to the meeting. Talk to them...

SPHAERUS

Definitely! Everything can be worked out...

CYCNUS

...and kill them all.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

Sphaerus stares at him, realizing.

CYCNUS

Make me proud, son. Make Ares proud.

\*

He slaps his son on the shoulder. When Sphaerus isn't looking, he gives Dioclese a look as if to say, "keep an eye on him."

\*

\*

\*

CUT TO:

24 INT. DARIUS' HOUSE - DAY

24

Xena nervously comes out of the bedroom wearing the blue dress. Darius and the boys are still astonished by her beauty.

CUT TO:

\*

25 EXT. WARRIOR ENCAMPMENT - DAY

25

Thugs sharpen their weapons.

\*

CUT TO:

\*

26  
THRU  
29 OMITTED

26  
THRU  
29\*

30 INT. TOWN HALL - DAY

30

A troubled Sphaerus stares into the fireplace, waiting. He looks tortured. Tynus and some other homesteaders enter and stand at the back of the hall waiting for the rest to join them.

\*  
\*  
\*

SPHAERUS

Please have a seat.

(beat)

While we wait for the others to arrive  
I want to say how happy I am we're  
going to be able to settle this issue  
once and for all.

The front door opens and Darius, Xena and the children enter. Sphaerus recognizes Xena. He's ruffled for a moment, then he regroups.

SPHAERUS

Welcome, neighbors.

Xena looks around and notices nothing unusual.

DARIUS

You see? I told you we could trust  
them.

We PULL BACK to behind a wall where:

DIOCLESE lays in ambush with his THUGS in a kitchen area. He signals them to draw their ominous weapons.

Meanwhile, Tynus notices Xena, doesn't recognize her at first in the new dress, does a double take and then turns to Darius.

\*

TYNUS

(to Darius)

What is she doing here?

DARIUS

I invited her.

TYNUS

You're a fool. We need peacemakers,  
not warriors. She could ruin  
everything.

Xena scans the room, ever alert to danger.

\*

Tynus goes to sit down. Darius throws a glance at Xena.

XENA

Go ahead. I think it's best if I wait  
back here.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

Darius goes to sit down.

SPHAERUS

The violence in our valley is unnecessary. We have to learn to live together.

Sphaerus watches the growing crowd enter. He's getting very nervous. He starts to speak;

SPHAERUS

I'm so glad we can meet like this and talk over our differences. The last this we need is more bloodshed. We must learn to trust each other. When all of you are here, perhaps we can settle this matter once and for all. My father has a solution and it's my job to present it to you. Please take a seat and make yourself comfortable. I'm sure all of this can be cleared up quickly.

During this speech, we INTERCUT:

XENA

notices:

THE KITCHEN DOOR LATCH

being opened with a sword point.

XENA

reacts as we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

30A INT. TOWN HALL - DAY

30A\*

As before, the people are listening to Sphaerus as he continues...

SPHAERUS (O.C.)

I...

(stammering, losing his  
nerve)

We need to keep communications open...  
It's the only way we can find a  
solution. I hope we all can agree on  
that.

IN THE KITCHEN AREA

Dioclese is tired of waiting for the signal and is about to launch the attack when:

XENA

bursts through the kitchen window and proceeds to kick Dioclese in the balls. The fight is on.

ON THE HOMESTEADERS

They're alarmed at the sound of a ruckus. The fight spills out from the kitchen, Xena battling ferociously to keep the thugs away from the homesteaders. She disables one warrior with an elbow to the nose.

ON TYNUS

He glares at Darius.

TYNUS

I told you she'd ruin everything.

XENA

continues to battle like a demon.

XENA

(to Darius)

Clear everyone out.

The Other Thugs attack. Holding the spear horizontally, she counters, driving them back from the door.

Darius, the children, and the rest of the Homesteaders run out the door. The thugs are about to give chase but Sphaerus stops them.

(CONTINUED)



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30A.

30A CONTINUED:

30A

SPHAERUS  
No. Let them go.

CUT TO:

31 INT. DARIUS' HOUSE - DAY

31

Darius hurriedly gathers belongings. Xena enters. Darius eyes her, his eyes full of pain and disappointment.

DARIUS

Why couldn't you give peace a chance?

XENA

Darius, they were waiting to slaughter you like lambs. Do you really believe you could have made peace with them?

