

Sam Brimi, Executive Producer
Rob Tapert, Executive Producer
R.C. Stewart, Executive Producer

Charles Meyer
(MICHAEL)

Adrienne
M

Eve.

XENA WARRIOR PRINCESS

"The God You Know"
production #V1415
episode 14

written by
Emily Skopov

ASCAUER

directed by
Garth Maxwell

The Best
Episode

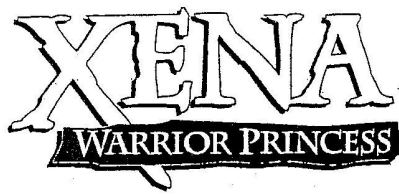
THE BEST
DIRECTOR

S. Axt

Shooting Draft

October 27, 2000

PACIFIC RENAISSANCE PICTURES, LTD. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED © 2000
This material is the property of Pacific Renaissance Pictures Limited, and is
intended and restricted solely for its use by its personnel. Distribution or
of this material to unauthorized persons is prohibited. The sale,
of this material to unauthorized persons is prohibited.



"The God You Know"
production #V1415
episode 14

Cast List

Xena/Zinia
Gabrielle/Cynda

Eve
Ares
Aphrodite
Archangel Michael
Caligula
Claudius
Priest
Elderly Holy Man
Soldier #1
Soldier
Captain
Nobleman
Elijan Man

Romans (non-speaking)
Holy Men
Praetorian Guards
Male Slaves
Musicians
Noblemen/women
Serving Girls/Boys
Slave Couples
Marcella
Elijans



"The God You Know"
production #V1415
episode 14

Set List

Interiors:

Palace - Xena & Gab's Quarters	4,14,18,19
Palace - Hallway	5,9,11
Palace - Prison	6
Catacombs	7,17,21,23
Palace - Main Room	8,10,12,13,25
Abandoned Temple	15,22,26,35

Scenes:

Exteriors:

Tavern	1
Beach	2,3,36
Roman Marketplace	16,20,28
Heavenly Bluff	24
Roman Public Square	27,29,32,34
Roman Street	30,31,33
Straightaway to the Public Square	34

Scenes:

FADE IN:

1 EXT. TAVERN - DAY

1

XENA and GABRIELLE ride up on their horses and dismount.

XENA

I'm thinking maybe it's about time we go find Eve and spend a little quality family time.

GABRIELLE

Xena, it wasn't long ago that we left Eve, and you made me promise to help you try and give your daughter some space.

XENA

What if I said I've rethought that idea and decided it was stupid?

GABRIELLE

I'd say why don't we eat first and talk about it later.

XENA

(noticing something)

Not likely, since I just lost my appetite.

Gabrielle follows Xena's eyes to see the archangel MICHAEL.

MICHAEL

I can understand your still being angry, Xena.

XENA

How generous of you, Michael, considering you tried to have me thrown down into Hell.

MICHAEL

Desperate times warrant desperate measures. You know what the stakes were. I had no other choice.

XENA

So let me guess, some new desperate times have fallen and you need a favor.

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

I'm afraid they're very desperate,
indeed. The Roman emperor Caligula
has become a god.

Xena and Gabrielle react. This is fairly major news.

GABRIELLE

Caligula? The charioteer?

XENA

With an appetite for sex, brutality,
and any combination of the two.

MICHAEL

Once he became emperor, he proceeded
to murder every last member of his
family to protect his throne from
successors, then turned the palace
into a hotbed of lust and immorality.
In his quest for ultimate domination,
he's threatened to destroy anyone, man
or god, that won't submit to him.

XENA

Does Eve know about this?

MICHAEL

What's important here is that only you
can stop Caligula. You still have the
power to kill immortals.

Xena grabs Michael. He doesn't resist.

XENA

And angels. Now I'll ask you one more
time -- is Eve aware she's in danger?

MICHAEL

Your daughter has the courage of her
convictions, Xena. She's gone to Rome
to spread the faith of Eli, and to
confront Caligula's persecution.

GABRIELLE

But if what you're saying is true,
that would be a suicide mission.

Xena goes to her horse, mounts up. Gabrielle follows suit.

