

Xena: Warrior Princess

"Sticks and Stones"

production #V1616

episode 11

by

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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. AMPHIPOLIS - XENA'S TAVERN - DAY

Xena has her arms full, carrying a keg of ale into her childhood tavern home. Those friendly AMPHIPOLIANS nod hello along the way.

NEIGHBOR #1

Are you going to re-open the tavern,
Xena?

XENA

Thinking about it. Why, is your
throat getting dry?

NEIGHBOR #1

Always...

The Neighbor opens the gate for Xena as a nosy AUNT BEA-TYPE waves from next door.

NEIGHBOR #2

Tell Gabrielle I have those herbs she
wanted.

Xena nods in polite recognition, but enough is enough as she heads into--

CUT TO:

INT. XENA'S TAVERN - DAY

Xena finds GABRIELLE and SARAH sitting on top of a tavern table, opposite each other, in the lotus position. Gab is walking Sarah through some Mendhi moves.

GABRIELLE

You've got to be very aware of your
body...clear your mind...

SARAH

How am I supposed to clear my mind?

GABRIELLE

You can't think about it. You just
let it happen.

Xena approaches gently.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XENA

The power of Mendhi isn't for beginners, Gabrielle. A little knowledge could be a dangerous thing.

GABRIELLE

Don't worry.

(showing her palms)

No paint, no lines, no Mendhi. We're just using it to meditate.

Xena moves on. PUSH IN on Gabrielle as she concentrates.

GABRIELLE

Let's try it again. Focus...clear your mind...feel the energy that passes throughout your body...let your mind fall deeper and deeper into relaxation...

A delicate hand reaches out to Gabrielle's...Gab opens her eyes to see--

NAIYIMA

is sitting in Sarah's place.

GABRIELLE

Naiyima...?

NAIYIMA

Stay focused, Gabrielle. You're in a state of meditation with me. Come...

Naiyima takes both her hands, and with a karmic FLASH--

CUT TO:

EXT. AMPHIPOLIS STREET - DAY

Gab finds herself standing with Naiyima on the street outside the tavern, and boy, is it a nightmare: Walls fill the air. The sky is blood red. The DENIZENS are either fighting, committing brutal acts, or lying dead in the streets. Carrion birds watch TWO THUGS drag a SLAVE up the blood-stained steps surrounding a giant STATUE OF ALTI. Everyone kneels to the statue.

GABRIELLE

Alti...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NAIYIMA

This is the future as Alti would have it. All this will come to pass unless you stop her.

GABRIELLE

But...where is she?

NAIYIMA

She's at the very beginning of time...you must go there now to stop her.

Naiyima opens her palms -- two Mendhi designs on them GLOW.

GABRIELLE

Wait...Xena is still...

NAIYIMA

Your bond with Xena is what Alti wants to destroy...she will pit your first incarnations against each other. They are primitive people, they're helpless against Alti's power.

Gab hesitates.

NAIYIMA

You only have this chance, Gabrielle. You must switch places with your first incarnation and form your bond with Xena before Alti tears it apart.

Naiyima holds her palms up, Gab hesitates, then places her palms against Naiyima's...ENERGY bursts from their palms.

CUT TO:

INT. XENA'S TAVERN - DAY

Sarah reacts as the meditating Gabrielle's palms GLOW with the Mendhi design.

SARAH

Gabrielle...?

Gabrielle collapses.

SARAH

Xena!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Xena comes on the scene as they try to snap Gab out of it. Gab is unconscious, grunting/panting in a primitive manner. Xena and Sarah react.

CUT TO:

INT. PREHISTORIC CAVE - DAY

Gabrielle SNAPS into consciousness in the hairy arms of an amorous CROMAG. She rolls out of his grasp.

GABRIELLE

Get off!

Gabrielle is in a prehistoric cave, wearing animal skins, and wild hair. Her Cromag mate gives an angry growl and dives on Gab again. Gabrielle wrestles the hulking brute.

GABRIELLE

Get your...filthy hands off me...ya
damn...dirty ape!

As she struggles--

SMASH CUT:

INT. XENA'S TAVERN - DAY

Xena and Sarah hold Gabrielle's unconscious body.

XENA

Gabrielle...?

Gab's eyes flash open -- this is PRIMAL GAB. She gives a raspy, primitive ROAR and swings at Xena and Sarah. They pin her arms as Primal Gab's eyes swim at the strange surroundings. She bites Xena. As they struggle--

CUT TO:

INT. CROMAG CAVE - DAY

Gabrielle is similarly forced to bite the arm of her Cromag mate. She kicks her way out of the Cromag's grip and rolls free. Gab reacts to the cave paintings, etc.

EXT. CROMAG CAMP - DAY

Gab stumbles outside into the light--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Where am I? GABRIELLE

Gab reacts to the other CROMAGS, this place is definitely prehistoric.

When am I...? GABRIELLE

CUT TO:

EXT. PREHISTORIC FOREST - DAY

ALTI crouches in the brush to spy on--

EXT. WATERING HOLE

There is a group of NEANDERTHALS, fighting over a kill, tearing and devouring the raw flesh. Fighting the fiercest for her piece of flesh is--

PRIMAL XENA

As Alti smiles at this bizarre sight--

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. TAVERN - DAY

Xena and Sarah struggle with Primal Gab and she tries to bite them.

