



"REMEMBER NOTHING"

**Story by
Steven L. Sears & Chris Manheim**

**Teleplay by
Chris Manheim**

**SEASON 2
EPISODE #2**

Prod. #V0201

XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

"Remember Nothing"

Story by

Steven L. Sears and Chris Manheim

Teleplay by

Chris Manheim

Directed by

Anson Williams

Revised Pages: 12-12B, 19-19AB, 25, 25A
(NB: these three scenes have already been shot)

Executive Producers
Sam Raimi & Robert Tapert

SHOOTING DRAFT
Apr. 25, 1996
Rev. May 03, 1996 - Pink
Rev. May 06, 1996 - Blue
Rev. July 02, 1996 - Yellow

XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

"Remember Nothing"

CAST LIST

XENA
GABRIELLE

LYCEUS (lie-SEE-us)
MEZENTIUS
KRYKUS
MAPHIAS (ma-FYE-us)
CLOTHO (KLO-tho)
LACHESIS (LACK-a-sis)
ATROPOS (A-tro-poss)
SLAVE BOSS
STOREKEEPER
MINION
HEAD GUARD
GUARD #1
GUARD #2
CAPUTIUS (*) (ka-PEW-shus)
BOY

*

Referred to in Dialog:

CORTESE (kor-TEEZ)

(*) Non-speaking

XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

"Remember Nothing"

SET LIST

INTERIORS:

TEMPLE OF THE FATES
WARLORDS' CASTLE - THE GREAT HALL
 - KITCHEN
 - MEAD STORAGE ROOM
 - DUNGEON
XENA'S HOME - MAIN ROOM
 - XENA'S ROOM
MAUSOLEUM (*)
GENERAL STORE
SMALL STORAGE ROOM

EXTERIORS:

TEMPLE OF THE FATES
WARLORDS' CASTLE GATE
PATH TO AMPHIPOLIS
SPARRING AREA IN AMPHIPOLIS

*

(*) Same mausoleum as in "Sins of The Past" #76901, if possible.

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XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

"Remember Nothing"

CHRONOLOGY

DAY 1
NIGHT 1

SCENES # 1 - 11
SCENES #12 - 13

DAY 2
NIGHT 2

SCENES #14 - 19
SCENES #20 - 21

DAY 3

SCENES #22 - 26

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XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

"Remember Nothing"

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. TEMPLE OF THE FATES - DAY

1

CLOSE ON A CANDLE FLAME flickering against the surrounding darkness, as we hear:

XENA (O.S.)
By this flame, I call on the three
Fates: the Maiden...

The CANDLE MOVES to light the wick of another candle.

XENA (O.S.)
...the Mother...

A second candle is ignited beside the first.

XENA (O.S.)
...and the Crone.

A third candle is brought to blazing life, creating a flickering triumvirate as we PULL BACK to reveal...

...XENA, softly illuminated by the candle she holds.

XENA
...Comfort my brother, Lyceus, whose
life you cut short this day eleven
years ago. In his memory, I ask it.

She places her candle in the middle of the other three and steps back, as we WIDEN to include GABRIELLE, watching solemnly.

GABRIELLE
I wish I'd known your younger brother.

XENA
(clouding guiltily)
If I hadn't insisted we rally against
Cortese, you might've had the chance.

GABRIELLE
It's not your fault. He chose to fight
for something he believed in.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

XENA

Yeah... me.

(forestalling her protest)
You don't know what it's like to take a
life, Gabrielle -- let alone cause the
death of someone you love. The gods
grant you never will.

Before Gabrielle can comment, a SCREAM sounds out front.
OFF the women's reactions:

CUT TO:

2 EXT. TEMPLE OF THE FATES - DAY

2

ON the terrified face of an ACOLYTE as he runs up the temple
steps, fleeing --

-- a grotesquely HOODED MARAUDER who, seeing he can't catch
the Acolyte, hurls his spear which we TRACK as it hurtles
toward the Acolyte's defenseless back when, suddenly --

Xena grabs the spear mid-flight, deftly turns it around, and
sends it sailing back in the other direction where --

-- it impales the hooded Marauder.

Going WIDE, we see SEVERAL HOODED MARAUDERS are mounting an
attack on the Temple whose Acolytes flee before them.

As Gabrielle uses her staff to trip and brain a Marauder --

-- Xena sees a group of them charging up the Temple steps to
surround her. Springing to grip one of the narrow entrance
columns, Xena propels herself around it by kicking off the
chests of the Marauders who tumble down the steps as --

-- Xena swings to the next column, reversing herself like a
gymnast on the parallel bars as she kicks some more
Marauders down the steps, then does a somersault dismount,
landing face-to-face with --

CAPUTIUS, the leader of the Marauders, a man whose lethal
martial arts are all the more dangerous for their
distracting dance-like movements that mask their sinister
intentions with sinuous style.

As he and Xena face-off in a deadly pas de deux, it's touch
and go until --

-- a sudden, graceful move by Caputius surprises Xena,
disarming her! But as Caputius glides in for the kill --

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

Xena springs into the air, kicks Caputius' sword from his hand, seizes it, and skewers him with it as she lands. Withdrawing the sword, Xena hears:

GABRIELLE (O.S.)
(shouting)
Xena -- behind you!

Whirling, Xena instinctively lifts the sword as a hooded Marauder wielding an axe rushes straight at her, skewering himself on her sword by his own momentum!

Staggering, the Marauder backs off her blade, then tumbles onto the steps, dislodging his hood to reveal...

...the face of a 15-year-old BOY.

GABRIELLE (O.S.)
(deploring)
He's just a kid...!

PULL BACK to see she's joined Xena who stares down at the dead boy, appalled. Then, turning in wordless turmoil, Xena strides blindly off into:

CUT TO:

3 INT. TEMPLE OF THE FATES - DAY

3

An otherworldly atmosphere permeates the building as Xena rounds a corner, then stops, slamming her fist against a wall in angry frustration.

THE THREE FATES (O.S.)
(simultaneous)
Xena...

Startled, Xena whirls to see...

...the three FATES: CLOTHO, a young maiden who spins out the thread of life; LACHESIS, a well-endowed, maternal woman who measures and guides the thread; and ATROPOS, an ancient crone who snips the thread with a large pair of scissors.

Though each speaks individually, they flow as one.

CLOTHO
You...

LACHESIS
...know...

ATROPOS
...us?

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

XENA
Everyone knows the faces of fate.

CLOTHO
But few glimpse them.

LACHESIS
And fewer still incur our debt.

ATROPOS
You saved our temple. Name your
reward. If it's ours to bestow, it's
yours.

XENA
(angry)
Reward?! For what? Killing a boy
barely out of his childhood?! I don't
want a reward. I want that boy alive
again.

(bitterly)
By the gods, I wish I'd never followed
the sword in the first place.

The Fates share an oblique look. Then:

ATROPOS
So be it. All is restored.

XENA
(surprised)
What --? You mean, you can bring him
back?

LACHESIS
All is restored...
(as Xena reacts and starts
out)
...until the first time you draw
blood in anger.

Xena stops, turning to eye the Fates, bewildered.

XENA
What are you saying?