(CONTINUED)

XENA

Not if I can help it.

Michael watches, satisfied, as Xena and Gabrielle ride off.

2 EXT. BEACH - DAY

2

A CROWD of Roman spectators is assembled. Before them, a line of HOLY MEN in costumes befitting their various religions. They look with fear at the chariot being drawn past them by CALIGULA, a regally handsome man with a maniac's eyes. He stops in front of a young PRIEST from the Far East.

CALIGULA

Behold before you the supreme
incarnation of immortality on earth.
Behold, the all-powerful god-emperor,
Caligula, who fears nothing and cannot
be vanquished.

He hands the Priest his sword. After a hesitation, the Holy Man plunges his blade into Caligula's gut. The Spectators react as Caligula smiles and withdraws the blade, unharmed.

PRIEST

We submit, my lord. We pray for your
favor.

CALIGULA

A wise choice.

Caligula moves down the line to an ELDERLY HOLY MAN.

CALIGULA

Behold before you the supreme
incarnation of--

ELDERLY HOLY MAN

I behold a monstrosity of evil, an
incarnation of all that is unholy and
unnatural!

CALIGULA

Correction -- you behold nothing at
all.

Caligula is about to plunge the sword into the Holy Man's heart when a hand suddenly grabs the blade and stops it. EVE stares at Caligula challengingly.

(CONTINUED)

CALIGULA
Don't worry. You're next.

And as he kicks her away, with his other hand, he pulls a dagger and stabs the Holy Man. Eve catches the Holy Man in her arms as he dies.

CALIGULA
Well, well, well. So this is Eve of the Elijans. Personally, I found you far more attractive when you were Livia, the bitch of Rome.

EVE
These days, I'm more the bitch for Rome, and her people. The god of Eli is the god of love, an unconquerable force once it has entered the soul. As his message spreads, your days of tyranny are numbered.

(putting the point of his sword to her chest)
Go ahead. My death will harken your defeat.

CALIGULA
Apparently, you need to learn the hard way that martyrdom doesn't pay.

He's about to kill her, when

A HORSE-DRAWN CHARIOT THUNDERS ITS APPROACH

Xena, in a glamorous charioteer costume and gold mask (NOTE: XENA WEARS THIS MASK WHENEVER SHE'S IN PUBLIC UNTIL ACT IV), races toward Caligula and Eve, even as PRAETORIAN GUARDS rush at her from all sides. She fights them off with her sword and skillfully outmaneuvers them with her chariot.

Eve reacts frustratedly to the sight of her mother, while Caligula's face lights up with a lust for the challenge. He kicks his horses into gear and heads right at her. Just as their chariots draw close, Xena leaps from hers, flips in the air and lands in Caligula's chariot.

CALIGULA
I don't know who you are, but I like your style.

XENA
Save the compliments.

(CONTINUED)

Then she stuns him further by knocking him to the ground. She raises her knife, about to kill him, when a MAN leaps from out of the crowd and lands on Xena. As they roll to the side, Xena realizes...this is ARES.

XENA

Ares...have you lost your mind?

ARES

Maybe. But I can't let you kill my sister.

She follows his eyes to see APHRODITE being led toward Caligula on a litter carried by studly SLAVES. Her dress and manner are markedly more tacky and slutty than usual.

ARES

Their lives are bound together. If he dies...so does she.

As Xena absorbs this new dilemma, then looks over where Eve is being dragged away by Guards, we:

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

3 EXT. BEACH - DAY - CONTINUING

3

Xena and Ares are grabbed and pulled to their feet by Praetorian Guards while Caligula and Aphrodite approach.

ARES

Do you see the way she looks at us?
It's like she doesn't know who we are.

XENA

Yeah well, I get the feeling she isn't exactly herself these days.

CALIGULA

Either you're incredibly brave, or you've heard there's nothing I enjoy more than a good surprise. Well, perhaps there are a few things, but...

Aphrodite runs her hands along Ares' muscular body.

APHRODITE

I don't know what this one's game is, but I've got a few of my own I'd like to teach him.

Xena watches as Ares takes a moment of enjoyment before finally shying away from his sister's lustful touch.

