

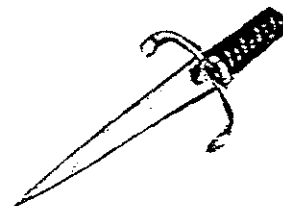
XENA

WARRIOR PRINCESS

Ides of March

BY

R.J. STEWART



Season 4
Episode #22

Prod. #V0624

XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

"Ides of March"

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Revised Pages: 3-3A, 17-17A, 25-27, 29

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Prod. #V0624

XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

"Ides of March"

CAST LIST

XENA
GABRIELLE

CALLISTO
CAESAR
BRUTUS
ELI
AMARICE
NAILSCOT
SPEARMAN
WARLORD
SOLDIER
JAILER

(EE-lie)
(am-uh-REECE)
(NAIL-scott)

Referred to in Dialog:

APENNINES
MOUNT AMARO

(a-pen-INES)
(a-MAR-owe)

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XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

"Ides of March"

SET LIST

INTERIORS:

CAESAR'S HOUSE - BEDROOM	SCENE # 2	
- CORRIDOR	SCENE # 8	
- OFFICE	SCENES # 5,9,10	
PRISON	SCENES #15,18,22A,24,26,29	*

EXTERIORS:

HELL	SCENES # 1,46	
DOCK	SCENES # 3,4	
HILL	SCENE # 6	
MEADOW	SCENE # 7	
ALLEY	SCENE #11	
PRISON COMPOUND	SCENES #12,20	
CRUCIFIXION ROW	SCENES #21,33,35,37,39,41,43,45,48	
PRISON COMPOUND YARD	SCENES #13,23,25	*
COUNTRY ROAD #2	SCENE #19	
COUNTRYSIDE	SCENE #16	
ROAD	SCENE #17	
FORUM	SCENES #22,28,32,34,36,38,40,42,44	
FOREST	SCENE #27	
SKY	SCENE #47	

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XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

"Ides of March"

CHRONOLOGY

DAY 1	SCENE # 1
NIGHT 1	SCENE # 2
DAY 2	SCENES # 3 - 5
DAY 3	SCENES # 6 - 11
DAY 4	SCENES #12 - 16
DAY 5	SCENES #17 - 25
MARCH 15TH	SCENES #26 - 48

XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

"Ides of March"

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. HELL - DAY

1

Bosch ("Garden of Delights: Hell") meets Bruegel ("Triumph of Death"). We PAN OVER a bizarre and nightmarish Hell-scape. ON A DESOLATE PLAIN we see the following: A wagon loaded with skulls being pulled by a HORSE. Sitting on the horse is a SKELETON. In an open coffin a MAN WRAPPED IN LINEN lies squirming in agony as a DOG feeds on his intestines. A FAT MAN hangs from a ledge where his feet are dangling in flames. He's SHRIEKING in pain. A HANDSOME MAN sits on a love seat with a BLONDE WOMAN whose head is turned from us. The Handsome Man makes an advance. The Blonde Woman turns around. She has the face of a wild boar. The Handsome Man SCREAMS in horror. We CONTINUE TO PAN. We reach a Woman sitting naked on her haunches looking quite mad, holding a sword. We GO CLOSER ON THIS WOMAN. IT'S CALLISTO. She's scanning the horizon. She spots what she's looking for.

GABRIELLE

stands a few strides away with a superior smile on her lips.

GABRIELLE

Look who's suffering now, Callisto.

Callisto charges Gabrielle and swings the sword at her.

DIFFERENT ANGLE

Gabrielle is gone and Callisto stands alone on the plain.

XENA'S VOICE

And you thought you were headed for oblivion.

Callisto spins around and sees XENA grinning at her.

XENA

This place makes Tartarus look like a day at the beach. How long are you here for? Eternity? That's gotta sting.

Callisto charges the gloating Xena and strikes at her with her sword. Suddenly, Xena is gone. Callisto drops to her knees and WAILS IN AGONY.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

A bulky man, NAILSCOT, reaches out and grabs her. He tries to lick her ear. She gives him an elbow and knocks him down.

CALLISTO
Get over it, will you?

Nailscot breaks into tears.

NAILSCOT
I'm doomed to be obsessed for eternity with a woman who despises me. What a nightmare?

CALLISTO
Coming right back at you.

NAILSCOT
After what I told Him about you, you'd think you'd give me more respect.

CALLISTO
Him? You mean Him?

Nailscot nods.

NAILSCOT
I've been here a very long while. He's come to trust me. I have His ear from time to time. I told Him your desire.

This gets Callisto's interest.

CALLISTO
He's going to let me go back?

NAILSCOT
He shares with you an interest in Xena. She's someone He thought He had in His grasp, but He's not so sure now.

CALLISTO
You mean to tell me those maudlin missions she goes on are going to land her in Paradise?

NAILSCOT
Probably not Paradise. Most likely she'll be reborn up the Karmic ladder.

CALLISTO
She cooks my family, destroys my life and I end up in Hell while she gets another shot.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: 2

1

Xena suddenly appears by Callisto.

XENA

You got to love the irony.

Callisto strikes at her again but Xena has disappeared. Nailscot hasn't seen Xena at all. Callisto turns to Nailscot.

CALLISTO

If He wants her to end up down here,
tell Him I'm the woman for that job.