CLOTHO
Spill so much as a drop of blood in
rage, and everything changes back.

XENA
But I'm a warrior. How can I obey
that?

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: 2

3

ATROPOS

As a warrior... you can't.

Xena frowns. But before she can question them further, the Fates fade into thin air. Alone, Xena quickly exits.

CUT TO:

4 EXT. TEMPLE OF THE FATES - DAY

4

Xena emerges from the Temple and moves down the steps, surprised as she looks around to see the place is deserted... no Marauders... no Caputius... no 15-year-old Boy.

XENA

(calling)

Gabrielle -- Gabrielle?

No Gabrielle. Frowning, Xena looks around, then turns back to the Temple, staring to find... no Temple.

Thrown, Xena notices her clothes -- not the breastplate, armbands, and boots of her warrior ensemble. Instead, she's dressed in a modest blouse and skirt, such as any village woman might wear. As she tries to make sense of all this, Xena hears:

LYCEUS (O.S.)

(calling)

Xena...? Hey, where are you? Xena --?

Reacting, Xena stands thunderstruck.

XENA

(softly; incredulous)

Lyceus...?

Turning, she stares as her handsome, younger brother, LYCEUS, alive and well, approaches through the trees. Then, with a joyful cry, Xena runs to him, flinging her arms around him as the two collide. Jolted, Lyceus eyes her, nonplussed.

LYCEUS

Sisters... can't live with 'em; can't live without 'em.

And ON Xena's dazed, but happy face:

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

5 EXT. PATH TO AMPHIPOLIS - DAY

5

Xena walks with Lyceus, doing her best to hide her confusion as she feasts her eyes on him while trying to figure out what's going on.

Aware of her stare, Lyceus finally stops and turns to Xena.

LYCEUS

Okay, what is it? What's wrong?

XENA

Wrong?

LYCEUS

Well, you keep staring at me. Is my face dirty or something?

He presents his face and Xena gazes into it, reacting to see her baby brother has grown from a boy to a man.

XENA

(heartfelt)

No... It's perfect.

Lyceus gives her a look.

LYCEUS

Uh-huh. You sure you're all right?

XENA

(still dazed)

I'm not sure about anything.

LYCEUS

You seem sorta... I don't know... funny.

Reluctant to call attention to her confusion, Xena shifts the subject.

XENA

Oh, yeah? Look who's talking.
(re: amulet around his neck)
A guy who still wears his virilis token.

LYCEUS

(protests)

Hey, c'mon, lots of guys still wear their tokens. Besides, it's good luck. It saved my life, remember?

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

XENA
(clueless but covering)
How could I forget?

LYCEUS
(with a look)
I never will. If that arrow had
hit me instead of this token, you'd
be running the inn alone, and I'd be a
memory.

*
*

XENA
(still taking it in)
Instead... you're a grown man.

Lyceus' look says she's being odd, even for a sister. Then:

LYCEUS
Come on...
(taking her hand)
I know what'll put you right.

XENA
(as he draws her away)
Where are we going?

LYCEUS
(grins)
As if you don't know.

And they are gone.

CUT TO:

6 INT. WARLORDS' CASTLE - THE GREAT HALL - DAY

6

ON the face of a MALE SLAVE grimacing in pain, as we hear
the WHISTLING WHIP lashing his back.

SLAVE BOSS (O.S.)
(counting aloud)
...eight...

PULL BACK to include a group of cowed Slaves, forced to
watch as the corpulent SLAVE BOSS finishes lashing the Slave
who's bound to a post in the center of the room.

SLAVE BOSS
(lashing Slave)
...nine...
(another lash)
...ten.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

He coils the whip, then shoots a questioning look to...

THE DAIS where MEZENTIUS and KRYKUS, two warlords Xena foiled in the past, sit watching the beating.

(CONTINUED)

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6 CONTINUED: 2

6

The two exchange looks, then Mezentius dismisses the Slave Boss with a wave of his hand, telling Krykus:

MEZENTIUS

Any more, and the slave would pass out...

(cruel smile)

...and they make much better examples to the rest when they're writhing in pain, don't you agree?

KRYKUS

Absolutely. Though I admit my Amazons rarely provide me the pleasure of hearing them scream. Still, given time, I'll break them.

Mezentius grins and pours himself some wine.

MEZENTIUS

Soon the entire world will feel our boots on their necks.

KRYKUS

Or our whips on their backs, if they resist us.

MEZENTIUS

Resist?

(scoffing)

By the gods, I'd like to see the fool who tries.

CUT TO:

6A EXT. SPARRING AREA IN AMPHIPOLIS - DAY

6A*

ON Lyceus who lunges with a wooden sword, then pivots it in his hand, and swings around to thrust the sword from behind his back. The move is awkward. As he tries again...

*
*
*

WIDEN to see he's lunging at a dummy as Xena watches from beside a tree. Lyceus' metal sword is nearby.

*
*

XENA

Not bad. But if you step forward as you pivot your sword, it'll be a cleaner move.

*
*
*
*

LYCEUS

(dubious)

Since when are you an expert on fighting?

*
*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

6A CONTINUED:

6A

As Xena fumbles for an answer, Lyceus tries her suggestion, surprised to find:

LYCEUS
You're right. Thanks.
(tries move again)
You know, if the rest of the village
practiced as much as we do, we'd never
have lost to Cortese. Now, grab a
sword. Let's go.

Reluctant to even pick up a sword, Xena shakes her head.

XENA
I don't think so, Lyceus.
(re: his sword)
This is real. What if I cut you?

LYCEUS
In your dreams.
(playfully teasing her with
sword)
C'mon... I'll tie one hand behind my
back, give you a sporting chance. How
'bout it?

XENA
(sharply)
I said no!
(off his surprised reaction)
I'm sorry. I just don't feel like it.

LYCEUS
(crossing to her)
You sure you're okay?

XENA
(nods)
Fine. But it looks like you've got
something...
(points to a place on his
shirt)
...right here.

As Lyceus looks down, Xena runs her finger up his chest to tip his nose, a trick she's played on him since childhood.

XENA
Gotcha!

LYCEUS
(suckered again)
When are you gonna stop doing that?

(CONTINUED)

6A CONTINUED: 2

6A

XENA

When you stop falling for it.

The two share a grin. Then:

LYCEUS

Look, I can handle things at the inn this afternoon. You look tired. Why don't you go home? Maybe lie down a while. Relax.

(firmly forestalling her)

No arguments. I mean it. Go home.

With a final insistent look, he exits.

XENA

(softly; gazing after him)

...I have.

CUT TO:

7 INT. XENA'S HOME - MAIN ROOM - DAY

7

ON Xena as she enters the modest, pleasant house. Looking around, she takes in this rebuilt version of her family home with curious interest while...

AN ANONYMOUS, SUBJECTIVE POV OF XENA reveals someone else is in the house, watching her as...

Spotting something, Xena smiles to herself and crosses to pick up a miniature family portrait, eyeing it while...

...THE MYSTERIOUS STALKER moves closer, silently coming up behind her just as --

-- Xena drops the portrait and whirls, seizing the Stalker -- a glib, handsome charmer named MAPHIAS -- and twisting his arm in a hold that leaves him helpless.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

XENA
One move, and I break it.