Darius looks confused.

DARIUS

I guess I'll never know.

He continues to pack.

XENA

What are you doing?

DARIUS

We're leaving the valley. They won't stop now until we're all dead.

XENA

Darius, don't run. Fight. The world is filled with evil men like Cycnus. With me fighting alongside you, he can be defeated.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

DARIUS

Do you think I like running? There's a part of me that would love to pick up a sword and fight. But I've seen too much of the pain war brings to ever be a part of it again.

XENA

The pain in your heart will not be eased by letting men like Cycnus crush the innocent.

DARIUS

Xena, I'm leaving to take my children to safety. It's what I have to do.

Xena eyes him, nods in acceptance and bends over to pick up her warrior gear that lies on a chair.

DARIUS

Where are you going?

XENA

To fight. It's what I have to do.

She exits. We stay on a reflective Darius for a moment.

CUT TO:

32 INT. WARRIOR ENCAMPMENT - ABANDONED BARN/STABLE - DAY

32

An outraged Cycnus confronts Sphaerus and Dioclese.

CYCNUS

(to Dioclese)

This warrior woman defies me and still lives? You've failed. I should kill you right now.

\*  
\*

SPHAERUS

It wasn't his fault.

Cycnus turns toward Sphaerus.

CYCNUS

Then whose fault was it?

SPHAERUS

Mine. I didn't give the signal in time. And I ordered them not to give chase.

CYCNUS

Why?

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

SPHAERUS

I couldn't bring myself to murder those  
helpless people.

\*  
\*  
\*

Cycnus eyes his son with pure contempt.

\*

CYCNUS

My son, the coward. You disgrace the  
memory of your brother.

\*  
\*  
\*

For Sphaerus this is the unkindest cut of all. Cycnus  
exits, leaving his devastated son behind.

\*  
\*

CUT TO:

33 INT. DARIUS' HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

33

Xena finishes tying her warrior tunic. She looks at the  
dress lying on the bed, tattered from her last battle, and  
realizes the life it represents could never be. She exits.

A breeze blows the blue cloth aside to REVEAL XENA'S  
CHAKRAM.

DISSOLVE TO:

34 INT. DARIUS' BARN - DAY

34

Moments later. Darius' children enter as Xena packs her  
saddle bag.

ARGOLIS

Are you going to fight Cycnus?

\*  
\*

XENA

(reluctant to reply)  
Only if it comes to that.

Alarmed, Lykus grabs her.

LYKUS

You can't go. You'll be killed.

Xena melts from his affection. Darius enters and hands her  
a small bedroll and a satchel of food.

DARIUS

So you'll have someplace to sleep, and  
something to eat.

XENA

Thanks.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

They lock eyes in heartfelt sadness.

DARIUS

You can still change your mind, you know.

XENA

I wish I could.

She quickly mounts her horse.

DARIUS

You'll take care?

Xena nods, smiles, then spurs her horse. Darius and the children watch her ride off.

CUT TO:

34A EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

34A\*

Xena rides away.

\*

35 INT. WARRIOR ENCAMPMENT - TENT - DAY

35

Tynus is brought in by Dioclese. Cycnus looks at him with disgust.

TYNUS

I've come to assure you that we were not responsible for the disruption of the peace process. It was that warrior woman, Xena.

CYCNUS

(his eyes glow with anger)

Xena!

TYNUS

She is not a part of our community. We're willing to help set a trap for her if you'd like. We want nothing but peace.

CYCNUS

Peace. Yes. And peace you shall have. Very soon. All your people.

Tynus's face lights up with hope.

CYCNUS

Eternal peace.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

Tynus's face sags as he realizes what Cycnus has said.

CYCNUS

Now go back to your flock and await the  
slaughter.

A devastated Tynus exits. Cycnus turns to Dioclese as  
Sphaerus enters.

\*  
\*

CYCNUS

Prepare my Chariot.

\*

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: 2

35

SPHAERUS

Why are you readying the Chariot?

CYCNUS

I'm going to do what you should have done -- kill the warrior woman. When those pathetic settlers see her die, they'll run in fear.

SPHAERUS

Why endanger yourself? The warrior woman is just passing through this land. There's no reason to kill her.

CYCNUS

(angry)

The warrior woman is Xena. A curse on our family.