NAILSCOT

You must not physically attack her
in any way. Your victory must be a
spiritual one. She's found a road to
redemption. The Way of the Warrior.
You'll need to get her off that path.
It won't be easy. He'll give you
plenty of powers, temptations to offer
her, things like that. But the rest
will be up to you.

*
*
*

CALLISTO

When do I set out?

Nailscot strokes her arm lasciviously.

NAILSCOT

I could speed up the process if you
were a little friendlier.

Xena appears behind Nailscot.

XENA

You have a suitor. How sweet.

Callisto snarls at the taunting Xena, who disappears. Callisto goes to kick Nailscot in the groin but stops as she notices a look of joyous anticipation on his face.

CALLISTO

No. You like that. No ecstasy for
you. We're in Hell, remember?

Nailscot is very disappointed.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: 3

1

CALLISTO

Now when do I leave?

NAILSCOT

Well, first you'll have to be briefed as to what's happened to Xena since you came here. And you have to agree to take care of one other thing for Him.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: 3

1

CALLISTO

What's that?

NAILSCOT

Do you know the man they call Caesar?

CUT TO:

2 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

2

Two people are in bed making love. The sheets and blankets cover appropriate body parts as the moonlight illuminates their passion just enough for us to know we're watching a well-built man and a shapely woman devour each other. The man shifts his position. His face moves into the moonlight. It's CAESAR. They continue to ravage each other for awhile as the woman maneuvers her way on top. Caesar looks up at:

XENA

She looks down at Caesar like a hawk ready to dive for the kill. She begins her descent, her lips slightly parted as she closes in on Caesar's mouth. Suddenly, she sits up, pulls a knife out from under a blanket, raises it in the air and brings it down violently toward Caesar's chest.

ON CAESAR

He sits up with a jerk to fend off the blow and finds himself sitting alone in bed. He's just woken up from a nightmare. He rubs his face with great anguish.

CALLISTO'S VOICE

That Xena can really mess up a dream,
can't she?

Caesar leaps out of bed, grabs a sword off a chair and points it at Callisto who is leaning casually on his bed post.

CAESAR

Who are you? How do you know my
dreams?

CALLISTO

I know everything about your life,
Caesar, what it's been and what it can
be. I'm here to help you get all you
ever desired. It is through me that
you'll finally fulfil your destiny.
I can give you ultimate power and
free you from your greatest torment.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

CAESAR

Xena.

CALLISTO

Yes. Xena. I can't begin to tell you how much we have in common in that way.

As Caesar studies Callisto's seductive smile, we:

CUT TO:

3 EXT. DOCK - DAY

3

Xena, Gabrielle and AMARICE walk along the dock.

AMARICE

(to Gabrielle)

Let me guess. This Eli guy is the one who taught you all that "love your enemy" stuff. Hey, Xena, why do we need to go see a preacher when there are battles to fight, wrongs to right, butts to kick?

XENA

Because Gabrielle wants to see him and so that means we go see him.

She walks up to the DOCK CAPTAIN.

XENA

When's the next ship to Athens?

Before the Dock Captain can answer, Xena suddenly raises her hands and catches a spear a moment before it connects with her nose. She then swings the spear around to clobber a SWORDSMAN rushing her back. THREE OTHER SWORDSMEN AND TWO SPEARMEN charge her. Amarice draws her sword and attacks two of the Swordsmen. Gabrielle takes her trusty net and waits for an opportunity to use it. Xena does a handstand on one of the Swordsmen's heads and from this position lands kicks to the other Swordsmen. Amarice is fighting for her life; she's taken on two pretty tough costumers, but she doesn't back down. She keeps coming. Gabrielle tosses her net onto the two Spearmen and gives it a tug. The two Spearmen fall to the ground. Xena is still in her handstand position on top of the Swordsman's head. She kicks the other Swordsman unconscious and then she lets go of her handstand position. Her head descends with a CRACK on the head of the last Swordsman. He goes down like a ton of bricks. Amarice is on the ropes, these guys are good. Xena passes behind them, slams one in the back of the head with her sword butt and rabbit punches the other one. He goes down for the count.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

AMARICE

What did you do that for? I had them.

ON THE TWO SPEARMEN

as they struggle to get up. Xena walks up, puts the pinch on one of them and knocks the other one unconscious.

XENA

What do you want with me?

SPEARMAN

Caesar's reward. Six million dinars.

Xena takes off the pinch and knocks him unconscious.

GABRIELLE

Six million dinars!

AMARICE

That's quite a temptation.

(off Gabrielle's look)

Not for me. I meant for every killer in Europe.

XENA

So it's come to this. Caesar wants me out of the way so bad, he's willing to deplete his fortune to do it.

GABRIELLE

Are you sure you want to go to Athens?

AMARICE

It'll be swarming with assassins.

XENA

No. Not Athens.

GABRIELLE

Good.

XENA

I'm headed for Rome.

GABRIELLE

Not good.

XENA

It's time to put an end to this feud between Caesar and me.

AMARICE

You're not going to try to make peace with that piece of slime, are you?

(CONTINUED)

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3 CONTINUED: 2

3

XENA
No. I'm going to kill him.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4 EXT. DOCK - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

4

Gabrielle is worried about Xena's pronouncement.
Amarice is excited.

GABRIELLE

Xena, you can't just walk into the
middle of Rome and kill Caesar.

AMARICE

It's an opportunity to kill a lot of
Romans. I say we do it.

