

#76911

XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

"Hooves and Harlots"

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XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

"Hooves and Harlots"

CAST LIST

XENA
GABRIELLE

TERREIS	(ter-ACE)
EPHINY	(EH-finy)
MELOSA	(may-LOW-sah)
PHANTES	(FAN-teez)
KRYKUS	(CRY-cuss)
MESAS	(MAY-suss)
TYLDUS	(TILL-duss)
CELANO	(say-LAH-no)
ARBEN	(AR-ben)
MAGDELUS	(mag-DEE-luss)
EPONIN	(eh-po-NEEN)
TOR	

XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

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SET LIST

INTERIORS:

AMAZON MEETING HALL
AMAZON CELL
MELOSA'S ROOM
TYLDUS' HUT
KRYKUS' TENT
ANOTHER TENT

EXTERIORS:

WOODS
ANOTHER PART OF THE WOODS/AMAZON ATTACK AREA
ANOTHER PART OF THE WOODS/NEAR TREES
AMAZON VILLAGE
CENTAUR CAMP
TREETOPS
KRYKUS' CAMP
ANOTHER PART OF KRYKUS' CAMP

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XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

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CHRONOLOGY

DAY 1
NIGHT 1

SCENES # 1 - 18
SCENES #19 - 29

DAY 2

SCENES #30 - 35

XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

"Hooves and Harlots"

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. WOODS - DAY - CLOSE ON WOOD CIRCLES

1

They look almost like those wood-wrapped Christmas wreaths. Two of them, hanging high in the trees.

ADJUST ANGLE

XENA stares up at them. Her horse is a few feet away, nibbling on some grass.

GABRIELLE'S VOICE

What do you think of this one?

GABRIELLE walks up holding a long branch. She strips the excess leaves from it. The central part of the branch is relatively straight and about as long as Gabrielle is high.

XENA

(deadpan)

It's lovely. What's it for?

GABRIELLE

It's a walking stick. I told you I was going to get one. It's very useful. You can walk with it...

(she demonstrates)

...lean on it when you need a rest...

(she does)

...and kill nasty little critters when you want to lie down.

She starts tapping the end of the stick on the ground as if seeking out the aforementioned "critters."

GABRIELLE

It's got a good feel. Here. Give it a shot.

She hands the stick to Xena who hefts it, examines it... then starts twirling it around her head and body in a display of grace and power that a true fighting staff would bring. With a spinning flourish, she nods her head and hands it back.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

GABRIELLE
Or, you could do that.
(re: wood circles)
What are those?

XENA
No trespassing signs. This is Amazon
territory.

*

GABRIELLE
Amazons! Do you think we'll see any?

Suddenly, ARROWS RAIN DOWN around them, forming a circle of shafts. Gabrielle reacts, startled. Xena is not surprised.

XENA
Almost certainly.

Xena pulls her sword carefully from it's sheath and plunges it into the ground. She steps back. Then, she raises her hands high and holds the palms together. Not a symbol of surrender, but obviously a symbol.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

XENA
Gabrielle...

Gabrielle does the same as Xena. A beat, then FOUR AMAZONS drop down from the treetops on ropes.

TERREIS
You know the Amazon Symbol of Peace.

XENA
We'd like safe passage through your hunting grounds.

Terreis removes her mask. She is a young girl, about Gabrielle's age with a similar look.

TERREIS
My name is Terreis. You know the Amazon ways. But you're not one of us.
(to Gabrielle)
You're really not one of us.

GABRIELLE
Hey! Don't judge a scroll by its paper.

Terreis gives a chuckle at that. She gestures to her women and they all remove their masks. The last one to remove hers is Ephiny, a strikingly beautiful girl with a lean, hard body and flashing eyes. And those eyes right now are flashing suspicion.

EPHINY
They invaded our territory. We should take them to Queen Melosa.

TERREIS
Ephiny is right. We have to let Melosa decide.
(then)
Don't worry. She's fair.

The Amazons retrieve their arrows and form a band around Gabrielle, Xena and her horse. One of the Amazons picks up Xena's sword.

GABRIELLE
We're going to meet the Amazon Queen?
This is so fantastic!

Terreis overhears and shakes her head with a smile. Ephiny glares at Xena as they move out.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE WOODS - LATER THAT DAY

3

The group still moves along. Ephiny is pacing Xena, her hand resting on her sword hilt. Xena keeps her eyes on the trees and the woods, constantly alert. Gabrielle is walking next to Terreis, talking with her.

GABRIELLE

When I was a kid, I used to listen to my Grandmother tell stories about Amazons. "One Amazon was the equal of ten men. Men were just put there to challenge women into greatness!" See, grandmother had issues with men.

*
*
*
*

TERREIS

She was wise. I'm sure the men of her village didn't see her that way.

*
*
*

GABRIELLE

Not really. I used to skip classes and go listen to her.

*
*

TERREIS

What kind of classes?

*

GABRIELLE

The usual stuff... butter churning; knitting; cooking; gardening... Boring stuff. I was always sneaking away. I wanted to read philosophy, learn history, science... they didn't consider me a normal girl.