MAPHIAS
(totally thrown)
Okay -- I'm a statue.
(twisting to look at her)
Bad day at the inn?

Reacting, Xena stares to find herself face-to-face with...

XENA
...Maphias?!

MAPHIAS
Who else? Unless you've got another
suitor on the side...?

XENA
(releasing him fast)
Suitor?! No!
(off his bemused look)
I mean -- no, of course, I don't...
(under her breath)
...I hope.

MAPHIAS
(grins; oblivious)
Good. Then I'll show you some moves of
my own.

And before Xena can blink, Maphias kisses her. She's too surprised to respond and, feeling this, Maphias pulls back.

MAPHIAS
(slight frown)
Something wrong?

XENA
(equivocating)
What could be wrong?

MAPHIAS
You're going to try and postpone the
wedding again, aren't you?

XENA
Why would I want to do that?

MAPHIAS
You tell me. First it was Cortese's
attack, then the town's
reconstruction... I'm warning you,
Xena.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: 2

7

MAPHIAS (cont'd)
You keep putting me off like this, I'm
liable to give up... in ten or fifteen
years.

XENA
(smiles despite herself)
I'll keep that in mind.

MAPHIAS
(only half-kidding)
Do.
(picks up family portrait;
eyeing it)
After all, it was the last thing we
promised her. We ought to make good on
it.

XENA
(apprehensive)
Promised who?

Off Maphias' reaction:

CUT TO:

8 INT. MAUSOLEUM - DAY

8

(Same mausoleum as in "Sins Of The Past" if possible).

ON a sarcophagus from which we PULL BACK to reveal...

...Xena, looking stunned as she gently traces the coffin's
chiseled inscription.

LYCEUS (O.S.)
(gently)
Xena...?

Turning, she sees Lyceus who crosses to join her.

LYCEUS
Maphias said you were here.

XENA
(dazed)
I just had to see --
(stops; catching herself)
I mean -- I guess I'm still having
trouble... you know... accepting it.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

LYCEUS

I know. It's been nearly ten years now...

(eyeing casket)

...and I still feel responsible.

Following her own guilty thoughts, Xena stares, surprised.

XENA

You!?

LYCEUS

(nods)

It broke her heart, losing everything to Cortese. But what else could I do? You were there. We had to run.

XENA

Lyceus, it's not your fault, believe me. If anything, it's mine.

LYCEUS

(wryly facetious)

Sure. And what could you have done? Fought Cortese yourself?

(smiles despite himself)

On second thought, that might've been something to see.

(then)

Look, I'm gonna go close up. You mind stopping for some bread on the way home?

XENA

(shakes her head)

Be there in a bit.

Seeing she wants some time alone, Lyceus gives her another curious look. Then:

LYCEUS

Right.

And he exits. Turning, Xena eyes the sarcophagus warmly.

XENA

I'm sorry, Mother. I never meant this to happen. I only wanted the boy's life back.

(still bemused)

Instead, I've been given the chance for a new life, too...

(hesitates; then, resolved)

...and I'm gonna take it.

(MORE)

*
*

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: 2

8

XENA (cont'd)

(sighs; regretful)

The hardest part is losing you... and Gabrielle. I wish you were both here, sharing this new world with me. But it helps, knowing that in this life, I never shamed you, that Gabrielle never left her family to follow me... that I never led Lyceus to die in battle.

(resolved)

It's like Xena, Warrior Princess, never existed. And I know the world's a better place without her.

CUT TO:

8A INT. XENA'S HOME - MAIN ROOM

8A

Lyceus and Maphias enter, carrying firewood.

LYCEUS

I don't know, maybe it's just a "brother" thing, but she's not herself today.

MAPHIAS

Yeah, I've sensed it, myself.

LYCEUS

You two have a fight or something?

MAPHIAS

(rueful; rubbing arm Xena twisted earlier)
Trust me, if we'd had a fight, I'd have noticed.

(then; thoughtful)

No... it's something else.

LYCEUS

Like what?

MAPHIAS

I'm not sure. At first I thought she was getting cold feet again, you know, about the wedding.

LYCEUS

(deadpanning)

Given the groom, can you blame her?

MAPHIAS

(with a look)

Hey, whose side are you on?

(CONTINUED)

8A CONTINUED:

8A

LYCEUS

(grins)

Sorry.

MAPHIAS

It's odd, though. When I mentioned our
when I mentioned our promise to your
mother, it's almost like she was
hearing it for the first time.

LYCEUS

I know what you mean. She's been that
way all day, sort of foggy and dazed.

MAPHIAS

Maybe she's coming down with something.

LYCEUS

(unconvinced)

Maybe.

Sensing his genuine concern, Maphias crosses to Lyceus.

MAPHIAS

Look, if you're really worried, I'll
talk to her, see what's going on.

LYCEUS

(relieved)

Would you? I mean, it's probably
nothing. But if there's something
wrong... Well, she's all the family
I've got.

Maphias eyes his prospective brother-in-law warmly.

MAPHIAS

Not all.

Best friends, the two smile as Maphias exits.

CUT TO:

9 INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

9

On Mezentius' Slave Boss and two MINIONS moving through the
store, sampling and trashing the stock, leaving a trail of
wreckage in their wake.

Reacting, the elderly STOREKEEPER hurries to intercept them.

STOREKEEPER

Here, hold on! What do you think
you're do--

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

He's cut off when the Slave Boss grabs him by the throat just as Xena enters the store, reacting to see the Slave Boss pinning the old Storekeeper to the wall menacingly.

SLAVE BOSS

We're here to place an order. Two wagon loads of food and hay, delivered by midday tomorrow.

(tightening grip)

That a problem?

STOREKEEPER

(hoarsely)

No. But I'll need some dinars in good faith.

Reacting, the Slave Boss pulls a knife and holds it to the Storekeeper's throat.

SLAVE BOSS

You wanna see some good faith? Start praying. And if I spare you, that's as good as it gets.

But as he starts to stick him, the Slave Boss suddenly DROPS OUT OF FRAME and we see...

...Xena, holding the edge of the carpet she's just pulled out from under him.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

All innocence, she hurries to the Slave Boss' aid.

XENA
(helping him up)
I'm sorry! I was just checking the
price of this rug. Are you alright?
Guess I don't know my own strength.
Can you forgive me?

Her dazzling smile and physical charms mollify the angry
Slave Boss who grudgingly warns her:

SLAVE BOSS
Next time, watch what you're doing.
Someone could get hurt.
(turning to Minions)
Well? Don't just stand there! Bring
in the slaves to fetch dinner.

As he and his Minions exit one way, and the Storekeeper
another, Xena frowns after the Slave Boss.

CLOTHO (O.S.)
Quick thinking.

Turning, Xena reacts to see the first Fate, dressed as a
peasant girl, standing nearby.

XENA
Thanks.

CLOTHO
Guess you'll be doing quite a lot of
that...
(delicately)
...unless you've had enough of the
quiet life. If so, you know the
remedy.

XENA
I do. But I'm through with fighting.
And nothing's gonna change that.