ARES

There's romantic love, there's platonic love, and then there's forbidden love. Know what I'm sayin'?

APHRODITE

Not really.

She nods to one of the Guards, and he knocks Ares out cold.

APHRODITE

Take him to the prison while I work up a sufficient appetite.

As the Guards drag Ares away, Caligula turns to Xena.

(CONTINUED)

CALIGULA

So. Mystery lady of the mask. Before
I kill you, tell me why you risked
your life to save the whore of Eli.

IN THE CROWD - GABRIELLE

thinks fast. Pushes her way to the Emperor.

GABRIELLE

Allow me to explain, my lord. Cynda
of Thrace at your service. I
represent Zinia, the famous woman
warrior and charioteer. What you
experienced was merely my way of
getting your attention in hopes that
you might favor us with a chance to
compete for you in a more official
capacity.

CALIGULA

A rather bold marketing ploy, Cynda of
Thrace.

GABRIELLE

There's nothing I won't do for my
clients. Especially for the chance to
appear before the supreme lord Caesar.

APHRODITE

So you're a parasite and a suck-up.

CALIGULA

Well, Cynda of Thrace, you clearly
have an eye for talent. What would
you say if I asked you and Zinia to be
my guests of honor at the palace?

GABRIELLE

I'd say we'll give you a show you
won't forget.

4 INT. PALACE - XENA & GAB'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

4

A lavish room complete with a large sunken bathtub. Gabrielle
and Xena bathe and dress for the party.

(CONTINUED)

XENA

If I don't stop Caligula soon, he could destroy all the other gods and change the world in ways we can't even imagine.

GABRIELLE

But first we've got to find a way to save Aphrodite.

XENA

If one thing is certain, it's that Aphrodite is no longer the goddess we once knew and loved.

GABRIELLE

Look, I agree something's changed her, but she probably hasn't had an easy time of it since nearly all her family was wiped out...

XENA

That's not fair.

GABRIELLE

Xena, we both know you did what you had to do. My point is, if a person's been changed, there's a chance they can change back.

XENA

I know. I just don't want you to get your hopes up too high, that's all.

Gabrielle watches as Xena dresses. It's obvious there's more on her mind.

GABRIELLE

Xena, what is it?

XENA

It's just that...as proud as I am of my daughter for her courage and her passion, I worry that I'll never be able to step back and let her face life on her own, that I'll always feel the need to protect her.

(CONTINUED)

GABRIELLE

I wouldn't be too hard on myself,
Xena. She does get into some pretty
tough scrapes.

XENA

Yeah, she does. So, is Cynda of
Thrace ready to perform one of her
legendary acts of diversion?

5 INT. PALACE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

5

Xena and Gabrielle walk down the hall together until it
reaches another corridor. As Xena and Gabrielle separate,

ANOTHER HALLWAY - XENA

carefully stealths a few steps, then stops at the sight ahead
of her: a Guard stands with his back to her. He's studying
his own image in a reflective shield hung on the wall. Xena's
eyes dart quickly around her, land on another nearby
decorative metal shield.

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE GUARD

fixes his helmet, smiles at himself in the shiny surface.

XENA (O.S.)

Mirror, mirror on the wall.

As the Guard whirls around, he smashes into his own reflection
as Xena clangs him in the face with another shield, knocking
him back and out cold. Xena then sneaks past him and turns
the corner.

6 INT. PALACE - PRISON - NIGHT

6

Ares is moping inside his cell, rubbing his sore jaw. He
looks up as Xena appears on the other side of the bars.

ARES

It's about time. Get me out of here.

XENA

I will. Just be patient.

ARES

Yeah, okay, why don't I just do that.
It's not like these guys are gonna
have me executed.

(CONTINUED)

XENA

Look, before I help you, I need to know you're gonna behave.

ARES

What, you're still sore about that thing on the beach?

XENA

In case you didn't notice, your timing could have been a little better.

ARES

Hey, I left that quaint little form of masochism known as the farm as soon as I heard there was trouble. But no sooner do I arrive in civilization again when I see you jumping the delusional little mortal who took my sister's godhood. You'll forgive me if I didn't have time to consult with you first.