*
*

TERREIS

Philosophy and history are among the first things taught to Amazon children.

GABRIELLE

Really? That would be refreshing.

TERREIS

Most men are fine and honest. But it is a man's world. Not because it should be, but because we let them have it. If we had stood up for ourselves long ago... you can imagine how different the world would be.

GABRIELLE

Well... maybe.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

TERREIS

The man's world is based on a woman's weakness. The Amazon world is based on truth. On a woman's individual strength!

GABRIELLE

I'm all for that. I've always figured myself as a single-minded person. Of course, if I got married, I'd have to ask my husband if that would be okay.

Terreis shoots her a look.

GABRIELLE

That was a joke.

Terreis laughs.

XENA AND EPHINY

Ephiny is still glaring at Xena from behind. Xena looks as if she hasn't noticed. But...

XENA

Is there something about me you find interesting?

EPHINY

Yes.

XENA

Do you want to tell me?

EPHINY

No.

XENA

Then stop staring at me before I take your eyes out.

Xena turns and stares her down. The battle lines are drawn. They are just passing the old wall of an abandoned house when Xena looks about as if aware of danger.

XENA

Gabrielle!

Gabrielle knows that tone of voice. She looks around wildly, backing toward Xena.

TERREIS

What is it?

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: 2

3

ARROWS FLY FROM THE WOODS! The Amazons immediately go into their defense; crouching down as they toss their ropes into the trees and scurry up. Gabrielle and Xena are left alone; no climbing here. Xena pushes Gabrielle behind her as she grabs up her dropped sword. She uses it to deflect and chop the arrows. Gabrielle stands behind her, doing her best to act as if she is guarding the rear.

A body falls down from the trees with an arrow in it.

GABRIELLE

Terreis!

Gabrielle runs to the body and drops down over her, shielding her from the other arrows. Xena steps over the two of them, still deflecting the onslaught. And then, it stops. The rustling of leaves and the sound of hooves tell us the attackers have departed. Gabrielle holds Terreis' head on her lap. Terreis bleeds from the arrow in her side. Xena goes to her and examines the wound. From the look she gives Gabrielle, we can tell it's mortal. Terreis groans.

XENA

Don't move. Let me get something for the pain.

Xena heads over to a tree and strips the bark from it. She wraps the strips into a ball and squeezes them. During all this, Terreis looks up at Gabrielle.

TERREIS

You tried... to save me...?

GABRIELLE

Don't talk. Save your strength.

The other Amazons drop from the trees. Ephiny runs to Terreis and kneels beside her and Gabrielle.

TERREIS

Listen to me, Gabrielle... what you did, only an Amazon would do for another Amazon. I want you to take my Right of Cast.

EPHINY

(startled)

Terreis...

TERREIS

(to Gabrielle)

Please...

GABRIELLE

Okay. I'll take it. Just don't...

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: 3

3

Gabrielle holds her helplessly as Terreis closes her eyes and goes limp. Xena comes over, holding the wadded bark and checks Terreis' pulse. She's gone.

Ephiny glares at Gabrielle. She is not happy at this Right of Cast transferal. Off this, we:

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4 INT. AMAZON MEETING HALL - DAY - CLOSE ON DRUMHEAD 4

As a wooden mallet is brought down onto it, we hear the soulful "BOOM" of this ceremonial drum. Another mallet follows suit and, in the background, we can make out the sound of several drums all pounding away in syncopated rhythm.

ANOTHER ANGLE - AMAZON FUNERAL PYRE - CLOSE ON STACK OF WOOD

as another bundle of dry wood is thrown onto the stack. We PULL BACK to reveal the Funeral Pyre; a large platform (unoccupied at the moment) with piles of wood underneath it. PULL BACK MORE as we encompass Amazons dancing and moving in "celebration" of a passing soul. (NOTE: This should be right out of National Geographic. The high energy, in the dirt, African-style mourning period).

The drumbeat in the background is upbeat, in a dark way. The Amazons move about to the beat and the ground underneath them has been churned up. The movements look animalistic in nature but focused. Suddenly, into this fray, leap two Amazons, wearing ceremonial masks. They are each armed with two short sticks (we will call these weapons CHOBOS), each about two feet in length -- they look like nightsticks. Both of the Amazons are huge, muscular women. They begin a battle. And it doesn't look mock. The chobos fly as they parry and strike, knocking each other around. It is obvious that one of the women is far superior to the other.

INCLUDE - GABRIELLE AND XENA

as they watch, fascinated. A few more quick exchanges and the battle is over, the winner standing over the loser. The drums change tempo as both victor and vanquished look over to see:

Several Amazons carry a stretcher with a bundled body on it.

GABRIELLE

(to Xena)

What are they going to do?

XENA

They're going to send Terreis to Artemis, the moon goddess.

The ~~stretcherbearers~~ proceed toward the pyre at a slow, measured pace as Amazons throw themselves down in the dirt and roll about in the agony of their misery. They stop momentarily next to the winner of the fight.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

She removes her mask and we see MELOSA, the Amazon Queen. She lifts the fabric and looks on Terreis' face.