SARAH

What's wrong with her?

XENA

I don't know.

SARAH

I've heard the Furies will drive people insane...

XENA

This isn't the Furies. This isn't even Gabrielle...

They're each holding one of Gab's arms -- Gab flips backwards out of their grip, lands, growling. Xena goes slow.

XENA

Easy...we're not trying to hurt you.

Primal Gab is like a cornered animal, feeling along the walls in panic, knocking things over.

XENA

She's going to hurt herself. Sarah, get some rope from the stables...

Still feeling along the walls, Primal Gab moves right past the closed door, she doesn't even know it's a door.

XENA

Easy...easy...

Suddenly, the door opens and nosey Neighbor #2 walks in.

NEIGHBOR #2

Is something wrong, I heard--

Primal Gab, startled by the sudden appearance, leaps over the Neighbor, bowling her over.

XENA

Gabrielle!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As Xena pursues--

CUT TO:

EXT. PREHISTORIC LANDSCAPE - DAY

The Cromag people surround Gabrielle, what's the trouble here? These people have no language, only a series of complicated grunts and gestures. Gab's Cromag mate comes out from the cave, pissed. He grunts a complaint to another Cromag, apparently Gab's CROMAG FATHER. Gab's Dad shoves her toward her mate. Gab backs off.

GABRIELLE

I have a headache.

The Father is furious. A female Cromag, apparently Gab's MOTHER, pulls her away before anyone gets hurt, grunting a warning to the others.

She pulls Gab away and encourages her to join her in her work, softening pelts by slamming them with rocks.

GABRIELLE

You guys don't exactly chatter away,
do you?

Gab's Mom is confused at Gabrielle's power of speech, touches Gab's mouth in wonder...and worry. Gabrielle tries to make her understand with mucho gesturing.

GABRIELLE

I have to find my friend. You
understand? Friend.

(looking around)

I wonder if she's in this clan.

Gab starts to move off, her "Mom" pulls her back to her work.

GABRIELLE

I'd like to help you with the ironing,
but I've got to find Xena, wherever
she is...

Gab looks at all the other Cromags going about their work...the daunting nature of Gab's quest dawning--

GABRIELLE

...or whoever she is...

CUT TO:

EXT. PREHISTORIC WATERING HOLE - DAY

The Neanderthals fight like rabid dogs over their shares of the kill. Primal Xena has ripped off her pound of flesh and crouches away from the others to gnaw on it. Then she sees her Neanderthal PAL has a bigger piece -- she swipes it out of his hands. He roars in protest, but Primal Xena shouts him down. Primal Xena's obviously the boss.

ALTI

It's a little on the rare side, don't you think?

Alti approaches the pack. They form ranks, parting for Primal Xena to investigate this stranger.

ALTI

The mighty Warrior Princess. Such humble beginnings, Xena. I've come a long way to find you.

Primal Xena is fascinated by Alti's power of speech, watching her mouth move, trying to imitate.

XENA

Yooo.

ALTI

This is too delicious. You are the creature that becomes my eternal nemesis. You don't even know we're enemies.

Primal Xena circles Alti suspiciously, sniffing and thumping her.

ALTI

I've lived a hundred different lifetimes, Xena, and in every one, there you are, in some form, you and your little soul mate, teaming up against me. But this is the beginning, you aren't soul mates yet. And if I can get you to kill her...you never will be. And no one will stand against me.

Xena suddenly SHOVES Alti, challenging.

ALTI

Initiation ritual. I must prove myself to join your pack. How primitive.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Xena pushes her again, harder. Alti bristles.

ALTI

When in Rome...

Primal Xena swings, Alti grabs her hand and--

CLIP: V0624 The Ides of March - crucifixion scene. Xena gets a nail SLAMMED into her palm.

BACK TO SCENE

Primal Xena pulls back her hand in bewildered pain.

ALTI

I can choose pain from any of your future lives. And you've lived a lot of pain, Xena.

Raging, Primal Xena winds up again, but Alti gestures--

CLIP: V1404 Who's GURKHAN? - Xena is slugged by the prison guard.

BACK TO SCENE

Primal Xena is sent reeling back. She scrambles to her feet, angry.

ALTI

You never could match my powers, Xena, in any form. You certainly can't in this one.

The other Neanderthals grumble at the display. Primal Xena sees the worry in the ranks, knows she's going to lose her pack if she doesn't beat this broad down. She picks up her club -- but Alti bows in deference.

ALTI

I don't want to fight you, Xena. I want to work together. For now.

Primal Xena looks Alti up and down suspiciously. Alti keeps her supplicating posture until Primal Xena thunks her shoulder with gruff acceptance. She grunts for the rest of the pack to move out. Alti walks with the pack.

ALTI

I must be in the club.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

As they continue on--

CUT TO:

EXT. AMPHIPOLIS - STREET - DAY

Primal Gab runs, disoriented at the "modern" world around her.

CUT TO:

EXT. AMPHIPOLIS - STREET - ELSEWHERE - DAY

Xena and Sarah spot Gab as she enters an alleyway.

XENA

There--

CUT TO:

EXT. AMPHIPOLIS - ALLEYWAY - DAY

Primal Gab goes down an alleyway, is immediately blocked by FOUR DRUNKEN BRUTES, including the inexplicably surly and nasty Neighbor #1.