XENA

We are doing nothing. I'm going
to Rome. You're not.
(to Gabrielle)
I can't take you there.

AMARICE

Hey, wait a minute.

XENA

Not after that vision.

AMARICE

You get to go where the fighting is and
I'm stuck with this peace loving --
What vision?

XENA

I had a vision that Gabrielle and I
would die at the hands of Romans. It's
bad enough that we can run into Romans
anywhere, but for us to actually go
into Rome together...

GABRIELLE

What if I asked you not to do this?

XENA

Gabrielle, he's an evil man who's
trying to kill me. I'm going to take
him out or die trying. It's my Way.

Gabrielle nods.

GABRIELLE

Be careful, Xena.

AMARICE

Was I in this vision?

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

XENA
No.

AMARICE
Then I should come.

XENA
You're staying with Gabrielle.

AMARICE
As her bodyguard?

XENA
As her friend. Amarice, listen to Gabrielle, you could learn a lot from her.

(to Gabrielle)
Promise me you won't follow.

Gabrielle looks at her for a moment and then nods.

GABRIELLE
I promise.

They hug. As WE CLOSE IN on Gabrielle's concerned look, we:

CUT TO:

5 INT. CAESAR'S OFFICE - DAY

5

Caesar sits at a table in his luxurious home. He's playing with a goblet of wine. TWO SOLDIERS enter with a mangy-looking WARLORD. The Warlord lays a cloth-covered round object on the table in front of Caesar. Caesar reaches out and unwraps the cloth. Underneath is the severed head of a man wearing lipstick.

WARLORD
That's Xena's head.

Caesar covers up the head.

CAESAR
(to his Soldiers)
Kill him.

The Soldiers start to drag the Warlord out.

CAESAR
(re: the head)
Take Xena with you.

One of the Soldiers grabs the head and they exit.
Caesar sits by himself, sipping his wine.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

A hand reaches out and caresses his hair. Caesar turns to see:

CALLISTO

who pours herself a glass of wine.

CAESAR

I did as you said. So far I've had eight impostors try to claim the reward. Xena will defeat any mercenary who attacks her.

CALLISTO

Of course. The reward was just to get her attention. She'll come to you. You need to be ready.

CAESAR

I've made plans for that, of course.

CALLISTO

Oh, really? Well, all the same, I suggest you get yourself one more card to play.

Off Caesar's questioning look, we:

CUT TO:

6 EXT. HILL - DAY

6

Gabrielle and Amarice stand at the back of a CROWD OF PEOPLE. They're looking at:

ELI

who stands on the hill, looking down at a crippled man, MAZIN, who lies on a pallet in front of him. A CROWD surrounds him. Eli lays his hands on Mazin and smiles into his face.

ELI

Your heart is pure, Mazin.
(looking heavenward)
Abba, make Mazin's body as whole
as his spirit.

Mazin looks down at his legs. He begins to move them. Pretty soon he gets to his feet. The People GASP. Mazin and Eli embrace. Eli spots Gabrielle.

ELI

Gabrielle.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

He gently steps away from Mazin and walks through the Crowd.

GABRIELLE

Hello, Eli.

ELI

I'm so happy to see you.

GABRIELLE

As soon as I heard you were teaching
in Greece I set out to find you.

ELI

Where's Xena?

GABRIELLE

She had some work to do. This is
my friend, Amarice.

ELI

Welcome, Amarice.

AMARICE

What would you do if someone threatened
your mother? You wouldn't fight to
defend her?

GABRIELLE

Amarice and I have some philosophical
differences.

ELI

(amused)

I see.

CUT TO:

7 EXT. MEADOW - DAY

7

Gabrielle, Eli, Amarice and some of Eli's followers sit in
this field, eating fruit.

GABRIELLE

Can you teach me to heal?

ELI

I can teach you to love, and if you
love with all your heart and soul, if
you become love itself, you can heal.

GABRIELLE

Why is love the key?

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

ELI

Selfless, pure love is the only expression of divine perfection we have in this world. It's the greatest power one can possess.

AMARICE

Oh, come on. The only real power comes at the point of a sword.

Suddenly, she jumps to her feet, ready for action.

AMARICE

Did you hear that?

GABRIELLE

What?

AMARICE

Boots.

Amarice takes a step toward the SOUND. Suddenly, seven swords poke out of the bushes and surround her neck. She freezes. Gabrielle leaps to her feet, only to find herself and Eli surrounded by FIVE ROMAN SWORDSMEN. Eli is grabbed and shoved toward Amarice.

ELI

(to Amarice)

And if the other side has more swords?

AMARICE

Hey, if you can "love" your way out of this, be my guest.

ON A ROMAN OFFICER

He makes his way through the Soldiers. Gabrielle spots him.

GABRIELLE

Brutus!

BRUTUS

Hello, Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE

You're doing Caesar's bidding again, Brutus?

BRUTUS

Caesar believes Xena will try to kill him. He has to protect himself.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: 2

7

GABRIELLE

With me. Alright. That I understand,
but let these people go.

BRUTUS

My orders are to arrest you, Eli and
his followers. Caesar promised me that
no one will be hurt. You'll be held as
a hostage against Xena killing Caesar.

Brutus eyes Gabrielle for a moment.

BRUTUS

Our friends are at war, Gabrielle.
I'm sorry that brings us into
conflict, but it's inevitable.