As if on cue, the Slave Boss and his men bring in their
slaves. Xena turns to look -- then stares, appalled to
see... the sullen, bitter face of Gabrielle.

Off Xena's stunned reaction:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

10 INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

10

Still in shock, Xena instinctively starts toward Gabrielle who glances up, surprised to see this young woman moving purposefully toward her. Reacting, Gabrielle backs into the Slave Boss, accidentally stomping on his foot.

SLAVE BOSS
Owww --! You clumsy fool!

Furious, he shoves her to the floor, shouting at her as she cringes at his feet.

SLAVE BOSS
I'll teach you to watch where you're going!

And seizing the wooden baton at his belt, the Slave Boss raises it high. But as he starts to bring it down --

-- Xena throws herself between the Slave Boss and Gabrielle!

XENA
Don't touch her!

Gabrielle is as surprised as the Slave Boss who scowls as he recognizes Xena.

SLAVE BOSS
You! Out of the way!

XENA
No. I won't let you beat her.

SLAVE BOSS
(incensed)
Won't let me?! Then by the gods,
you'll take her place!

And raising his baton, he starts to bring it down when --

-- Xena reaches up, grips the stick, and stops it mid-descent.

For a moment, they remain that way: Xena fixed, unmoving -- the Slave Boss shaking with rage and effort. Then:

MAPHIAS (O.S.)
Wait -- stop!

Reacting, they look to see Maphias quickly approaching.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

MAPHIAS

I can explain.

Scowling, the Slave Boss wrenches free of Xena and turns to Maphias who quickly forestalls him.

MAPHIAS

It's all a misunderstanding.
(deftly separating Xena and
Slave Boss)
Right, darling?

Thrown, Xena stares, speechless. Capitalizing on it, Maphias turns back to the Slave Boss, winging it.

MAPHIAS

You see, we're getting married soon,
which means we're in the market for a
house slave.
(turning to Xena; pointedly)
Isn't that so, sweetheart?

Before she can answer, he's back to the Slave Boss.

MAPHIAS

And she's right.
(re: Gabrielle)
This girl would be perfect. But if
I've told her once, I've told her a
thousand times: ask before you
examine the goods.
(to Xena; meaningfully)
Isn't that true, my love?

Catching his drift, Xena nods, working with him.

XENA

Yes... Yes, it is!
(to Slave Boss)
So, how much?

The Slave Boss eyes her coldly, happy to tell her:

SLAVE BOSS

Forget it. Mezentius likes her too
much to sell at any price.

XENA

(appalled)
Mezentius?

But before she can ask more, they're interrupted by one of the Minions who approaches, informing the Slave Boss:

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: 2

10

MINION

Ready to go.

SLAVE BOSS

Right. Load everyone into the wagon.

As the Minion nods and exits, the Slave Boss looks down at Gabrielle, still crouched on the floor.

SLAVE BOSS

Get up, you worthless slag. Move!

Darting a look at Xena, Gabrielle rises and flees, barely dodging the Slave Boss' kick as he follows her off.

Instinctively, Xena starts after him. But Maphias restrains her, quickly pulling her aside into:

CUT TO:

11 INT. A SMALL STORAGE ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

11

Eyes flashing, Xena shakes Maphias off.

XENA

Let go! He's taking her away. What're you doing?

MAPHIAS

(just as mad)

Saving your neck! What's gotten into you today? Lyceus is worried, and so am I. That's why I'm here.

XENA

(bristling)

Lyceus sent you?!

MAPHIAS

Good thing he did, too. What were you doing, interfering like that?

XENA

I wasn't "interfering." I was saving a frien-- a girl from being beaten.

MAPHIAS

She was a slave! The way you were acting, you'd think slavery was a crime.

XENA

It is!

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

MAPHIAS

Don't give me that argument again.
It's very generous and noble. But
when'll you learn you've got to go
along to get along. That's how the
world works.

(torn between love and
frustration)

And you can't change the world, Xena...
no matter what you think.

And turning, Maphias exits, leaving Xena shaken as:

LACHESIS (O.S.)

(gently)

He's wrong, you know.

Turning, Xena reacts to see the second Fate standing beside
her, dressed as a village woman, eyeing her kindly.

LACHESIS

One drop of blood, and the world
changes back to what it was.

XENA

No. Things aren't perfect here, but
they weren't perfect in my world,
either. And I won't take my brother's
life. Not again.

*
*
*

LACHESIS

And your friend? What about her
life?

Xena frowns, but remains resolved.

XENA

I can change that. All I have to do is
free her, and Gabrielle will be fine.

LACHESIS

You sound very sure.

(gently warning)

But as you said, things are different
here... people, too.

XENA

(confident)

We're talking about Gabrielle. How
different can she be?

CUT TO:

12 INT. WARLORDS' CASTLE - THE GREAT HALL - NIGHT

12

ON Gabrielle. The sunny face we've come to know is hard and bitter as she serves dinner to Mezentius and Krykus who talk strategy over a large map.

MEZENTIUS

It won't work. They have to know we're coming, or they won't be scared.
(shouting to Gabrielle)
More bread!

Taking a platter of baguettes, Gabrielle moves to Mezentius.

KRYKUS

(patiently)
If the village knows we're coming, they'll mount a defense. That's why it's better to surprise them. Fewer casualties -- higher profits.

MEZENTIUS

Higher profits is good. Especially when you're dividing 'em by three.
(slaps Gabrielle's rear end)
Right, sweet thing?

Hating him, but powerless to protest, Gabrielle deliberately drops a baguette on the floor, moving out of reach to get it.

KRYKUS

Three's a lot, it's true. But combining your muscle with my strategies, and Caputius' deadly arts, we'll more than triple our take.

Bending for the baguette, Gabrielle sees Mezentius' dog and, holding out the bread, lets him lick it a few times before she rises, puts the baguette among the others, and serves it to Mezentius.

MEZENTIUS

(taking baguette)
The three of us'll be a regular force of nature, all right.

To Gabrielle's satisfaction, he takes a big bite of the bread. But as she moves away, he grabs her.

MEZENTIUS

Not so fast, sweet thing.
(as she quails; raising his cup)
More wine.

Relieved, she grabs a flagon, covertly spitting into it as:

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

KRYKUS

Our first move'll be the most important. What's the word on Amphipolis?

MEZENTIUS

Ripe for the picking.
(pinching Gabrielle as she pours his wine)
...like some other things around here... eh, sweet thing?
(back to Krykus)
Guy by the name of Lyceus might give us some trouble, though. According to my spies, he and his sister stood up to Cortese a few years back, 'til they were forced into the hills.

KRYKUS

(thin smile)
If they thought Cortese was bad...
(smug pride)
...imagine what they'll think of us.

The look on Gabrielle's face makes it clear what she thinks as she watches Mezentius drink his wine.

CUT TO:

12AA INT. XENA'S HOME - MAIN ROOM - DAY

12AA

Maphias looks exasperated as he talks to Lyceus.

MAPHIAS

Crazy! Your sister's totally lost her mind, taking on a slave boss. And not just any slave boss. One who works for Mezentius.

Lyceus does his best to hide his proud grin, but:

LYCEUS

Tell you the truth, I'm relieved.