NEIGHBOR #1

Well...my next door neighbor. Are you lost?

Primal Gab backs away growling, but Neighbor #1 grabs her and throws her into his pack of thugs.

NEIGHBOR #1

Don't go yet, we've hardly gotten to know each other.

Xena appears out of nowhere and slams the Guy against the wall.

XENA

You're not being very neighborly.

NEIGHBOR #1

(snarling to the others)

Let her go.

They release Primal Gab, who runs off. Xena must release the Neighbor to lasso the fleeing Gabrielle. The Thugs VANISH. As Sarah helps Xena bind the wild Primal Gab--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SARAH

Those were the people next door.
What's wrong with them?

XENA

I don't know. The whole town is
acting like animals.
(lifting Gab to her feet)
First thing's first, let's figure out
what happened to her.

As they steer Gabrielle back home--

CUT TO:

EXT. BLUFF OVERLOOKING CROMAG CAMP - DAY

Alti is drawing Primal Xena and her pack to a bluff
overlooking the Cromag camp.

ALTI

This way...I have something to show
you...

Alti points to the camp below. Primal Xena looks down -- she
sees these guys have more food, more pelts, everything.

ALTI

Look at how much they have. Ripe for
the taking.

Primal Xena's eyes glow. Alti gloats aloud, not caring
whether Xena understands or not.

ALTI

And down there in that clan is the
first incarnation of your precious
little soul mate. Always appealing to
your good side, turning you against
me. Once you've killed her, I'll be
free to shape destiny any way I wish.
(pointing)
There she is -- you see?

ANGLE GAB

She is spearing fish in a shallow pool, trying to show the
procedure to a FEMALE CROMAG. The female inexplicably backs
in fear from Gabrielle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WITH PRIMAL XENA

her eyes narrow, fascinated by the spear. She regards her own club, tosses it aside. She strips the branches off of a prehistoric plant -- resulting in a wicked spear. Xena's troops do likewise.

ALTI

Now you're talking. And just to make sure...

Alti lifts a rock and retrieves a PIT VIPER. It wiggles in her hand.

ALTI

A little poison for insurance...

Xena watches with fascination to Alti's applying the snake poison to the spear.

CUT TO:

EXT. CROMAG CAMP - DAY

Gabrielle spears a fish and shows it to one of the MALE CROMAGS, who is fruitlessly trying to catch one with his bare hands.

GABRIELLE

You'll catch more fish with this.

The male Cromag takes great offense to the gesture, growls to some of the other Men. Six or eight of the Cromags surround her, angry to see Gab holding the little spear.

GABRIELLE

What?

They grab the spear out of Gab's hand.

GABRIELLE

Let me guess...girls aren't supposed to touch weapons.

The Males surround her threateningly.

GABRIELLE

You know what? Xena's not in this clan...and I've had enough of your hospitality.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They block Gab's escape, but before anything goes down, a WARNING CONCH BLAST sounds. Pandemonium as the clan falls back and takes up defensive positions at the mouth of the cave.

THE NEANDERTHAL PACK

appears at the edge of the camp.

GABRIELLE

What is it?

Gab's Cromag Mom pulls her back into the cave. Gab's ready to fight, but the Males that guard the entrance shove her inside--

INT. CROMAG CAVE - DAY

Gab stays ready to fight while the other Females huddle a corner of the cave. The pack of Neanderthals come on the scene, all carrying their new spears. The Cromag Men exchange concerned looks at the strange new weapons. They only have clubs.

The forces clash in a primitive melee. This isn't martial arts, this is raw aggression, like dogs fighting.

GABRIELLE

reacts to the brutal bloodshed. She reaches for a stick of firewood, just in case.

ONE NEANDERTHAL

breaks through the line and charges at the Females. Gab pushes the Females behind her.

GABRIELLE

Get back!

Gabrielle leaps up and disarms him, spin-kicking him away and grabbing his spear, mid-air. The other Women react in amazement at Gabrielle's prowess.

Gabrielle dives into the fray, holding the line at the cave entrance. Clubs and spears everywhere. Gab is pounced on by a huge Neanderthal, tumbles to the ground with him. As she frees herself, she sees in silhouette against the cave entrance -- a Neanderthal pulling away her "Mother."

GABRIELLE

Let go of her!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gab picks up the spear and throws it -- catching the Neanderthal in the shoulder. As her foe turns, snarling, to reveal--

GABRIELLE

Xena...

On Gab's reaction...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. CROMAG CAVE - DAY - CONTINUING

Resume as Primal Xena pulls the spear out of her shoulder, snarling at Gab.

GABRIELLE

Xena...?

Alti battles her way into the cavern, points toward Gabrielle.

ALTI

That's the one! Get her!

Like Primal Xena needs encouragement. She charges Gabrielle, who uses her skills to deflect Xena's spear thrusts.

GABRIELLE

Xena! It's me!

Gab must land a few blows to keep Primal Xena at bay, kicking her back, etc. (These are the blows Alti will use later in Primal Xena's brainwashing.)

GABRIELLE

I don't want to hurt you!

Alti, mid-fight, hears Gabrielle speaking.

ALTI

You! Who brought you here?!

GABRIELLE

Alti?

Alti winds up a psychic knuckle-ball, but gets double-teamed by Cromags. Gabrielle thinks fast. She gestures to Primal Xena, daring to chase her.

