

XENA[™]

WARRIOR PRINCESS

"EVE"

by
George Strayton
&
Tom O'Neill

SEASON 5
EPISODE #21

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

XENA

WARRIOR PRINCESS

"Eve"
production #V0922
episode 21

written by

George Strayton & Tom ONeill

rewrite by

Chris Black (Shooting)

revisions by

Chris Black (Pink)
Chris Manheim (Blue, Yellow, Green, 2nd White)

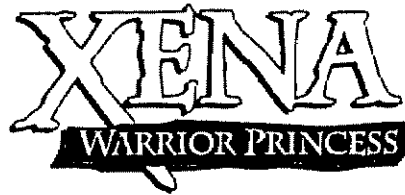
current revisions by

Chris Manheim (2nd Pink)

directed by

Mark Beesley

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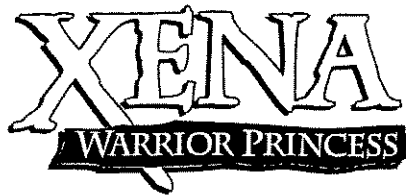
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Cast List

Xena
Gabrielle

Joxer
Ares
Livia
Virgil
Senetus
Archangel Michael
Villager
Woman
Young Villager

Livia's Soldiers (non-speaking)
Villagers (non-speaking)
Livia's Archers (non-speaking)
Eli's Followers (non-speaking)
Ostia Villagers (non-speaking)
Augustus' Soldiers (non-speaking)



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Set List

Interiors:

Livia's Tent	9, 11
Cave	16A, 17A *
Church of the Elijians	19A, 20A

Scenes:

Exteriors:

Country Road	1, 5, 6
Village	2, 2A, 3, 4
Another Village	7, 8
Xena's Camp	10, 10A, 12
Livia's Camp	13, 15
Wooded Trail	14
Forest	16, 17B *
Cave	16B *
Bluff	17
Outside Ostia	18
Ostia	19, 20
Church of the Elijians	20B

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

1

XENA leads Argo II along the deserted road. Her face is dark, tortured, and GABRIELLE, JOXER and VIRGIL hang back a few steps, as if held at bay by the dark energy of Xena's torment. Finally, Gabrielle steps forward and touches Xena's arm.

GABRIELLE

Xena, we'll find Eve.

JOXER

You bet, Xena. Look at all these tracks. Even I can follow this trail--

Catching himself, Joxer glances at Virgil.

JOXER

Um, I mean...

(seriously; playing to
Virgil)

Hmmm, judging by all these hoof prints I'd say a large group of men passed this way. Probably on horses.

Xena and Gabrielle share a look and Xena can't help but smile. Same old Joxer.

XENA

Good eye, Joxer. She's got at least a company, Roman troops still loyal to her. They can't be more than half a day ahead of us.

VIRGIL

We'll find your daughter, Xena.

Xena finally stops and turns to face them.

XENA

You said we'd find Eve. But the woman we're tracking is Livia, champion of Rome.

(in anguish)

I'm not sure if my daughter Eve even exists anymore.

GABRIELLE

I'm sure.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

Gabrielle looks deeply into Xena's eyes.

GABRIELLE

It doesn't matter what she calls herself. A lifetime serving Rome can't change the fact that she's your daughter. Once she looks inside herself and finds you there, Xena, she'll be Eve again. I know it.

JOXER

With a mom like you, how bad can she be?

As Xena looks at the hopeful faces of her friends, we...

SMASH CUT TO:

LIVIA'S FACE

contorted with rage. Sweat and dirt streak her face as she swings her sword, roaring her bloodlust. We are...

2 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

2

LIVIA and her TROOPS are sacking a small peasant village. The troops are hauling terrified VILLAGERS from their huts and putting the place to the torch. It's a Roman My Lai.

LIVIA

Followers of Eli!

She twirls her sword and impales a fleeing villager.

LIVIA

Don't forget to turn the other cheek!

Wrenching her sword free, Livia strides to where a squad of her soldiers have forced some villagers to their knees.

LIVIA

Why Xena is so determined to protect you sheep is beyond me.

A Roman captain overseeing the prisoners moves to Livia's side. Call him SENETUS.

SENETUS

(low; to Livia)

Livia, we haven't found a temple to Eli in the village.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

SENETUS (cont'd)

There's no proof these people are even members of Eli's cult.

LIVIA

And I should care...why?

She grabs a MALE VILLAGER from the line of prisoners and jerks him forward, laying her sword at his throat.

LIVIA

Eli's followers are vermin. They hide amongst true Romans, spreading like a sickness. If a few innocents must die to stamp out their heresy, so be it.

(a dark smile)

If it vexes Xena, so much the better.

As she raises her blade to strike down the villager kneeling before her, he raises his head defiantly...

VILLAGER

You cannot destroy our spirit. We've seen worse than you. We lived through Callisto's raids.

Livia hesitates, sword poised.

LIVIA

Callisto?

(mock thoughtful)

Hm. She did some good work. But you're looking at a whole new ball game now.

And she brings down the sword in the coup de grâce. We don't see the blow land, but a SPATTER OF BLOOD peppers Livia's face.

LIVIA

(roaring)

I AM THE DAUGHTER OF XENA!

And off Livia's crazed, bloodstained visage, we go to:

2A EXT. VILLAGE - LATER

2A*

We start close on Xena, Gabrielle, Joxer and Virgil as they enter the village. Play the looks of horror on their faces.