MAPHIAS

Relieved?! She could've been hurt...
(darkly)
...or worse.

LYCEUS

(skeptically)
Xena?

(CONTINUED)

12AA CONTINUED:

12AA

MAPHIAS

That's right. You two practice fighting and swordplay. But these guys are professionals. They hurt people for a living.

LYCEUS

(stung)

We may not get paid to fight. But I'd put us up against the best they've got.

MAPHIAS

Then you'd lose. And for what? To stop someone you don't even know from being legally punished?

LYCEUS

To stop someone... anyone... from being abused, legal or not.

MAPHIAS

The gods deliver me! You're as bad as she is.

LYCEUS

What's so bad about wanting to help someone?

MAPHIAS

Nothing. As long as you don't get hurt in the process.

LYCEUS

So? Xena didn't get hurt.

MAPHIAS

(worried)

Not yet.

And on his concern:

CUT TO:

12A INT. GENERAL STORE - NIGHT

12A

The Storekeeper is closing up, his back to the door, when he HEARS someone enter.

STOREKEEPER

Sorry, I'm closed. You'll have to come back tomor--

Turning, he sees it's Xena.

(CONTINUED)

12A CONTINUED:

12A

STOREKEEPER

Oh, it's you, Xena. Forget something?

XENA

Yes... I need to get...
(looking around for
inspiration)
...one of those.

She points to his rotisserie chickens. Nodding, the Storekeeper moves to get one. Xena crosses with him.

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12A CONTINUED:

12A

XENA
('casually')
Guess you'll be sending those supplies
out to Mezentius tomorrow.

STOREKEEPER
(nods; bitter)
It's like dealing with Ares himself.
But a man's got to make a living,
right?

XENA
Right.
(then; fishing)
Your drivers must leave pretty early...
y'know... to be there by midday...?

STOREKEEPER
Gone by first light, back by dark.
Why? Looking for a job?

XENA
(quick smile)
No thanks. I'll just take the chicken.

STOREKEEPER
(extending it)
There you go. That all you need?
Chicken in hand, Xena smiles, her plan in place.

XENA
Thanks. It's exactly what I need.
And, as we PUSH IN ON the chicken:

MATCH DISSOLVE:

13 INT. XENA'S HOME - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

13

ON the skeletal remains of the chicken which are wisked
away, as we:

PULL BACK to see Xena and Lyceus clearing the table.

XENA
(angry)
You should have seen him, Lyceus.
Petty son of a bloodsucking Bacchae --
that's what all slavers are.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

LYCEUS

You act like that's news. Why do you think I wanted to stop Cortese? Not just to get the town back. Men like that can't go unchallenged. Look what happened to the Amazons.

XENA

(thrown)

Yeah... Guess they're a pretty good example, all right.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

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13 CONTINUED: 2

13

XENA (cont'd)
(fishing)
...Aren't they?

LYCEUS
Sure. No one challenged the warlord
who started things with them and the
centaurs, and now where are they? Dead
mostly, or enslaved by the same scum
who tricked them.
(trying to remember)
What was his name? Kreetin? Kruton?

XENA
(steely voice)
Krykus.

LYCEUS
Right. Another charmer. Seems like
everywhere you look these days, things
are going from bad to worse. And no
one's doing a thing to stop it...
(smiles at her)
...except you.

Caught up in her own guilty thoughts, Xena stares.

XENA
Me?!

LYCEUS
Going up against a slave boss like you
did?
(grins)
Guess our sparring finally paid off,
huh? Next thing y'know, you'll be
taking on Mezentius himself. *

XENA
(growling)
Don't think I wouldn't love it.
(then; reining herself in)
But I'm sure there's another way to go,
another way to make things right.

Seeing his sister's frustration, Lyceus crosses to her.

LYCEUS
Hey, c'mon! It's not your fault the
world's the way it is. And with
Mezentius lording it safely inside his
castle...
(rueful shrug)
What can you do?

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: 3

13

OFF Xena, mental wheels whirling.

*

DISSOLVE TO:

14 EXT. WARLORDS' CASTLE GATE - DAY

14

Two supply wagons approach: the first loaded with food and wine; the second with hay -- as per the Slave Boss' orders.

While the GUARD at the gate stops the first wagon to search it...

...THE SECOND WAGON halts behind it. The inebriated DRIVER sways on his seat, his back to the hay where we can just make out...

...Xena surfacing through the straw to peer covertly out, reacting to see --

-- The Guard at the gate prodding and poking through the first wagon's load... with a three-pronged pitchfork!

Satisfied, the Guard motions the wagon through, then waves for the second, which pulls up beside him.

As the drunken Driver clutches his seat to keep from falling off it...

...The Guard begins searching the hay, jabbing his pitchfork closer and closer to where we saw Xena when, suddenly --

He hits something buried in the straw!

Frowning, the Guard withdraws his pitchfork, reacting as...

...a spurt of red liquid sprays his face!

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

15 EXT. WARLORDS' CASTLE GATE - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 15

Wiping his face, the Guard fumbles through the hay, finally uncovering...

...a large wineskin, punctured in three places, copiously leaking wine.

Glaring, the Guard throws it at the cowering Driver.

GUARD #1

Drunk! Shouldn't be allowed on the road!

Climbing down, the Guard motions the wagon through the gate, then turns to deal with his stained clothes, oblivious to...

...Xena, who clings covertly to the underside of the wagon as it makes its way into the castle.

CUT TO:

16 INT. WARLORDS' CASTLE - KITCHEN - DAY 16

As the Slave Boss oversees their work, Gabrielle and some of the other Slaves store the new supplies, while others tend to the cooking.

Placing a load of logs beside the enormous fireplace where something is simmering over a fire, Gabrielle starts back for some more when --

-- a HAND suddenly darts INTO FRAME, grabs Gabrielle, and jerks her into:

CUT TO:

17 INT. MEAD STORAGE ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 17

Clamping her hand over Gabrielle's mouth, Xena signals for quiet as she pulls her further into the room which is filled with large barrels of mead.

Seeing Gabrielle's wide, frightened eyes, Xena quickly uncovers her mouth, reassuring her:

XENA

Don't worry -- it's me.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

Gabrielle's confused stare reminds Xena that, in this world, the two are strangers.

XENA
I was at the market yesterday,
remember?

GABRIELLE
(eyeing her coldly)
I remember. You wanted to buy me.
What do you want now?

XENA
(thrown by her coldness; but
recovering)
I've come to get you out.
(crossing to check)
Soon as it's clear, we make our move.
And stick close. The timing's
everything.

GABRIELLE
(staring; incredulous)
You're crazy.
(starting out)
The only move I'm making is back to
work.

XENA
(stopping her)
No! Wait --!

GABRIELLE
Why? You know what they do to runaway
slaves? You ever seen it?

And pulling down the shoulder of her blouse, Gabrielle displays... the scars of old lash marks embedded in her skin.

XENA
(devastated)
Oh, Gabrielle... I'm so sorry.

Quickly pulling up her blouse, Gabrielle eyes her narrowly.

GABRIELLE
How do you know my name? Who are you?
Why are you doing all this?

Wracked with guilt, Xena eyes her unhappily, knowing she can't explain.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: 2

17

XENA

My name is Xena. I just want to help you.