Next to Terreis on the stretcher is the arrow that killed her. Melosa picks it up, holds it above her, and BREAKS IT. The rest of the Amazons cheer. She places the broken arrow on Terreis' chest and covers her again. There is a barely-suppressed rage in this woman. She steps away as Terreis' body is placed on the pyre. It isn't lit, though. The bearers step back and join the mourning process. Melosa walks over to Xena and Gabrielle.

MELOSA

I am Queen Melosa. I'm told you tried to save my sister. For that, I thank you.

(beat)

You have safe passage through my land, but you must go quickly. We may be at war soon.

GABRIELLE

At war? With who? Who attacked us?

At that cue, there is an uproar from outside of the meeting hall. They go outside to see:

5 EXT. AMAZON VILLAGE - DAY

5

Ephiny and a swarm of Amazons surrounding a captive. A Centaur (we will come to know as PHANTES). His arms are bound behind him, his hooves have shackles and there are ropes around his neck by which the Amazons restrain him. He pulls this way and that, but he can't fight the odds. The Amazons cheer as Ephiny walks him up to her Queen and bows her head. Xena reacts visibly, almost pulling back. Gabrielle notices.

GABRIELLE

You've never seen a Centaur before?

XENA

I've seen too many of them. Let's say I'm not a friend of the Centaurs.

Phantes looks defiant despite his predicament. Ephiny hands Melosa a quiver of arrows. Melosa pulls one out: a perfect match.

EPHINY

These were his. I brought him down as he was escaping across the river.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

PHANTES

You never would have caught me in the open field.

Ephiny tugs on the rope.

EPHINY

But I did catch you. In our land.

Melosa examines Phantes, barely holding her anger.

MELOSA

You're Phantes, aren't you? I make it a point to know my enemies.

He shows a bit of a smile at the recognition. She cracks him across the jaw with her fist. It staggers him.

MELOSA

You have until the end of our mourning period to make your peace with the gods. Take him.

PHANTES

Make peace with your own gods! Do you think my people will allow you to kill the son of Tyldus?

Xena reacts on the name "Tyldus." They take him away. Xena turns to Melosa.

XENA

What problems do you have with Centaurs?

MELOSA

Disgusting animals. You know how they are. Near the river, there's a village of Centaurs and Men. They want our hunting areas. It was only a matter of time.

(then)

You should go.

She exits.

6 INT. AMAZON MEETING HALL - DAY

6

Xena and Gabrielle enter.

GABRIELLE

All right... now what was that about? What do you mean "I'm not a friend of the Centaurs?"

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

XENA

A long time ago my army fought the Centaurs.

GABRIELLE

I guess that makes sense. They certainly wouldn't be friends if you defeated them in battle.

XENA

I fought them. I never defeated them.
(then)
Stay here.

Xena heads over to the room where the Amazons took Phantes. Ephiny walks over to Gabrielle.

EPHINY

Gabrielle... did you tell your friend about the Right of Cast?

Gabrielle give her a look. At that moment:

THE FUNERAL PYRE

suddenly IGNITES. The Amazons in attendance let out a wail of sadness that sends shivers down Gabrielle's spine.

CUT TO:

7 INT. AMAZON CELL - DAY

7

Xena enters the prison where Phantes is being held. Phantes is on one side, still restrained by ropes and shackles.

XENA

Did you kill Terreis?

PHANTES

Terreis? The Amazon had a name, did she?

XENA

Did you kill her?

PHANTES

(long beat)

Would you believe me if I said I didn't?

XENA

I find it hard to believe the son of Tyldus is a murderer.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

PHANTES

Maybe it wasn't murder. Maybe it was
the opening of a war. A war that
should have happened long ago.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: 2

7

XENA

If it is, it's a stupid way to begin it. Only one death? And to get captured so easily? Centaurs aren't known for their stupidity.

PHANTES

Amazons aren't known for asking questions.

XENA

I'm not an Amazon.

PHANTES

(dry laugh)

If it looks like a hydra and moves like a hydra, it's a hydra.

XENA

Did you kill her?

Finally, Phantes levels a look at her.

PHANTES

I'd kill them all if I could.

(beat)

Maybe I'll get my chance. If my father can still muster the courage for battle. If he can't... I'd rather die under the executioner's blade.

And he turns his back to her. A beat, then:

CUT TO:

8 OMITTED

8*

9 INT. MELOSA'S ROOM - DAY

9

Melosa meets with KRYKUS, obviously a warlord, and his assistant, TOR. Over in one corner is a small fire in a coal hearth. The hilt of a sword protrudes from it. Melosa is seated. Krykus stands before her.

*
*

MELOSA

I appreciate your coming here for this discussion, Krykus.

KRYKUS

I do it only in the interests of peace. You should know that I have men at the Centaur village right now. Telling them the same thing I'm telling you.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

MELOSA

And that would be...?

KRYKUS

That I have no interest in this war of yours... if it happens. Don't expect an ally or an enemy in me.

*

MELOSA

I don't need an ally. I just want your army to stay on the other side of the hill. We won't hesitate to attack it if --

KRYKUS

My army goes where I please, regardless of threats. Personally I don't care if you execute one Centaur or a dozen. But I have no intention of dragging my men into this war.