CUT TO:

8 INT. CAESAR'S HOUSE - CORRIDOR - DAY

8

Caesar walks down the corridor reading from a scroll. He
passes TWO HEAVILY-ARMED GUARDS. WE PAN OVER THE FACES OF
THE GUARDS. WE STOP ON ONE OF THEM. It's XENA in Roman
attire. She eyes Caesar carefully as he passes.

ON CAESAR

as he enters a room.

ON XENA

She begins to walk toward the room Caesar entered.
The other Guard gives her a strange look.

XENA

At ease.

She brings an elbow up into his jaw. As he slides down the
wall, Xena grabs him and shoves him into an alcove, out of
sight. Xena proceeds toward the doorway. She reaches it
and peers in at:

CAESAR'S OFFICE - XENA'S POV

SEVERAL GUARDS line the walls. Caesar is standing at his
desk. The chair to the desk has IT'S BACK TO US. He picks
up a LAUREL WREATH that lies on the desk.

ON XENA

She pulls out her chakram. WE HEAR FOOTSTEPS COMING.
Xena hides the chakram and stands at attention as TEN GUARDS
march down the corridor past her.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

When they're gone, she pulls the chakram again and looks into the room.

CAESAR'S OFFICE - XENA'S POV

Caesar is nowhere to be seen.

ON XENA

She darts her eyes around the room, concerned that she lost him. Then she spots something.

ON THE CHAIR

Popping over the back of the desk chair is the laurel wreath sitting on top of someone's head.

ON XENA

She readies her chakram.

XENA

(to herself)

Let's make this short and sweet.

She throws the chakram.

9 INT. CAESAR'S OFFICE - DAY

9

The chakram bounces off a few walls and then heads for chair. It disappears from sight behind the back of the chair. There's A MOMENT'S PAUSE and then Callisto's smiling face appears from behind the chairback and grins back at Xena. Callisto is holding the chakram and wears the laurel wreath.

CALLISTO

Brings back some memories, doesn't it, Xena?

ON XENA'S stunned reation, we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

10 INT. CAESAR'S OFFICE - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

10

Xena stands stunned, looking at Callisto. The Guards react to the throwing of the chakram and charge Xena. Xena is slow to react, her eyes are still riveted on Callisto. In a moment she's surrounded by Guards. All hell breaks loose as Callisto watches, smiling.

ON CAESAR

as he bursts into the room from another door and lays into Xena who is fighting for her life now, totally surrounded by ten Guards and Caesar. Suddenly, Xena leaps in the air, runs across their heads and dives through a window.

CUT TO:

11 EXT. ALLEY - DAY

11

Xena dashes into the alley and regroups.

CALLISTO'S VOICE

That was a real shocker, wasn't it?

Xena spins to see Callisto leaning against a wall, spinning the chakram on her finger. Xena charges her. When Xena strikes at her, Callisto moves with SUPER NATURAL QUICKNESS to behind Xena.

CALLISTO

Don't bother. You already did all the harm you can to me. Thanks, by the way.

XENA

For what?

CALLISTO

I wanted to cease existing and you did your best to help but it didn't take. They wouldn't let me off the hook that easy.

XENA

Who's they?

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

CALLISTO

Whoever it is that does the final judging. It may not be a "they" exactly, maybe it's a "he," or an "it," or even a "she"... Now wouldn't that be a hoot? Whoever it is, they sent me to a place for the wicked that makes Tartarus look like the Elysian Fields. They call it Hell.

XENA

It couldn't have happened to a nicer girl. What are you doing here?

CALLISTO

Well, the One who runs things down where I come from, He's very interested in what happens in this life. He thinks Caesar could be valuable in doing His work here on earth.

XENA

I'm sure he does.

CALLISTO

And of course, He also figures you may be an obstacle to giving Caesar the ultimate power.

XENA

He figures right. I won't be the only one. A lot of people will oppose Caesar becoming emperor.

CALLISTO

Ah, you know about the emperor thing.

XENA

The laurel wreath kind of gave it away. My guess is he's going to announce it when the Senate reconvenes on the Ides of March.

CALLISTO

Oh, you are the clever one, aren't you. Yes, some people will be unhappy. But everyone has their price. Even the honorable Brutus. Caesar's going to give him Gaul. That'll keep him smiling. It's you that I'm worried about. I'm here to make you an offer.

XENA

Forget it.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: 2

11

CALLISTO

Afraid you'll be tempted?

XENA

What could you say that would tempt me?

CALLISTO

You'd be surprised. I'll give you a little hint. Gabrielle is in Roman hands as we speak.

XENA

That's a lie.

CALLISTO

My Lord gave me a thorough briefing as to what's happened to you and your little friend since the last time I saw you. I know everything about India and Eli.

Xena reacts.

CALLISTO

Ah, I see I was right to have Caesar send Brutus to find Eli. I guess he found Gabrielle, too. I recommended he arrest the whole peace-loving bunch. They'll be a problem sooner or later. You're not the only clever girl, Xena. Your little friend is on her way to a prison compound somewhere in the Apennines right now. Now, about my offer...

*
*
*
*

XENA

There's nothing you could possibly say that would interest me, Callisto.

Xena turns and walks away. Callisto calls out after her:

*

CALLISTO

I was afraid you'd be like this. We'll see if later on you aren't a little more open.