GABRIELLE

Right.

She starts out again. Xena stops her.

XENA

Gabrielle, please. Lyceus and I can hide you 'til it's safe.

GABRIELLE

Lyceus? The same Lyceus who stood off Cortese...

(disdain)

...before he ran for the hills, I mean.

XENA

(thrown)

How do you know about that?

GABRIELLE

I heard 'em talking, Mezentius and Krykus. They think I'm like an animal, or a piece of furniture. But I hear... and I remember.

XENA

Mezentius and Krykus? But they're sworn enemies.

GABRIELLE

So's Caputius. But he's gonna join them, too, come tomorrow.

XENA

(appalled)

All three... together?

(then)

Look, we've got to tell my brother what you know. Once those warlords combine, no one's safe.

She starts for the door. But Gabrielle stays put.

GABRIELLE

I told you, I'm not going anywhere.

XENA

You're gonna let these men kill and destroy while you do nothing? Well, I don't buy it. Not from you.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: 3

17

GABRIELLE
(at her wit's end)
How can you say that? You don't even
know me!

XENA
(levelly)
Maybe you don't know yourself.

As Gabrielle holds her gaze:

CUT TO:

17A INT. XENA'S HOME - MAIN ROOM - DAY

17A

Maphias, who's just arrived, looks concerned as he talks
with Lyceus who's perplexed, but not too worried.

MAPHIAS
What do you mean, she's gone?

LYCEUS
(at a loss)
Gone, as in "not here."

MAPHIAS
Since when?

LYCEUS
(shrugs)
Don't know. Since before I got up,
though. I thought maybe you and she...
you know...

He trails off, meaningfully. Maphias gets his drift, but
shakes his head.

MAPHIAS
No. I haven't seen her since
yesterday.

LYCEUS
Oh. Well, maybe she went for a walk,
or a ride.

MAPHIAS
(dubious)
Yeah... maybe.

LYCEUS
Hey, c'mon... You don't think she's in
some sort of trouble, do you?

(CONTINUED)

17A CONTINUED:

17A

MAPHIAS

Let's hope not.

But his face looks doubtful, as we:

CUT TO:

18 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

18

The Slaves are still bustling around, cooking and putting away supplies under the watchful eyes of the Slave Boss as:

Gabrielle emerges from the mead room, carefully rolling a large barrel ahead of her when, suddenly:

SLAVE BOSS (O.S.)

(shouts)

You --! Stop right there!

Freezing, Gabrielle tenses as the Slave Boss strides up.

SLAVE BOSS

What're you doing with this mead?

GABRIELLE

Putting it near the fire to mull.

SLAVE BOSS

(snorts)

Hmph! I take my mead cold and straight.

(to a slave)

Bring me a cup.

Gabrielle looks nervous as the Slave Boss rights the barrel and a Slave runs up with a cup. Taking it, the Slave Boss bends to untap the barrel, holding the cup to the tap where...

...nothing happens.

Reacting, the Slave Boss frowns. But as he straightens to check --

-- Xena bursts out of the barrel, seizes one of its hoops, and jams it down around the corpulent Slave Boss, pinning his arms to his sides as she tells Gabrielle:

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

XENA
Quick -- the fire!

Racing to the fireplace, Gabrielle grabs a broom and beats the fire out, igniting the broom while --

SLAVE BOSS
(struggles; screaming)
Guards! Gu--

Xena corks his mouth with an apple, making him look like the pig he is. Grabbing a meat hook hanging from a pivoting arm, Xena hooks it on the barrel hoop, and crosses to hoist the Slave Boss up in the air.

Tying him off, she grabs a plank that serves as a counter and takes it to the fireplace where, using a log as a fulcrum, she places the plank on it as:

A half-a-dozen GUARDS rush into the kitchen!

Instinctively, Xena looks around for a weapon, grabs a firepoker and hoists it like a spear when she sees...

...Atropos, the third Fate, watching from a nearby table.

Instantly, Xena recalls she cannot shed blood, and drops the poker as the Guards rush toward her.

XENA
(shouting)
Gabrielle -- the broom!

As Gabrielle tosses her the burning broom, Xena sweeps it back and forth, keeping the Guards at bay as she tells Gabrielle:

XENA
Get on the plank in the fireplace.
(as Gabrielle hesitates)
Now!

Responding, Gabrielle obeys and, once she's in place --

-- Xena springs into the air, somersaulting to land squarely on the other end of the plank which --

-- propels Gabrielle straight up the chimney!

Instantly taking her place, Xena uses the flaming broom to burn through the rope suspending the Slave Boss, who CRASHES down on the plank --

-- shooting Xena up the chimney after Gabrielle!

CUT TO:

19 EXT. WARLORDS' CASTLE GATE - ON SUPPLY WAGON (MOVING) - DAY 19

The drunken Driver heads back to Amphipolis, too soused to notice as --

-- Gabrielle comes sailing into the wagon bed, her landing cushioned by some leftover hay. She's followed by --

-- Xena landing nimbly on her feet beside Gabrielle who looks up at her, stunned.

XENA

Beats taking the stairs.

And as the wagon continues moving off, we:

DISSOLVE TO:

20 INT. XENA'S ROOM - NIGHT 20

Overwhelmed, Gabrielle moves about marveling at the clean bed, the curtained window, the wash basin and pitcher, etc. as Xena enters carrying some clothes.

XENA

My mother was about your size, so these ought to fit.

She hands the outfit to Gabrielle who takes it gingerly.

GABRIELLE

This was your mother's? It's beautiful.

XENA

So was she.
(then; starting out)
I'll leave you to change.

GABRIELLE

(stopping her)
Wait --
(as Xena turns back)
Why are you doing this?
(forestalling her)
I know what you said about wanting to help me. But if there's one thing I've learned, it's that everyone's out for themselves. So, what's in it for you? Guess you need a house slave pretty bad, huh?

XENA

No.
(off Gabrielle's skepticism)
But you're right. There is a reason I'm doing this.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

XENA (cont'd)
(as Gabrielle looks
vindicated)

The truth is, you remind me of my best
friend.

Not at all what she expected to hear, Gabrielle stares.

GABRIELLE

I do?

XENA

(nods)

I look at you, and see the purest,
kindest, person I've ever known.
Someone who's full of wonder, and
stories, and never gives up on
anything... or anyone.

GABRIELLE

(wryly wistful)

Then you better look again. 'Cause
that's not me.

XENA

But it could be.

Then turning, she exits... leaving Gabrielle to ponder the
possibility, as we:

CUT TO:

21 INT. XENA'S HOME - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

21

Lyceus peers out the window as Xena joins him.

LYCEUS

I don't like it. Maphias should've
been back by now.

XENA

Maybe he's having trouble convincing
the others.

LYCEUS

I have to admit, the thought of three
warlords banding together to make one
army does sound pretty unbelievable.

XENA

I'm sure that's what they're counting
on, the element of surprise.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

LYCEUS

Yeah, well, they're the ones who'll be surprised when we counter their attack with one of our own.

He crosses to a map on the table.

LYCEUS

What I thought is that Maphias and I will lead the attack, while you and the others arm yourselves and do whatever you can...