(CONTINUED)

2A CONTINUED:

2A

VILLAGER

Merciful Eli.

As they move slowly into the village, we REVEAL...

DOZENS OF CRUCIFIED VILLAGERS

lining the street. The village is in ruins. Huts have been
burned to the ground and the ruins still SMOLDER. Xena and
our heroes move slowly into the village.

XENA

My daughter did this.

Off Xena's anguish, we:

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

3 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY - CONTINUING 3 *

We find Xena, Gabrielle, Joxer and Virgil as before,
surrounded by the horror of Livia's handiwork. *

JOXER

Xena, you can't be sure Eve did this. *

Xena stops before a wall where the words "ROMA NONREQUIRIT
MATREM" have been scrawled, presumably in blood.

XENA

"Rome needs no mother." *

That's all the proof Xena needs. Virgil reacts with shock as
he recognizes some of the crucified victims.

VIRGIL

Kenides...Titus...Atria. These were
my friends.

XENA

Get them down. Get them all down.

Joxer and Virgil hurry off. Gabrielle moves to Xena's side.

GABRIELLE

Xena, you can't blame yourself for
this.

Before Xena can answer, we hear...

WOMAN (O.S.)

Xena?

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

Xena and Gabrielle turn to see a middle-aged WOMAN sitting in the dirt. In her arms, she cradles the body of the Villager Livia butchered in the Teaser. Her hands are stained with her husband's blood. She looks up at Xena through red, teary eyes.

WOMAN

You're Xena?

Xena moves to the Woman's side and crouches next to her. She speaks tenderly.

XENA

That's right.

Suddenly and shockingly, the Woman SPITS on Xena. Gabrielle recoils in surprise, but Xena doesn't flinch.

WOMAN

She killed them all...my husband, our children. I asked her why. Why? She said, "Ask Xena. Ask my mother."

Xena looks stricken. The Woman glares at her through her tears.

WOMAN

Tell me why, Xena?
(breaking down)
Why? Why? Why?

As the Woman collapses over her husband's body, Xena rises and moves away.

GABRIELLE

Xena.

But Xena just walks away, leaving Gabrielle to stare after her friend, her face creased with worry.

4 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY - LATER

4

A huge FUNERAL PYRE consumes the remains of Livia's victims. Through the shimmering WAVES OF HEAT, we find Xena, staring deep into the flames. Her reverie is broken by the voice of:

ARES (O.S.)

Nothing like a roaring funeral pyre to take the chill off. Cozy.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

Xena turns to face ARES, who's briskly rubbing his palms and warming his hands off the blazing pyre.

ARES

Livia's racked up nearly the body count you had at her age.

XENA

You sick bastard. She's my daughter.

ARES

What do you think made turning her so easy?

He moves closer.

ARES

But that's blood under the bridge.
You still haven't responded to my latest offer. Give me a child and I promise the other gods will never learn Eve is still alive.

*
*

XENA

I'd rather go back to hell.

ARES

(no more Mr. Nice Guy)
You don't get it. I'm not asking anymore. I'm telling you. Give me what I want or I'll bring all of Olympus down on your daughter.

*
*

XENA

You're the one who doesn't get it. So lemme spell it out. The thought of being with you...having your child...
(eyes full of loathing)
It makes me sick to my soul.

*
*
*
*
*

They hold a look as Ares searches her eyes, amazed to find...

*

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (2)

4

ARES

You really mean that.

Xena drills Ares with a hard look.

XENA

I'd do anything to keep Eve from
spilling more blood. But if the
prophecy is true. If the Twilight is
coming? Don't think I'd raise a
finger to keep her from killing you.

Ares looks like Xena has driven the Dagger of Helios through
his chest. Then he hardens his heart, pain transforming his
love to hate as he holds her gaze, then DEMATERIALIZES.

5 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

5

Livia's troops are spread out across the roadside, resting and
watering their horses. Livia moves to a shady spot on the
side of the road. She pulls out a wineskin and takes a long
hit.

ARES (O.S.)

A little early for the hard stuff,
isn't it?

In a single, lightning-fast move, Livia drops the wineskin and
draws her sword. She whirls on Ares, arcing the sword toward
his neck. But Ares claps his hands together, trapping the
blade inches from his throat.

ARES

Down, girl. We've got business.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

He spreads his hands, releasing Livia's sword. She steps back, still pissed.

LIVIA

Take your business to my mother. Your long lost love. We've got nothing.

*
*

ARES

Grow up. I had a thing for Xena once. No more. So, deal with it. Then get even with her. Wouldn't you like that?

*
*

LIVIA

What do you think? I was supposed to marry Augustus. I was destined to be Empress of the Empire...

(darkly furious)

...till she came back.

*
*
*
*

ARES

So? Nothing's really changed.
(off her look)

We had an arrangement. You destroy the cult of Eli for me. I run a little divine intervention to make you Empress of Rome.

*
*
*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

5

LIVIA

Where's Xena fit into this?

ARES

She doesn't. But you'll have to kill
her to keep her from stopping you.

Livia narrows her eyes.

LIVIA

And the Twilight?

(lifts her sword to his
chest)

Aren't you afraid I'll bring about the
end of your gods?

ARES

When you were born, there was panic on
Olympus. It cost Zeus his life, and
Hera vanished. Then we thought you
were dead, and for twenty-five
years... nothing.

Ares spreads his arms.

ARES

The only power you have over us is our
own fear.