*

CUT TO:

12 EXT. PRISON COMPOUND - DAY

12

Gabrielle, Eli, Amarice and the rest of Eli's disciples are led in chains toward this well-guarded compound. Ideally, the mountains from the crucifixion vision are in the background. Brutus leads the group. Gabrielle is transfixed by something:

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: 12

CRUCIFIED MEN

A row of Crucified Men lines the path they're taking.

ON BRUTUS

and his Prisoners. They enter the front gate into:

13 EXT. PRISON COMPOUND YARD - DAY 13

Brutus stops as he notices something:

CROSSES

being built by WORKMEN.

ON BRUTUS

He looks concerned as he shoots a look toward Gabrielle.

CUT TO:

14 OMITTED 14*

15 INT. PRISON - DAY

15

Brutus enters and approaches THE JAILER. Gabrielle and the others are brought in. Amarice looks angry; Eli looks strangely at peace.

BRUTUS

Jailer. These prisoners are to be held here.

JAILER

Yes, I know. We've been waiting for them.

BRUTUS

Those crosses. Who are they for?

JAILER

You never can have enough crosses. We're expecting a boatload of thieves and murderers any day.

Brutus eyes the Centurion carefully. One of the SOLDIERS sits next to Amarice on a coil of rope. The butt of his sword is facing her. She looks around. Nobody's looking. She grabs the sword and leaps to her feet. She strikes out at another Soldier and gashes his arm. Another Soldier slams her legs with his spear hilt. She goes down. A moment later, four Soldiers move toward her with intent to kill. They're about to strike when:

GABRIELLE

throws her body over Amarice's. The Soldiers look comfortable with killing Gabrielle.

BRUTUS

No!!

He pushes the Soldiers away.

BRUTUS

Don't harm Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE

Of course not. I'm still useful.

BRUTUS

Get up.

GABRIELLE

No. I won't let go of her till you promise you'll pardon her for what she just did. You promised no one would be hurt.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

BRUTUS

She attacked one of my men.

GABRIELLE

Brutus, I remember a time when mercy
was shown to you.

Brutus reflects on this for a moment, then SIGHS.

BRUTUS

(to the Soldiers)

Put up your swords.

The Soldiers reluctantly sheath their weapons. Gabrielle
slowly gets off Amarice. Brutus points at Amarice.

BRUTUS

(to the Soldiers)

Chain her to the prophet.

AMARICE

Oh, please, can't you just break my
legs?

The Soldiers start chaining Amarice to Eli.

ELI

Nice move.

AMARICE

If I had some backup, maybe I could
have pulled it off.

ELI

What exactly was your plan?

AMARICE

I hadn't totally figured that out
but I'm sure I would have thought
of something.

ELI

No doubt.

AMARICE

Thanks, Gabrielle.

ELI

That Peace Lover just saved your life.

Amarice looks at Eli who still wears that serene smile.

AMARICE

You think I won't pop you one just
because you're a man of peace?

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: 2

15

ELI
No. You won't do it because you're
wearing manacles and leg irons.

ON GABRIELLE

Brutus approaches her. The SOUND OF HAMMERING can be heard
as the Soldiers work on the crosses.

GABRIELLE
You really think they're building
crosses for a boatload of murderers?

BRUTUS
Caesar has never lied to me.

GABRIELLE
There's a first time for everything.

Brutus exits.

ON ELI AND AMARICE

ELI
Amarice, listen, I --

AMARICE
You're not going to start talking
about love and forgiveness, are you?
(to one of the Soldiers)
Hey, do me a favor. If he starts
preaching, knock me unconscious.

Eli can't resist a little CHUCKLE.

CUT TO:

16 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

16

Xena gallops across a field, heading north.

CUT TO:

17 EXT. ROAD - DAY

17

Brutus rides along the road. He passes under an overhanging
branch. Xena swings down and kicks him off his horse. He
lands with a THUMP. She lands straddling him, her sword
dangling casually at her side. Brutus looks up at her.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

XENA

Hello, Brutus. I have an offer for you. Tell me where Gabrielle is and I'll give you some information that will save your life. Deal?

Brutus seems unconvinced.

XENA

You don't trust me. I'm hurt. Tell you what, if you promise to tell me where Gabrielle is, I'll go first.

BRUTUS

And you'd trust me?

XENA

Well, everyone says Brutus is an honorable man. Do I have your promise?

BRUTUS

Yes.

Xena extends her arm and pulls Brutus to his feet.

XENA

Beware the Ides of March, Brutus.

BRUTUS

Why the Ides of March?

XENA

On that day Caesar's going to declare himself emperor.

BRUTUS

I don't believe it. Why would he do that?

XENA

Greed, lust for power, an ego the size of the Mediterranean. Of course, he plans to get rid of anyone who would object.

BRUTUS

What do you mean?

XENA

He's too smart to kill you in Rome, he knows you have support there. But I have firsthand knowledge that he's been in contact with assassins in Gaul. Now, your turn, Brutus.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: 2

17

Brutus is deep in thought.

XENA
Brutus, I'm waiting.

BRUTUS
I put her in a prison compound at the
foot of Mount Amaro.

Xena walks over to her horse that grazes a few feet away.
She mounts it.

BRUTUS
I don't believe what you said about
Caesar.

XENA
It's your funeral. Have fun in Gaul.

She turns the horse around, then stops.

XENA
Tell me something, Brutus.
Is there snow on Amaro?