(in his face)

She killed your brother.

SPHAERUS

(confused)

My brother fell in battle near Corinth.

CYCNUS

Your brother was murdered by Xena's sword. She killed him cowardly, when he wasn't looking.

Sphaerus steps back, his emotions churning, anger rekindled.

SPHAERUS

I'm going with you. Let me avenge my brother's death.

Cycnus sees the anger in Sphaerus' eyes, then:

CYCNUS

How I've longed to see that fire in your eyes. Prepare your Chariot. It is time for Xena to die. \*

\*

CUT TO:

36 OMITTED

36

37 EXT. ROAD - DAY

37

With Darius' house back in the distance, Xena continues to ride towards the hills. Just then, she squints at something stirring dust in the distance.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

Is it an enemy? Someone in distress? We HEAR a distant voice:

GABRIELLE  
Xena!! It's me! Gabrielle!

ON XENA

realizing it's Gabrielle. She shakes her head and smiles.

CUT TO:

38 EXT. ROAD - DAY

38

Xena, now off her horse, greets a winded Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE  
Where have you been?! I've been looking all over for you.

XENA  
I ran into a little trouble.

GABRIELLE  
You? Trouble? That's a surprise. You couldn't send a messenger? I was worried sick.

XENA  
I'm sorry, all right?

GABRIELLE  
(not hearing her)  
Here I am, wandering around this gods forsaken land, which I might add, is not the safest place for an attractive young woman...  
(realizing)  
Did you just apologize?

XENA  
(gesturing; businesslike)  
There's a farmhouse down the road. Nice people. Wait for me there.

GABRIELLE  
Why? Where are you going?

XENA  
A Warlord in the hills needs to be taught a lesson.

(CONTINUED)



38 CONTINUED:

38

GABRIELLE

Oh, no. I'm not waiting around while  
you have all the fun.

Gabrielle starts off. Xena hesitates.

XENA

This guy means business.

GABRIELLE

(not paying attention)  
Are you gonna stand there all day?  
Come on, we've got a Warlord to fight.

Xena starts after her.

\*

CUT TO:

\*

39 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

39

TWO CHARIOTS, led by ferocious steeds. Sphaerus drives the  
lead Chariot, with Cycnus by his side. TWO THUGS occupy the  
second.

40  
THRU OMITTED  
41

40  
THRU  
41

42 EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

42

The Two Chariots continue their descent towards Xena and  
Gabrielle. Sphaerus, driving the first Chariot, whips the  
WILD-EYED STEEDS with furious abandon. Their pounding  
hooves send clouds of dust whirling behind them. The other  
chariot carries two ugly and easily expendable heavies.

Cycnus, standing beside his son, murderous axe in hand,  
anticipates the kill.

CUT TO:

43 EXT. THE VALLEY - DAY

43

Xena and Gabrielle still on the move.

\*

GABRIELLE

\*

I think I might have met my tree in the  
forest. He was cute, in sort of a  
rugged, outdoorsy way. At least I  
thought so.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

GABRIELLE (cont'd)

Anyway, things were going fine until we started talking about his father. Then he just gets up and leaves. Now I've got no way to find this guy again. I mean, what if I was supposed to intertwine with him and have kids and now I'll wind up some lonely, pathetic woman like...

(she looks at Xena)

Never mind.

Xena isn't listening. Gabrielle notices.

GABRIELLE

You haven't heard a word I said.

(then)

Xena? What is it?

Gabrielle turns and squints. She can't see a thing.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

XENA  
Get on the horse.

GABRIELLE  
I'm not leaving you here! I want to help!

XENA  
You can help by getting on the horse.

Xena grabs Gabrielle and boosts her onto her horse.

XENA  
Somebody needs to distract them.

GABRIELLE  
I'm not very good at this horse thing...

XENA  
Just hold on and don't stop.

GABRIELLE  
Don't stop?

With that, Xena slaps the horse on the rump and sends it into a gallop, Gabrielle holding on for dear life. Xena turns and races through the trees.

CUT TO:

44 EXT. THE HILLSIDE - DAY

44

In the lead Chariot, Cycnus SEES the HORSE WITH RIDER disappear into the woods.

CYCNUS  
(to Sphaerus)  
There! She's on horseback!

Sphaerus pulls hard on the reins, turning the Chariot towards the woods. The Second Chariot follows.