MELOSA

That's all I care to know.

*

KRYKUS

I would offer my condolences on the murder of your sister, but...

MELOSA

But I wouldn't believe it anyway. Don't pretend you care about an Amazon's life or death, Krykus.

Krykus merely nods, turns, and he and his assistant exit. Xena enters at that moment and there is a beat of appraisal between the two. Melosa stands and goes to the hearth.

XENA

I need to speak to you.

MELOSA

Xena, I am tired of talking. That was Krykus, the warlord. He hates us only slightly less than the Centaurs.

XENA

Don't let this war happen. You can stop it now before it gets out of hand.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: 2

9

MELOSA

(furious)

I have no intention of going to war. That's up to the Centaurs. I intend to execute a murderer. If they take it to the next step, we'll be prepared.

XENA

You're going to get your people killed. I fought the Centaurs. I know what they can do.

MELOSA

The famous battle of Corinth. Yes, we've heard of it. We've all heard of you, Xena. To some of us, you're a hero. A true Amazon at the head of the mightiest Army the world has known.

XENA

And yet the Centaurs fought my Army to a standstill. That's how good they are. Tyldus was their leader. Executing his son is certain to bring on this war.

(then)

I don't believe Phantes killed your sister. I'm going to speak to Tyldus.

There is a long pause. Then Melosa pulls the red-hot sword from the fire. She holds it up and stares at it.

MELOSA

This was Terreis' sword. According to Amazon custom, it will burn throughout the night during our mourning period. It will be used to execute her murderer. That execution takes place at noon tomorrow.

She jams the sword back into the hearth and walks off.

CUT TO:

10 EXT. AMAZON VILLAGE - DAY

10

Xena talks to Gabrielle as she resheaths her sword and prepares to leave. Ephiny watches from a distance.

GABRIELLE

Don't you think it's out of our hands? It sounds like the Centaurs have been asking for it.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

XENA

Only fools and profiteers ask for war,
Gabrielle. Centaurs are neither.

GABRIELLE

But he killed Terreis.

XENA

Someone killed Terreis. I'm not so
sure it was Phantes.

(beat)

I have to talk to his father.

Xena mounts her horse.

XENA

This is probably the safest place for
you right now. The Amazons will
protect you because of Terreis.
Besides, I'm sure Tyldus still
considers me an enemy.

She gallops off.

GABRIELLE

Good luck...

Ephiny and Melosa approach Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE

So, are we going to talk about this
Right of Cast now? I did as you
asked. And I have to tell you, I
don't like keeping secrets from my
friend. Especially when I don't know
what they are.

MELOSA

With her dying wish, Terreis bestowed
all her rights and possessions to you.
And her position.

GABRIELLE

Wait... you mean I'm an Amazon?

MELOSA

Terreis was my true sister. The next
in the royal line. You're an Amazon
Princess.

(to Ephiny)

Make sure she's taught.

She turns and walks away. Off Gabrielle's look, we:

CUT TO:

11 EXT. WOODS - DAY - TRAVELING - DAY 11

Xena moves through the woods. The drums of the Amazons are still audible, though getting fainter.

DISSOLVE TO:

12 EXT. WOODS - ANOTHER AREA - NEAR TREES - DAY 12

Xena pauses and looks at three "X" shaped totems dug into the ground. Obviously more territorial markers.

She gets off her horse and examines the markers. Then, suddenly, she grabs one up and spins just in time. An arrow plows deep into the wood.

A scream is heard and from the tree line gallops a Centaur (MESAS). He has a pike and aims it low at Xena. She grabs the pike, forcing the end into the ground. It jams, knocking the Centaur off balance and into the exposed end of a broken tree branch. He staggers, severely wounded. Meanwhile, Xena turns as a man (CELANO) charges her from the brush. She meets him head on, drawing her sword and deflecting his blow. A knee comes up into his face, she spins, sweeping her leg under his knees, flipping him onto his back.

He raises his sword, but Xena's chakram slices through the blade and lodges in a tree. But, then, Xena turns and sees:

A ROW OF CENTAURS

At least three or four emerging from the woods in a line, along with a few men. They all have bows. They all lower them to aim at Xena.

XENA

diggs in her stance, her sword at the ready to deflect as many as these arrows as possible.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

13 EXT. WOODS - ANOTHER AREA - DAY

13

As before: Xena is braced to repel the arrow assault from the Centaurs. The arrows are loosed, Xena deflects them as a voice rings out:

TYLDUS' VOICE

Hold your fire!

TYLDUS

trots up. He has an aura of authority and command that can be felt by anyone in his presence. He holds himself proudly. Like all Centaurs, Tyldus' emotions are close to the surface. But there is a maturity here that keeps them in check. In the background, we can see Mesas being aided by Celano.

TYLDUS

Corinth is a long time in the past,
Xena. What brings you to my present?

CELANO

Tyldus, we have a problem here.

Mesas wheezes and hacks, holding his chest. Blood is forming on his lips.

TYLDUS

Mesas... are you all right?