GABRIELLE

C'mon!

Gabrielle runs out of the cave. Primal Xena gives chase, snatching up her spear. As she does, she shrugs in pain at her shoulder wound--

MATCH CUT:

EXT. OUTSIDE XENA'S TAVERN - DAY

Xena and Sarah drag the hand-tied Primal Gab back to the tavern. As they enter, the formerly-friendly Neighbor #2 barks at them.

NEIGHBOR #2

That girl is dangerous! They should lock her up!

XENA

She's not herself.

NEIGHBOR #2

She's a beast! She should be in prison!

Xena reacts to this sudden rudeness as they haul Primal Gab inside--

INT. XENA'S TAVERN - DAY

Xena and Sarah struggle with Primal Gab.

SARAH

What's happening with everyone in this town?

XENA

I don't know. This is more than just Gabrielle. Something's affecting the way everything is supposed to be...

Xena examines Primal Gab's palm. There is the Mendhi design, imprinted from Naiyima's palm when she sent Gab back.

XENA

Mendhi...reincarnation. This is one of Gabrielle's former lives, occupying her body.

Xena steers Primal Gab into a chair and ties her further.

XENA

We only have one enemy that can attack anywhere in the karmic cycle. Alti.

SARAH

How do we get Gabrielle back?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XENA
I've got to go back to wherever she's
from. That's where I'll find
Gabrielle. And Alti.
(re: the Mendhi design)
And this is the road map.

SARAH
If things are out of balance in the
past...that could be why everything is
suddenly changing here.

XENA
Then we don't have much time. Go to
Gabrielle's horse, in her pack is a
wooden box with her Mendhi paint.

Sarah runs off to do that. Xena examines Primal Gab's Mendhi
design closely--

XENA
I'm coming, Gabrielle...

CUT TO:

EXT. PREHISTORIC CANYON - DAY

Primal Xena is coming all right, right on the heels of
Gabrielle. Play the chase as Gabrielle stays ahead of the
increasingly groggy, wildly-swinging Xena.

GABRIELLE
Xena...it's me! It's Gabrielle!

Xena takes another dizzy swing at Gabrielle. She staggers,
throws the spear before collapsing. Gab catches the spear,
and seeing Xena's condition, checks the tip of the spear, she
can taste the poison. Uh-oh.

Gab approaches the groggy, but still rabid Primal Xena.

GABRIELLE
The spear has poison, Xena. I have to
get it out of you.

But groggy Primal Xena is still in kill mode, swinging and
growling at Gab as she gets closer.

GABRIELLE
You're going to die, if I don't.
You've got to let me help you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gab gets closer as Primal Xena slowly gets weaker. Primal Xena reacts as Gab sucks the poison out of her shoulder, but can barely struggle. Primal Xena passes out as Gabrielle finishes up. Gab puts a mud pack on the wound.

GABRIELLE

I think I got it all. And if I know you, Xena, you'll walk it off in a half hour.

Gab looks at the unconscious Primal Xena sadly, stroking her hair.

GABRIELLE

But you're not really Xena, are you? You're just the beginning of her. I don't know how I'm supposed to reach you.

Then Gab sees a pack of Neanderthals pursuing through the woods. She starts to drag Xena away, but it's no use.

GABRIELLE

I can't protect you like this. You'll have to stay with your clan a little longer. I'll find a way to reach you, Xena.

Gab kisses Xena quickly and disappears. The Neanderthals find Xena's unconscious form and carry her back.

CUT TO:

INT. XENA'S TAVERN - DAY

Our Xena has applied the Mendhi design to her palms and is ready to go back to the past. Sarah is testing the heavy chain they've put on her boot.

XENA

I don't know who or what you'll be dealing with when I go back, but if she's anything like that...

(re: the struggling Primal Gab)

...you'll have your hands full.

Sarah gulps a little, pulls a skillet within reach.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XENA

Try not to do any damage? I hope to
come back into this body in one piece.
Gabrielle, too.

SARAH

I'll be careful, Xena.

Xena begins her Mendhi motions, the designs on her palms
GLOWING. But as she reaches a point of meditation...NAIYIMA
reaches out to her as she did with Gabrielle in the Teaser.

NAIYIMA

Xena...you aren't prepared to face
Alti in the past...

XENA

I'm going to bring Gabrielle back,
Naiyima.

NAIYIMA

Even if you do, you'll have no home to
return to. Alti is changing all of
destiny...history itself. She is at
her most powerful in the past, Xena.

XENA

I've beaten Alti before.

NAIYIMA

This will be the final battle, Xena.
Her soul or yours will survive.

XENA

Then let me face her.

NAIYIMA

It is your destiny...but remember
this: when Alti's power is its
greatest, she will be at her weakest.
That is the only way to beat her.

Naiyima VANISHES. Xena reacts to a faraway SCREAM...SARAH'S.

XENA

Sarah?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Xena pops out of the meditative state to see Primal Gab has ripped out of her binds and pounced on Sarah. Xena jumps up to help, but her CHAIN stops her short. On the predicament--

CUT TO:

EXT. PREHISTORIC FOREST - DAY

Alti is on a small rise, Neanderthals gathering around her like she's giving the Sermon on the Mount. At her touch, they jump back, in amazement.

ALTI

I have all the knowledge of the ages.
And I can give it to you...or at least
enough to start building my world.