CLIP - "ADVENTURES IN THE SIN TRADE II" - A FLASH OF
XENA FROM THE CRUCIFIXION VISION. WE SEE LOTS OF SNOW.

RESUME SCENE

as Xena awaits the answer to her question.

BRUTUS
Yes. It was snowing when I left.

She nods and spurs the horse toward her destiny.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

18 INT. PRISON - DAY

18

Eli and Gabrielle sit opposite each other; Amarice is still chained to Eli. Eli and Gabrielle are meditating. Gabrielle opens her eyes and looks at Eli. Eli senses she's looking at him and opens his eyes.

GABRIELLE

I did it.

AMARICE

Did what? You were sitting there like a couple of bumps on a log. What could you have done?

ELI

She did nothing.

GABRIELLE

That's right. Nothing.

AMARICE

I'm so impressed. We're going to be nailed to crosses tomorrow morning and you two are bragging about doing nothing.

ELI

In order to become a perfect vessel for love, one has to cease all activity, not only physical but mental as well. When you've reached that state of emptiness, you are ready at last to be filled with love.

AMARICE

Oh, that makes a lot of sense.

ELI

You're very close to mastering the Way of Love, Gabrielle.

AMARICE

Just in time, too. You'll be able to love the people who nail you down, Gabrielle.

CUT TO:

19 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD #2 - DAY

19

Xena still gallops north.

*

CUT TO:

20 EXT. PRISON COMPOUND - DAY

20

Xena crawls to the top of a hill to look down at the compound.

XENA'S POV - SOLDIERS

The Soldiers are cutting down bodies from the crosses and throwing them onto a wagon.

ON XENA

She peers down at the compound, making her plans.
She crawls along the hill toward a clump of trees.

CUT TO:

21 EXT. CRUCIFIXION ROW - DAY

21

Soldiers are tossing a couple of bodies onto the wagon.

IN THE WAGON

Xena hides between two dead bodies. She looks at the face of the one next to her. IT'S CALLISTO.

CALLISTO

I just keep coming back. In that way,
I'm more dependable than your chakram.

*
*

(CONTINUED)

19 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD #2 - DAY

19

Xena still gallops north.

CUT TO:

20 EXT. PRISON COMPOUND - DAY

20

Xena crawls to the top of a hill to look down at the compound.

XENA'S POV - SOLDIERS

The Soldiers are cutting down bodies from the crosses and throwing them onto a wagon.

ON XENA

She peers down at the compound, making her plans.
Callisto crawls up next to her.

CALLISTO

How you going to get out of this one?
You've got to penetrate a heavily-manned Roman compound. That's the easy part. Then you have to fight your way out through two Roman legions with a passel of pacifists who won't lift a finger to help. All of this done right under the mountains you saw in the vision of your death.

Xena shoots her a look.

CALLISTO

My Lord sees everything. Xena, you *don't* have to go ahead with this. I can arrange for you and Gabrielle and all her peaceful little friends to just walk out of there. No one gets hurt and that vision ends up being just a silly nightmare. You and Gabrielle live happily ever after.

XENA

What's the catch?

CALLISTO

No catch... Well... there is one little thing. You have to lay down your sword and join Gabrielle in a fulfilling life of loving kindness.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

 XENA
 Right.

*
*

Xena crawls along the hill toward a clump of trees.

*

CUT TO:

21 EXT. CRUCIFIXION ROW - DAY

21

Soldiers are tossing a couple of bodies onto the wagon.

IN THE WAGON

Xena hides between two dead bodies. She looks at the face
of the one next to her. IT'S CALLISTO.

 CALLISTO
I just keep coming back. In that way,
I'm more dependable than your chakram.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

XENA

I'm not interested in your offer,
Callisto.

CALLISTO

That's because you haven't heard
it all yet. I'm offering you pure
serenity.

*
*

XENA

Go on.

CALLISTO

There's a reason you can't allow you
and your partner peace. Your guilt.
It motivates everything you do. It
torments you. Invite me into your
soul and I can purge you of your guilt,
cleansing you of that shame that drives
you, I can give you peace if you let
me. What will it be? Serenity and
happiness or another ride in this wagon
with your friend Gabrielle. Remember
your vision, Xena.

*

*

XENA

You want to tempt me off my Way by
offering me peace.

*

CALLISTO

In a nutshell.

XENA

I've got bad news for you. That guilt
that you're depending on, I've put that
behind me. I know now what I have to
do - be the best Warrior I can be. To
redeem myself, I must battle evil with
a sword. And that's what I plan to do
no matter what the consequences.

Callisto examines the determined look on Xena's face.

CALLISTO

(frustrated)

Damn.

CUT TO:

22 EXT. FORUM - DAY

22

Caesar is chatting with some PEOPLE. Brutus approaches.
Caesar spots him.

CAESAR

Brutus! Welcome.

Brutus and Caesar embrace.

CAESAR

You deposited our little hostage
in a safe place?

BRUTUS

Yes.

CAESAR

Perfect.

BRUTUS

They were building crosses when I was
there.

CAESAR

Of course they were. You can't have a
crucifixion without crosses.

BRUTUS

You're crucifying Gabrielle?

CAESAR

All of them.

BRUTUS

You told me Gabrielle would be safe -
you were only going to use her as a
distraction.

