

## Xena: Warrior Princess - Subtext Virtual Season 7



Production #V706 - War's Children

Virtual Airdate - December 5, 2002

**WRITTEN BY**

Melissa Good

**SCREENGRABS**

Judi Mair

**PRODUCED BY**

Carol Stephens

**ARTWORK**

Lucia

**DIRECTED BY**

Denise Byrd

**TITLE GRAPHIC**

Linda (Calli)

Xena: Warrior Princess is a trademark and copyright of StudiosUSA and Renaissance Pictures.  
This is a fan based not-for-profit work of fiction and is not intended to infringe upon their rights.

## TEASER

FADE IN

### INT. INN BEDROOM - NIGHT

The inn is old, and shabby. There is a hole in the wall, and the window, what's left of it, is cracked and hanging open. There is a pallet near the wall, and on the pallet is sprawled a woman dressed in dirty leathers. A wineskin lays empty on the floor next to her, and it is obvious the woman has passed out from drinking.

It is VARIA.

Possessions are scattered around the room, including a sword and a bow, tossed forgotten in a corner.

The door to the room opens, making a loud creak. All noise stops, but Varia doesn't stir and after a moment, the door continues to open. Four men enter cautiously. One holds up a torch to see the pallet better.

#### SLAVER #1

Out like a wet match.

#### SLAVER #2

This one's been drinking so much,  
I doubt a cart rolling over her  
would get her up. C'mon.

The four men gag Varia, then they grab Varia's arms and legs, and tie them tightly. They wrestle her into a heavy burlap sack and carry her out of the room, closing the door behind them.

The bow, leaning against the wall, slides down and clatters to the floor, next to the forgotten sword.

CUT TO:

### EXT. FOREST GLADE - NIGHT

In the middle of the forest, near a small brook, XENA and GABRIELLE sit in their campsite. Gabrielle is lying on a pile of furs with her leg in Xena's lap while Xena tends to her healing wound. A fire burns nearby, with a pot hanging over it, and Argo is munching grass near the water.

#### GABRIELLE

How does it look?



#### XENA

Not bad, considering you  
refuse to stay off it.

Gabrielle rolls her eyes. Xena carefully replaces the bandage around her leg, wrapping it expertly and giving Gabrielle a comforting pat on the calf when she finishes.

**GABRIELLE**

No one else does that the way you do.

**XENA**

Yeah? Thought you didn't like my nursing skills.



Gabrielle looks fondly at Xena.

**GABRIELLE**

Well, your bedside manner's gotten a lot better over the years.

**XENA**

*(smirks)*

Depends on whose bed I'm at the side of.

Xena gets up and gives the pot a stir. She walks over to their gear and gets out two wooden dishes, but her attention is on the forest around them. She listens intently, then shakes her head.

**GABRIELLE**

Still hearing things out there? C'mon, Xena. We've got days to go before we're anywhere near Amazon country.

**XENA**

Maybe some of them came to us. I still think Varia was acting strange.



**GABRIELLE**

How could you tell? She's acted differently every time we've met her.

Xena goes to the pot and puts some stew in both bowls, then returns to Gabrielle's side. She gives Gabrielle a bowl and sits down next to her.

**XENA**

Something's just not right.

Gabrielle eats some stew, then points her fork at Xena.

**GABRIELLE**

I know what it is.

Xena looks at her.

**XENA**

You do, huh?

**GABRIELLE**

You're just mad because she blew you off.



**XENA**

What? Gabrielle, don't be ridiculous.

Gabrielle chuckles.

**CUT TO:**

### **EXT. VILLAGE STREET - NIGHT**

A wagon stands in the street, drawn by four horses. The wagon has high walls, and a barred door. Eight men meet by the back of it, and one man opens the door. The rest of them pick up two wrapped burlap bundles and toss them into the wagon, closing the door and locking it afterward.

**SLAVER #1**

That'll do for this run. Let's get a move on.  
We've got dinars to collect!

The men scramble onto the wagon and it starts off through the deserted streets.

**CUT TO:**

### **EXT. FOREST GLADE - NIGHT**

Gabrielle now has her scrolls out, and she is writing on one of them. Across the campsite, on the other side of the fire, Xena is sharpening her sword. Xena watches Gabrielle as she writes - Gabrielle realizes she's being watched and looks up.

**GABRIELLE**

*(teasingly)*

You're not still hearing things, are you?



Xena throws a pebble at her, which Gabrielle ducks.

**XENA**

Matter of fact, I was just thinking about how peaceful it is out here.

**GABRIELLE**

Uh oh.

**XENA**

What?

**GABRIELLE**

Every time you say that, chaos happens.

**XENA**

C'mon, Gabrielle. Give me a break.



The peace is broken by the sound of people moving nearby, including hoof beats, footsteps, and the clinks of chains. A whip cracks. Gabrielle looks at Xena and shakes her head. Gabrielle puts her scrolls away and climbs to her feet, using her staff as Xena clips her sword to her back and dusts her hands off. Gabrielle starts to speak. Xena puts a hand over her mouth.

**XENA**

*(Cont'd)*

Don't say it. You told me so.

Gabrielle chuckles, and they head off into the forest to investigate.

**CUT TO:**

## EXT. FOREST ROAD - NIGHT

A column of people move through the forest. Two men on horses lead, behind them are a line of shackled prisoners. Guards walk alongside the prisoners, and two more men on horses bring up the rear. All the guards are armed with crossbows.

Xena and Gabrielle creep up through the trees, watching the column.

**GABRIELLE**

What is it?

**XENA**

Looks like convicts. Moving them, maybe.

**GABRIELLE**

Great. Nothing we need to get involved in.



Xena grunts in agreement. They watch the last of the prisoners walk by. The prisoner's head turns, as though sensing their presence and they recognize Varia. Xena and Gabrielle look at each other in consternation.

**FADE OUT.**

**END OF TEASER**

## ACT ONE

FADE IN:

### EXT. FOREST ROAD - NIGHT

Xena and Gabrielle gather their things.

**XENA**

You could stay here with Argo.



**GABRIELLE**

I could grow wings and fly, too.  
You think that's happening any time soon?



Xena gives Gabrielle a wryly exasperated look.

**GABRIELLE**

*(Cont'd)*

*(serious)*

Xena, this is an old argument  
I thought we left in the past.

Xena tosses Gabrielle her makeshift staff.

**XENA**

I know. Where I go, you go, right?  
Gabrielle, you're still hurt.

**GABRIELLE**

That's true.

*(beat)*

So it's probably a good idea I stick  
with you so you can protect me.

Xena laughs, and holds her hand out. Gabrielle joins her. They head off after the prisoners together.

CUT TO:

## EXT. SLAVER'S CAMPSITE - LATE NIGHT

The column has stopped for the night. The prisoners are chained to trees in crowded circles. Guards stand around them with crossbows. One guard walks around with a bag, and throws chunks of hard, dried bread to the slaves. Most of the prisoners examine the bread, and discard it as inedible.