Those who have been "touched" stagger away, overwhelmed. Alti holds on to one Neanderthal's arm, illustrating a point.

ALTI

But...I can bring pain just as easily
as knowledge.

Alti ZAPS him--

CLIP: The Neanderthal is whacked in the Cromag fight from page 13.

BACK TO SCENE

The Neanderthal is bowled over. The others react in fear and amazement. Alti turns to one of her people.

ALTI

First, you people need to learn
language.

She ZAPS the guy with a psychic FLASH, he reacts in total amazement.

ALTI

What is your goddess' name?

NEANDERTHAL

Ah...ah...Alti...

ALTI

And thou shalt have no other god
before me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Primal Xena is led on the scene as she shakes off the effects of the poison.

ALTI

Did you kill your accursed soulmate yet?

(scanning Primal Xena's thoughts)

No.

Primal Xena doesn't like the looks of Alti's growing ranks or Alti's bossing her around. She thumps herself, she's in charge her.

ALTI

I know, you're used to being the leader. Well, this is going to be my world now. You just live in it.

Primal Xena picks up a stone ax and faces off against her. The other Neanderthals circle around.

ALTI

I'm not your enemy, remember? She is...

Alti gestures -- sends a PSYCHIC BLAST--

CLIP: Gabrielle throwing the spear on page 14.

CLIP: Gabrielle landing blows in her fight with Primal Xena on page 15.

After a few rounds of this, Xena picks herself up, growling. Alti smiles.

ALTI

Your primitive minds are so easily molded. Now...

(tossing her the ax)

...take your revenge.

Xena picks up her stone ax and marches off. Alti smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. XENA'S TAVERN - DAY

Xena struggles to shove Primal Gab into a room. She shuts the heavy door. Sarah is recuperating from Primal Gab's attack.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SARAH
You think that will hold her?

XENA
We used to call that "the drunk room."
It'll hold her.

Primal Gab pounds violently from the other side.

SARAH
You better hurry, Xena.

Xena re-chains her boot to the floor and performs the Mendhi moves. As she begins to GLOW and transport--

CUT TO:

EXT. NEAR THE WATERING HOLE - DAY

Gabrielle is staying low, watching Alti's Neanderthal army move out. Then she reacts to a noise, turns to see Primal Xena behind her.

GABRIELLE
Xena...?

We wonder for a second if this is our Xena, but when she raises that stone ax, we have the answer. Gab rolls just in time to avoid the blow -- the ax splintering a rock. Gab stumbles backwards into the water.

GABRIELLE
Xena...wait a minute...

Primal Xena swings the ax at Gabrielle, batting her around the watering hole. Gab doesn't stand a chance.

GABRIELLE
Xena...you've got to listen to
me...It's Gabrielle...

But there's no stopping Primal Xena as she beats Gab down. She tosses her ax aside and moves in for the kill, drowning Gab in the watering hole. Play the painful beats as Gab no longer struggles.

Primal Xena shakes Gab's rag doll body. Then she drops her in the water, noticing the Mendhi design GLOWING into existence on her palms..

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And OUR XENA blinks into her prehistoric body. She looks at her handiwork, pulling the limp Gabrielle out of the water.

XENA

Gabrielle...

On Xena's anguish--

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. WATERING HOLE - DAY - CONTINUING

Xena pulls the limp Gabrielle to land. Play the suspense as Xena tries to resuscitate her. All the worse because she knows it was her hands that did it.

XENA

Gabrielle...c'mon...

Xena uses every technique she knows. Finally, Gabrielle coughs up the water, groans back to life. Xena holds her.

XENA

It's okay...you're back now.

Gabrielle coughs, reacts to Xena.

GABRIELLE

So are you.

Gabrielle sits up slowly, feeling her skull--

GABRIELLE

In case you're interested, your first incarnation hits just as hard as you.

(then thinking)

So...what's happened to her?

CUT TO:

INT. TAVERN - ROOM - DAY

Sarah is backing away from a growling Primal Xena, who moves on her menacingly, then jerks when her chain runs out.

SARAH

Sorry about that...

Suddenly Primal Gab smashes through the "Drunk Room" door and tumbles to the ground with Sarah. Sarah manages to throw Primal Gab off of her. Primal Gab scrambles to her feet, reacts to Primal Xena, scrambles out the door.

SARAH

Gabrielle!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sarah runs after her, but is tripped up as Primal Xena grabs her leg. Sarah slips out of her shoe to escape Primal Xena's grip. She runs outside--

EXT. XENA'S TAVERN - DAY

Sarah bursts outside -- Primal Gab is gone -- then Sarah reacts, dumbfounded...

THE CITIZENS OF AMPHIPOLIS

have changed, everyone shuffles Neanderthal-like. FOUR MEN beat up a VICTIM, laughing, drinking. Another BRUTE drags a WOMAN by the ankle behind him. TWO MEN sitting at a table suddenly explode in a fight like a couple of snarling dogs.

SARAH

What's happening...?

Suddenly Sarah is conked on the head with Primal Xena's heavy chain. Primal Xena steps out, looks around at her new world. She steps over Sarah and moves on.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEAR THE WATERING HOLE - DAY

Xena tends to the recouping Gab.

GABRIELLE

I'll be all right in a minute. You're shaking worse than me.