Livia holds Ares' gaze for a long beat, then lowers her sword.
His eyes still locked on hers, Ares urges:

ARES

Reclaim your destiny, Livia. Kill
Xena.

Then he DEMATERIALIZES, leaving Livia alone.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (3)

5

6 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

6

ANGLE ON Joxer and Virgil as they walk along the road a short distance behind Xena and Gabrielle.

VIRGIL

It must feel great to be back on the road. Leading Xena and Gabrielle into battle again after all these years.

Joxer nervously eyes Xena and Gabrielle, but they don't seem to have heard Virgil.

JOXER

(keeping his voice low)

Yes, son. The old armor may be a bit snug, but you never outgrow your warrior's instincts.

VIRGIL

I just can't believe all your old stories are true.

JOXER

(nervously)

What do you mean?

VIRGIL

You told me you were a fierce fighter. Brave men trembled at your name. Xena and Gabrielle owe you their lives a hundred times over. But I look at you and see the man who tucked me in at night, who sang me to sleep when I had a nightmare. You're my dad.

Joxer seems torn, nagged by the guilt of having deceived the son who trusts him so completely.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

JOXER

Well, it just shows you how there are
two sides to every man.

(then; loudly)

Say, how about a few rousing choruses
of "Joxer the Mighty" to get the
juices flowing?

He clears his throat, but stops short when he sees...

XENA AND GABRIELLE

glaring back at him.

JOXER

(to Virgil)

Better still, let me teach you about
the virtues of stealth.

We move up the road to find...

XENA AND GABRIELLE

As they turn their attention back to the road, Xena looks at
the heavily trampled earth.

XENA

These tracks are fresh. Eve can't be
more than a few hours ahead of us.

GABRIELLE

You sure you don't want to double
check with Joxer the Mighty?

They smile. A short beat, then...

XENA

This is my daughter we're tracking,
Gabrielle. It's Eve who's doing these
terrible things.

GABRIELLE

She's not the Eve that you would have
raised. Ares did this to her.

XENA

Ares may have opened the door. But
Eve had to walk through.

GABRIELLE

How can you know that?

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (2)

6

XENA

You said it yourself. Eve finally took a good look inside herself and found me there.

GABRIELLE

Xena, no--

XENA

I know the rage she feels. It's in Eve's blood, Gabrielle. I made her who she is. I was her.

GABRIELLE

Then there's hope.

XENA

Why?

GABRIELLE

Because you changed.

XENA

Thanks, Gabrielle. I hope you're right.

As they move on up the road...

7 EXT. ANOTHER VILLAGE - DAY

7

Livia's troops are at it again. For the moment, Livia is nowhere in sight as the Roman soldiers drag terrified VILLAGERS from their homes. Senetus watches as two of his SOLDIERS force an OLD MAN down onto a cross. A THIRD SOLDIER raises a hammer to nail the old man to the cross. But...

XENA'S CHAKRAM

slices off the head of the hammer. The soldiers look up with surprise as the chakram returns to...

XENA

standing near the entrance to the village. Gabrielle, Virgil and Joxer are spread out around her, weapons at the ready.

XENA

That's enough arts and crafts for today, boys.

Senetus draws his sword.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

SENETUS

Attack!

And the battle is on. Xena FLIPS into the fray with her BATTLE CRY, slashing down soldiers left and right. Once again, Gabrielle and Virgil fight side by side, working as a single force. Virgil has his hands too full to notice...

JOXER

struggling to hold off the Third Soldier (the one who had the hammer). It would've been a lopsided match-up in his prime, but Joxer's twenty-five years older now. Clumsily deflecting the soldier's blows, Joxer trips over a fallen body and drops his sword. With a smirk, his opponent raises his sword to strike when...

THE OLD MAN

the soldier was going to nail to the cross conks the soldier on the head with an urn. As the soldier collapses...

JOXER

(irked)

I had him.

As Joxer gets up and indignantly adjusts his armor, a SHADOW falls over him. Joxer looks up and reacts as we go to...

XENA

going blow for blow with Senetus. They're closely matched and they lock blades as Xena hears a chilling call...

LIVIA (O.S.)

Oh, Mother.

Xena whirls to see...

LIVIA

standing across the village square. She is holding a dagger to Joxer's throat. The battle comes to a halt as everyone turns their attention to the impending showdown. Senetus and his men fall back toward Livia. Virgil stares at his father in shock.

VIRGIL

Father!

JOXER

No problem, son. Got it covered.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2)

7

Xena lowers her sword and steps slowly toward Livia.

XENA

Eve.

Livia violently shoves Joxer to his knees, jerking her dagger tight to his throat.

LIVIA

I told you. My name is Livia!

XENA

All right...Livia. You got a bone to pick with me, here I am. But let Joxer go.

LIVIA

(mocking)

"Let Joxer go." Why? Does this pathetic excuse for a fighter mean something to you?

Joxer flinches, stung. He can't look at Virgil.

LIVIA

You've managed to ruin everything that meant anything to me. It's time for some payback, Xena. Why don't I start with this loser?

Livia jerks back Joxer's head and draws back her blade to slice his throat.

VIRGIL

NO!

Xena quickly bends and grabs a handful of the large iron nails the Romans were going to use to nail the old man to the cross and hurls them.

THE NAILS FLY THROUGH THE AIR

LIVIA

is forced to drop Joxer and use her dagger to deflect the incoming projectiles. SPARKS FLASH off her blade as the nails PING off the metal.