Mesas shakes his head, unable to speak.

XENA

You know me, Tyldus. You know I can help him.

TYLDUS

Why would you want to help a Centaur?

XENA

Because he's dead without it.

TYLDUS

(beat)

If he dies, you die.

She walks up to Mesas. Celano pulls a rather fancy dagger and holds it in a way that reminds her of the risks of failure. She barely glances at it. She looks into Mesas' mouth, examining the blood. She then puts a variation of the pinch on him.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

MESAS

I... I can't feel my chest.

XENA

That's the point. I've blocked the nerves.

(to Celano)

I'll need that.

In a lightning flash, she takes the dagger from his hand, much to his surprise. As mentioned, it is fancy, with one of those curvy blades and jewel inlay.

XENA

(re: knife)

Very nice.

(to Mesas)

Look up.

As he does, Xena jams the dagger into his side. Everyone reacts. Using careful angles, we see that Xena has opened the wound and reaches in, pulling on something until we hear a satisfying "CRUNCH." Mesas' breathing immediately becomes relaxed. Xena releases the pinch.

XENA

One of your ribs was pushing against your lung. It didn't penetrate, though.

(to Tyldus)

I'll need a needle and leather twine. And compresses.

She hands Celano his dagger back. Off this (and Tyldus' look) we:

DISSOLVE TO:

14 EXT. CENTAUR CAMP - DAY - LATER

14

Xena walks into the camp, followed by a few of the men, Tyldus, and Mesas being assisted by Celano. The camp is on a war footing. Men and Centaurs are moving here and there preparing defenses. A Centaur pulls a load of logs across the ground. Two men are sorting arrows into "ammo" cases. Mesas and Tyldus move off to get him some more help. Xena observes all the activity. Celano stays by her side.

XENA

I need to speak to Tyldus now.

CELANO

Tyldus will speak when he has the time. You may have noticed, we're a bit busy.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

XENA

I don't often see men working with Centaurs.

CELANO

Men and Centaurs have been working together in this village for years. Amazing what a common enemy can do. This whole thing with Phantes is a trick, you know. To goad us into war.

XENA

What was Phantes doing on their land?

CELANO

Hunting. The young bucks think it's a test of manhood to go hunting on Amazon land. It's not like the Amazons didn't do it to us. He told me he'd be back by afternoon. You know the rest.

At that moment, Tyldus comes up to Xena. He is accompanied by ARBEN, another Centaur.

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TYLDUS

Celano, check with Antilus about the water supply.

Celano nods and heads off. As he passes by Arben, they hold up their arms and hit forearms in a casual way.

*
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ARBEN

(to Tyldus)

We've finished the preparations. We can handle a three-day campaign. I recommend we...

*
*

He looks at Xena and pauses, then:

ARBEN

(slowly)

I recommend we extend our patrols into the hunting grounds. There are other things we should discuss... alone.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: 2

14

TYLDUS
Arben, you remember Xena, the
destroyer of nations.

*

ARBEN
(tense)
My unit was wiped out by your Army on
the first day.

*

XENA
That was a long time ago. In a war
that shouldn't have happened.

TYLDUS
(flaring)
It happened because of you. Sisyphus
asked for our help! We were defending
a nation. What was your noble excuse
for being there?

XENA
I didn't have a noble excuse. But I'll
make up for it now by stopping all of
this. I've spoken with your son.

Tyldus and Arben react.

CUT TO:

15 INT. AMAZON MEETING HALL - DAY

15

Gabrielle stands expectantly as a leather breastplate is
lowered over her shoulders and fitted to her. Gabrielle is
in awe. MAGDELUS and EPONIN help her.

GABRIELLE
This... this can't be mine!

MAGDELUS
Everything that was Terreis' is yours.

GABRIELLE
That makes me feel kind of strange.
Wearing her clothes and all.

EPONIN
It's an honor. To deny it would
degrade her memory.

GABRIELLE
What kind of a person was she?

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

There is a moment of silence as the other girls go about the business of securing her battle gear. Then:

MAGDELUS

Terreis was an Amazon in the purest sense. She would have made a good leader one day.

EPONIN

She could look at our struggle and put it in it's proper place. For one thing, she doesn't... didn't think that all men or Centaurs were evil.

MAGDELUS

Just misguided.

GABRIELLE

(repeating)

"It's a man's world. Not because it should be, but because we let them have it." I guess that's true.

(beat)

Maybe the world would have been different after all.

They finish tying the straps. Gabrielle moves around in it. It fits well. Ephiny walks over to her.

EPHINY

Come. Now.

GABRIELLE

I'm sorry. You must have mistaken me for a pet.

EPHINY

(tense)

Would you come with me?

GABRIELLE

Better. Where am I going?

Ephiny takes her over to a cloth-covered rack.

EPHINY

From birth, every Amazon is taught to use weapons. Pick your first weapon.

The cloth is pulled back to reveal a rack of weapons: swords, daggers, bows, fighting staffs... Gabrielle approaches and examines them.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: 2

15

GABRIELLE

No... don't like swords. Can't hit the side of a sleeping Cyclops with a bow and arrow. What's this?