CUT TO:

45 EXT. THE WOODS - DAY

45

On a muddy road, Xena's horse gallops at breakneck speed. In the saddle, Gabrielle hangs on for dear life.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Sphaerus and Cycnus in the First Chariot gain on her.

CUT TO:

46 EXT. ELSEWHERE IN THE WOODS - DAY

46

Xena, on foot, races through a more dense part of the woods, leaping over boulders and fallen trees.

ON GABRIELLE

holding tight to Xena's galloping horse. She looks over her shoulder.

ON THE CHARIOTS

Sphaerus, in the lead, whips the demon steeds. They pull faster.

RESUME GABRIELLE

panicked, she turns back around to SEE:

A TREE BRANCH

right in her face! With no time to spare, she closes her eyes, screams and ducks. The deadly branch MISSES HER by a hair.

STAY ON THE BRANCH

as Sphaerus and Cycnus approach in their Chariot. Both duck in plenty of time to avoid it.

ANGLE ON THE SECOND CHARIOT

The same; they see the branch and duck.

ANGLE ON XENA -- IN A TREE

Xena climbs the tree and begins to tie one end of the rope to a solid branch. Gabrielle races past followed quickly by Cycnus' chariot. Xena sets herself, waiting for the second chariot. Uncoiling the rope, holding the looped end in her hand...

RESUME THE SECOND CHARIOT

As the second chariot passes under the tree, Xena lands in the front, facing the surprised heavies. She calmly places the looped end of the rope around them and folds her arms, waiting for an instant...

The rope goes tight; the two goons are pulled out of the back of the chariot. With a casual wave, Xena turns her attention to driving the chariot. Meanwhile...

ANOTHER ANGLE

Gabrielle, desperately hanging on to Xena's horse, is slowly being overtaken by Sphaerus and Cycnus in their Chariot.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

ON XENA

NOTICING a SHORT CUT. She pulls hard on the reins, making a sharp right turn. Her Chariot races towards a narrow ravine. She drives the horses faster, and forces them to LEAP across the ravine -- landing safely in a cloud of dust.

ON GABRIELLE

as she catches sight of Xena, cutting off Cycnus' Chariot, and pulling alongside her. Xena steers close and shouts:

XENA

Jump!

GABRIELLE

Are you crazy!?

They look back to see Sphaerus and Cycnus gaining on them.

GABRIELLE

(to Xena)

If I die, I'm blaming you!

With that, Gabrielle JUMPS from her horse -- barely making it onto Xena's Chariot. Xena grabs hold of her and, as she drives, pulls Gabrielle on. Gabrielle has a rush of adrenalin that would bring the dead to life.

XENA

That was a jump?!

GABRIELLE

No! It was a frantic leap! The best I could do!

Just then, a part of their Chariot is ripped apart by an unseen force. Xena turns to see:

CYCNUS

gripping his lethal axe. He swings again, this time directly at Xena. He misses. Preparing for battle, Xena hands the reins to Gabrielle:

XENA

Drive!

Gabrielle takes hold of the reins in a panic. What is she supposed to do with these? As Xena turns to face her opponent, the Chariot swerves out of control.

XENA

(yelling at Gabrielle)

What are you doing?

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: 2

46

GABRIELLE  
(yelling back)  
I have no idea!

Gabrielle gains control of the Chariot just as Cycnus returns for another strike. Xena avoids the blow, as the axe lodges in the side of the Chariot. She counters with a forearm to Cycnus' face, but the Warlord doesn't flinch!

Grabbing her BULL WHIP, Xena snaps it at Cycnus' weapon, wrapping the business end around the handle. But Cycnus wrestles it free. Meanwhile, Xena reaches for her Chakram. But it's not there. Gabrielle notices her.

XENA  
My Chakram is gone!

GABRIELLE  
Is that supposed to be funny?

On Gabrielle's panicked expression, we;

CUT TO:

47 EXT. WOODS - DAY

47

The chase continues as Cycnus strikes again with his lethal axe, taking a large chunk out of Xena's Chariot. As the speeding Chariots draw nearer, Gabrielle SEES the other driver. It's Sphaerus. Her eyes go wide in recognition.

GABRIELLE  
You!

Struggling to make sense of the coincidence, Gabrielle neglects to keep her Chariot on course. The Chariots come CLOSER, nearly colliding.