As Joxer scrambles away, Livia charges Xena. Livia draws her sword, and mother and daughter clash. Livia attacks with a vengeance and Xena struggles to protect herself without hurting Livia.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (3)

7

Between sword blows, their dialogue comes in breathless gusts...

XENA

Eve...I know what you're feeling.

LIVIA

Oh, goody. Then you'll understand when I cut your head off.

As they continue to fight...

ARES MATERIALIZES

near Gabrielle, Virgil and Joxer. He smiles thinly. *

ARES

Things are getting interesting now, huh?

Off Gabrielle's look of disgust...

BACK TO XENA AND LIVIA

Xena shoves Livia back.

XENA

You can get past this rage.

Ares steps forward.

ARES

Don't listen to her, Livia. She's just jealous of your strength.

LIVIA

(to Xena)

I'm glad you came back. Killing you must be part of my destiny.

XENA

Your destiny isn't to kill. It's to find a new way beyond this killing.

With a flurry of vicious blows, Livia manages to force Xena back. Finding an opening, Livia stabs her sword toward Xena's chest. Xena is barely able to block the blade and Livia's sword point quivers inches from Xena's heart.

ARES

Do it, Livia! She's all that stands between you and Rome.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (4)

7

XENA

He's lying, Eve. He'll say anything to keep you from your true path. That's why I came back. To show you who you really are.

Livia hesitates, her sword poised.

XENA

Listen to your heart.

LIVIA

My heart is a traitor.

And she lunges, trying to plunge her sword into Xena's chest. But Xena uses her momentum against her, flipping Livia over her head and sending her flying hard against a wall. Livia's sword goes flying as she crumples to the ground, the wind knocked out of her. Xena reaches out to her...

XENA

Eve.

Suddenly, a YOUNG VILLAGER leaps from a high window above Livia. He lands on top of her, drawing a dagger. As he cocks his arm to stab Livia:

YOUNG VILLAGER

Die, butcher!

XENA

No!

Xena unleashes her chakram. The chakram ZINGS through the air, shattering the Young Villager's knife blade before he can stab Livia. Livia looks up in amazement. She locks eyes with Xena, realizing Xena has just saved her life. Off Livia's stunned expression, we...

*
*

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

8 EXT. ANOTHER VILLAGE - DAY - CONTINUING

8

As before. Livia looks up from the ground, her gaze searching Xena's face for an answer. The moment passes in an instant though, and Livia knocks out the Young Villager with a single vicious blow to the face. She leaps to her feet.

LIVIA

Burn it!

Senetus gestures to his men, who immediately fall back behind a row of ARCHERS. The archers fire FLAMING ARROWS into the village structures, setting them alight. Livia and her troops withdraw, their retreat covered by the RAPIDLY SPREADING FIRE.

XENA

Eve!

But she's gone, swallowed up by the billowing smoke. Stepping casually through A WALL OF FIRE, Ares faces Xena.

ARES

How does it feel, Xena? Knowing the person you love despises you. Trying to reach her but knowing, in the end, it'll be either her or you.

*
*
*

Ares DEMATERIALIZES. Xena doesn't have time to ponder his words, as the FIRE is spreading fast. We see Gabrielle and Virgil helping villagers away from the burning structures.

GABRIELLE

Xena!

Xena spots a...

WATER TOWER

rising above the flaming buildings. Xena hurls her chakram, which ricochets across the side of the water tower, perforating a series of holes in it. WATER SPRAYS OUT like a giant sprinkler, dousing the flames.

XENA

moves to Gabrielle, who is helping the Young Villager who attacked Livia to his feet. He glares at Xena.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

YOUNG VILLAGER

Why did you stop me? She murdered my
wife, my daughter.

XENA

Killing her won't bring your family
back.

YOUNG VILLAGER

Don't you think I know that? But what
about the next family she butchers?
And the next? Their blood's on your
hands now.

He jerks away and storms off. Xena watches him go.

9 INT. LIVIA'S TENT - NIGHT

9

Livia is in a rage. She sweeps maps and documents from a
table, hurls goblets and wine bottles to the floor. After a
few moments, she stops, breathing hard, her anger spent.

ARES (O.S.)

All better now?

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

She spins to find Ares watching her from the corner, arms crossed, an amused expression on his face. She gets in his face.

LIVIA

She could have let that peasant kill me. Ended it all right there. But she saved my life. Why?

ARES

(exasperated)

The same reason she didn't kill you in the arena. She wants you to buy into all that touchy-feely garbage about love and mercy.

LIVIA

She came all this way, survived in an ice cave for twenty-five years, to find me.

ARES

(flaring)

She came here to destroy you! Who are you going to listen to? The mother who abandoned you twenty-five years ago? Or the god who's going to make you an empress?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (2)

9

ARES (cont'd)

(a sneer)

Make up your mind, Eve. *

Livia's face hardens. She swings at Ares, but he catches her wrist.

LIVIA

My name is Livia.

A smile creeps across Ares' face. He releases her wrist and slams one of her strewn maps onto the table and jabs a finger at a spot on it.

ARES

This is where Eli's followers will gather. This is where you will put an end to it all. *

CUT TO:

10 EXT. XENA'S CAMP - NIGHT

10

Xena, Gabrielle and Virgil hunker down a short distance away from a flickering CAMPFIRE, strategizing. Virgil sketches a map in the dirt. Joxer sits in the BG at the fire.

GABRIELLE

Ostia?

VIRGIL

It's near the coast. Eli's largest temple is there. Word has it that the last of Eli's faithful are gathering there to pray for a miracle to save them from Livia.