EPHINY

That's a fighting staff.

Ephiny takes it and shows her: she swirls it around her body in pseudo-martial-arts moves, similar to the way Xena handled Gabrielle's walking stick. Which gives Gabrielle the idea:

GABRIELLE

I choose the walking stick!
(off Ephiny's look)
I brought it with me. Where is it?

CUT TO:

16 INT. TYLDUS' HUT - DAY

16

Xena and Tyldus. At the moment, Tyldus is in a rage.

TYLDUS

They have my only son! Am I supposed to just sit by and let him be executed?

XENA

No! I'm asking you to give me time. He has until noon tomorrow. Give me that.

TYLDUS

You ask too much. Especially from an enemy. Why am I to trust you? At one time, we would have rejoiced in each other's blood. What makes me think you've changed?

XENA

Look inside yourself for that answer. Are you still the Centaur I faced at Corinth?

TYLDUS

(beat)

No. I left that part of me on the bloody field.

(then)

What remained of my people came here to start a new life... new families. I raised my son Phantes in peace.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

TYLDUS (cont'd)

I swore that he'd never know the sting of war. I told him what I had seen. About the childhood friends I lost to the sword. The Centaurs who died singing songs of victory as they spilled their blood on the earth. I told him of the carnage. All he heard was the glory.

(then)

Phantes is filled with pride and rage. He feels the Centaur Empire can be restored. And I know, deep down, that he's ashamed of me... because I want peace.

XENA

There's nothing to be ashamed of in that. It's a lesson that takes a lifetime to learn. And for most, it takes their life as well.

TYLDUS

I had a good teacher. You.

She reacts.

TYLDUS

You killed a fourth of my Centaur Army. My friends.

(then)

My son will not die for something he didn't do. He's not a murderer. I desperately want to avoid war, but I'm going to get him back. If he dies, I swear, every Amazon will suffer at my hand.

XENA

I don't think he killed that girl. But whoever did wants you to go to war. You're playing into his hands.

TYLDUS

(beat; then)

Just before noon tomorrow, my Army attacks. It makes no difference if you warn them. You can go, Xena, but don't come back. You and I are still enemies. And I'll kill you if I have to.

*

A beat, then Xena exits.

CUT TO:

17 EXT. AMAZON VILLAGE - DAY

17

Eponin and Gabrielle stand side by side. Eponin is slowly showing Gabrielle moves with the staff. Gabrielle has her familiar walking stick and is keeping up fairly well. Eponin does a complicated swinging-overhead motion. Gabrielle imitates and hits her head.

GABRIELLE

Show me that again...

Eponin does and Gabrielle follows... and hits her head again.

GABRIELLE

Ow! Okay... never say die. Once more.

Ephiny walks up. She is carrying a beautiful redwood fighting staff.

EPHINY

Report?

EPONIN

She's not bad, actually. A little rough.

GABRIELLE

But I'm getting the idea. It's really a lot of fun when it's working.

EPHINY

Fun.

Magdelus walks a horse over to them. Several other Amazons gather around. Ephiny speaks to all as if this was a class. She refers to her fighting staff.

EPHINY

This fighting staff was my first weapon. My mother passed it on to me. It's saved my life more than once.

(then)

Centaur's have certain weaknesses and strengths.

She walks to the horse.

EPHINY

They're fast and agile. We use that to our advantage. As the Centaur passes at full gallop, the staff goes here...

She swings her staff to the front knee of the horse (without touching it... this is just a demonstration).

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

EPHINY

...to crack the knee at the joint.
This splits the leg forward and drops
him to the ground.

Gabrielle reacts.

EPHINY

As the Centaur falls, a swing to the
lower shoulders...

She moves the staff toward the shoulders.

EPHINY

...will dislocate the two front legs
completely. Once the Centaur is on the
ground, an overhead strike to the
throat...

She swings the staff over her head and down to the ground
with a loud noise.

EPHINY

...breaks the neck. Death is
immediate. If they're lucky.
(to Gabrielle)
Still fun?

She walks away. Gabrielle reacts, then looks over to see
Melosa, watching her. Gabrielle shakes it off and, like a
good Amazon, she returns to her training with vigor. She
repeats the move Eponin was teaching her and performs it
flawlessly. Off Melosa's approving nod, we:

CUT TO:

18 INT. AMAZON CELL - DAY

18

As we last saw him, Phantes is bound hand and hooves.
However, he has been working on his bindings. He has
loosened the ones on his wrists. Straining himself to the
utmost, he manages to pull one hand free. He immediately
rips away the noose around his neck. Then he bends over at
the waist and attacks the shackles on his feet.

The blade of a sword moves to his throat. He freezes.

EPHINY'S VOICE

Planning to take a trip?

WIDER

to reveal Ephiny holding the sword.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

PHANTES

How did you get in here without me hearing you?

Still holding the sword to him, she hands him the leather bindings. He puts them back around his wrists. She pulls the free end taut.

PHANTES

I wouldn't have left, you know. Not until I had killed everyone in this camp.

EPHINY

You talk big. Even for a Centaur.