CAESAR

Well, what could distract Xena more
than her little friend's execution?
Tomorrow, on the Ides of March, the
very day I most need Xena distracted.

BRUTUS

What happens on the Ides of March?

CAESAR

Brutus, I'm going to make an
announcement that will change history.
How do the troops up there look?

BRUTUS

Excellent.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

CAESAR

Good. Because in a few days, I want you to take command of one of those legions and march into Gaul.

Brutus reacts to this with a flinch. He recalls what Xena said to him.

BRUTUS

Why Gaul?

CAESAR

I can't tell you now, Brutus. But trust me, I've got it all planned out.

He spots someone else.

CAESAR

Cassius, how are you? You're looking a bit lean.

He moves away, leaving Brutus alone with his thoughts.

CUT TO:

22A INT. PRISON - DAY

22A

Gabrielle, Amarice and Eli sit listening to the HAMMERS BEATING NAILS INTO THE CROSSES. Amarice is already scared.

AMARICE

I always thought I'd die in battle, not hung on a cross like a slab of beef. Do you think Xena even knows we're here? *

*

Gabrielle places a comforting hand on her shoulder.

GABRIELLE

She knows, I'm sure of it. *

*

23 EXT. PRISON COMPOUND YARD - DAY

23

The body wagon rolls into the yard. Xena slips out from the back of the wagon and heads for the prison. She pauses at the side of the building and is about to go on when Callisto steps in front of her.

CALLISTO

All right, let's keep it simple. I keep the vision from coming true and get your friend out of here and, in return, you leave Caesar alone.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

XENA
Go to Hell, Callisto.

She walks past Callisto.

CALLISTO
(angry)
All right, Xena. You had your chance.

She lets out a XENA-LIKE CRY.

CALLISTO
It wasn't as good as yours, but
they'll hear it just the same.

ON ROMAN SOLDIERS

running toward Xena and Callisto.

ON XENA

She runs toward the prison entrance. She knocks TWO GUARDS
aside, kicks open the door and bursts into:

24 INT. PRISON - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

24

Xena knocks out the Jailer and turns to Gabrielle.

XENA
Let's go.

She spots the chains on Eli and Amarice. She grabs the
keys off the Jailer's unconscious body, unlocks the locks
and frees them. Amarice immediately picks up the Jailer's
sword.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

AMARICE

Am I glad to see you. I thought
I was going to take your place
in that vision.

*
*
*
*

XENA

That vision isn't going to happen.
Move!

*
*
*

25 EXT. PRISON COMPOUND YARD - DAY

25

There're a LOT OF ROMANS out here. The prison door opens
and Xena explodes out, knocking Romans back.

ON GABRIELLE

as she and Eli lead the others out. Amarice brings up the
rear.

ON XENA

She battles toward the gate.

ON GABRIELLE AND ELI

They usher the slower, weaker members of Eli's following.

ON AMARICE

She's kicking some butt herself.

THE GATE

Xena smashes through the opposition and reaches the gate.
She kicks it open and leaps aside.

XENA

Go.

Eli leads the others out. Amarice covers their exit.
Gabrielle pauses to look back at Xena who's still kicking
Roman butt.

XENA

Gabrielle, go!! I'll catch up.

Gabrielle leaves.

ON ROMANS

rushing toward Xena from all directions.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

ON CALLISTO

She pulls out Xena's chakram.

MORE ROMANS

are joining the fray, driving Xena back against a wall.

ON CALLISTO

as she throws the chakram.

THE CHAKRAM

bounces off the wall behind Xena and smashes into Xena's back.

ON XENA

as she reacts to the chakram hitting her spine. Her eyes widen in shock; her body quivers; she pitches forward.

ON THE CHAKRAM

It lands on the ground, broken in two.

ON XENA

She falls to the ground, her spine shattered, her legs useless. She tries to get up. It's no use.

A Soldier stands over Xena with his sword. He raises it in the air to finish her off. He starts to bring the sword down.

ON GABRIELLE

as she leaps between the Soldier and Xena. She's holding a sword and she shoves it into the Soldier's heart.

ON CALLISTO

CALLISTO

Interesting.

ON GABRIELLE

Two other Soldiers close in on her. She fights like a demon, killing another Soldier. Then the other.

GABRIELLE

Xena, let's go.

Xena struggles to get up; she can't.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 2

25

XENA
Go, Gabrielle. It's my spine.
It's shattered.

Gabrielle looks in horror at Xena. *

ON ROMAN SOLDIERS *

Dozens of them close in for the kill. *

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

26 INT. PRISON - DAY - BLACK SCREEN

26

Light floods in. We're Xena's POV as she forces her eyes open. It's all blurry for a moment, then we focus on:

GABRIELLE - XENA'S POV

She's smiling warmly down at Xena. She has a few bumps and bruises. *

*

GABRIELLE

Hi. It's all right. Everyone got away.

XENA

Really.

The Jailer steps up behind Gabrielle.

JAILER

It won't be long now.

He walks away.

DIFFERENT ANGLE

Gabrielle is cradling Xena's head. Xena is heavily manacled. Many ROMAN GUARDS surround her. There is the SOUND OF HAMMERS hitting wood coming from outside. Xena tries to get up. She can't. She looks at her legs.

XENA

Then this is it.

GABRIELLE

The woman who threw the chakram... she looked like --

XENA

Callisto. It was her. She came for me.