XENA

I thought I had killed you.

GABRIELLE

It wasn't you, Xena. She was more like the very beginning of who you are, before we came together. Before we became soul mates.

XENA

I don't like the way I was before we were soul mates.

GABRIELLE

Can I just say that I don't either?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XENA

Our first incarnations must have come together here, in this time.

GABRIELLE

Naiyima says that's exactly what Alti wants to prevent. She wanted to destroy our bond before we ever formed it.

Then Gab is pensive.

XENA

What?

GABRIELLE

I wonder if our souls would have ever come together at all if you and I hadn't come back here to do this.

Xena thinks about for half a second, then starts repairing the shattered stone ax.

XENA

You can work that out in your next scroll. What's important now is Alti is changing destiny, and we have to defeat her here, in this time...or we won't have a world to go home to.

Xena keeps working, lowering her voice a little.

XENA

Someone's coming up behind me.

A few Cromags approach, some injured and limping. They see Xena and become threatening. Gab stands, indicating Xena.

GABRIELLE

No...no! Friend...friend...

XENA

I don't think they understand. Who are these guys?

GABRIELLE

They're one of the clans in this area. They're at war with another clan. Your clan.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XENA

Great.

(noticing)

They aren't exactly talkative.

GABRIELLE

They don't have much of a language.

XENA

They're hurt. This one's got a
dislocated shoulder.

Xena approaches, the Cromag backs off suspiciously.

XENA

It's okay...

Xena moves slow, pops the Guy's shoulder back in expertly.
The Cromag reacts in pain, then sudden relief and amazement.
The others murmur.

XENA

We're going to need all the help we
can get if we're going up against Alti.Xena picks up her ax, then thumps the Leader, indicates the
other Men and Gabrielle, then thumps her own chest as the new
leader. Xena points back to the Cromag valley where the men
came from, then walks off.

XENA

Let's go.

The Cromags murmur among themselves, then follow Xena.
Gabrielle can only shake her head.

GABRIELLE

Born leader...

Gab follows them--

CUT TO:

EXT. CROMAG CAMP - DAY

Alti has annexed the Cromag camp. The Neanderthals are busy,
no longer shuffling about, they are as organized as worker
ants: some hustle the Cromag prisoners, some are building
huts, some are carrying heavy stone slabs into the cave. One
Neanderthal drops his end of the slab.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALTI

Be careful! That's for my throne!
Take it into the cave.

Alti snags a passing Neanderthal.

ALTI

I told you to help the others carve my
statue.

NEANDERTHAL

I...I don't know how...

Alti gives him a PSYCHIC ZAP. FLASHES of hammer-and-chisel
close-ups flood into his brain.

ALTI

Now you do. Get to work.

Alti releases the overwhelmed Neanderthal and follows the slab-
bearers into the cave.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLUFF OVERLOOKING THE CROMAG CAMP - DAY

Xena and Gab look down at the activity below.

XENA

Alti's been busy. We need to get
closer.

GABRIELLE

She looks pretty dug in, Xena.

XENA

Naiyima told me..."When Alti's power
is its greatest, she will be at her
weakest." I won't know when to strike
unless I can see what she's up to.
You're going to be my prisoner. They
won't know I'm not one of them.

GABRIELLE

Alti will.

XENA

But she's not expecting us, either.
This could be our only chance to get
the drop on her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Xena starts to "escort" Gab away. The Cromags bristle.

XENA

It's okay...it's okay. Stay here.

They head to--

CUT TO:

EXT. CROMAG COMPOUND - DAY

Xena escorts "prisoner" Gab through the activity.

GABRIELLE

These people didn't know how to build anything.

XENA

I'll bet Alti got them up to speed pretty fast.

GABRIELLE

She's making the world in her own image...just like Nalyima said.

XENA

(pointing)

That isn't her image...

Xena is pointing at base of Alti's statue. (The main part with Alti is still veiled, this is the defeated Xena portion at her feet.)

GABRIELLE

Xena, is that supposed to be you?

Oops -- the passing Neanderthals hear the name.

NEANDERTHAL

Xena...Xena is the enemy of our goddess.

Xena reacts -- these guys can talk.

XENA

My prisoner will say anything, she knows she's going to be executed.

More Neanderthals gather around suspiciously.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEANDERTHAL
Her kind can't talk. Our goddess
hasn't given them the power.

XENA
That's why I'm taking this one to her.

The Neanderthal isn't buying it.

NEANDERTHAL
Take her.

The Neanderthals move for Gab. That's it, Xena swings into action sending Neanderthals flying. Her and Gab are back-to-back, fighting off the horde, winning, when suddenly--

XENA

is paralyzed in pain, screaming,

CLIP: V1409 The Ring - Xena gets gripped in the rib cage by Grindl.

BACK TO SCENE

Our Xena drops to reveal a smirking Alti behind her.

ALTI
You came a long way to just to die,
Xena...

Xena picks herself up and tries to charge Alti. Every few steps, she hits Xena with a FLASH of a TRAUMATIC EPISODE CLIP--

With these crippling blows, Xena arrives at Alti's feet, bloody and crawling. Alti stands victoriously over her.

ALTI
The thing about fighting in this
lifetime, Xena, is that you have
thousands of future lives -- all full
of pain and brutality. And it's quite
a selection.