PHANTES

What would you know of Centaurs? You despise us. You spit on us. When was the last time you ever talked with any of us?

EPHINY

I had a friend who admired the Centaurs. She didn't see you as the beasts you really are. She felt that one day we might work together. She thought that you were brave, noble people.

Phantes snorts at the idea.

PHANTES

If she likes the Centaurs so much, where is she now?

EPHINY

You killed her.

Silence. Then:

PHANTES

I didn't... kill her.

EPHINY

(beat)

She also told me that Centaurs have a high sense of honor. Is that true? Can you swear on your father's name?

PHANTES

I swear on the name of Tyldus The Great, I didn't kill your friend.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED: 2

18

PHANTES (cont'd)

(then)

Not that the oath of a Centaur would mean anything.

EPHINY

Not to many.

With that, she exits.

CUT TO:

19 EXT. STOCK FOOTAGE - SUN SETTING

19

To establish that night has begun.

20 EXT. WOODS - AMAZON ATTACK AREA - NIGHT

20

We are near the abandoned building where the Amazons were when Terreis was killed. Xena examines the ground, searching for clues. Suddenly, she crouches and moves to take cover amidst the building ruins.

ARBEN AND MESAS

The way their eyes search the area, the way they hold their shields and swords suggest that this is a patrol.

ARBEN

This is the extent of our patrol.
Amazon land begins here.

(then)

Do you need to go back?

Mesas' ribs are bandaged.

MESAS

I'll be all right. Xena knew what she was doing, I'll give her that.

ARBEN

You move south, along the river. If you run into an Amazon patrol, don't wait for me. Kill as many as you can and sound the alarm.

They split up. A beat, then Xena moves back into the field. Once again, she judges the direction of the arrows and moves over to:

THE UNDERBRUSH

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

A thick area of brush. This is where the attack came from. She is walking gingerly around something on the ground when Xena's eyes look up slightly... Something has gotten her attention, but she doesn't give away her awareness. She moves toward two vines that hang parallel to each other from the treetops to the ground. Just as she approaches them, she spins and sends her chakram flying. It slices through the leaves and returns to her. She catches it and follows the sound of something moving quickly above her. In a flash, she is on the vines, holding one in each hand and "laddering" her way up into:

THE TREETOPS

The branches are thick, but Xena flips and flies gracefully through them until she comes to a large branch and freezes... listening. Something "snaps" above her and she dives, just avoiding a body that jumps down at her. Xena grabs a limb and flips around it, bringing her feet up into the assailant's face. The mystery guest flies backwards but also grabs a branch, flips over it, stands atop it and does a backflip as Xena charges. This person is good.

Xena spins to see who her assailant is: Ephiny! She has already drawn an arrow and has it aimed at Xena.

XENA

Don't be stupid...

And she doesn't wait to see if Ephiny is stupid or not. Xena does a backflip and grabs the limb she was just standing on, swinging in a wide arc.

Ephiny, startled, fires her arrow. It flies safely into the night.

As she starts to reload, Xena's feet come crashing up into her midsection, lifting her high and free of the branches. Ephiny grabs a branch, swings and grabs another. It breaks. She falls...

THE GROUND

Ephiny hits hard, the wind knocked out of her. She winces in pain and then looks up to see:

ARBEN

standing above her. He raises up on his back hooves, pulling his sword and preparing to come down on her with full force, as we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

21 EXT. WOODS - AMAZON ATTACK AREA - NIGHT - AS BEFORE

21

Ephiny is on the ground, helpless as Arben towers above her, his hooves flailing. Suddenly, a figure lands on Arben's back. Ephiny quickly moves to the side as Arben fights to throw Xena. She has a firm grip on him as he bucks.

Ephiny grabs up her dropped bow and arrow and notches a shot. She lets it fly. Xena sees it and, at the last moment, she leaps from Arben's back and catches the arrow mid-flight. She drops to the ground and rolls to her feet.

XENA

The trees!

Xena runs straight for Ephiny. Ephiny sets herself, interlocking her hands down low. Xena steps into her hands and leaps up to catch the lower branch and flip herself upside-down, hooking her legs and dangling down. Immediately, Ephiny grabs Xena's hands and crawls up her body into the trees. Arben, recovered, grabs up his sword and charges, slashing at them. He barely misses Xena as she pulls herself up into the trees.

Silence. Arben knows he is out of his element here. Keeping his guard up, he backs off, leaving the area.

22 EXT. TREETOPS - NIGHT

22

Xena and Ephiny watch Arben leave.

EPHINY

Are you sure you're not an Amazon?
Very few people know that escape.

XENA

Why are you following me?

EPHINY

I'm not. This is where we were
attacked. I wanted to take another
look at it.

(then)

You saved me. And you saved him. Why?

XENA

Because the moment an Amazon or Centaur
kills the other, the war can't be
stopped. And that hasn't happened yet.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

EPHINY

But Terreis was killed...

XENA

By Krykus, the Warlord. He gains everything from the war.

Off that, Xena lowers herself off the branch down to:

THE GROUND

where she walks over to the underbrush again. Ephiny drops and follows her.

XENA

This is where the attacker was hidden. There are hoofprints all over here.