XENA

Maybe they'll get one.

(to Virgil)

Get some rest. We'll move out at first light.

Virgil nods and moves off toward the fire. Xena turns to Argo II tied up nearby and begins checking her gear. Gabrielle lays a hand on Xena's shoulder.

GABRIELLE

Xena, don't worry. I know you started to get through to Eve today. You just need another chance.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

XENA

Chances run out, Gabrielle...for all
of us.

*
*

There is a long pause. Then...

*

GABRIELLE

(softly)

If that's true, if Eve doesn't come
around...

*
*

(knowing the anguish
firsthand)

*

Can you bring yourself to kill your
own daughter?

*

*

Seeing Gabrielle's pain, Xena's heart breaks for them both.

*

XENA

You did. How can I do anything less?

*

As the two friends reach to comfort each other, we...

*

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (4)

10

JOXER

Xena.

VIRGIL

Wow.

(a beat; smiles)

It sounds like you and Xena had some
real adventures together.

Joxer turns and looks at his son, a warm smile growing on his
face.

JOXER

We sure did, son. We sure did.

XENA AND GABRIELLE

as Xena swings up into Argo II's saddle. She looks down at
Gabrielle.

XENA

If this plan is going to work, I'll
need to get to Ostia before Eve's
forces can dig in.

GABRIELLE

It'll work.

Xena nods. And with a "Ha!", she spurs Argo II off into the
darkness. We hold for a beat on Gabrielle's face, deep in
thought. Then...

DISSOLVE TO: *

10A EXT. XENA'S CAMP - LATER

10A

ANGLE ON JOXER

dozing by the CAMPFIRE. His mouth hangs open and he snores.
Gabrielle steps quietly into the firelight and gestures to
Virgil to come closer...

GABRIELLE

Virgil, there's something I have to
do. If I'm not back by dawn, I need
you to make sure that Xena goes to the
temple at Ostia like we planned.

VIRGIL

Where are you going?

(CONTINUED)

10A CONTINUED:

10A

GABRIELLE
Promise me, Virgil. Make sure Xena
protects Eli's followers.

*

(CONTINUED)

10A CONTINUED: (2)

10A

VIRGIL

I will, Gabrielle. But what are you going to do?

*
*

GABRIELLE

I'm going to try and make sure Xena isn't forced to do something she'll never forgive herself for.

Off Virgil's concerned look...

*

11 INT. LIVIA'S TENT - NIGHT

11

Livia pores over maps, preparing for her attack. Senetus enters.

LIVIA

Have all the preparations been made for the attack?

SENETUS

Yes. But there's a complication.

Livia turns from her maps to face Senetus. He steps to the side and two SOLDIERS drag Gabrielle into the tent.

SENETUS

She just walked into camp. Unarmed.

LIVIA

Leave us.

Senetus nods and he and the soldiers exit. Livia steps up to face Gabrielle.

LIVIA

Auntie Gabrielle. Welcome.

GABRIELLE

I came here to--

LIVIA

No, please. Let me.

As she speaks, Livia slowly circles Gabrielle.

LIVIA

You thought if you could just talk to me -- heart-to-heart -- you could convince me that Xena wants to help me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

LIVIA (cont'd)

If I can just find it in my heart to give her a chance, Mommy will make it all better.

GABRIELLE

The gods wanted you dead. Xena risked her own life to protect you. Doesn't that mean anything to you?

LIVIA

It means she's as stupid as she is sentimental.

GABRIELLE

Can't you see the pain she's in? She came to Rome to find you. She loves you.

LIVIA

Then why is she trying to destroy me?

GABRIELLE

She wants to save you. She won't even fight you.

Livia draws her dagger and presses the tip to Gabrielle's throat.

LIVIA

Maybe she just hasn't been properly motivated.

Off Livia's evil smile...

12 EXT. XENA'S CAMP - NIGHT

12

Virgil watches as Joxer nervously paces around the CAMPFIRE.

JOXER

How could you let Gabrielle go alone? *

VIRGIL

She wanted us to wait for Xena. *

Coming to a decision, Joxer picks up his helmet. *

VIRGIL

What are you doing?

JOXER

Gabrielle could be in trouble. *

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

Joxer straps on his sword.

VIRGIL

Dad, you don't have to prove anything
to me.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (2)

12

A change seems to come over Joxer. As he turns to face his son, he seems confident, resolved. He speaks firmly to Virgil, as a father to his son:

JOXER

I know. Now I want you to find Xena.
Bring her as fast as you can.

VIRGIL

But Father--

JOXER

Son. Do what I tell you.

Virgil holds his father's gaze for a beat, then nods.

13 EXT. LIVIA'S CAMP - DAWN

13

Livia's troops are packing up, preparing to move out. Hidden in the bushes near the camp, we find...

JOXER

peering into the camp.

JOXER

(low; to himself)
Eighteen, nineteen, twenty to one. No
problem.

His eyes go wide when he sees...

LIVIA DRAGGING GABRIELLE

into the center of the camp. She addresses her troops.

LIVIA

Today we wipe out the final remnants
of Eli's cult. And today I take my
revenge on their champion, Xena.

GABRIELLE

Eve, it's not too late to stop this.

Livia slaps Gabrielle hard across the face, knocking her to the ground. She leans down into Gabrielle's face.

LIVIA

Don't call me Eve.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

JOXER

flinches as he watches. He yearns to do something to help, but the odds are overwhelming.

JOXER

Xena, where are you?