Xena collapses. The Neanderthals drag Gabrielle to Alti.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALTI

Chain her up with the rest of her kind.
(leaning in to Gabrielle)
You see, loyal bard, my new world will
need a race of slaves. You and your
ancestors should do just fine...

As they clamp the chains on Gabrielle--

SMASH CUT:

EXT. AMPHIPOLIS STREET - DAY

Primal Gab takes a corner to run right into a pack of modern-day Neanderthals, including the now even more beastly next door Neighbor. They put the grip on her fast.

NEIGHBOR #1

Where are you going, slave?

Primal Gab struggles in his grip.

NEIGHBOR #1

This slave's owner failed to break her spirit.

Sarah, pursuing Primal Gab, runs up--

SARAH

Let go of her!

NEIGHBOR #1

There's another one. What's going on today?

SARAH

I said let go of her!

Sarah slugs Neighbor #1. He feels his jaw as the others grab her, too.

NEIGHBOR #1

Do you know what happens to slaves who strike people?

(gripping her throat)
The sentence is death...

As they drag her off.

CUT TO:

EXT. CROMAG COMPOUND - DAY

In the center of a ring of Neanderthals, Alti struts as Xena writhes in agony in the dirt. Alti ZAPS her with psychic blow after blow. Gabrielle, in chains, tries to comfort Xena, but of course there's nothing she can do.

GABRIELLE

You're killing her!

ALTI

If I wanted to kill her, I could have done that in your time.

Alti offers a stone knife to Gabrielle.

ALTI

No, killing her is your job. Why don't you put her out of her misery?

GABRIELLE

You know I won't do that.

ALTI

Not now, perhaps. Maybe after a few long days of this.

GABRIELLE

If I kill her, then our souls won't join to fight you in the next life. And that's what you're afraid of.

Alti sends Gabrielle flying back with a PSYCHIC BLAST.

ALTI

I'll try something else...

Alti leans down to hiss at the writhing Xena. Xena stares blankly at her own vanquished image at the foot of Xena's statue. Alti grins.

ALTI

Don't approve of your likeness, Xena?
I thought I'd make your legend the
very source of evil...vanquished by me
of course.

Xena's groggy wheels turn.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALTI

Xena...you know I can hammer away at your mind until there's nothing left of your will. You know it will be painful, and you know I'll win. Why don't you surrender your will to me now, you can rule by my side. I'll blast that nagging conscience of yours right out of your head. All you have to do is stop fighting it and let me in.

Xena's eyes search Alti's face blankly...she's mad with pain.

ALTI

You're a sensible woman. I'll let you think about it.

Alti walks off. Gabrielle gathers herself and goes to Xena.

GABRIELLE

Don't give up, Xena.

XENA

No...that's exactly what I'm going to do. I think I understand what Naiyima was telling me...

(calling to Alti)

Alti...I'll give you my will...

ALTI

You know I can see in your mind. There's no fooling me, Xena. There's no tricks.

XENA

I give you my will...

Alti kicks Gabrielle away and grips Xena's head. Xena screams as Alti drains her mind. Xena drops, recoups and finally staggers to her feet.

Gab waits for the results. Xena drops at Alti's feet, hanging on like some long-lost puppy.

XENA

My mistress...

Alti, suspicious, checks Xena's mind carefully, then smiles, grabbing her back by the hair. Her suspicion fades.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALTI

No...it's true...Xena...at long last
you are mine.

On this disturbing scene....

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. CROMAG COMPOUND - DAY - CONTINUING

Alti helps the groggy Xena stand.

ALTI

Xena, Warrior Princess...and her will
is mine.(turning her around)
And you already know what I want you
to do first.

Alti hands Xena the stone knife. Xena turns to do the job.

GABRIELLE

Xena...?

Then Xena stops, indicates the veiled statue.

XENA

Your altar...she should be the first
to die on it.

ALTI

You're stalling...some trick...

Alti checks Xena's mind once again. She's convinced, but
can't explain it.

ALTI

No...your will is mine. And you've
got an excellent idea.(to some Neanderthals)
Bring her. We'll unveil my graven
image for the sacrifice.

The Neanderthals drag Gabrielle to the altar.

ALTI

(to Gabrielle)

You should be honored. Your blood
will be the first to stain my altar.

They all head to--

CUT TO:

EXT. ALTI'S STATUE - DAY

The huge statue is still veiled. Steps lead up to the foot of the statue where the altar is. Gabrielle is tied there. Alti turns to Xena.

ALTI

You'll do the honors, obviously.

XENA

Yes, mistress.

Xena takes the knife and slowly walks up the steps to the altar. Alti turns to her minions.

ALTI

With this sacrifice, I give my image to the centuries. It will stand for all time, and this place will be the cradle of civilization. My civilization.

Alti gestures. Two Neanderthals pull down the veil to show us the Alti statue. EVERYONE DROPS IN REVERENCE. PRE-LAP a THUNDERCLAP as--

MATCH CUT:

EXT. AMPHIPOLIS STREET - DAY

Sarah reacts -- the sky has turned blood red as she and Primal Gab find themselves being dragged to the weathered statue, past all the kneeling Amphipolians. The steps are stained thick with blood. Carrion birds wait for the leftovers.

SLAVE OWNER

Move aside. These two slaves are for the sacrifice!

Sarah recognizes the figure of the vanquished Xena at the bottom of the statue.

SARAH

That's Xena!

NEAREY--

Primal Xena is fitting in rather well with this violent world. She snatches some food off a Guy's plate, he grabs her arm. They begin to fight, when another Patron points.

PATRON #1

That's Xena!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PATRON #2
 Alti vanquished Xena eons ago...

PATRON #1
 But that's her!

A mob forms, murmuring about Xena, the legendary source of all evil.

PATRON #1
 Take her to the altar!

The mob swamps Primal Xena and drags her to the statue--

CUT TO:

EXT. CROMAG COMPOUND - DAY

Alti stands, feeling the vibe...soaking it all in.

ALTI
 I can feel the flow of destiny in my bones...everything has changed now. From this moment on, my legend never dies. This statue will stand a thousand centuries.
 (turning to Xena)
 And with one slash of the knife, you and your soul mate will never join... or rise against me...in any lifetime.

Xena holds the knife high.

ALTI
 Kill her!

GABRIELLE
 (pleading)
 Xena...

Xena hesitates, blinking. Pissed, Alti approaches, winds up a psychic punch...

ALTI
 Do you need a reminder?

Alti gestures...nothing. She searches Xena's mind and gestures again. Nothing. Xena is snapping out of it. Alti tries to force Xena's hand physically, but Xena stands firm. Alti tries her magic again in vain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALTI

I don't understand. Hundreds of lifetimes...thousands of moments of pain...

XENA

You've changed destiny so much those moments are gone.

(cutting Gab loose)

And with them goes your power!

Xena slugs Alti, sending her flying down the altar steps. Alti calls to her minions.

ALTI

Kill her!

Xena fights the Neanderthals as Gab releases the Cromag slaves. The big Neanderthal/Cromag battle is on.

Xena and Alti pair off and fight up and down the steps of the altar. They bash at each other with their primitive weapons, spears breaking, stone axes shattering. It's not lost on Alti that this is exactly what she was trying to avoid. She's crazed with frustration as she walls away on Xena.

ALTI

Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow... another lifetime...another battle with your damnable soul!

Xena does a brilliant move that sends Alti's weapon flying.

XENA

...and I always win.

ALTI

(spitting back)

And I always come back. Kill me now! I'll just fight you in the next life, or the next, or the last. We're soul mates too, Xena.

XENA

Then we end it here. The power of my soul against yours.

Xena opens her palms -- her Mendhi designs GLOW on her palms. Alti raises her hands, happy to oblige.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALTI

You really think you can win that fight?

They SLAM together, fingers laced like wrestlers, pushing against each other, KARMIC ENERGY screaming from between their hands as they push against each other.

ALTI

Is this what you wanted, Xena? Did you really think your soul contained the power of mine?

XENA

I'm just sick of fighting you time after time. I want to end it now.

ALTI

We will -- and there won't be a thing left of you...body or soul!

Alti pours it on, Xena is faltering, the blinding ENERGY bursts from between their palms. Xena screams.

GABRIELLE

Xena!

Gab runs to back up Xena, pushing against the blinding force of Alti, adding her power to the equation. The karmic ENERGY reaches critical mass and with Alti's SCREAM--

A KARMIC ENERGY SHOCKWAVE

spreads over the fighters. They are all knocked to the ground.

SMASH CUT:

EXT. AMPHIPOLIS STREET - DAY

The karmic shockwave spreads out from Primal Gab and Primal Xena as they struggle with the bloodthirsty mob. The mob is also knocked flat. As the power of the energy burst BLEACHES THE SCREEN--

WHITE OUT:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FADE IN:

CLOSE ON GABRIELLE

as she lies, coming into consciousness, her cheek in the dirt. The first thing she sees is Xena, lying in a similar fashion. They manage weak smiles before they can pick themselves up. When they do...

EXT. AMPHIPOLIS - DAY

The town is back to normal, except for the unconscious Citizens radiating out from our girls. Then they see--

NAIYIMA

who walks gracefully toward them.

GABRIELLE

Naiyima...

NAIYIMA

Your karmic bond is whole again, and with it the destiny of the world.

GABRIELLE

Was Alti destroyed?

NAIYIMA

Thanks to you, Alti's never existed.

They chew on that as Naiyima VANISHES in a ball of light.

GABRIELLE

Never existed?

XENA

(shaking her head)

This reincarnation stuff could give the Furies a run for their money.

SARAH

Gabrielle...?

Sarah wakes up and hugs Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE

Do you think everything's really back to normal, Xena?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XENA

The very fact we're home tells me it is.

The Citizens of Amphipolis get up slowly. As things get back to normal...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CROMAG COMPOUND - DAY

The prehistoric citizens pick themselves up, equally groggy. Alti's statue is crumbled. The Neanderthals are back to their primate mannerisms. They seem to have no memory of what happened, but they start polarizing into their groups again, taking up their weapons. Then one points--

PRIMAL GAB AND PRIMAL XENA

are sitting opposite each other, dazed, near the SMOKING SKELETON of Alti.

The girls examine the Mendhi designs on their palms in wonder. They notice they each have the same design. They touch their matching palms together, smiling primitive smiles.

The other primitives gather around and take the clue from their girls. They put their weapons down, milling amongst each other.

On the new world Xena and Gab have created...

FADE OUT:

THE END