(indicating on map)

...here and here. What do you think?

XENA

(hesitates; then, reluctantly)

Lyceus, I can't.

LYCEUS

(misunderstands)

Sure, you can. Don't underestimate yourself. You're nearly as strong as I am, and better with a sword. In fact, if I didn't need you to organize the others, I'd have you riding beside me.

XENA

No, I mean --

GABRIELLE (O.S.)

-- Xena?

Turning, the siblings see Gabrielle hesitating in the doorway of Xena's room. Dressed in becoming clothes, she looks lovely... a fact not lost on Lyceus who stares.

GABRIELLE

Sorry, am I interrupting?

LYCEUS

No! Not at all! Please...

(crossing to usher her)

Won't you sit down?

Unused to such chivalry, Gabrielle eyes him, mistrustful. But Lyceus' admiration is so guileless, Gabrielle allows herself to trust it -- trust him -- and for the first time since she was captured and enslaved...

...Gabrielle smiles... and Lyceus loses his heart... all of which Xena watches warmly.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: 2

21

GABRIELLE

(sitting)

Thank you.

(gazing around)

All this... It's like a dream, or a story -- too good to be real.

LYCEUS

(his eyes never leaving her face)

I know what you mean.

Watching Gabrielle beginning to unfold, Xena allows herself a small satisfied smile, when --

-- A furtive KNOCK sounds at the door.

Reacting, Gabrielle starts up in a panic.

LYCEUS

Don't worry. You're safe here. It's just Maphias.

(crossing to door)

You met him earlier, remember?

He opens the door, and Maphias enters, looking tense.

LYCEUS

Did you bring the others?

Before he can answer, Maphias is pushed aside by --

-- A troop of Mezentius' Guards who quickly deploy, as:

MAPHIAS

It's all right. They just want the slave. I made a deal: we give her back, they leave us alone, no problems.

HEAD GUARD

(to his men; summarily)

Take 'em.

Instantly, the Guards seize Xena, Lyceus, and Gabrielle, holding them at swordpoint, as:

MAPHIAS

(reacting)

Hey --! What're you doing? We have a deal!

HEAD GUARD

Deal's changed.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: 3

21

MAPHIAS
(realizing he's been had)
Why you lying piece of --

He charges the Head Guard, but is clubbed from behind by another Guard and drops like a stone.

Taking advantage of the distraction, Lyceus grabs a couple of swords off two nearby Guards!

LYCEUS
(tossing a sword to Xena)
Xena, here -- catch!

But to his amazement, Xena, though clearly torn, makes no move to get it, and the sword clatters to the floor.

The Guards quickly disarm Lyceus who's too shocked to resist as he stares at Xena incomprehensibly. But as he's being dragged away --

XENA
(imploring his understanding)
Lyceus --!

Wrenching around, he gives her nothing as he glares in silent fury and is hustled out, while we:

STAY ON XENA

devastated as the Guards drag her and Gabrielle out, too.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

22 INT. WARLORDS' CASTLE - DUNGEON - DAY

22

Flickering torchlight reveals the macabre sight of several hanging cages, looking like human cocoons, suspended at various heights from a ceiling beam with pulleys and ropes.

As CAMERA PANS the cages, we see most contain the decaying remains of their latest tenants, until we find and HOLD ON...

...Gabrielle, scrunched awkwardly in a cocoon-like cage, passed out from total exhaustion.

Moving on, CAMERA DESCENDS to find Lyceus, cramped in a similar cage a little lower than Gabrielle's. Using the edge of his amulet, he's trying to cut the cage's leather lashings.

XENA (O.S.)
(quietly)
Try working against the grain.

As Lyceus reacts, CAMERA RISES to find and HOLD ON...

...Xena, hunched in a small cage that hangs highest of all.

Below her, Lyceus hesitates, then takes her advice, though his tone is like ice.

LYCEUS
I'm surprised you care one way or another, seeing how you sold us out.

XENA
Aren't you confusing me with Maphias?

LYCEUS
At least Maphias thought he was protecting us. You just gave up. We could've taken those guards. But you didn't even try! Why not?

XENA
You wouldn't believe me if I told you.

LYCEUS
Well, try me. 'Cause, right now, I don't know what to believe. I thought we felt the same way about these monsters.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

XENA

We do!

LYCEUS

Then why didn't you fight? I saw you, Xena. You wanted to. Why didn't you pick up the sword?!

XENA

(snapping)

Because I --

(stops; then)

Because I was afraid.

There is a BEAT as Lyceus absorbs this. Then:

LYCEUS

(gently)

We're all afraid to die, Xena. But, for me, some things are worth dying for: you... our friends...

(hesitates; then, confessing)

...Gabrielle. These men have got to be stopped.

XENA

I know. And given time, I --

LYCEUS

Given time, they'll be unstoppable.

(earnestly)

Maybe it's a lost cause. But I'd rather die fighting these bastards, than live with myself if I don't.

And lapsing back into silence, he resumes sawing the lashings of his cage while, above him...

...Xena hangs suspended on the horns of her dilemma.

CUT TO:

23 EXT. WARLORDS' CASTLE GATE - DAY

23

A crowd is gathered, MURMURING with anticipation as the Guards swing open the gate to admit...

Caputius who rides at the head of a gang of Hooded Men that walk behind him.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

In the noise and excitement, no one notices an unknown Hooded Man who quickly emerges from some bushes near the gate and joins the others, passing with them into the castle as the gate swings shut behind him.

CUT TO:

24 INT. WARLORDS' CASTLE - DUNGEON - DAY

24

Suspended in her cage, Xena hears the sound of FURTIVE CRYING and, following it, looks out to see...

...Gabrielle hanging in a cage not far below her.

XENA

Gabrielle..?

The CRYING STOPS. But there's no answer.

XENA

(hesitates; then)

I'm sorry. If it wasn't for me, none of this would've happened.

GABRIELLE

You're right. If it wasn't for you, I'd never have known how it felt to be free again. And now I don't know whether to thank you... or hate you for it.

*

XENA

(thrown)

Hate me?

GABRIELLE

At least before, I'd forgotten what a real life was. Then you showed me. You gave me hope, made me think that maybe it wasn't too late, that I could still be happy. And now...

*
*
*

She stops, tears welling despite her efforts to stop them.

*

XENA

(devastated)

I never meant it to be like this. I only wanted to help.

*

GABRIELLE

(ironic)

Yeah... because I reminded you of your friend.

*
*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

XENA

No. Because you are my friend.

*
*

As Gabrielle absorbs this --

*

GUARD #2 (O.S.)

(calling as he unlocks door)

All right, you three -- look alive so's
I can tell you from the others.

Opening the door, he enters, followed by one of Caputius'
Hooded Men.

GUARD #2

Which one does Caputius want?

The Hooded Man looks up and indicates Lyceus. But as the
Guard nods and heads for the rope holding up Lyceus' cage...

...the Hooded Man draws a knife and starts after him as:

GUARD #2

(turns back)

Think you could help me with --

Seeing the Hooded Man coming at him with a knife, the Guard
lashes out with his foot, kicking the knife and...