CUT TO:

14 EXT. WOODED TRAIL - DAWN

14

Xena rides through the woods, pushing Argo II for all she's worth. Virgil sits behind Xena, hanging on for dear life as they crash along the narrow trail.

15 EXT. LIVIA'S CAMP - DAWN

15

Livia stands over Gabrielle. She gestures to two of her men.

LIVIA

Tie her up.

IN THE BUSHES...

Joxer is beside himself as he watches the soldiers roughly bind Gabrielle to a tree.

LIVIA

steps up to Gabrielle.

LIVIA

Do you think Xena will still want that mother-daughter reunion after she finds your bloodless corpse, Auntie Gabrielle?

Gabrielle sets her jaw as Livia slowly draws her sword. *

JOXER

stares in horror. He looks around...

JOXER

Xena.

But Xena isn't there. Joxer realizes it's up to him. He draws his sword.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

IN THE CAMP

Livia brings her arm back to plunge her sword into Gabrielle, when Joxer suddenly leaps out of the bushes. *

JOXER *

Gabrielle! *

With a battle cry, Joxer begins swinging his sword. Driven by adrenaline and his own inner strength, and with the element of surprise on his side, he actually does pretty well. He gets in a few lucky blows, knocking back some of Livia's troops as he heads for Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE *

(amazed) *

Joxer! *

Just as Livia's troops recover from their initial surprise.

ARGO II

comes leaping into the encampment with Xena and Virgil on her back. Xena flips from the horse's back and joins the battle. Virgil jumps from the horse, backing up his father.

JOXER

(to Xena)

It's about time!

Xena wastes no time taking on Livia's men. She's got half a dozen Roman soldiers on her, keeping her busy. *

VIRGIL *

squares off against Senetus. Virgil fights well, but he's no match for the veteran Roman. *

As the fight rages around him, Joxer tries to make his way to... *

JOXER *

Gabrielle! *

LIVIA *

sees Xena cutting down her men, and she turns back to Gabrielle. *

LIVIA *

Good. Mom's here. This will be much more effective with an audience. *

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: (2)

15

What happens next takes place nearly simultaneously: *

LIVIA *

draws back her sword to strike down Gabrielle. *

SENETUS *

forces Virgil back, knocking Virgil's sword from his hand. As
Senetus raises his blade to finish off Virgil... *

XENA *

sees Senetus and hurls her chakram. The chakram knocks the
sword from Senetus' hand. As the chakram returns to Xena... *

JOXER *

is still fighting his way to Gabrielle. *

JOXER *

Gabrielle! *

XENA *

catches the chakram and spins to see Livia raising her sword.
Xena cocks her arm to throw the chakram, but Joxer steps in
her way! *

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: (3)

15

XENA

Joxer! Get down!

But Joxer is rushing blindly to save Gabrielle. As he raises his sword, Livia spins, her blade poised, and Joxer's momentum carries him right onto Livia's sword. Joxer's look is one of surprise as he stares into Gabrielle's eyes.

GABRIELLE

NO!

Livia steps back. Joxer slides off the end of her sword and collapses against Gabrielle.

VIRGIL

Father!

Xena runs toward Livia, but Livia signals to her troops and they quickly retreat into the woods. Xena has to let her go as she turns her attention to Joxer. Virgil gently lowers Joxer to the ground and Xena slashes Gabrielle's bonds.

VIRGIL

Father.

(to Xena)

Can you help him?

Xena goes to work on Joxer's wound.

XENA

I don't know what we'd do without you, Joxer. You saved our butts again.

Joxer takes Xena's hands and holds them. She looks into his eyes.

JOXER

It's okay, Xena. Virgil knows the truth about his old dad.

XENA

He does now that he's seen you in action.

GABRIELLE

(losing it)

Joxer, why didn't you wait for Xena?

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: (4)

15

Joxer takes Gabrielle's hand as well.

JOXER

I couldn't live with myself if I let
you down again.

*
*

GABRIELLE

You never let us down.

*

JOXER

(shudders)

Thanks for the adventures.

*
*

XENA

Don't thank us, old friend. You
earned 'em. Every one of them.

Joxer turns to Virgil.

JOXER

Take care of Mom, son.

Virgil nods numbly.

JOXER

And maybe you can put my helmet up in
the tavern back home? I think there's
a spot next to one of Gabrielle's old
staffs.

(to Gabrielle)

Is that okay?

She can't even speak. Her eyes welling with tears, she
manages to nod yes.

And with his son and his best friends gathered around him,
Joxer slowly closes his eyes and dies, a content look on his
face. As the CAMERA LINGERS ON XENA'S FACE, we...

*

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

16 OMITTED 16
 16A OMITTED 16A*
 16B EXT. CAVE - DAY 16B*

Xena, Gabrielle and Virgil finish stoning up the entrance to
 A SMALL, SHALLOW CAVE, then stand eyeing it in silence. *

GABRIELLE

We should take Joxer home. He wanted
 to do the same for us. *

VIRGIL

I'll take him. After we deal with
 Livia.

XENA

Virgil, you should be with Meg. This
 isn't your fight.

VIRGIL

(hard)

You have my respect because you had
 his. But don't tell me this isn't my
 fight.

(looks at stones; then back
 to Xena) *

Not now. *

He turns and walks into the forest. *

GABRIELLE

I'll talk to him.

Xena nods and Gabrielle moves off after Virgil. Xena stands
 for a moment, gazing at the sealed cave. Then Ares
 MATERIALIZES. He looks after Virgil and shakes his head. *

ARES

Virgil's one angry guy. And I don't
 blame him.

(turning to Xena) *

Losing his dad like that.

Xena never even spares him a glance.

XENA

Get lost. *

(CONTINUED)

16B CONTINUED:

16B

ARES

(ignoring her)

But he shouldn't be mad at Livia. We both know that...don't we, Xena?

XENA

I said go.

ARES

You're the one he should hate. You could've prevented this. Joxer's dead...all because the thought of me made you sick.

Numb, Xena stands her ground as Ares moves in close to whisper:

ARES

Well, if I sickened your soul...

(even closer)

...stopping Livia's gonna kill it.

Still Xena refuses to meet his eyes. A beat. Then Ares DEMATERIALIZES. Xena stands for a moment, absorbing his words. Then, sensing someone, she looks up to see...

*
*
*

...Gabrielle standing at the edge of the forest, having witnessed Xena's scene with Ares. The women hold a look. Then:

*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

16B CONTINUED: (2)

16B

XENA

When I saved Eve's life, that villager told me the next person she killed... their blood would be on my hands. I never thought it would be my friend.

GABRIELLE

(moving to her)

Xena, this isn't your fault.

XENA

Isn't it? How many lives was I willing to sacrifice while I tried to save my daughter?

GABRIELLE

You had to try.

XENA

I'm sure that'll be a comfort to Meg and Virgil. How many more innocents will die before I end this?

Gabrielle stares into Xena's eyes, her expression unflinching.

GABRIELLE

No more.

Off Xena's look...

GABRIELLE

I went to Livia because I wanted to spare you the pain of killing your child. I thought I could make Livia see how much we cared about her.

XENA

(a beat)

You called her Livia.

GABRIELLE

It's who she is now. Eve is already dead. She's not your daughter anymore, Xena. She's Rome's.

Her expression stone, Xena turns and stalks off into the forest.

17 EXT. BLUFF - DAY

17

A high cliff overlooking the sea. Waves crash on the rocks far below. Xena walks to the edge of the cliff and gazes out at the beautiful vista. She drops to her knees, turns her eyes heavenward.

XENA

I don't understand. You made me a warrior, but then you tell me to fight my enemies with compassion instead of my sword. Is this what you wanted? Eli murdered. Now Joxer. You gave me this child. And I loved her. With all my heart.

(anguished)

And now I'm supposed to choose between my way and my daughter's life?

(shouting at heaven)

What do you want from me?

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

Of course, there is no booming voice from heaven to soothe Xena's spirit. Only the crashing of the waves.

XENA

Are you enjoying this? I thought you were different. Maybe you're just like the other gods.

Xena stares out into the vast blue of sky and sea.

XENA

(defeated)

Where is your infinite love?

As Xena sags, not finding the answers she seeks, we go to...

17A OMITTED

17A*

17B EXT. FOREST - DAY

17B*

Standing beneath a large tree, Virgil's grief and anger overwhelm him and he slams his fist into the tree as Gabrielle approaches. Not wanting her to see he's near tears, Virgil turns away from her.

*
*
*
*

VIRGIL

This is what it means to follow Eli?

Gabrielle bows her head and doesn't answer.

VIRGIL

I knew my faith would be tested, but never like this.

GABRIELLE

Eli always said it took courage to walk his path.

VIRGIL

(hard)

How can I love when my heart is filled with vengeance?

GABRIELLE

You said it yourself. When you're pushed, it's hard not to push back. But you have to ask yourself if that's what Eli would have wanted.

VIRGIL

I don't care what Eli wants. I just know what I have to do.

(CONTINUED)

17B CONTINUED:

17B

He strides away. Off Gabrielle's pained expression, we go to...

*

18 EXT. OUTSIDE OSTIA - DAY

18

Livia and Senetus stand on a high ridge looking down on the town of Ostia.

SENETUS

The men are in place.

LIVIA

Wait for my signal.

SENETUS

The longer we delay, the greater chance Eli's followers may scatter like rats--

LIVIA

I said wait for my signal!

She whirls on Senetus.

LIVIA

I won't destroy them until Xena is there to see it.

Senetus nods and moves off. Ares MATERIALIZES next to Livia.

ARES

Don't worry. She'll be there. Killing her friends tends to get her attention.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

LIVIA

Then, once Xena is dead, we move on to
the next prize. Rome.

ARES

If you win.

Livia bristles.

LIVIA

You don't think I can kill her?

ARES

I know you've got the will for it,
let's hope you find a way.

Her anger rising, Livia hisses in Ares' face.

LIVIA

My destiny is to rule Rome. Xena made
the mistake of trying to change that.
Today I'm taking my destiny back. And
after today, I don't ever want to hear
the name Xena again.

ARES

Then destroy her.

They hold a look as a temple BELL TOLLS in the distance.

19 EXT. OSTIA - DAY

19

A slightly larger town. It looks like most of the citizenry
has gone to ground. In the town square, we see a large temple-
like building: the church of the Elijians. As its BELL STOPS
TOLLING...

19A INT. CHURCH OF THE ELIJIANS - DAY

19A

A vast sanctuary with a high-raftered ceiling. Truly a church as compared to the temples of the Roman gods. A large group of ELI'S FOLLOWERS have gathered inside. They are dressed in hooded robes that hide their features as they bow in prayer. Suddenly, the door to the church bursts open and...

LIVIA

leads Senetus and her troops inside.

LIVIA

Good. Everyone's here.

She draws her sword.

LIVIA

Why don't we get started?

XENA

drops from the ceiling to take a position between Livia's troops and Eli's followers.

LIVIA

Glad you could make it, Xena. I hope you're not going to ruin my day with more of your excruciating mother-daughter platitudes.

XENA

No.

Xena draws her sword.

XENA

(ice cold)

I'm done talking...Livia.

And as mother and daughter face off, we...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

20 OMITTED 20
 20A INT. CHURCH OF THE ELIJIANS - DAY - CONTINUING 20A

Xena and Livia face each other across the sanctuary, Livia's troops arrayed behind her.

XENA
 This ends now, Livia.

LIVIA
 You finally get it. Eve is dead.

XENA
 I know. I'm here to avenge her.

Xena charges Livia. Livia returns the charge. Xena and Livia collide head on, their swords crashing together.

LIVIA
 Time to put you out of my misery.

XENA
 Give it your best shot.

And they begin a brutal sword battle.

A BALCONY OVERLOOKING THE SANCTUARY

A couple of VILLAGERS nervously watch the action unfolding below. Ares MATERIALIZES next to them. *

ARES
 (to the villagers)
 This box is reserved. *

Terrified, the Villagers scuttle away as Ares turns his attention to... *

XENA AND LIVIA

exchanging savage sword blows. Livia makes a spectacular spinning strike and knocks Xena's sword away.

XENA
 Nice move.

(CONTINUED)

20A CONTINUED:

20A

LIVIA
Must be in my blood.

Xena draws her chakram and throws it...

THE CHAKRAM

sails through the air. It hits Livia's sword and SPLITS,
knocking the sword from Livia's hand. WHIP PAN back to...

XENA

who stares at her hand in surprise. She's only holding half
the chakram. She looks over to see Livia has the other half.
Livia grins.

ON ARES

watching from the balcony. *

ARES
'Atta girl. *

BACK TO XENA AND LIVIA

Livia turns to her troops behind her.

LIVIA
Attack!

Senetus waves his men forward and they charge Eli's followers.

XENA
Gabrielle!

TWO OF ELI'S FOLLOWERS

spin and throw off their robes. It's Gabrielle and Virgil,
swords drawn!

GABRIELLE
Now!

The rest of the "worshippers" drop their robes. We now see
they are a legion of well-armed ROMAN SOLDIERS.

LIVIA

stares at the Roman troops in shock.

LIVIA
What is this?

(CONTINUED)

20A CONTINUED: (2)

20A

XENA

You didn't think Augustus was just going to sit back and let you take his throne, did you? When he heard what you were up to he was more than happy to send a few reinforcements. I paid a little visit to Ostia last night and asked Eli's followers to take a short vacation.

Livia's face is a mask of rage. With a roar, she comes at Xena swinging the chakram. Xena does the same. It's a SUPER-FAST and FURIOUS exchange of slices and parries. All the while, the battle rages around them. Senetus and his men engage Gabrielle, Virgil and Augustus' troops.

ON XENA AND LIVIA

as their acrobatic battle carries them up into the rafters high above the sanctuary. SPARKS fly from the chakram halves as they strike each other. Suddenly, the CHAKRAM HALVES LOCK TOGETHER. Xena and Livia find themselves face to face, neither one willing to let go of the chakram. A vicious tug of war begins with each fighter beating the hell out of the other with their free hands while they balance on the narrow beams. Below...

GABRIELLE AND SENETUS

trade sword blows. Nearby, Virgil fights with a vengeance, brutally cutting down anyone in his way. Gabrielle sends Senetus sprawling. Virgil spots the downed Roman captain. He spins and plunges his sword into Senetus.

GABRIELLE

Virgil!

Virgil looks up at Gabrielle. There is no remorse in his eyes as he pulls his sword from the dead Roman and leaps back into the fray.

ON THE BALCONY

Ares frowns to see Livia's troops are taking a beating. *

ARES

Let's heat things up. *

He hurls a couple of LIGHTNING BOLTS down into the fight. *

(CONTINUED)

20A CONTINUED: (3)

20A

THE LIGHTNING BOLTS

*

EXPLODE amongst the Roman reinforcements, sending Augustus' men flying.

(CONTINUED)

20A CONTINUED: (4)

20A

XENA AND LIVIA

continue to battle over the chakram when Xena sees Ares blowing up the troops. As Livia gives a hard pull on the chakram, Xena lets it separate. Livia falls back, losing her grip on her chakram half and plummeting to the floor. Xena leaps down and stands over her, the razor-sharp chakram blade ready to strike. Livia gazes up at Xena.

*
*
*

LIVIA

Come on, Mother. Do it.

Xena stares down at her daughter, wrestling with her decision. Then she drops the chakram! Livia leaps to her feet and grabs her sword. In an instant, the blade is at Xena's throat.

XENA

(a prayer)

Eli. Save my daughter. I couldn't.

(to Livia)

I love you.

Xena closes her eyes. Livia swings. As the sword arcs toward Xena's neck, time suddenly SLOWS...

ARES

watches from the balcony, rapt.

GABRIELLE

sees Livia about to kill Xena. She cries out...

GABRIELLE

(slowed down)

Noooooo!

But just before Livia's sword makes contact, A CIRCLE OF BRIGHT WHITE LIGHT forms on Xena's forehead and SHOOTS OUTWARD, shining into Livia's eyes. Blinded, she halts her sword as we go in TIGHT ON LIVIA'S EYES.

FLASH CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