(then)

Here's your proof. It wasn't a Centaur. It was someone on horseback.

EPHINY

You're right.

She kneels and scoops up a "substance" from the ground. She examines it and holds it out to Xena.

EPHINY

This is filled with raw hay stalks. Centaurs don't eat hay.

XENA

(mildly disgusted)

Actually I was looking at the hoofprints. Centaurs have their weight on the front hooves.

EPHINY

(considering)

That's just as good.

Ephiny puts the dung into a bag and looks up into the sky.

EPHINY

But how did Krykus know Phantes was going to be across the river?

XENA

We're going to find out. And we'd better do it quick. Phantes is set to die at noon.

They start off, as we:

CUT TO:

23 INT. AMAZON MEETING HALL - NIGHT

23

The drums pound on. Gabrielle is seated next to the drummers. She has her finger placed carefully against the ear nearest the percussion section as she watches the dancers. The light from the still-burning pyre reflects off their oiled bodies as they punish themselves in their rite of mourning. Melosa sits nearby. Eponin comes over to Gabrielle and pulls her to her feet, dragging her to the dance.

GABRIELLE

What...? No, really, I'm really bad at this. When it comes to dancing, I have two left feet... facing backwards! They wouldn't let me dance at crop festivals because I'd bring a bad harvest!

At first, she tries to stumble her way along. But, after a bit, she really gets into it. The drums get louder and Gabrielle throws herself into the dance, showing us a little bit of grace normally hidden under her peasant's garb.

Suddenly, the drums stop. The dancers drop to their knees. Silence. Gabrielle dances on for a couple of beats before realizing what has happened. She looks around and slowly drops to her knees like the rest. Out from Melosa's room comes a couple of Amazons holding the burning hearth with Terreis' sword in it. Melosa addresses the crowd.

MELOSA

Before the sun is high overhead, we will have welcomed a new member to the Amazon Nation. Gabrielle, as the Right of Cast of Terreis. Now, that the mourning has ended for our departed sister, the sword of Terreis becomes hers.

With that, the Amazons take the hearth to Gabrielle so that the sword hilt is offered to her. In awe, Gabrielle grins and takes the hilt. She reacts to the heat, but holds on, pulling it free of the coals. It still glows red.

MELOSA

And, today, the murderer of our sister is to meet his justice. The sentence is death. Death by the sword of the murdered.

Gabrielle takes a beat, then looks to Melosa.

GABRIELLE

What?

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

MELOSA

When Terreis gave you her Right of
Cast, she made you her avenger. You
have to carry out the sentence with her
sword.

GABRIELLE

I can't do that! I can't kill someone!

MELOSA

You're an Amazon, Gabrielle. To refuse
would be treason and your own death.
The sentence will be carried out just
before noon. *

With that, she leaves the assembly. Gabrielle just stares
at the sword.

CUT TO:

24 EXT. KRYKUS' CAMP - NIGHT

24

Torches are lit, guards walk the perimeter. There are
several tents set up here. Obviously Command and Control of
the whole camp.

XENA

She is hidden in the brush, watching and waiting. Suddenly,
the sound of a hooting owl is heard. Xena counts it off...
one hoot... another... a pause... and another. Xena nods
and stands. She walks toward the camp. Tor immediately
confronts her.

TOR

Stop right there! What is your
business?

XENA

My name is Xena. I'm here to see
Krykus.

TOR

The Warlord is busy. You can see me,
instead.

XENA

I'll see you face down on the ground if
you don't take me to Krykus.

With a grin, Tor (why won't they ever learn?) steps forward
to put his hand on Xena's chest; perhaps reaching for her
throat, perhaps other items of his interest. Whatever.
We'll never know. *

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

Xena grabs his thumb and bends it back, dropping Tor to his knees and, when she steps back, to the ground. Face down in the dirt. Tor lets out a muffled groan. Xena still holds his thumb, when:

*

*

KRYKUS

What's going on here?

Krykus stands at the entrance of his tent, his sword drawn.

TOR

(muffled from dirt)

Someone to see you, Lord Krykus.

Xena releases Tor's thumb and faces Krykus.

CUT TO:

25 EXT. ANOTHER PART OF KRYKUS' CAMP - NIGHT

25

FULL SHOT of another Guard, walking patrol. He stops for a moment and stretches. He yawns. Then he walks away. A beat, then where he was standing, a figure stands. Ephiny, covered in camouflaging dirt, pulls herself into a crouch. Ninja-style, she creeps off toward the tents in the distance.

26 INT. KRYKUS' TENT - NIGHT

26

The man must be Spartan. There isn't a heck of a lot of luxury here. Desk, bed, a few chests, and the like. A couple of torches flicker on the walls which are supported by wooden poles. Krykus turns to face Xena as she follows him in.

KRYKUS

Am I to take it that Melosa has sent the Warrior Princess to talk me into an alliance?

XENA

Perhaps. Would an alliance interest you?

KRYKUS

Not really. If they wipe themselves out, all the better. I couldn't care less. A battle between the hooves and harlots... I wonder who will win?

(CONTINUED)