...sending it tumbling end-over-end high into the air
where --

-- Xena's hand suddenly darts through the bars of her cage
to grab it!

Below, the Guard and Hooded Man are trading blows while --

-- above them, Xena shifts back and forth in her cage,
starting it swinging side-to-side as --

-- the fight on the ground continues while --

Xena's momentum increases 'til her cage is swinging high
enough for her to reach the rope suspending it from the
pulley and cut it.

Set loose, the cage falls to the floor where it breaks open,
freeing Xena as --

-- the Hooded Man finishes off the Guard.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: 2

24

Turning, he faces Xena who stands, knife in hand. Then, ripping off his hood, the man reveals himself to be:

XENA

Maphias!

MAPHIAS

(with difficulty)

I made a big mistake last night. But I figure, better late than never...

(eyeing her apologetically)

...right?

XENA

(smiles; apology accepted)

Right.

LYCEUS

(having overheard)

Hey, you gonna keep us hanging around all day?

Reacting, Xena and Maphias cross to lower Lyceus and Gabrielle, releasing them from their cages.

LYCEUS

(warm; to Maphias)

'Bout time you showed up.

MAPHIAS

Took me a while to wake up...

(ruefully)

...but I have.

The two hold a look. Then Lyceus clasps his shoulder and moves off to retrieve the Guard's weapons as Maphias turns to Xena and Gabrielle.

MAPHIAS

Okay, here's the way it stands. All three warlords are meeting in the great hall. So, if we hurry, we can be outta here and gone before they even know we're missing. Any questions?

GABRIELLE

Just one. Where's Lyceus?

Looking around, they see the door is open... and Lyceus is gone. OFF Xena's alarmed concern:

CUT TO:

25 INT. WARLORDS' CASTLE - THE GREAT HALL - DAY

25

The higher echelon of the warlords' men sit at two communal tables that run up to the dais where the warlords themselves -- Krykus, Mezentius, and Caputius -- sit at the head of the noisy room. Rising, Mezentius pounds the table for order.

MEZENTIUS

Alright, you men, stow it. I'm making a toast.

(hoists his wine as they settle)

To the fiercest fighting force the world will ever know.

The crowd SHOUTS and WHISTLES agreement. But as they drink:

LYCEUS (O.S.)

Thanks for the tribute.

Reacting, everyone looks to see Lyceus, sword in hand.

LYCEUS

Now I'll earn it.

MEZENTIUS

(scowls)

We'll see about that.

He motions a man to attack Lyceus, and a large thug obeys, charging Lyceus who deftly dispatches him as --

-- another thug rises and throws an axe which we TRACK as it hurtles toward Lyceus when, suddenly, it's DEFLECTED by --

-- Xena, standing unarmed, flanked by Maphias and Gabrielle.

LYCEUS

(grins to see them)

Welcome to the party.

As brother and sister hold a look...

KRYKUS

(furious; shouts to men)

What are you waiting for? Kill them!

And the fight is on!

Weaponless, Xena quickly disarms a thug who charges her with his sword.

XENA

(tossing sword)

Maphias -- catch!

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

He does, dispatching a couple more thugs with it, while --
Lyceus fights his way up a table toward the dais.

Seeing him, Xena leaps onto the other table, making it a two-pronged advance as, still weaponless, she kicks a couple of grasping thugs aside.

XENA

Where are your table manners?

Meanwhile, Gabrielle crawls along the floor, armed with a wooden baton that she CRACKS against shins and knees with HOWLING success. One thug drops his sword as he hobbles off in pain. For a heartbeat, Gabrielle hesitates -- then she quickly picks up the sword as --

Maphias joins the advance to the dais, fighting his way up the middle between the two tables, while --

-- Xena CONKS the heads of two thugs together, kicking their bodies off the table as they collapse.

XENA

Elbows off the table.

Meanwhile, Mezentius is creeping off the dais, trying to sneak away when, suddenly --

-- Gabrielle rises up, and thrusts the sword she holds straight into his gut!

GABRIELLE

(face twisted with hate)

There's your 'sweet thing.'

Hearing her, Xena turns to Gabrielle, appalled to see her savage fury as Gabrielle gives the sword a brutal twist before she pulls it out.

Mind reeling, Xena's oblivious to a charging thug, when --

-- Lyceus jumps in, dispatches the thug, and calls to Xena:

LYCEUS

Get a sword!

XENA

(still dazed)

No!

Lyceus repels another thug.

LYCEUS

Arm yourself!

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 2

25

XENA
(torn apart)
I can't!

Thinking she's scared, he holds her gaze, his heart full.

LYCEUS
We all gotta die.

Then grinning, he tosses her his sword which she instinctively catches as he sweeps up another one. Still Xena hesitates, when suddenly she hears:

GABRIELLE (O.S.)
(raging)
Die! Die!!

And turning, Xena sees Gabrielle slash a wounded thug to death! Reacting, Xena looks from Gabrielle to Lyceus who urges her:

LYCEUS
C'mon! Go out fighting!

For an instant, brother and sister lock eyes: his filled with loving encouragement; hers filled with a last good-bye.

Then the two remaining warlords attack. As Lyceus deals with Krykus, Xena turns to fight Caputius, briefly fending him off 'til she sees her chance to run him through.

Withdrawing her sword, she sees the blood on its blade, and we go TIGHT ON XENA's anguished face. Then:

GABRIELLE'S VOICE
(shouts)
Xena -- behind you!

PULL BACK and WIDEN to reveal we are:

CUT TO:

26 EXT. TEMPLE OF THE FATES - DAY

26

In a replay of the Teaser, Xena (back in warrior clothes) whirls around, lifting her sword as --

-- a hooded, axe-wielding Marauder runs straight at her!

Only this time, instead of skewering him, Xena lowers her sword, and flips him to the ground where his hood falls off, revealing... the face of the same 15-year-old Boy from the Teaser.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

Sword at his throat, Xena eyes him a BEAT, then:

XENA

You've got a second chance. Swear you won't waste it by killing again.

BOY

(scared; but earnest)
I won't kill, I swear it. Never again.

She holds his gaze another BEAT, then steps back and tosses down her sword.

XENA

Get up then.
(as the Boy hesitates)

Go.

Rising, the Boy runs off, never looking back. As Xena watches him go, Gabrielle (also in her usual clothes) joins her, looking after the Boy, then noticing:

GABRIELLE

Hey, he dropped something.

Reaching down, she picks up... a rite of manhood amulet.

GABRIELLE

It's his virilis token.

She hands it to Xena who eyes it a bittersweet moment, reminded of Lyceus. Then, reaching out, Xena hugs Gabrielle who's delighted, but nonplussed as Xena releases her.

GABRIELLE

What was that for?

XENA

(shrugs)
Just for being you.

GABRIELLE

(more puzzled than ever)
Uh-huh.
(then)
You okay?

Looking down at the amulet, Xena closes her hand around it, surprised to realize:

XENA

Yeah... I am.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: 2

26

GABRIELLE
(dubious)
Really? You don't seem yourself.

XENA
You're wrong.
(retrieving her sword)
I'm more myself than ever.

And draping a companionable arm around the baffled
Gabrielle, the two move off, as we:

FADE OUT.

THE END

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