CUT TO:

27 EXT. FOREST - DAY

27

Amarice leads the other escaped Prisoners through the forest.

CUT TO:

28 EXT. FORUM - DAY

28

Brutus stands talking with a GROUP OF SENATORS. There's a lean and hungry look to this bunch. There's a COMMOTION coming from somewhere else in the Forum. Brutus turns to see:

CAESAR

entering the Forum. He's surrounded by WORSHIPFUL ADMIRERS. Some of them are kissing his hand.

ON BRUTUS

He looks displeased. He turns to one of the Senators.

BRUTUS

He thinks he's a god.

The pensive Senator nods.

ON CAESAR

as he continues his arrogant promenade through the Forum.

CUT TO:

29 INT. PRISON - DAY

29

Xena lies on the floor. Gabrielle sits next to her.

XENA

You know what I wish?

GABRIELLE

What?

XENA

That I sat down one time and just read your scrolls. I told myself I was going to make time to do that one day, but I never got around to it.

GABRIELLE

You would have liked them.

XENA

I'm sure I would have.

Xena turns to Gabrielle.

XENA

I'm sorry.

GABRIELLE

For what?

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

XENA

Everything. When I hurt you, when I lied to you, when I didn't listen to you, when I took you for granted and most of all, when I tore off some of your scroll to use in the bushes.

Gabrielle smiles through her tears. She picks up Xena's hand and kisses it.

GABRIELLE

Thank you.

XENA

For what?

GABRIELLE

Everything. But most of all for seeing me.

XENA

Seeing you?

GABRIELLE

Before I met you I felt invisible. No one saw me or experienced me for who I was. But you did that. You saw me, the deepest part of me, down where the meanings are. The saddest thing about this world is that some people go a lifetime without having that, without being seen, experienced. You've saved me from many things Xena, but what makes me love you the most is that you saved me from loneliness. That made everything else worth it.

XENA

You left the Way of Love. It's my fault.

GABRIELLE

No. It was my choice. And I don't regret it at all. I don't think I was strong enough for the Way of Love. But the Way of Friendship, that I can do.

CALLISTO'S VOICE

How are you with the Way of Pain?

ON CALLISTO AND TEN GUARDS

They've entered the prison. They're obviously ready to take Xena and Gabrielle to their deaths.

CUT TO:

30 EXT. FORUM - DAY

30

Caesar stands by a pillar, speaking to his Admirers.

CAESAR

I am like the North Star, steady while
others waver.

ON BRUTUS

as he listens to Caesar.

BRUTUS

(to the Senators)
He's become a very dangerous man.

The Senators nod.

ON CAESAR

as he makes his way toward Brutus and the Senators.

CUT TO:

31 EXT. PRISON COMPOUND YARD - DAY

31

Xena is dragged out of the prison by two Guards. Gabrielle follows, escorted by Callisto and Guards through the yard. Xena spots something:

CROSSES - XENA'S POV

Two empty crosses lay outside the compound gate.

ON XENA, GABRIELLE AND CALLISTO

Xena stares at the crosses.

CALLISTO

Crosses.

A snowflake falls. Callisto catches it on her tongue.

CALLISTO

And it's starting to snow. Just in
time.

Gabrielle and Xena look at each other.

CUT TO:

32 EXT. FORUM - DAY

32

Caesar approaches Brutus and embraces him. He notices Brutus looks uncomfortable with this attention.

CAESAR
Brutus, what's the matter?

BRUTUS
Do you have anything to tell me?

CAESAR
Tell you? What do you mean?

BRUTUS
About this announcement you're going to make today.

CAESAR
Oh, that. Well, at first you probably won't like it, but I plan to persuade you. Are you ready for your trip to Gaul?

BRUTUS
I'll be ready.

CAESAR
Good.

CUT TO:

33 EXT. CRUCIFIXION ROW - DAY

33

Xena and Gabrielle are being tied to the crosses. Callisto kneels next to Xena. Xena gives Callisto a triumphant look.

CALLISTO
Don't give me that confident look. You're about to die like a slave, and drag your friend with you. That's alright with me.

XENA
Your Lord may not feel the same way. He sent you on a mission, didn't he?

CALLISTO
Making Caesar dictator was His main concern. Once Caesar rules, it'll be easy to make him the agent of my Lord on earth. While you lie here helpless, Caesar is declaring himself emperor.

CUT TO:

34 EXT. FORUM - DAY

34

Caesar stands in the midst of a CHEERING Crowd.

CAESAR

Romans, I have an important
announcement to make.

The Crowd QUIETS DOWN. Brutus turns to the Senators and
nods. The Senators return the nod and walk toward Caesar.

CUT TO:

35 EXT. CRUCIFIXION ROW - DAY

35

The Guards finish lashing Xena and Gabrielle to the crosses.

CUT TO:

36 EXT. FORUM - DAY

36

The Senators close in on Caesar.

CAESAR

To quell civil unrest, I have decided
to make an important change in our
government.

CUT TO:

37 EXT. CRUCIFIXION ROW - DAY

37

Xena looks toward Gabrielle. Gabrielle looks toward Xena.

XENA

You're the best thing in my life,
Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE

I love you, Xena.

CUT TO:

38 EXT. FORUM - DAY

38

The Senators are closing in behind Caesar.

CAESAR

I must supply the leadership so
desperately needed.

Knives appear in the Senators' hands.

CUT TO:

