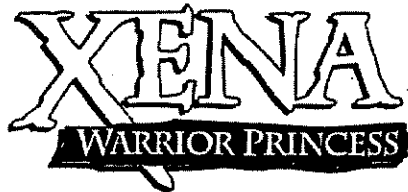


**"AMPHIPOLIS UNDER SIEGE"**

**by  
Chris Black**

**SEASON 5  
EPISODE #14**

Sam Raimi, Executive Producer  
Rob Tapert, Executive Producer  
R.J. Stewart, Executive Producer



"Amphipolis Under Siege"  
production #V0919  
episode 16

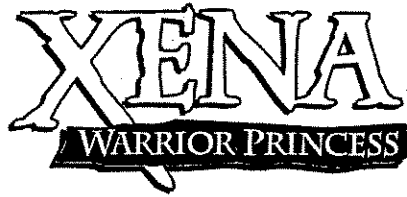
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Shooting Draft  
Full Script

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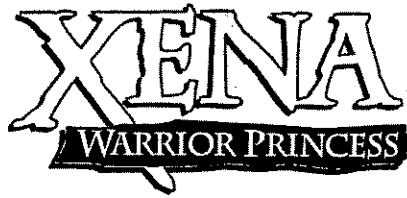
"Amphipolis Under Siege"  
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Cast List

**Xena**  
**Gabrielle**

Ares  
Athena  
Cyrene  
Ilainus  
Border Guard  
Villager  
Villager #2  
Infantry Commander  
~~Wounded Teenager~~ \*

Eve (non-speaking)  
Border Guards (non-speaking)  
Athena's Troops (non-speaking)  
Villagers (non-speaking)  
Wounded Villager (non-speaking)  
Injured Villagers (non-speaking)  
Little Girl (non-speaking) \*  
Ilainus' Lieutenant (non-speaking) \*



"Amphipolis Under Siege"  
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Set List

Interiors:

Cyrene's Tavern	5, 17, 19 *
Cyrene's Tavern - Back Room	18
Caverns	9, 11, 15
Another Tunnel	12, 14
Temple of Ares	21, 22, 25, 26

Scenes:

Exteriors:

Road	1
Road to Amphipolis	2
Amphipolis	3
Amphipolis - Trenches	6, 20, 23, 27 *
Athena's Encampment	4, 8, 24
Outside Amphipolis	7, 10, 13, 16
Ilainus' Position	28

Scenes:

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. ROAD - DAY

1

Ten or so BORDER GUARDS man a small fortification on a remote, wooded road. One of the guards notices the bushes rustling by the roadside and gestures for his fellow guards to grab their weapons. As the Guard steps cautiously forward...

BORDER GUARD

Who goes there? Step forward.

A BUFF BABE IN REVEALING SILVER ARMOR

Steps from the bushes. Her name is ILAINUS. The Border Guard leers as he gives her the once-over.

BORDER GUARD

Well, well. You know this is Prince Damron's road. You'll have to pay the toll.

ILAINUS

Toll? Oh, dear me. I seem to be a bit short at the moment.

BORDER GUARD

That's all right. I'm sure we can work something out.

ILAINUS

(a coy smile)

Oh, I'm sure we can.

A squad of a half dozen female ARCHERS leaps from the woods behind Ilainus. They're all dressed in the same silver armor as their leader and they launch a fusillade of ARROWS at the border guards. The precisely aimed arrows strike near the guards, scattering them without hitting any of them.

Ilainus singles out the first Border Guard and FIRES an arrow into his shoulder, spinning him to the ground. Ilainus and her archers restring their ornate bows and unleash a second flight of arrows on the retreating guards. But...

XENA'S CHAKRAM (MOVING)

WHIZZES through the air, SLICING the shafts of the arrows in flight. Follow the chakram as it returns to...

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

XENA

as she flips into the fight, yipping her battle cry. Cradling EVE in one arm, she catches her chakram with the other.

XENA

Careful. Lady with a baby.

Ilainus redirects her archers toward Xena. As they notch fresh arrows...

XENA

Gabrielle!

And she's there. With a no-look behind-the-back pass, Xena flips Eve to GABRIELLE.

ON EVE (MOVING)

as the baby flies through the air, gurgling happily.

GABRIELLE

catches Eve easily just as the archers let fly another volley of arrows. Xena pulls her sword and -- PING! PING! PING! -- deftly parries the incoming arrows.

Before the archers can reload, Xena charges their line and starts taking them out, hand-to-hand. Ilainus draws her own sword and crosses blades with Xena. She goes blow for blow with Xena, and the two seem equally matched. Finally, Xena spins and swings her blade, just nicking Ilainus' forehead and drawing BLOOD.

Ilainus steps back and touches her head, surprised by the smear of blood on her hand. Xena twirls her sword, ready to continue, but Ilainus WHISTLES a signal and her archers retreat into the woods. Ilainus follows and, as quickly as it started, the battle is over. Xena and Gabrielle move to the wounded Border Guard. Xena jabs him sharply with a therapeutic pinch.

XENA

That should ease the pain.

The Border Guard nods with relief.

GABRIELLE

Who were those archers? Why did they attack you?

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (2)

1

BORDER GUARD

...doesn't make sense. Who would want  
to seize the road to Amphipolis?

At the mention of Amphipolis, Xena and Gabrielle exchange a  
surprised glance. Xena's expression darkens.

XENA

ARES!

ARES MATERIALIZES.

ARES

Xena. You have a change of heart? My  
offer still stands. I can protect  
you...and your child. At great  
personal risk, I might add--

Xena grabs Ares by the tunic and pulls him face to face.

XENA

And if I decline? You ransack my  
hometown? Hold my mother captive  
until I agree?

\*

ARES

You've got the wrong god. Don't  
forget, there is another who deals in  
mortal blood.

\*

\*

(a smile)

You should know her, Xena. She's  
shined her favor on you often enough.

\*

Xena turns to the fallen Border Guard and roughly pulls the  
arrow from his shoulder. The Guard yelps in pain.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (3)

1

XENA

Sorry.

As Xena carefully examines the arrow:

XENA

(softly)

Athena.

ARES

Like all the gods, she knows your  
bundle of joy portents the demise of  
the Olympians.

ANGLE ON THE ARROWHEAD

which we now see is ornately carved. The design on the  
arrowhead is the head of Medusa, crowned with snakes.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

The same Medusa insignia engraved on a golden breastplate.  
WIDEN TO REVEAL, we are...

2 EXT. ROAD TO AMPHIPOLIS - DAY

2

The Medusa breastplate is part of the golden armor adorning  
ATHENA, goddess of war and wisdom. Noble and formidable, her  
sharp green eyes miss nothing as she rides her war horse at  
the head of a column of well-armed TROOPS. She doesn't turn  
as Ilainus gallops up next to her.

ATHENA

Report.

ILAINUS

It is done. We used your arrows, as  
you ordered. And we spared the border  
guards to tell Xena we're heading for  
Amphipolis.

(CONTINUED)



2 CONTINUED:

2

Athena nods and turns to look at Ilainus. She frowns as she sees the cut on Ilainus' forehead. Athena reins her horse to a stop and the column halts behind her.

ATHENA

Don't tell me one of those toll  
collectors laid a weapon on you.

ILAINUS

Xena was there.

Athena reaches out and gently caresses Ilainus' face. A soft GOLDEN LIGHT emanates from her hand and Ilainus' WOUND HEALS. Athena's hand lingers on Ilainus' cheek.

\*

ATHENA

Be careful. You're a fine warrior.  
A rival even to Xena. But you're  
mortal and the most dangerous animal  
on earth is a mother protecting her  
young.

\*

\*

\*

\*

Athena stares off into the distance.

ATHENA'S POV

From their vantage point, we see the village of Amphipolis in the distance, thin COLUMNS OF SMOKE rising from cooking fires.

ON ATHENA

as she looks down at the distant village.

ATHENA

It will take the power of the gods to  
separate Xena from her daughter.

\*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (2)

2

ATHENA (cont'd)

(intense)

In Zeus' name, I will kill the child  
myself.

Off Athena's hard expression, we:

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

3 EXT. AMPHIPOLIS - DAY

3

N.D. VILLAGERS go about their business as Xena and Gabrielle ride into town on their horses (Xena carrying Eve in her sling). As they dismount...

XENA

Mother!

Xena's mother CYRENE hurries out of her tavern. Her face lights up as she sees Xena and Eve.

CYRENE

(chiding)

Well, it's about time you brought my new granddaughter for a visit.

XENA

There'll be time for a family reunion later. Right now we need to get you to safety--

Cyrene lifts Eve out of the sling.

CYRENE

(nuzzling Eve)

Who's your nana? Who's your nana?

Eve gurgles with delight, obviously loving her "nana." Off Xena's exasperated expression...

4 EXT. ATHENA'S ENCAMPMENT - DAY

4

A bustling, well-oiled military camp. TROOPS move to and fro purposefully as Athena and Ilainus pore over a detailed map of their positions.

ILAINUS

We allowed Xena to enter the village before cutting off the road behind her. Amphipolis is completely surrounded.

Athena rests a hand on Ilainus' shoulder.

ATHENA

Excellent. You know my mind better than I do, Ilainus.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

ARES (O.S.)

An army is a terrible thing to waste.

Athena and Ilainus turn to see Ares strolling through the camp. He gazes admiringly at the soldiers moving briskly about.

ARES

Legions from Rome standing beside Cleopatra's royal guard. Knights from Britannia. And, of course, Athena's own elite archers.

Ares saunters up to Ilainus and runs his finger along her jaw. She pulls her head away.

ARES

The best of the best. I'm all tingly. You could take Rome itself with these all-stars.

Ares looks down at Athena's battle map.

ARES

(pointing to map)

Attack here and here. Now. Before Xena has a chance to rally her defenses.

ILAINUS

Athena doesn't need your help.

ARES

Nor any man's, hm?

Ilainus tenses. Athena holds up her hand. Then...

ATHENA

Why are you here, brother?

ARES

My survival is at stake, too. The child must die.

ATHENA

Strange. Rumor has it that you made Xena an offer to spare the child. If she gave you one of your own.

ILAINUS

(smiling)

Rumor has it she turned you down.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (2)

4

Ares dismisses this with a wave, but Athena moves to face him.

ATHENA

This isn't one of your little games to try and make Xena your plaything. Zeus is dead, Ares. Our father. The prophecy is coming true and Xena's child is the key.

ARES

Then why not attack now?

ATHENA

The people of Amphipolis are loyal to me. Give them time and the town will be opened to us. Without the need to spill blood.

ARES

Perhaps.

(darkly)

But where's the fun in that?

Ares VANISHES, leaving Athena to stare pensively down at the map of Amphipolis. As we PUSH IN ON the map of the besieged village, we:

CUT TO:

5 INT. CYRENE'S TAVERN - DAY

5

The tavern is jammed with nervous VILLAGERS. Xena and Gabrielle stand with Cyrene, who still holds Eve.

CYRENE

But Athena has always been our protector. Why would she want to hurt this precious child?

GABRIELLE

The gods believe Eve is fulfilling a prophecy that will end their rule.

CYRENE

You mean the Twilight? I thought it was just a myth.

XENA

That's what Olympus wants you to believe.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

CYRENE

If it's true...how can you protect Eve  
from the gods?

XENA

Still working on that.  
(whistles loudly)  
All right! Listen up!

The hubbub dies down enough for Xena to be heard.

XENA

The last thing I wanted was to bring  
an army down on your heads. But I'm  
not sacrificing my daughter. Not for  
the sake of a selfish pack of gods who  
don't give a damn about the human  
suffering they cause.

The villagers murmur amongst themselves, exchanging looks.  
Finally, one VILLAGER speaks up.

VILLAGER

We've heard stories, Xena. About Eli  
and his teachings. How his god raised  
you from the dead. That the age of  
the Olympian gods is over. Is it true?

\*  
\*  
\*

GABRIELLE

It's true. The gods ruled us with  
fear, but Eli fought them with love.  
I was with him when...  
(deeply moved)  
...when Ares struck him down.

An awestruck murmur crackles like electricity through the  
villagers. We hear ad-libbed bits: "Eli." "They were with  
Eli." "The stories are true." etc.

XENA

Now you know what's at stake for the  
gods. And you know they'll do  
anything to save themselves.

VILLAGER

We're not soldiers, Xena. But if your  
daughter is the one who will bring  
about Eli's word, we'll do what we can  
to protect her.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

A rumble of agreement rolls through the crowd, and Xena nods her thanks. Then a GOLDEN LIGHT is cast over the Xena's face. The villagers react as...

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (3)

5

ATHENA

MATERIALIZES in the center of the tavern. She is wreathed in GODLIKE ENERGY that dances and gleams off her golden armor.

ATHENA

Xena.

Even Xena seems pretty impressed by Athena's flashy entrance.

XENA

Athena. I would say it's an honor.  
But considering you're here to kill my  
kid...

She draws her sword and moves between Athena and Cyrene and Eve.

XENA

...we'll skip the formalities.

ATHENA

I am not unsympathetic, Xena, but  
consider the consequences of your  
actions. You would deprive these  
people of their gods? Their faith?  
For the life of one child?

Before Xena can answer, Cyrene steps forward, clutching Eve tightly.

CYRENE

Hasn't this village given up enough of  
its children? I've already lost a  
son. And a grandson I never even met.  
Well, I won't give up this child. Not  
even to the gods themselves.

ATHENA

(to the room)

And all of you? Are you that eager to  
die for this child?

The villagers exchange nervous looks. Then Cyrene begins to SING. In a clear, strong voice she belts out the rousing anthem of Amphipolis. Athena shakes her head.

ATHENA

I don't want any of you to suffer.  
Give me the child and you will receive  
my blessing.

(CONTINUED)



5 CONTINUED: (4)

5

Xena joins in the song, and Gabrielle. Athena needs to raise her voice to be heard.

ATHENA

The armies of Athena lay siege to this town. You think you can fight them with a song?

Some of the villagers join in the song, their voices rising together.

ATHENA

I've protected you for years. Watched over you. This is how you repay me?

\*

More and more villagers join in, the voices booming as one, nearly drowning out Athena.

ATHENA

So be it. You have chosen your fate.  
(to Xena)  
To be honest, it'll be a pleasure beating you in battle. You are the best a mortal can be. I'll enjoy the challenge.

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

Athena VANISHES in a GOLDEN FLASH. Xena looks admiringly at her mother as she sheaths her sword and takes Eve from Cyrene's arms. As she clings to her child, we:

CUT TO:

A KEG OF RUM

A hand reaches in and LIGHTS a liquor-soaked FUSE leading to the keg. POOF! REVEAL WE ARE...

6 EXT. AMPHIPOLIS - TRENCHES - LATER THAT DAY

6

Gabrielle has lit the fuse. The keg sits in the sling of a jury-rigged catapult. The VILLAGERS are hunkered down in a series of trenches they've dug around the village. They're armed with an array of primitive weapons: pitchforks, hunting bows, pikes, a few swords. Xena is nowhere to be seen. Gabrielle looks up and down the line of villagers manning the defenses. A tense beat, then...

GABRIELLE

FIRE!

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

As the catapult is triggered, we:

CUT TO:

7 EXT. OUTSIDE AMPHIPOLIS - DAY

7

Athena's TROOPS have set up a perimeter outside the village. These guys are tough-looking and well-armed -- as far from the ill-equipped villagers they're facing as you can imagine. An INFANTRY COMMANDER watching Amphipolis looks up and sees:

THE FIERY RUM KEG soaring toward the troops. He shouts to his men:

INFANTRY COMMANDER

Defenses now!

The troops instantly snap to and use their shields to assemble a solid umbrella over their heads. The incoming firebomb hits the shields and EXPLODES, spraying FLAMING RUM all over the troops. Their shields protect most of them, but a few of the soldiers roll away, beating at their FIERY CLOTHING.

MORE MAKESHIFT MOLOTOV COCKTAILS

rain down on their position, causing chaos, as...

GABRIELLE LEADS A CHARGE OF VILLAGERS

up out of the trenches. Gabrielle slashes and strikes with her sais, dropping soldiers left and right, all the while exhorting her own TROOPS to hold fast.

8 EXT. ATHENA'S ENCAMPMENT - DAY

8

Athena and Ilainus study their battle map. Ilainus points to a position on the map.

ILAINUS

They're trying to break out here.

ATHENA

A frontal assault into one of our best units? That doesn't sound like a move Xena would make.

ILAINUS

It could be a diversion.

ATHENA

I considered that. But Gabrielle is leading the attack. Xena would never waste her second-in-command on a suicidal feint.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

ILAINUS

If Xena commands half the loyalty you do, my goddess, Gabrielle would surely lay down her life to ensure Xena's escape.

ATHENA

I don't doubt Gabrielle's willingness to die. Only Xena's willingness to lose her.

Athena stares intently at the map.

ATHENA

(a realization)

But what if Xena has no intention of losing her?

Ilainus gives Athena a quizzical look.

ATHENA

Remember, Ilainus, a great commander always looks beyond what their opponent is doing on the battlefield to see if there is a deeper strategy.

Athena waves her hand over the map. The map SHIMMERS and turns TRANSLUCENT. We are now looking through the map at a three-dimensional LABYRINTH OF TUNNELS that have appeared beneath Amphipolis. Athena smiles at Ilainus, as we go to...

9 INT. CAVERNS - DAY

9

A rough-hewn underground tunnel. Xena appears carrying a torch and leading a squad of armed VILLAGERS.

XENA

This way. We'll come up right behind Athena's frontline.

As they hurry off down the tunnel...

10 EXT. OUTSIDE AMPHIPOLIS - DAY

10

Gabrielle's attack is losing momentum. VILLAGERS fall back, wounded by arrows and sword blows. The villager from the tavern stumbles up to Gabrielle, bloodied and frightened.

VILLAGER

Where is she?

(CONTINUED)

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

14 INT. ANOTHER TUNNEL - CONTINUING

14

We find Xena and her squad of VILLAGERS as before, face to face with Ilainus and a detachment of Athena's TROOPS.

ILAINUS

Very clever. Using these tunnels to try and flank our positions.

XENA

They were dug when Amphipolis was being raided by Cortese. Thought they might come in handy again. Now if you'll excuse us, we're running a little late.

ILAINUS

There's no rush. You're too late to save Gabrielle now.

Xena draws her sword and steps forward to face Ilainus.

XENA

I know who you are. Ilainus of Mycenae. Athena chooses her warriors wisely.

Ilainus nods in acknowledgement.

XENA

Which is why I was so surprised when you ran off after attacking those border guards. At first I figured you were just following orders. Make sure you lure Xena to Amphipolis, right? But maybe that just gave you an excuse to turn tail.

Ilainus bristles. Xena grins and twirls her sword.

XENA

Why don't we finish what we started?

ILAINUS

(biting back anger)  
Nothing would make me happier. But once again, I have my orders.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

Ilainus steps aside to reveal the soldiers behind her rolling forward TWO LARGE BARRELS.

ILAINUS

To seal these tunnels.

She nods to the soldiers, who tip over the barrels, sending a flood of LIQUID coursing down the tunnel toward Xena and the villagers.

XENA

Greek Fire!

Ilainus takes a TORCH from one of the soldiers and tosses it into the Greek Fire. The liquid erupts into a FIREBALL, which races toward Xena and the villagers.

XENA

Go! Go!

As the villagers run back down the tunnel, Xena pulls her chakram and flings it toward the fire...

WITH THE CHAKRAM (MOVING)

as it flies down the tunnel. The chakram strikes the stone floor of the cavern and SPLITS, and the halves each hit a wooden support beam on either side of the tunnel. The chakram halves splinter the two wooden beams before rejoining and returning to Xena.

The now unsupported section of tunnel ceiling collapses, blocking the tunnel.

CUT TO:

15 INT. CAVERNS - OTHER SIDE OF THE BLOCKAGE - CONTINUOUS

15

Ilainus watches as the ceiling collapses, opening up to DAYLIGHT overhead. The surging wall of GREEK FIRE hits the collapsed ceiling blocking the tunnel and is DIVERTED UP THROUGH THE NOW OPEN CEILING, to...

16 EXT. OUTSIDE AMPHIPOLIS - CONTINUOUS

16

Gabrielle is still struggling to hold off TWO SOLDIERS. With a mighty heave, she shoves the soldiers backwards, where...

THE GROUND SUDDENLY OPENS UP

underneath them. The soldiers drop into the chasm. We hear their O.S. SCREAMS as a COLUMN OF FIRE erupts from the hole.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

Gabrielle is surprised, but she seizes the opportunity. Supporting a WOUNDED VILLAGER, she retreats to the safety of the trenches.

17 OMITTED

17\*

18 INT. CYRENE'S TAVERN - BACK ROOM - DAY

18

The living quarters in the rear of the tavern. Xena enters to find Cyrene changing Eve's diaper in a makeshift cradle.

CYRENE

Don't panic. She just needs changing.

Xena nods and moves to watch her mother change the baby.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

\*

CYRENE

No matter what happens, Xena, thank you for letting me see my granddaughter. She's so perfect.

XENA

I know. No wonder the gods are afraid of her. Sometimes she frightens me.

Xena touches her mother's arm.

XENA

Mom. Thanks. You stood up to Athena. Pretty impressive.

CYRENE

Please, facing down a god I can handle. I raised you, remember? The terrible twos. Terrible threes. Terrible fourteens...

Xena smiles.

XENA

I'm sorry I made things so hard--

CYRENE

Just listen for once. In the end, it's worth all the heartache in the world to see your child grow up. Strong. Proud. I want you to know what it's like, Xena.

Xena puts her arm around Cyrene, drawing her close. Together they gaze down on Eve.

XENA

(determined)

I will.

Off Eve's peaceful face...



19 INT. CYRENE'S TAVERN - LATER THAT DAY

19

Xena holds Eve as she wanders among the INJURED VILLAGERS. She pauses as Cyrene pulls a blanket over the Wounded Villager's face. Cyrene glances up at Xena, shaking her head. As Cyrene moves off to tend to the others, Xena stares down at the covered body.

ATHENA (O.S.)

Move, countermove. It gets my juices going. How about you? \*

Xena spins to find Athena standing behind her. Xena grips Eve defensively. \*

ATHENA

Don't worry. I'm not going to wrestle you for her. Not my style. I love what we're doing. You try to break out. I counter attack with infantry and oil. You neutralize the oil and stop my infantry with one masterful stroke. I always loved the way you fought and thought. You're like a mortal me. \*

XENA

Why are you doing this? Ares I could understand. He's always been out for himself. And Zeus was just clinging to power. \*

Athena's eyes narrow at the mention of Zeus.

XENA

But I had faith in you, Athena. Of all of them, you're the only one who ever seemed to deserve my respect.

Athena seems moved by Xena's speech, but she shakes her head.

ATHENA

I have no choice. The Fates have decreed it.

XENA

Warriors like us make our own fate. I have a proposal for you. You say you like this game we're playing. Let's keep it up. A fair fight. No tricks. No godlike powers. \*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: (2)

19

ATHENA

Tempting. But no. The people need their gods, Xena. They need something to believe in.

XENA

They already have something to believe in. If you listened to them, you'd know that.

ATHENA

(shaking her head)

The cult of Eli? Do you really believe love will win this battle? I've cut off your water supply. What will you give them to drink when they're dying of thirst? Love?

Athena VANISHES. Off Xena's troubled eyes...

20 EXT. AMPHIPOLIS - TRENCHES - DAY

20

Xena and Gabrielle walk through the trenches where the VILLAGERS (some of them now sporting bandages and slings) continue to man the defenses.

GABRIELLE

The wounded can still keep watch. They're all committed, but we're down to half strength.

XENA

Half strength, full strength. Any way you cut it, we don't have the manpower to break the siege. Athena can just sit out there until we starve.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

GABRIELLE

Maybe there's another way.  
(off Xena's look)  
We can get Eve out of here.

XENA

What?

GABRIELLE

We captured some of their armor in the last attack. You put it on. You can slip through the lines after dark. Take Eve someplace safe. The Amazons--

XENA

Forget it.

GABRIELLE

You just said we can't break the siege.

XENA

So, I just abandon these people? And you?

GABRIELLE

Then we send Cyrene. Or one of the villagers--

XENA

It won't work.

GABRIELLE

Why not? Once Athena realizes Eve is gone, she'll pull out. This will all end.

Xena shakes her head.

XENA

No, it won't. Why do you think Athena picked Amphipolis in the first place? Because she knew I'd try to save these people. If I run, she'll just keep tightening the noose. 'Cause she knows that with every body that piles up here, she's that much closer to getting what she wants.

Gabrielle considers their grim situation, when suddenly an arrow ZINGS into the trench. More arrows rain down on the defenders.

\*

(CONTINUED)

XENA

Get down!

They flatten against the side of the trench.

GABRIELLE

We should be out of the range of their archers. What's going on?

Xena peeks her head carefully over the edge of the trench:

XENA'S POV

Ilainus and her ARCHERS have crept forward and taken up concealed positions within spitting distance of the trenches. Ilainus spots some VILLAGERS scurrying for cover and directs her archers toward the villagers. The archers FIRE their arrows toward the retreating villagers. \*

ON XENA \*

She rushes toward the villagers, dives, catches two arrows in one hand, two in the other, does a backward flip, throws up her feet and catches the last arrow between her feet just before it connects with: \*

A LITTLE GIRL \*

who stands quivering with fear, the arrow point an inch from her nose. Xena gets up and puts a comforting arm around the child. \*

XENA \*

You shouldn't be out here, sweetheart. Stay inside. \*

The little girl runs off. \*

ON ILAINUS \*

ILAINUS \*

Next time, it'll be six arrows, Xena. \*

ON XENA \*

She looks concerned. \*

CUT TO: \*

21 INT. TEMPLE OF ARES - DAY

21

A FLAME flickers on the altar of Ares' temple in Amphipolis.  
Shadows dance on the walls AS Xena enters and looks around.

XENA

Ares.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

Ares MATERIALIZES.

ARES

Ouch. Athena's beating you like a dog out there. Put a poultice on that, that's gotta sting.

XENA

Thanks for the support.

ARES

Don't feel too bad. You are fighting the goddess of wisdom and warfare.

XENA

Don't forget weaving.

Ares nods, "Right."

XENA

Ares.

She can't bring herself to continue.

ARES

Yes?

XENA

I believe we had discussed a deal.

ARES

Did we?

XENA

Cut the crap, Ares. I'm ready to bargain. Fight with me, and together we can defeat Athena.

ARES

Maybe we can. Of course, if I turned against my sister, I'd become a pariah on Olympus. Helping you would seal my own fate. Don't get me wrong, I'm still interested. I just want to know what's in it for me?

Xena steps up close, very close, to Ares.

XENA

What's in it for you?

Xena wraps her arms around Ares and breathes in his ear...

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

XENA

Me.

Off Ares' surprise, we...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

22 INT. TEMPLE OF ARES - CONTINUING

22

As before. Xena stands with her arms wrapped around Ares, their lips nearly touching.

XENA

Together we defeat Athena and I'm yours.

ARES

You're mine?

XENA

For a god, you're pretty slow on the uptake. For years, you've wanted me to be your warrior queen. Well? I'm offering you my sword.

(a purr)

Along with the body that wields it.

ARES

Tempting. But what about Olympus--

XENA

The gods are doomed. Zeus is dead. No matter what happens here, their reign will end. You want immortality? A child is immortality. A legacy. A lineage. Save my daughter, Ares. You can be her father. We can both live forever through her.

ARES

Xena. I...

Xena grabs Ares and pulls him close again.

XENA

I'm offering you everything you've ever wanted. Why won't you take it?

And she lays a serious kiss on him. The kiss lingers for a steamy moment, then...

ARES

(breaking away)

Oh, no. No, you don't.

(CONTINUED)



22 CONTINUED:

22

XENA

What?

Ares backs away, wagging an accusing finger at her.

ARES

You're up to something. I've lov--  
I've desired you from the moment I saw  
you in battle. And now, after all  
these years. All the games, the cat  
and mouse. You suddenly say, "Take  
me, Ares. I'm yours." It's too easy.

XENA

I'm offering you a deal, Ares. Have  
you ever known me to go back on a  
promise?

ARES

No. But you've come up with some  
pretty creative ways to mess with my  
head.

And he turns and strides from the room. After he leaves, Xena  
wrinkles her nose slightly, "What's that smell?" She looks  
down and we see TWO SMOKING FOOTPRINTS seared into the floor  
where Ares was standing. A small smile plays over her face.

DISSOLVE TO:

23 EXT. AMPHIPOLIS - TRENCHES - DAY

23

The beaten-up, half-starved defenders of Amphipolis hunker in  
the trenches. One of the VILLAGERS grumbles...

VILLAGER #2

This is crazy. I'm a pig farmer, not  
a soldier. How am I supposed to fight  
Athena?

The Villager who rose to Xena's defense earlier in the tavern  
responds.

VILLAGER

So, what do you suggest? We just give  
up her little babe to be killed?

VILLAGER #2

If the gods will it, who are we to  
stand in the way?

He appeals to the other villagers in the trench.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

VILLAGER #2

Athena's always protected us. What do we know about this Eli and his way? All I know is he wound up on the end of Ares' sword.

VILLAGER

What about the Twilight?

VILLAGER #2

It's a myth! Athena's the goddess of wisdom for crying out loud. If she wants the child, I say we give it to her!

Villager #2 is suddenly shoved into the dirt by...

GABRIELLE

who stands over him, furious.

GABRIELLE

So, you want to give Eve to Athena?

She glares at the other villagers, fire in her eyes.

GABRIELLE

Anyone else feel that way? Just give up the baby and this will all be over. We can go back to our fields in peace.

Clearly a few of the defenders have been wavering.

GABRIELLE

Sounds like a plan. Except what happens the next time the gods show up? Maybe it's Poseidon or Hera.

She gets in the face of one of the wavering villagers.

GABRIELLE

And this time they want your daughter.  
(to another villager)

Or yours.

(to Villager #2)

Or yours. So, you just give her to them? I mean, they're the gods, right? They can come down here and take whatever they want.

She stalks the trench, staring down the villagers.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (2)

23

GABRIELLE

You don't get it, do you? You're not fighting for Xena. You're fighting for yourselves. For your rights to be human beings and not game pieces pushed around a board by the gods. If any of you would be willing to give up your own child, speak up... 'cause I don't want you fighting beside me.

No one speaks up.

GABRIELLE

All right. Back to your posts.

As the villagers move off, we hear the sound of slow, steady CLAPPING. Gabrielle turns to see Ares standing behind her.

ARES

Very inspiring.

GABRIELLE

Ares. I need to talk to you. \*

ARES \*

Really? I'm just such a popular guy lately. \*

GABRIELLE \*

Tell me. Did my body give you pleasure? \*

ARES \*

Ah...I think you're ahead of me on this one. \*

GABRIELLE \*

I'm talking about Hope. She was my spitting image, right? \*

ARES \*

Oh, your dear little girl. Yes, I had a great time with "your" body. But remember, she was evil incarnate. It'd be a tough act to follow. \*

GABRIELLE \*

Let me have a shot at it. I may surprise you. \*

Ares isn't unmoved as he sizes up Gabrielle and lets his memory trickle back to Hope. \*

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (3)

23

ARES \*  
It's tempting... \*  
(then, suddenly) \*  
Oh, I get it. \*

GABRIELLE \*  
What? \*

ARES \*  
You're trying to distract me from \*  
accepting Xena's offer. \*

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (4)

23

Gabrielle is suddenly pleading.

\*

GABRIELLE

You can't accept. You'll destroy Xena. You'll turn her into what she used to be. A vicious killer.

ARES

You know, I kinda liked that Xena.

GABRIELLE

Did you? Then why are you still so obsessed with the person she's become? Tell me you don't feel anything when you look into her eyes now and see the real Xena. The good Xena.

Ares hesitates.

GABRIELLE

If you really care for her, you won't let that Xena die. Take me instead.

\*

Ares looks at her curiously, seeing the total conviction and passion in her face.

ARES

You know, for a while I was thinking Xena was trying to fool me. But now that I see the length you're willing to go to stop her, I'm a believer. Later.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

He VANISHES. Off Gabrielle's confused look...

24 EXT. ATHENA'S ENCAMPMENT - DAY

24

Athena pores over her battle map for a beat, then...

ARES (O.S.)

So, how goes the siege?

REVEAL ARES standing behind her. He strolls up to join her.

ATHENA

I'm about to start catapulting dead cows into the village.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

ARES

Ah, a classic.

(then)

But as much as I love the smell of a rotting cow carcass in the morning, have you considered there could be another way to break this stalemate?

Athena turns to face him.

ARES

I might be able to persuade Xena to leave our realm. To take Eve where she can do us no harm.

Athena laughs in disbelief.

ATHENA

And where would that be? You're thinking with your...codpiece again, brother. Do you honestly believe Xena will be yours if you can save her child?

ARES

And have you considered that maybe this prophecy is fulfilling itself? What can Xena's baby do to us? Really? Yet the more we fight amongst ourselves over the fate of this one tiny child, the more vulnerable we become.

ATHENA

(hard)

Because of this tiny child, Zeus is already dead.

ARES

And if he'd left well enough alone, Hercules wouldn't have had to kill him.

ATHENA

What if you're right, Ares? Is it worth the risk for one child? Or for one woman?

She turns back to her battle map.

ATHENA

There will be no compromise.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (2) 24

Off Ares' angry glare...

25 INT. TEMPLE OF ARES - DAY 25

Ares MATERIALIZES in the temple and looks around. A FIRE still flickers on the altar.

ARES

Xena?

He notices a trail of rose petals strewn across the floor. Ares follows the trail of petals to a goblet of wine sitting on the floor. Curious, he picks up the goblet.

XENA (O.S.)

(sultry)

Ares. Is that you?

Ares gulps down the wine.

ARES

Oh, yeah.

He follows Xena's voice to...

AN ALCOVE

where Xena reclines seductively on a pile of cushions. She's wrapped in a diaphanous robe and covered with rose petals.

XENA

Thought I might find you here. Are we going to seal this deal, or what?

Ares tosses aside the goblet.

ARES

Sounds like a plan.

He lays down with her, pulling her into a hungry embrace. She presses her lips to his, pulling at his clothing. Then...

XENA

One thing.

ARES

Mm-huh?

XENA

I can trust you to keep your end of the bargain?

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

ARES

Of course.

They continue to kiss. Then...

XENA

Because I wouldn't want there to be any confusion.

ARES

(frustrated)

No. No confusion. I side with you against gods. Save Eve. Gotcha.

And he covers her mouth with his. They lay back together, entwined in passion. Outside the temple, we hear the faint SOUNDS OF BATTLE rising. Xena pushes Ares away.

XENA

What's that?

ARES

What's what? I don't hear anything.

He kisses her again, but she pulls away and sits up.

XENA

It sounds like fighting.

As Ares tries to pull her back down beside him...

ARES

It's probably nothing. Now where were we?

THE WALL OF THE TEMPLE EXPLODES

showering Xena and Ares with shattered stonework and dust. Now desperate SHOUTS and the rising SOUNDS OF BATTLE can be heard clearly through the ruined temple wall. Xena and Ares slowly push the rubble off themselves.

ARES

Did the earth move for you, too?

XENA

I'm not that good.

CYRENE (O.S.)

Xena, are you okay?

\*

(CONTINUED)



25 CONTINUED: (2)

25

Xena and Ares look up to see Cyrene staring at them in shock through the hole blasted in the wall. She's holding Eve.

\*  
\*

CYRENE  
(hurt, upset)

\*

Xena.

\*

XENA

\*

Hi, Mom.

\*

\*

As Xena primly covers herself, Ares flops back on the cushions in frustration, and we...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

26 INT. TEMPLE OF ARES - CONTINUING

26

The dust settles in the wrecked temple as a BATTLE RAGES outside. Xena struggles to keep covered and gather up her clothes and weapons. Ares glowers with his arms crossed as Cyrene peers through the hole in the wall. \*

XENA

Okay, it's not what it looks like.

ARES

Sure it is.

CYRENE

I suppose it could be worse. I mean, he is a god after all. Although I would have preferred Apollo or maybe Hermes.

ARES

Hermes! With the little wings on his feet? Please.

CYRENE

Xena, Gabrielle has launched an attack on Athena's army. \*

Xena begins to dress. \*

ARES

What are you doing? I couldn't have planned it better myself. \*

Xena turns back to find Ares standing behind her.

ARES

I promised to help you and your daughter. If Gabrielle is attacking, she's provided us with the perfect cover. \*

XENA

What are you saying? \*

ARES

Leave her. Now, while Athena is distracted. I'll take you and your daughter away from here. \*

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

No. XENA \*

ARES \*  
(shaking his head)  
You're making a mistake. I would have  
kept our bargain.

XENA \*  
(genuine)  
I know you would have. But I'm doing  
this my way.

ARES \*  
What a surprise.

And with a rueful smile, he VANISHES.

27 OMITTED.

27\*

28 EXT. ILAINUS' POSITION - DAY

28

Ilainus coolly supervises her ARCHERS as they rain ARROWS on Gabrielle from their hidden positions. Athena MATERIALIZES beside her, observing the battle.

ILAINUS

Gabrielle tried to charge our lines.  
We have her trapped.

ATHENA

They must be getting desperate. End  
this for me, Ilainus, before all of  
Amphipolis is destroyed.

(sadly)

Put an arrow in the young bard. We'll  
see how long Xena will resist while  
her companion slowly bleeds to death.

Ilainus smiles appreciatively as she strings an arrow on her bow.

XENA -- ATHENA'S POV

Walking out of the fog of battle is Xena. She carries her  
bundle of joy in her arms. She walks resignedly toward Athena.

ON ATHENA

She sizes up Xena for a long moment, then realizes what's  
going on.

ATHENA

(to Ilainus)

Stop the attack.

ILAINUS

What are you--?

She stops as she sees Xena walking toward them. She realizes  
what's up.

ILAINUS

(to her LIEUTENANT)

Stop the attack.

The Lieutenant rushes off to give the orders. Xena approaches  
with the child. Gabrielle rushes to stop Xena.

GABRIELLE

Xena, what are you doing?

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

XENA

I'm saving my village...and you. Now  
get out of my way.

A stunned Gabrielle stands aside as Xena approaches Athena and  
lays the bundle at her feet.

XENA

Pull back your army.

ATHENA

Of course.  
(to Ilainus)  
You heard her.

Ilainus waves toward the Lieutenant who begins to lead the  
soldiers away.

ATHENA

(to Xena)  
You're doing the best thing for your--

XENA

Please don't make it any worse with  
platitudes. Just do it.

Athena nods sadly and draws her sword.

ATHENA

You might want to look away.

XENA

No. I'm letting my child die to save  
my village. The least I can do for  
her is remember every detail.

Athena raises the sword above the baby. Suddenly, Ares  
appears between Athena and the baby.

ARES

Not so fast, Sis.

ATHENA

You've got to be kidding me. You  
don't really think you've still got a  
chance with Xena.

ARES

I was this close just seconds ago.  
Sorry, I know blood's thicker than  
water, but blood flows hardest when  
love's involved.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (2)

28

ATHENA

You're really whipped, aren't you?

ARES

Now, don't be that way.

He lays into her with a flurry of blows.

ON XENA

She attacks Ilainus.

XENA

(to Gabrielle)

Now, Gabrielle.

(to Ilainus)

Let's see how good you are without a  
god as a backup.

ON GABRIELLE

GABRIELLE

(to the villagers)

Follow me!!

She leads the villagers against the retreating army. In other words, she's attacking the retreating troops while they're in column and not in battle line.

ON XENA AND ARES

as they stand shoulder to shoulder, Xena battling Ilainus, Ares battling Athena. Athena and Ares are equally matched. Xena, however, is all over Ilainus and, after a grueling battle, sinks her blade deep into Ilainus' breast.

ILAINUS

Athena.

ON ARES AND ATHENA

Athena breaks away from bro to rush over to the dying Ilainus.

ATHENA

Ilainus!

She kneels by Ilainus' side, gathering her into her arms. She looks up to see:

THE VILLAGERS

routing her army.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (3)

28

ON ATHENA

\*

Athena presses her hand to Ilainus' wound. A GOLDEN GLOW spreads over wound. Ilainus shakes her head.

ILAINUS

No. It is too deep. Do I still have your favor?

ATHENA

Always.

Ilainus manages a weak smile as the GOLDEN GLOW FADES AWAY and she dies...

ATHENA

No...NO.

\*

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (4)

28

Xena and Ares watch as Athena kneels beside Ilainus' body.  
She gently caresses her fallen warrior's face, then  
effortlessly, lifts Ilainus into her arms.

ATHENA

Look at her, Ares. We're next. All  
of us.

And with Ilainus cradled in her arms, Athena EVAPORATES INTO  
A GOLDEN MIST.

Gabrielle moves to Xena's side. She looks awkwardly at Xena  
and Ares.

(CONTINUED)



28 CONTINUED: (5)

28

GABRIELLE

Xena. Ares. Xena, I...Did you?

Xena glances to Ares with a sly grin.

XENA

No.

ARES

Not yet. Shall we conclude our transaction, Xena?

XENA

I do appreciate the offer, Ares. But it appears I don't need to take you up on it anymore.

ARES

I just saved you from Athena. You owe me.

XENA

Technically, I didn't ask for your help.

ARES

We had a deal, Xena.

XENA

You never gave me a chance. I might have won by myself.

ARES

Athena would have destroyed you!

XENA

I think I had her on the ropes.

ARES

(intense)

Why do you deny us? We could be so good together, Xena. When we were fighting together, we felt like one. And before? In the temple? Can you tell me you didn't feel anything?

Xena shrugs, "Eh." Ares shakes his head.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (6)

28

ARES

This isn't finished. As long as your child lives, the others will keep coming. You'll need my help soon enough.

And Ares VANISHES. Xena stands for a moment looking at the spot where he stood, then...

XENA

(softly)

I felt something.

Cyrene comes hurrying across the battlefield, carrying Eve.

CYRENE

Are you all right?

Xena takes Eve from Cyrene's arms and holds her tight. She embraces Cyrene with her free arm. Gabrielle picks up the bundle Xena laid at Athena's feet. Inside is a child's doll. \*

XENA

We're okay.

(then; to Gabrielle)

But you cut it pretty close with the attack. I was running out of foreplay. I almost had to go through with it.

GABRIELLE

Well, excuse me. Maybe when someone invents an accurate timekeeping device, we can synchronize our plans better.

XENA

And that blast was a little much, don't you think? It wasn't like I had my armor on.

CYRENE

I don't understand. Gabrielle, you blew up Ares' temple?

GABRIELLE

I had to get the battle going somehow or Xena would have had to keep up her end of the deal, so to speak.

\*

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (7)

28

\*

\*

\*

CYRENE

You two planned this whole thing?

(shaking her head)

What am I going to do with you two?

As they all walk back toward Amphipolis:

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (8)

28

GABRIELLE

(to Xena)

So, you felt something.

As we CRANE UP AND AWAY...

XENA

What?

GABRIELLE

I heard you. You said you felt something with Ares.

XENA

I did not.

GABRIELLE

I heard you.

XENA

Get your ears checked.

GABRIELLE

You said it. You felt something.

XENA

Maybe a little something.

GABRIELLE

WHAT?

And we...

FADE OUT:

THE END