Gabrielle calls to Sphaerus:

GABRIELLE  
(re: Cycnus)  
That's your overbearing father?

SPHAERUS  
Stay out of my way!

ON THE CHARIOT WHEELS

Coming CLOSER until -- COLLIDING! and LOCKING TOGETHER!

ANOTHER ANGLE

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

The two Chariots grind to a halt, sending everyone tumbling into the forest brush.

ANGLE ON CYCNUS

as he lands with his dangerous axe nearby. He quickly recovers, grabs his weapon, and jumps to his feet.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Xena and Gabrielle land near one another. Dazed, but whole, they untangle themselves.

XENA  
(re: Sphaerus)  
Don't tell me, that's him?

Gabrielle nods.

XENA  
Remind me to talk to you about your taste in men.

GABRIELLE  
(derisively)  
Men? The best ones are boats.

RESUME CYCNUS

stepping out of the bushes. Sphaerus follows with a SWORD.

CYCNUS  
(to Xena)  
Xena... I've waited a long time for this moment. It's been a while.

XENA  
Have we ever met?

With that, the powerful Warlord swings at Xena with his lethal weapon. She avoids the blow, tumbling behind him. As Cycnus turns, Xena LEAPS at him with a flying kick to the chest. He barely flinches as he takes the impact and steps back. Xena rolls to her feet.

CYCNUS  
It was the battle of Corinth. You killed my son. Do you remember the name Stentor?

Cycnus again attacks with his weapon. Xena avoids him.

XENA  
Stentor? Stentor died trying to make peace!

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: 2

47

Sphaerus shoots a startled look at his father.

CYCNUS

Not true! He was a brave warrior and you stabbed him in the back. \*

XENA

He came to me under a banner of peace. And his own men killed him.

CYCNUS

You lie!  
(to Sphaerus; re: Gabrielle)  
Kill her!

And, with that, Cycnus renews his attack on Xena. Meanwhile, Sphaerus points his sword at the unarmed Gabrielle. They move around each other carefully. But Sphaerus' eyes keep moving to his father, his sword blade wavering, unsure...

GABRIELLE

This is it... Sphaerus, this is your moment of choice. Like mine. Look inside yourself... who are you? Who are you really?

Sphaerus doesn't flinch, but behind those eyes, the wheels are turning.

At that moment, Darius rides up. He looks over the situation and, as he dismounts, tosses a pouch to Xena.

DARIUS

Xena!

Xena catches the pouch as Cycnus turns his wrath upon Darius. With an upward swipe of his sword, he catches Darius a glancing blow and sends him to the ground, wounded. As Cycnus brings his sword down in the death blow, Xena pulls her Chakram from the pouch and throws it, hitting Cycnus' blade and deflecting it!

Cycnus pivots as Xena catches her Chakram. She spins and swings her sword at Cycnus.

Sphaerus intervenes. Leaving Gabrielle with a scream, he blocks Xena's blow with his sword. Cycnus raises his sword to strike at Xena. Xena is ready to counter the blow but Sphaerus uses his blade to take on the battle. Xena backs off as Sphaerus turns to his father.

SPHAERUS

Enough! The killing stops here!

(CONTINUED)



47 CONTINUED: 3

47

Cycnus looks at his son with a mixture of disbelief and, then, hatred.

CYCNUS  
Get out of my way!

SPHAERUS  
No! No one else has to die.

CYCNUS  
You're wrong. At least one more has to die. And if it has to be my cowardly son, so be it!

And the fight is renewed in earnest. Xena makes a move to intervene, but Gabrielle stops her by grabbing her arm. \*

GABRIELLE \*

He has to do this by himself. \*

As the fight continues... \*

CYCNUS  
Peace is an illusion, coward! There is only war and death; victors and vanquished! There is no compromise!  
(then)  
Give up! You can't defeat me!

Sphaerus pulls back, winded.

SPHAERUS  
No... you're right. I can't.  
(then)  
But I can still win.

And, with that, he tosses his sword to the side and opens his arms.

SPHAERUS  
I'm not going to fight anymore. Ever. Kill me if you have to. My brother died for peace. I'm no better or worse than he.

A moment as we all wonder what the next instant will bring.

CYCNUS  
I should have done this long ago...

Cycnus raises his sword to strike his son down.