### GUARD #1

That's all you'll get. Eat it!

One of the prisoners has worked his ankle shackle loose. He waits for the guard to pass, then stands up and bolts across the camp, heading for the forest. He gets two steps before the nearest guard raises his crossbow and shoots him in the back. The prisoner sprawls to the ground almost at Varia's feet. He cries out in pain as he reaches for the arrow stuck in his spine, then with a shudder, he dies.

### GUARD #1

That's what you're all in for, so pay attention.  
You're nothing but property, understand!

Varia does not react. She keeps her head down. The dead man's ration of bread falls from his fingers and she takes it quickly and hides it. A guard sees her.

### GUARD #2

*(laughs)*

Hey! Fast learner!

The guard grabs Varia by the hair and pulls her head back to look at her. Varia's eyes narrow. The man leans over and kisses her roughly, then shoves her back against the tree.



### GUARD #2

*(Cont'd)*

See you later, sweet thing.

The guards all laugh.

CUT TO:

## EXT. FOREST - OUTSIDE SLAVER'S CAMP - NIGHT

Xena and Gabrielle crouch together behind some bushes, watching.

### XENA

Nice.

### GABRIELLE

What in the world did she get into, Xena?



**XENA**

That's exactly what I'm gonna ask  
her as soon as we get her out of there.

**GABRIELLE**

If we just bust in there, they'll kill those people.



Xena studies the campsite carefully.

**XENA**

Yeah.

Let's see if we can try a little subtlety.

**GABRIELLE**

*(under her breath)*

Oo... there's a switch.

Xena gives Gabrielle a slap on the behind, and they fade into the bushes together.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SLAVER'S CAMPSITE - LATER THAT NIGHT**

The guards joke amongst themselves as they stand by the fire. Several guards are on the perimeter, keeping watch. Two of the guards around the fire shove a third, the one who kissed Varia, towards the prisoners.

**GUARD #1**

Go on, big man!

You said you could handle her!

**GUARD #2**

Handle her?

She's gonna handle ME!

The second guard swaggers towards where Varia is chained. Nearby, one of the men watching turns and puts his back to the forest as he stands under a tree.

**GUARD #2**

*(Cont'd)*

Awright, baby... you ready?



From behind the watching guard, a dark figure suddenly drops down from the tree branch over his head. It is Xena, hanging up side down. A hand taps him on the shoulder. He turns, and Xena whacks him in the face with her head. The guard drops without a sound into the underbrush. Xena pulls herself up into the branches again and disappears.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SLAVER'S CAMPSITE - UNDERBRUSH - NIGHT**

Gabrielle crawls on the ground towards the prisoners. She stops as she hears footsteps coming closer, and pulls one of her sais out.

**GUARD #2**

(O.S.)

You just stay right there and bend over!

**GUARD #1**

(O.S)

Better watch those teeth!

The first guard walks right past Gabrielle and stops, his boot inches from her face. Gabrielle grits her teeth - he is standing between her and the prisoners, and she can't get around him. She picks up a rock and tosses it to her right, hoping it distracts the guard.

The guard doesn't hear it. Gabrielle tries another rock, but gets no results.

**GUARD #2**

(O.S.)

Here we go!!!!

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SLAVER'S CAMPSITE - TREE - NIGHT**

Xena is crouched in a tree over two other guards. She watches impatiently as the guard nearest the prisoners stands without budging.



**XENA**

C'mon, Gabrielle....

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SLAVER'S CAMPSITE - UNDERBRUSH - NIGHT**

Gabrielle is at a loss. She readies her sai and steels herself, tensing her body to rise up and attack the guard. Something touches her hand and she jumps. She looks at her hand - crawling on it is a very large, black, slimy leech.

**GABRIELLE**  
(under her breath)  
A leech. I \*hate\* leeches.



Gabrielle looks around for a place to ditch the leech. The guard standing over her chooses that moment to break wind. Gabrielle looks up in disgust, then realizes the guard is not wearing anything under his leather battle skirt. Her eyes go to the leech, then up to the guard. Gabrielle smiles wickedly.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SLAVER'S CAMPSITE - TREE - NIGHT**

Xena unstraps her chakram and readies it, out of time. The guard is standing over Varia. Xena takes aim, and pulls her arm back.

**XENA**  
I wanted to do this the easy way.  
Shoulda known better.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SLAVER'S CAMPSITE - NIGHT.**

The guard stands over Varia. He unlocks her shackles, and bends to grab her hair. Nearby, a watching guard suddenly screams, and grabs his groin. Everyone looks. The man starts frantically clutching at himself. The guards all laugh.

**GUARD #2**  
Hey! Wait your turn, buddy!



The guard hops backwards, and suddenly falls into the underbrush, thrashing around and squealing. The guards all laugh. A sharp crack resonates through the darkness, then the man stops struggling, and the brush stops moving.

**GUARD #2**  
(Cont'd)  
Okay, okay, you had your joke.  
Get over here.

There is no answer.

**GUARD #2**  
(Cont'd)  
Branos?

Three of the guards run towards the spot.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SLAVER'S CAMPSITE - UNDERBRUSH - NIGHT**

Gabrielle crawls forward, pulling her makeshift staff with her. She examines the stick, then smiles and pats it almost affectionately.

**GABRIELLE**  
I've missed being able to do that.



She squirms through the grass until she's at the edge of the slaves, and waits.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SLAVER'S CAMPSITE - NIGHT**

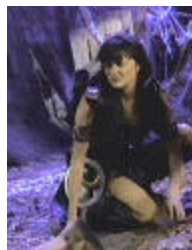
The guards mill around in confusion. Suddenly, a soft whining is heard from the bushes nearby, as though an animal is hurt.

**GUARD #1**  
What's that?

The sound gets louder, and moves away a little.

**GUARD #3**  
Over there!

They race off into the underbrush, following the sound. Xena drops from the tree silently and races across the campsite. The prisoners all stare at her wide eyed.



**INTERCUT TO:**

### ON GABRIELLE:

Gabrielle jumps to her feet and limps towards Varia. With a single blow of her sai, she knocks the guard standing over her to the ground and gets him out of the way.

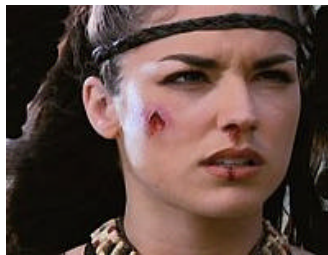


### ON XENA:

Xena jumps over the campfire, somersaulting through the flames and landing inside the ring of prisoners. Varia's head jerks up and she looks right into Xena's eyes.

### VARIA

Xena!



Xena grabs one of Varia's arms, and Gabrielle grabs the other, and they leap into the forest, carrying her with them before the guards realize what has happened.

The branches close behind them. The guards come running back into camp, looking around in bewilderment. Four of them carry two limp bodies.

### GUARD #1

Did you see something?

### GUARD #2

No, did you?

What the Hades was that?

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

## ACT TWO

FADE IN:

### EXT. FOREST UNDERBRUSH - NIGHT

Xena, Gabrielle, and Varia dive behind a thick patch of underbrush. Xena and Gabrielle release Varia and start looking out for the guards.

**XENA**

Keep down.



**GABRIELLE**

Varia, are you okay?

**VARIA**

What the Hades do you think you're doing?

Xena and Gabrielle look at Varia. Varia is furious.

**GABRIELLE**

What?



**VARIA**

What makes you think you can just come in and interfere like that? I told you to leave me alone! You're wrecking my plan!

Xena points back towards the slaver's camp.

**XENA**

That's your plan?

**VARIA**

I \*know\* what I'm doing.



Gabrielle grips Varia's arm.

**GABRIELLE**

Varia, we left tied up and shackled to trees plans behind a long time ago.

Xena snickers under her breath.

**GABRIELLE**

*(Cont'd)*

You hush.

*(beat, to Varia)*

Why don't you tell us what's going on?



Varia twists her arm free and starts to get up.

**VARIA**

I've got a better idea. Why don't the two of you crawl back under whatever rock you've been hiding under.

Xena grabs Varia's leathers and holds her.

**GABRIELLE**

Varia, wait!

**VARIA**

I'm yelling for the guards.

Varia opens her mouth to yell. Xena balls her hand into a fist and yanks her down.

**XENA**

You're betting your tongue's faster than my fist.



Varia glares at her. Gabrielle pulls a ten dinar piece from her belt and points at Xena meaningfully.

**XENA**

*(Cont'd)*

Now, spill it. Level with us or I'll hog-tie you and drag you back to the Amazons the hard way.

Varia remains stubborn for a moment, then gives in. She sits down and runs her hands through her hair.

**VARIA**

All right. I just want you to understand  
I'm not asking for your help.

**GABRIELLE**

I understand.

**VARIA**

*(curtly)*

Do you?

**GABRIELLE**

Understand that whole warrior thing that won't let  
you ask for help when you desperately need it?

*(side glance at Xena)*

Oh yeah.



Xena snorts.

**VARIA**

Whatever. Okay, it's like this.  
Amazons are missing.

**GABRIELLE**

Missing?

**VARIA**

Gone. Disappeared on patrol, during scouting  
missions, on trips to the trading villages...  
just gone. We can't find any trace of them.

Xena and Gabrielle are now listening seriously.

**XENA**

So where does all this come in?

**VARIA**

I found a trader, drunk in one of the villages  
near us who claimed he crewed on a  
boat full of 'savages like you'.

*(beat)*

I made him tell me everything he knew.





**XENA**

Must not have taken long.

**VARIA**

He said there were slavers paying top dinars for slaves on the coast, especially Amazons. So I went to the port town we'd lost our last people in, and....

**GABRIELLE**

Got yourself kidnapped.

**VARIA**

They'll take me where the rest of them are. I'll bring them back. Now....

Varia stands up.

**VARIA**

*(Cont'd)*

Stay out of my way, and leave me alone.  
I don't need your help.

Varia slips off into the underbrush, leaving Xena and Gabrielle behind.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. FOREST - PRE-DAWN**

Xena and Gabrielle walk together through the trees. Gabrielle leans heavily on her staff, but keeps up.

**GABRIELLE**

I don't get it, Xena.  
Why is she so mad at us?



**XENA**

Wish I knew. Whatever the reason, it's clouding her judgment. She could end up finding nothing at the end of this path but...

Xena hesitates.

**GABRIELLE**

Corpses?

**XENA**

I can't see Amazons living as slaves.

Gabrielle continues on a few steps. She is tiring.

**GABRIELLE**

No, neither can I. But you know, Xena,  
people sometimes surprise you.

Xena casually lays her arm over Gabrielle's shoulders. Gabrielle leans against her, grateful for the support. They walk in silence for a few paces.

**XENA**

So. What do you think? Should we  
interfere despite what Varia wants?

**GABRIELLE**

Do ponies piddle in the pasture?  
Of course we should.

**XENA**

Varia's not gonna like it.



Gabrielle grins.

**XENA**

*(Cont'd)*

We're going to need some way  
of blending in to get on that ship.

Gabrielle grins all the more.

**GABRIELLE**

I think I've got exactly what we need.

**CROSSFADE TO:**

**EXT. FOREST GLADE - MOONLIGHT**

Xena and Gabrielle are dressing each other in Amazon garb.



Gabrielle has her back to Xena, and Xena fastens her top, then traces the dragon tattoo with her fingers.

Gabrielle looks back over her shoulder and smiles. Xena smiles back. Gabrielle turns around and wraps Xena's skirt around her and fastens the belt. Her hands lift and brush over the place the arrows pierced her, where there are no remaining marks.

Xena puts a tooth and bone necklace around Gabrielle's neck.

Gabrielle fastens leather wraps around Xena's biceps.

**GABRIELLE**

You look good as an Amazon.

**XENA**

So do you.

*(beat)*

You always did.

Images enter their memories at the same time, of Gabrielle's times as an Amazon, showing her growth from the wide eye innocent of Terrais' time to the battle leader of Varia's.



**GABRIELLE**

Yeah. But it took a lot of growing into.

They both smile. Gabrielle picks up her staff.

**GABRIELLE**

Let's go find some trouble.

Xena and Gabrielle leave the glade and head for the port town.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. PORT TOWN MARKET - DAY**

Two men sit outside a brothel, drinking. They watch a festival in progress in the market. Men and women are drinking and dancing, celebrating the harvest.

**SLAVE MASTER**

I'll be glad to get out of here.  
Where's the damn cargo?

**LACKEY**

They're here, boss. Just waiting for  
nightfall, then we're outta this joint.

As they watch, a yodel is heard, then a woman dressed as an Amazon appears, riding a donkey backwards. She is singing. Sort of.

It is Gabrielle. Xena stumbles behind her, attempting to lasso the donkey with her whip. The men watch with interest.

**LACKEY**

*(Cont'd)*

Hey boss... see that? What a pair of....



**SLAVE MASTER**

What I see is two capture  
payments in my pocket. Come on.

The two men disappear into the brothel.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. INN BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Xena and Gabrielle lay together on the floor of the room, which has been wrecked. The pallet lies in pieces near the window, and a small table sits upside down with broken mugs and crockery on it. The room stinks of bad wine and worse judgment.

Once again, the door slowly opens, and a torch appears.

**SLAVE MASTER**

Careful. One of them was pretty big.

The lackey sticks his head in and cautiously looks around.

**LACKEY**

No problem, boss. They're out.

The men enter.

**SLAVE MASTER**

What a pit.

**LACKEY**

Which one we taking?

**SLAVE MASTER**

The little one's hurt. Leave her.  
I don't need damaged merchandise.  
Let's get the big one.

**ON GABRIELLE:**

Gabrielle's eyes are open, and she tenses up when she hears the slave master speak.

**GABRIELLE**

*(whispers)*  
Xena.

As though in her drunken sleep, Xena stirs and rolls over, then reaches out and gathers Gabrielle to her, wrapping her arms and legs firmly around her in a tight hold.

**SLAVE MASTER**

Damn! Never get her loose  
without waking her....

Gabrielle smirks.

**LACKEY**

Boy, that's gonna be a load.

Xena looks indignant.

**SLAVE MASTER**

Shut up, and start bagging.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SHIP - NIGHT**

A galley type ship is docked, with a ramp leading into it's hold. The column of prisoners is being moved up the ramp. Guards nervously watch everything, prodding the prisoners forward impatiently.

**GUARD #1**

Move it. C'mon.

At the head of the ramp, a group of men in sailor's clothing stands with a pot. As each prisoner reaches them, two guards grab the prisoners arms, and pull their head back, and the sailors force them to drink a cup of whatever is in the pot. The prisoners struggle, but after the march, and little food, they are quickly exhausted.

Varia reaches the top and fights the men as they grab her.



**guARD #2**

Bitch! Tolja this one is trouble!

The men grab for Varia, but she evades their hands and knocks one of them off the ramp and into the water. Two others grab hold of her chains and pull, and a third gets a headlock on her from behind.

**GUARD #1**

Give her a double dose!

The sailors approach cautiously. Varia snarls at them and kicks out, kicking the mug from their hands. Another guard dives for her feet and circles them with his arms, holding her still.

**GUARD #2**

Hurry!

The sailors get another mug and grimly return. The guard behind Varia pull her head back and yanks her jaw open. The sailors pour the substance into her mouth, and Varia is faced with either swallowing or choking.

Varia struggles, and for a moment, no one knows what she's going to do. She tries to spit the substance out, but the guard claps a hand over her mouth and prevents her.

Varia's eyes dart everywhere, then her shoulders slump and she gives in, swallowing the mouthful.

**GUARD #1**

More!

The sailors force her to drink the entire mug. Then the guards shove her forward, into the hold.

**GUARD #2**

Next!

All of the prisoners are on board. The slave master hands the guards a bag of coins.

**SLAVE MASTER**

*(ironic)*

Nice bunch.

**GUARD #1**

These babies gave us a lot of trouble.

Next time, you'll pay twice the price.

The guards leave the dock. The slave master watches them go, and waits until they are out of sight.

**SLAVE MASTER**

Next time maybe you'll be the cargo.

*(beat)*

All right - get the last two on board.

Four men struggle up the ramp with a large, burlap wrapped bundle. They toss the bundle into the hold, then retreat, wiping their brows.

**SLAVE MASTER**

*(Cont'd)*

*(to sailors)*  
Give them a dose before they wake up.  
*(to ship captain)*  
Let's get out of this dump.

The ramp starts to close, as the sailors laugh.

**FADE OUT.**

**END OF ACT TWO**

## ACT THREE

FADE IN:

### INT. SHIP'S HOLD - DAY

The captives are chained to the deck. Many struggle against their chains. Guards walk on planks set above the level of the deck with long whips, lashing the captives that struggle most. One captive grabs a guard's leg and tries to pull him to the deck. Several other guards grab the man. One of the sailors comes over and forces some of the liquid down the man's throat. The man almost chokes on it, but the sailor persists. They throw the man to the deck when they finish, and he lies there gasping.

#### SAILOR #1

Try that again, and you'll be over the side.

The guard snaps his whip over the heads of those nearby, making them duck. The captives mutter, but hunker down to avoid any more violence.

The guards walk past a darker portion of the deck and look down, then walk past, laughing.

After they pass, the torchlight suddenly reflects off a pair of pale eyes. Xena watches them go by, then she sits up. Gabrielle is lying next to her, sick to her stomach.

#### XENA

How are you doing?



#### GABRIELLE

Ugh. What was that stuff?

Xena makes a face and wipes her mouth with the back of her hand.

#### XENA

Wish I knew. It has a nasty kick.

#### GABRIELLE

Glad I kicked it out of me, then.  
Sorry about the mess.

#### XENA

Couldn't be any worse than it was.  
What a garbage scow.

Xena cautiously looks around. She watches a captive one section over get kicked in the head and she starts to jump up, but stops when a sailor slaps the guard.



**SAILOR #1**

Stop it! This is valuable merchandise.  
You break it, you pay for it.

The sailor shoves the guard away.

Xena settles back down.

**GABRIELLE**

Any sign of Varia?



**XENA**

No.

Sailors start moving among the captives, passing out mugs and hard loaves of bread. One sailor hands Xena and Gabrielle their portion.

**SAILOR #1**

Here. Don't spill it.  
It's all the water you'll get.

Xena takes the mug and smells it.

**XENA**

Herbs. Sleep ones, and  
something else. I can't tell.

Gabrielle puts hers down, along with the bread.

**GABRIELLE**

No thanks. I'll pass.

Xena is worried. She knows they both can't last without water.

**XENA**

Take off your skirt and  
hand over your knickers.



Gabrielle gets up on her elbows and stares at Xena. Xena crooks a finger at her. Gabrielle shakes her head, but starts to unbuckle her belt.

**GABRIELLE**

Why can't we ever use yours?

**XENA**

Teach you to buy those  
fancy Roman ones, won't it?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SHIP'S HOLD - THREE DAYS LATER - DAY**

The hold ramp is open, and daylight is flooding inside the ship. Outside, there is the sound of life and activity, even music.

The sailors are lining the captives up to be taken off. In contrast to how they boarded, the captives are now docile and stand without protest as they are pushed into place. They are exhausted by their captivity, and by the voyage.

Varia is carried over a guard's shoulder, apparently out cold.

Xena and Gabrielle are at the end of the line, appearing as disheveled and worn down as the rest. Gabrielle's knee is still bandaged, but she is not visibly limping. The guards drive them down the ramp and out of the ship.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. ISLAND DOCK - DAY**

It is bright daylight out side. The captives blink and try to shade their eyes, now used to the dark confines of the ship. Men with rods are waiting for them there. The slave master stops them just short of the men.

**SLAVE MASTER**

Here's the merchandise, Avon.

A man walks up and down the line of captives, then turns to the slave master.

**AVON**

Pickings getting slim? Not much to see....

*(points to Varia)*

What happened to her?

**SLAVE MASTER**

She needed extra work. A real feisty one.

The sailors all chuckle. Avon pulls Gabrielle out of the line.

**AVON**

*(Cont'd)*

This one's damaged. Why should I take it?

Gabrielle looks him right in the eye.

**GABRIELLE**

Because I'm a Queen of the Amazons.



Avon stares at Gabrielle. He examines her, turning her head this way and that, and poking at her. Behind them, Xena's face is impassive, but she is very tense.

**AVON**

Eh. Nothing to look at,  
but she's strong at least.

Avon shoves Gabrielle back into line. Xena catches her by the shoulders and steadies her.

**SLAVE MASTER**

You'll see better next time.

Avon hands the slave master a large bag of coins.

**AVON**

I'd better. This lot's not worth the coin.  
*(to men with rods)*  
Take them to the cells.  
*(disgustedly)*  
Wash them first.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SLAVE COMPOUND - DAY**

The men with the rods circle the captives and herd them along. At the end of the line are Xena and Gabrielle. A man prods Xena in the back. Xena doesn't turn around, but she snarls silently. The man prods her again.

**MAN**

C'mon. I want to see some action!

Moving very quickly, Xena lifts her shackled hands and nails the man in the jaw with her elbow. The man falls down, but Xena is so fast, no one sees her do anything.

**XENA**

*(muttering)*  
Careful what you ask for.



**GABRIELLE**

*(softly)*

Xena, look.

They are entering a large courtyard. A huge gate closes behind them with an ominous bang. Inside, groups of slaves dressed in black and wearing collars are being instructed. The slaves sit obediently, nodding in unison when the man speaks.

**INSTRUCTOR**

You must always obey.

Do as you are told.

Never argue with your master.

The slaves nod.

**SLAVES**

Yes, master.

Xena and Gabrielle are stunned.

**XENA**

Still sure we're gonna find live Amazons here?



**GABRIELLE**

I don't see any. Xena, look at them.  
They're like sheep!



Gabrielle watches the scene, visibly disturbed. Gabrielle and Xena are pushed into an enclosed area with the rest of the captives, and a gate is shut behind them.

**CUT TO:**

## INT. SLAVE ENCLOSURE - DAY

The captives all stand in the enclosure.

**GABRIELLE**

Now what?



Men with huge barrels of water appear above the enclosure walls, and dump the water over the slaves, drenching them. Gabrielle spits out a mouthful of the water and wipes her eyes, then turns and looks at Xena. Xena is completely drenched.

**XENA**

Ohh... Amazons are gonna be  
the least of their problems.

Curiously, none of the other slaves seem upset at the water. Another gate opens in front of them, and they are herded through it.

**FADE TO:**

## INT. SLAVE ENCLOSURE - DAY

Xena and Gabrielle duck behind a wall as they enter, letting the rest of the slaves move on.

**XENA**

C'mon.

Xena and Gabrielle disappear into the darkness.

**CUT TO:**

## INT. SLAVE COMPOUND HALLWAY - DAY

Xena and Gabrielle walk cautiously down the hallway, listening for guards. They pass a stone aqueduct and Gabrielle stops.

**GABRIELLE**

Is this safe to drink?

Xena smells the water.

**XENA**

I think so. Thirsty?

**GABRIELLE**

After having only three mouthfuls of  
sludge filtered through my underwear  
the last three days? Yeah.

*(smiling)*

Least it gave my leg a chance to heal. Mostly.



Xena dips her cupped hands into the water and takes a drink, then offers a handful to Gabrielle. Gabrielle drinks the water. They both react when they hear footsteps approaching. Xena pulls Gabrielle into an alcove next to the aqueduct. It is a very tight squeeze, and they are pressed up against each other in the small space.

Avon and his lackey come down the hallway and stop right next to the aqueduct.

**LACKEY**

This new batch is pretty ragged, m'lord.

**AVON**

I know. Soon we'll be breeding our own,  
and we won't have to depend on those idiots.

**LACKEY**

Aye, m'lord.

**AVON**

Raise from infants to serve us.  
Obedient, pliable... perfect.

Avon laughs, and they walk on.

**GABRIELLE**

*(whispering)*

Are they gone?

Xena listens.

**XENA**

Yes.

**GABRIELLE**

Too bad.

Xena and Gabrielle emerge from their hiding spot, a little more disheveled than when they went into it. Xena plucks one of the feathers from her clothing from behind Gabrielle's ear and twirls it.

**GABRIELLE**

*(Cont'd)*

Did you hear what they were planning?  
Xena, we have to stop this.

**XENA**

I know. Let's go see if we can find  
some Amazons, and get backup first.



They continue down the hallway. Suddenly, several guards appear from around the next corner.

**GUARD #1**

You there! Stop!

Xena and Gabrielle take off running. The guards chase them.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SLAVE ENCLOSURE - HALLS - DAY**

Xena and Gabrielle race through the hallways. They duck into a doorway just past an intersection, and the guards run right by them. They back into the room and close the door.

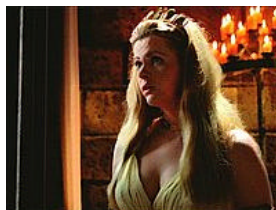
**CUT TO:**

**INT. SLAVE ENCLOSURE - HAREM - DAY**

Xena and Gabrielle stop short as they enter a large room. The room is full of women. They are all dressed in shifts. The room is comfortable, with many beds lining the walls. There is a fountain, and an ample supply of food. The women sit in groups, chatting and brushing each other's hair. The women look up curiously as Xena and Gabrielle enter.

**WOMAN #1**

Gabrielle?



Gabrielle recognizes the woman as an Amazon.

**GABRIELLE**

Cyane?

The women gather around Xena and Gabrielle.

**CYANE**

Are you the new ones they  
told us about? How wonderful.

Xena raises her eyebrows.



**GABRIELLE**

We're going to get you all out of here.

The Amazons whisper to each other, seemingly puzzled.

**CYANE**

Out of here? Why?  
It's great. It's wonderful here.  
Come on, come sit down, and have a drink.  
You'll love it, really.

Xena and Gabrielle exchange glances.

**CYANE**

*(Cont'd)*

Look.

*(pointing)*

We have plenty of food, everything's taken  
care of for us, it's paradise here. Not like before.  
No more fighting, no more having to hunt... it's great!

**XENA**

What's it costing you?

**CYANE**

Cost us? What do you mean? Here.  
*(hands Xena mug)*  
Drink this. You'll feel a lot better. Honest.

Xena hears guards coming. She hands the mug back.

**XENA**

Thanks, but we gotta run.

**CYANE**

Run? Where?

Gabrielle and Xena back towards the door, and escape through it.

**CUT TO:**



## INT. SLAVE COMPOUND HALLWAY

Xena and Gabrielle pause outside the Amazon's chamber.

**XENA**

I don't believe it.

**GABRIELLE**

Xena, do you remember hearing that  
guy talk about breeding their own slaves?



**XENA**

Yeah.

**GABRIELLE**

Do you think....

**XENA**

Yeah.

They hear the guards approaching.

**GABRIELLE**

Xena, we can't leave them in here.

Xena urges her down a side corridor.

**XENA**

I know. I'm workin' on it.



Xena opens a door and looks inside. Her face takes on a darker expression.

**CUT TO:**

## INT. VARIA'S ROOM

Varia is dressed in a blue gown. She is seated on a soft couch with her hands folded in her lap. Her face is still and expressionless. She hears the door to her room open, and she turns to see

Xena and Gabrielle there. Varia puts her hands down and curls her fingers around the edge of the couch.

**VARIA**

I knew you'd show up.

Gabrielle approaches her.

**GABRIELLE**

Varia, I know you didn't want us to be involved,  
but now we're here, and we can help you.



Xena walks to the nearby table and examines an empty mug. She sniffs it, then puts it down.

**XENA**

What's your plan?



**VARIA**

It's... harder than I thought it would be.  
I didn't count on the herbs. Their effect....

**GABRIELLE**

The herbs? Is that what they gave the Amazons?  
I thought they were just to keep everyone quiet.

**VARIA**

No.

*(beat)*

They change everything.

Gabrielle kneels next to her.

**GABRIELLE**

What do you mean? How can  
herbs change everything?

Varia looks at Gabrielle. Varia's expression is wondering, and a little sad.

**VARIA**

For the first time in my life, I know what peace is.  
(beat)  
There's no anger. No guilt. I feel whole.  
Do you know what that's like, Gabrielle?



**GABRIELLE**

I did, once.

**VARIA**

Then maybe you'll understand.

**GABRIELLE**

Understand what?



The doors burst inward, and guards start to fill the room, pointing crossbows at Xena and Gabrielle. Varia has sounded an alarm.

**VARIA**

Why I don't want to give this up.

Xena and Gabrielle react as one. Gabrielle dives under the line of fire as Xena picks up the table and throws it at the guards. Gabrielle rolls up to her feet and she and Xena run up onto the table, squashing the guards underneath as they leap together over the rest of the guard's heads.

The guards scramble after them. Xena and Gabrielle almost make it out the door, but opens into them and they are thrown backwards into the guard's arms. They struggle, and Xena throws two of the guards back.

The rest of the guards jump on them, and they are pushed backwards against a large, leaded glass window in the back of the room. The rest of the guards pour into the room and shove, and the glass breaks.

Xena rips herself loose, but can't catch her balance, and she and Gabrielle topple through the broken window, into a dark, bottomless shaft.

**FADE OUT.**

**END OF ACT THREE**

## ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

### INT. TUNNEL SHAFT - MOMENTS LATER

Xena and Gabrielle fall through the shaft. Xena twists and turns, frantically trying to find something to hold onto, but the rock walls are smooth.

**XENA**

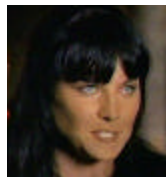
Gabrielle!

They hear a loud rumbling noise just below them, and they realize they are reaching the end of the tunnel. Xena reaches out and grabs Gabrielle around the waist.

**XENA**

*(Cont'd)*

This is gonna hurt.



**GABRIELLE**

Not for long.

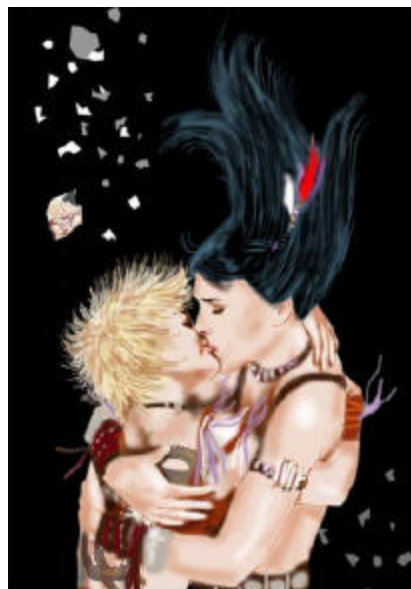
Gabrielle puts her arms around Xena's neck and looks into Xena's eyes.

**GABRIELLE**

*(Cont'd)*

But if I only had thirty seconds left to live, this is how I'd want to spend them.

They run out of tunnel shaft. Xena answers Gabrielle's words with a kiss.



CUT TO:

## INT. VAT - MOMENTS LATER

Xena and Gabrielle drop out of the tunnel shaft and plunge into a huge, roiling vat of liquid. They go all the way to the bottom and the impact separates them. They struggle through the liquid to reach the surface. Xena emerges first, gasping for air. She looks around.

**XENA**

Gabrielle!

Gabrielle surfaces behind her, coughing. The liquid pushes them apart and they fight against the current - which is forcing them into a rapidly moving stream of water that goes into an aqueduct.

**GABRIELLE**

*(yelling)*

If we get sucked in there....

**XENA**

I know! Grab on!



A surge of water pulls them towards the wall. At the last moment, Gabrielle gets her arm hooked around a pipe in the vat and hangs on, grabbing hold of Xena's belt as she goes past. Gabrielle pulls Xena back from the aqueduct.

**XENA**

*(Cont'd)*

What a time to haveta trust  
in Amazon craftsmanship!

Xena turns and gets hold of the pipe as well, and they climb up it, getting to the top of the vat wall and falling over it.

**CUT TO:**

## INT. VAT CAVERN - CONTINUOUS

Xena and Gabrielle roll over the top of the vat wall and tumble to the ground. They get to their feet and lean against the vat to catch their breath.

**GABRIELLE**

*(coughing)*

I must have swallowed a cartload of that stuff.

Xena gives her a concerned look.

**XENA**

Me too.

Xena looks around the chamber they are in. It is fully stocked with bales of herbs. There are boxes of a powdered mixture sitting on top of the vat. Square holes have been cut in the boxes to let the mixture out steadily into the water.

**XENA**

*(Cont'd)*

That must be what they're giving the slaves.



Gabrielle stares at the boxes, then at Xena. Xena walks to the bales of different herbs and starts examining them. Gabrielle puts her hand up to her head.

**GABRIELLE**

I... I'm starting to feel a little strange.

Xena keeps searching through the herbs.

**XENA**

So am I. Let's hope we get lucky  
and I find something to counteract it.

**FADE TO:**

### **INT. VAT CAVERN - A SHORT WHILE LATER**

Xena and Gabrielle are sitting together on the floor. Between them is a box. They are fully under the influence of the herbs.

**GABRIELLE**

So this is what they meant.

Xena appears totally relaxed and unconcerned.

**XENA**

Bout what?

**GABRIELLE**

Being at peace. Everything's just... clean.



**XENA**

Yeah. I've never felt like this before.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SLAVE ENCLOSURE CORRIDOR - SAME TIME**

Guards rush through the corridors, searching for Xena and Gabrielle. Avon steps out of Varia's room.

**AVON**

They were here. Find them!

**GUARD CAPTAIN**

They're not in the upper halls, sir.

**AVON**

Then check the lower ones.  
When you find them, shoot them.

**GUARD CAPTAIN**

But....

**AVON**

*(angrily)*  
Just do it, fool!

The guards run off. Avon's Lackey emerges from Varia's room.

**LACKEY**

Good thing she warned us who they are,  
m'lord. They could have ruined everything.

Avon nods and smiles grimly.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. VAT CAVERN -MOMENTS LATER**

Xena and Gabrielle still sit with the box between them. There is now a cup on the top of the box. They hear guards coming closer, but apparently don't care.

**GABRIELLE**

Do you feel lighter? I do. It's like this very  
strange sort of floating. Like a butterfly.  
Do you think butterflies feel like this, Xena?  
*(beat, laughing)*  
Listen to me. I must sound like a....



**XENA**

You sound like the Gabrielle I met  
in Potadeia way back when.



Gabrielle thinks about that for a minute.

**GABRIELLE**

Yeah. It's been a long time, hasn't it?  
(beat)  
Since either of us has really known peace.

**XENA**

Maybe Varia was right.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. LOWER CORRIDORS - SAME TIME**

Guards search the lower corridors. They open storage rooms and look inside. One guard is loading his crossbow. The guard captain stops to talk to him.

**GUARD CAPTAIN.**

Just be ready.  
You might only get one shot.

**GUARD**

With the poison on these arrows, sir,  
all we have to do is nick them.

Another guard yells down the hallway.

**GUARD #2**

Sir! We've cleared this section.  
All that's left is the water room!

**GUARD CAPTAIN**

Let's go.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. VAT CAVERN - MOMENTS LATER**

The sounds of pursuit are louder. Xena is now on her knees, holding the cup in her hands and examining it. Gabrielle is watching her.



**XENA**

Peace.

*(beat)*

Maybe that's what I was  
really looking for in Japa.



Gabrielle looks at her in sudden understanding.

**GABRIELLE**

Not only their peace - your own?



Xena nods. Xena stands up and steps onto the edge of the vat, reaching up and filling the cup with water as it comes into the cistern. She kneels back down and takes a handful of the substance in box and pours it into the water, stirring it with her finger. Xena looks at Gabrielle.

**XENA**

Is this what you really want?

Gabrielle takes the cup from her.

**GABRIELLE**

Yes.

Gabrielle takes a drink from the cup.

**GABRIELLE**

*(Cont'd)*

I don't think we're made for peace, Xena.  
We're meant to fight and bleed and die.

*(looks at Xena)*

But also to laugh and love and live.



Gabrielle hands the cup back, then she makes a face and shudders, as the antidote takes effect. Xena finishes off the cup and tosses it against the wall. It shatters.

The door to the vat cavern slams open, and guards start pouring into the room.

**XENA**

I'll hold em off - you dump the antidote.

Gabrielle grabs the box and starts climbing up the side of the vat while Xena grabs two bales. The guards attack her. Xena fends them off with the bales. She catches an arrow in one.

Gabrielle reaches the top of the vat and dumps the herbs into it, then throws the box in for good measure. She grabs the edge of the box of bad herbs and pulls on it. With a crack, it breaks loose and falls backwards, sending the herbs everywhere. Gabrielle falls to the ground.

Xena grabs a mixing paddle and paddles the guards. Gabrielle grabs another paddle and joins her. She is wincing, and a little green around the gills.

**GABRIELLE**

That stuff gave me a killer hangover.

**XENA**

*(snarling)*

Tell me about it.



Xena takes her discomfort out on a guard, punching him in the face then smacking him between the legs with her paddle. She shoves him out of the way and kicks another guard back into a hay bale. Two more guards rush at her with torches, trying to drive her back.

Gabrielle goes into action, letting out an angry yell as she lays into the guards, picking up Xena's forgotten paddle and using it to knock out the man closest to her. Then she grabs his crossbow and turns, firing it at a guard charging at her. The man collapses, clutching the arrow sticking out of his guts. Gabrielle looks for another target, but the men scramble away from her.

Xena grabs a torch from one of her attacker and sets his hair on fire. He bolts away, screaming. Xena whirls and puts the torch to a bundle of herbs, then another. Fire springs up and starts to spread quickly.

Xena kicks a guard in the throat, then grabs Gabrielle's arm.

**XENA**

*(Cont'd)*

Let's go!

Gabrielle throws the crossbow at the nearest guard and follows Xena. They duck arrows as they make it to the door to the vat room and run through it.

**CUT TO:**

## INT. LOWER CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

Xena leads Gabrielle through the hallways. Smoke is starting to spread, and cries of alarm are heard.

**GABRIELLE**

*(yelling)*

How long will it take the antidote to work?



Xena pulls Gabrielle into a side corridor. Several guards rush by them, oblivious.

**XENA**

Longer than it did for us.  
We only had one big dose.



Gabrielle peeks around the corner.

**GABRIELLE**

Xena, this is our best chance to get everyone out of here. Any way to speed it up?

Xena thinks.

**XENA**

Maybe. If we stir em up.

**GABRIELLE**

You mean... like, kick them around a little?

Xena nods.

**XENA**

Think you're up to that?

Gabrielle produces a not really that pleasant smirk.

**GABRIELLE**

Yeah.  
(pokes Xena)  
You take the Amazons.  
I've got an old score to settle.



Gabrielle heads off. Xena hesitates, then shakes her head and follows.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. VARIA'S ROOM - DAY**

Varia puts down her cup. She sits down on her couch and picks up her harp. She plucks a few notes idly.

Gabrielle enters behind her, unseen. Gabrielle's leathers are tattered, and she is covered in soot and liquid. Her face has a fierce, almost feral expression on it.

**GABRIELLE**

You're out of tune.

Varia whirls and spots Gabrielle.

**VARIA**

Guards!

Gabrielle stalks towards her.

**GABRIELLE**

They won't hear you. They're busy.

Varia gets up and moves around the couch warily.

**VARIA**

I warned them about you.

**GABRIELLE**

Not well enough, apparently.  
The game's up, Varia.

**VARIA**

Gabrielle, you're wrong.  
Can't you see how wrong you are?  
We're happy here. We're not.... hunted  
beasts, or outcasts, or having to scratch out  
a living in the forest. Like you left us to do.

**GABRIELLE**

No, Varia. The drug only makes  
you \*think\* you're happy.

**VARIA**

What's the difference?  
Can't you just leave us alone?

Varia reaches for her head.

**VARIA**

*(Cont'd)*

Wait. What's happening?

**GABRIELLE**

The truth is happening.

Gabrielle reaches out and shoves Varia hard. Varia stumbles towards the wall and hits it, then stares at Gabrielle. Gabrielle follows her, then grabs her again and shakes her. Varia's eyes narrow.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. AMAZON'S CHAMBER - SAME TIME**

Xena enters the chamber and stops. She puts her hands on her hips and surveys the Amazons. They all seem very glad to see her.

**CYANE**

Xena! Glad you came back.  
Where's Gabrielle?

**XENA**

All right, girls. Party time's over.

The Amazons look at each other. Xena steps down among them and picks up a mug of the liquid.

**CYANE**

Oh! You're joining us!  
Good choice, Xena.  
You'll see. It's g... yow! Hey!

Xena tosses the cupful of liquid in the woman's face.

**XENA**

Like that? Looks good on you....

The Amazons start laughing.

**XENA**

*(Cont'd)*

Think that's funny?

Xena picks up two grapefruit halves, and shoves them in two of the Amazon's faces. The cherries in the center pop out and bounce on the floor. The woman who got wet now starts laughing at the halves stuck to their faces.

**XENA**

*(Cont'd)*

Now that's funny.

**CYANE**

Hah! Like a pair of mules!

One Amazon pulls the grapefruit off.

**AMAZON #2**

Mules? I'll give you a mule!

The Amazon picks up a melon and chucks it.

**CYANE**

Hey! Stop that, you little pig!

**AMAZON #2**

Who are you calling a pig?

Xena takes a step back, watching the carnage begin.



**CUT TO:**

#### **INT. VARIA'S ROOM - SAME TIME**

Varia is on the ground, a bruise across her left cheek. Her face is now set in anger, and she reaches for the harp as she leaps at Gabrielle. She swings it, intending on smashing across Gabrielle's head.

**VARIA**

Bitch! I knew I should have killed you instead of beating you when you challenged me.

**GABRIELLE**

Fair's fair. I knew I should have killed you when you betrayed me to Bellerephon.

Instead of backing off, Gabrielle grabs the harp as it descends and rips it out of Varia's hands. She whirls and kicks Varia in the ribs, sending her flying, then tosses the harp onto the couch and jumps on top of her. They grapple. Varia pins Gabrielle down, but Gabrielle twists and locks her ankles around Varia's neck, arching her back and slamming Varia to the ground.

**GABRIELLE**

Not this time, Varia.



Gabrielle pulls Varia up, then abruptly releases her, and before Varia can catch her balance, Gabrielle cocks her fist and puts everything she has into one pile driver right-handed blow. She hits Varia right in the chops and her head snaps back. She flips over the couch and lands in a heap on the other side, out cold.

Gabrielle leaps over the couch and stands over her, ready to continue the fight. She lets her hands drop as she realizes she no longer has an opponent.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. AMAZON'S CHAMBER - MOMENTS LATER**

The Amazons are still all squabbling with each other. They bump into Xena, who shoves them back. The room is now a shambles, and Xena's out of patience. She is wondering where Gabrielle is, and is about to go find her.

Xena's ears prick - she hears the guards coming.

**XENA**

All right. Enough.  
Time to get out of here.

**CYANE**

Oh yeah? Who are you to tell  
us what to do, Xena?

**XENA**

You're welcome. Now get packing.

**CYANE**

I'm not going anywhere!  
You can't boss us around!

The door opens, and Gabrielle enters, carrying Varia on her shoulders.

**GABRIELLE**

No. But I can.

Gabrielle dumps Varia's unconscious body on the ground. Gabrielle is a sight. She has blood streaked across her skin, along with dirt and grime from the tunnels and sweat.

**GABRIELLE**

*(Cont'd)*

*(growling)*

Now get moving!

There are yells coming from the corridor. Guards are approaching at full speed. The Amazons look at each other for a brief moment, then burst into action, running for the door. Two of them pick up Varia's body and take it with them. Gabrielle and Xena follow.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SLAVE COMPOUND HALLWAYS - DAY**

The Amazons run down the hallway in their shifts and bare feet. Xena and Gabrielle chase after them in their dirty leathers. The guards are gaining on them, and arrows start falling around Xena's feet.

Xena catches the next arrow and holds it, using it to bat away an increasing number of others. She looks behind her, and sees a mass of guards with bows and spears closing in on her.

Up ahead, the noise of another crowd approaching suddenly becomes audible. Xena realizes they will get trapped between the guards behind and in front of them.

**XENA**

*(yelling)*

To the right!! To the right!!

**GABRIELLE**

Xena! More guards!

**XENA**

I know. Just keep running!

Two corridors intersect. The Amazons, Xena and Gabrielle race through the intersection just as the guards catch up with them, one throwing a spear that grazes Xena on the leg.

They clear the crossroads just as a huge, screaming, angry crowd of slaves comes barreling down from the other direction. The slaves crash into the guards and start attacking them mindlessly.

Xena and Gabrielle look behind them, to see the pile of thrashing arms and legs, as the hapless guards are pummeled.

**GABRIELLE**

That was lucky.

**XENA**

No, it was brilliant timing.

C'mon. We're outta here.

Xena and Gabrielle throw the gate open and push the Amazons outside to freedom. Screams and puffs of smoke follow them as they leave. The compound is in complete ruin.

**FADE OUT.**

**END OF ACT FOUR**



TAG

FADE IN:

EXT. DOCKSIDE - MORNING

The smouldering remains of the slave compound is in the background. The ship that brought Xena and Gabrielle to the island is at the docks, with it's hold open. A large number of angry, jostling ex slaves wait to get on board. The citizens of the town watch fearfully from behind the town walls. The huge gate to the city is firmly shut.

To one side, the Amazons are clustered, very much hung over, very much embarrassed, and very cranky. Varia sits away from them, looking out at the water.

Xena and Gabrielle appear, dressed in new clothing, silken robes. They approach the Ship captain. He is obstinate.

SLAVE MASTER

Why should I take this lot back?  
What's in it for me?

XENA

*(growling)*

You get to live all the way back to Greece, and  
I'll forget my trip over here in that leaky bucket.



Xena glares at the man coldly. He meekly backs off.

SLAVE MASTER

Okay! Okay!

The slave master scurries off. Xena twitches at her new, silk sleeve and smirks.

GABRIELLE

No herbs, no slaves.  
But they can get more, Xena.

XENA

True. But it's gonna take time, and a lot of  
dinars to rebuild. And we know they're here now.

Gabrielle nudges her, and points towards Varia. They walk over to her. Varia does not look at them. Her jaw is covered with a huge bruise.

VARIA

I'm not going back with you.

GABRIELLE

So you're just abandoning your people?

Varia looks at her, then she touches her jaw.

**VARIA**

They're not my people. They're yours now.

Varia gets up and walks off, not looking back. Gabrielle looks at Xena.

**GABRIELLE**

Wasn't what I was going for.



Xena drapes her arm over Gabrielle's shoulders.

**XENA**

You're not going to ask me if  
we did the right thing, are you?

**GABRIELLE**

No. I know we did.

*(sighing)*

I just wonder if they do.

Gabrielle looks off into the distance, deep in thought.

**XENA**

Hey. Maybe it won't be so bad  
to spend some time with them.



Gabrielle leans against Xena.

**GABRIELLE**

Yeah. I think we could use a break.

Xena steers her towards the ship. The Amazons are squabbling with each other, as Xena and Gabrielle approach, one of them shoves another into the water. Xena and Gabrielle sigh, and shake their heads as they keep on walking.

**FADE OUT.**

**DISCLAIMER**

Gabrielle's macha was not harmed in the making of this  
motion picture, but her undies might never be the same.