GABRIELLE  
No!

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: 4

47

Xena leaps forward, blocking his blade with hers. He recovers instantly and brings his sword up. In her other hand is the Chakram.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: 4

47

She uses that to protect her fist as she blocks the next blow and, almost instantly, follows it up with a blade under Cycnus' arm. Cycnus drops his sword and looks at his wound. He then looks to Sphaerus.

CYCNUS

If you had done that... I would have died proud.

Sphaerus can't say anything. He blinks back his tears as his father falls to the ground, dead. Sphaerus then turns to Darius.

SPHAERUS

Call your people together again. No tricks. We will have peace.

DISSOLVE TO:

48 EXT. FARMLAND - DAY

48

Sphaerus stands alone, looking into the hills where he once lived with his father. Gabrielle approaches him.

GABRIELLE

Hey, stranger.

He turns to her.

SPHAERUS

Hi.

(then)

I understand you're leaving.

GABRIELLE

Yeah. I just wanted to say that I... that I...

(searching)

That I really don't know what to say to you. And I don't mean that in a bad way.

Sphaerus can't respond. He looks away.

GABRIELLE

You've done something wonderful here, Sphaerus. You've saved a lot of people.

SPHAERUS

I know. I just don't feel too wonderful right now.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

48

GABRIELLE

Remember what I said about making a choice? How does that feel?

SPHAERUS

(beat; then)

That feels good. I don't have any regrets.

Gabrielle smiles and turns to exit.

SPHAERUS

(calling to her)

Gabrielle?

She turns back.

SPHAERUS

When you remember me... pretend I'm a nice guy.

GABRIELLE

(with a grin)

No problem.

CUT TO:

49. INT. DARIUS' HOUSE - DAY

49

A big party. All of the HOMESTEADERS laugh and celebrate around a HUGE SPREAD of tasty-looking FOOD. Tynus and a few Homesteaders approach Xena. Tynus looks real uncomfortable. And, it is obvious that the people behind him are prompting him into this.

TYNUS

Xena? I may... I may have been guilty of a misjudgement... not that we agree with your methods...

XENA

(interrupting him)

You're welcome. And don't worry. I'm leaving.

She turns away as Darius' children approach.

LYKUS

You can't leave, Xena.

ARGOLIS

Who's gonna teach Lykus how to ride?

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

49

LYKUS

I can so ride.

XENA

You guys will be just fine.

Sarita clings to Xena's leg. Xena bends to her. Sarita's eyes are filled with emotion.

XENA

What is it?

SARITA

Stay.

Xena's eyes light up. Nearby, Darius overhears.

DARIUS

(to Sarita)

Say it again, Sweetheart.

SARITA

Daddy. I want Xena to stay.

An overjoyed Darius lifts her in his arms, hugging her, tears in his eyes. He turns to Xena questioningly.

XENA

I wish I could.

LYKUS

Why can't you, Xena?

ARGOLIS

Don't you like us?

DARIUS

Of course she likes us. Now, you kids go. Xena and I have to talk for a moment.

He puts Sarita down and the kids head off. Darius and Xena stare at each other for a moment.

XENA

So? What do we have to talk about?

DARIUS

Everything. And nothing. Words don't really mean too much. All I can say is that I have a home here. I have a family. And there's no reason you can't have those things, too.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED: 2

49

XENA

Maybe one day. The strange thing is that I never thought of having those things until now. You're a lucky man. You're a very lucky man.

(then)

Somewhere out there I have a father. I want to know about him. I want to know if he's as wonderful a man as you.

\*

A moment, then he kisses her. In the background, the kids react happily.

DARIUS

I hope you find happiness.

XENA

I did. I just have to leave it for a while.

She exits.

50 EXT. DARIUS' HOUSE - DAY

50

Xena crosses to her horse where Gabrielle waits for her. Gabrielle notices Xena's sadness.

GABRIELLE

You all right?

XENA

Yeah. Fine.

(then)

You ever miss your family?

GABRIELLE

Sometimes. Not as much when I'm with you.

Xena smiles at her.

GABRIELLE

(to Xena; re: horse)

So, you want me to drive?

XENA

(grabbing the reigns)

Not on your life. Not on my life.

GABRIELLE

Hey!

As the two friends walk on, we:

FADE OUT.

THE END