XENA

Caligula took Aphrodite's immortality?

ARES

After he took what there was of her mind, or she never could have been convinced to give it to him.

XENA

Is there any way for her to get it back?

ARES

Yeah. She has to have complete mental discipline and focus of will.

XENA

Translation, not a snowball's chance in Hades.

ARES

And by the way, if you're looking for your daughter, it's too late.

XENA

What?

(CONTINUED)

ARES

That pompous angel Michael was here a few minutes ago. He worked some celestial magic and got her out.

7 INT. CATACOMBS - NIGHT

7

Eve enters with Michael.

MICHAEL

I was impressed by your bravery earlier, Eve. You showed a true believer's courage in the face of impending death.

EVE

Tell me something, Michael. Do you honestly believe I can make a difference here in Rome?

MICHAEL

The name you made for yourself as Livia still lives on, Eve. The Romans revere and respect you.

EVE

But I'm no longer that person.

MICHAEL

Which is precisely why you can have such a powerful effect on these poor, misguided souls. When the citizens of Rome see that the great Livia has been converted, they will flock to follow you in seeking out the god capable of such a feat. In your faith will be reflected their desire for such truth and salvation.

EVE

Well, I guess I can't do much good hiding out here in a cave, now can I.

And seeing Michael isn't going to stop her, Eve heads out.

8 INT. PALACE - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

8

An ultra-lavish party. MUSICIANS entertain; half-dressed, intertwined NOBLEMEN and WOMEN are served by almost naked SERVING GIRLS and BOYS.

(CONTINUED)

CONCLUDED.

In large cages, SLAVE COUPLES kiss and engage in pseudo/almost-sex/S&M acts. Gabrielle sits beside Caligula, who has Aphrodite on his lap.

GABRIELLE

So. The union of an emperor and a goddess. That's a pretty powerful combination. How long have you two been together?

CALIGULA

Not very, though it seems like forever.

He shoves Aphrodite off his lap.

APHRODITE

Hey!

GABRIELLE

Was it having that whole immortality thing in common, or did the promotion to godhood come afterwards?

Aphrodite snorts in disgust.

APHRODITE

Just the fact that you ask that question proves you're as dumb as you look. A man only wants--

Caligula gives Aphrodite a warning glare and she shuts up.

CALIGULA

Your interest in our relationship would be charmingly naive were it not a thinly veiled attempt to distract me from your charioteer's obvious and insulting absence.

GABRIELLE

My lord Caesar is as shrewd as he is handsome. Which is why I'm sure he'll understand the extra time I insisted she take in preparing herself for the pleasure of your company.

APHRODITE

She'd better get a bigger mask, then, because eternity wouldn't be long enough.

(CONTINUED)

Gabrielle looks over toward the door, concerned.

9 INT. PALACE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

9

Xena is walking towards the sounds of the party. Ahead of her, a PRAETORIAN GUARD paces back and forth, moving in and out of her sight. On one pass, Xena notices it takes longer than usual for him to reappear. She creeps further toward where he was. Moments later, a GUARD reappears, only it's clearly not him, but an imposter who's stolen his uniform.

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE IMPOSTER GUARD

prepares to enter the party room when Xena suddenly yanks him into an alcove. He reaches for his sword, but Xena quickly disarms him, pulling off his helmet to reveal a handsome, but YOUNG MAN, who tries to cover his fear.

XENA

Just tell me who you are and why you want to kill the emperor. And if it makes you feel any better, I'm no fan of his either.

10 INT. PALACE - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

10

Gabrielle studies Caligula, who seems barely aware of all the dancing and festivities going on around him.

GABRIELLE

The emperor looks bored.

CALIGULA

Wouldn't you be, if you had everything you ever desired?

GABRIELLE

Perhaps Caesar misses the challenge of being a mortal...

CALIGULA

The only thing challenging about being a mortal man is dealing with mortal women. And even that quickly grows old.

As a beautiful woman (MARCELLA) walks by, Caligula grabs her, turns her around to get a full look and feel.

(CONTINUED)

CALIGULA

Although this one certainly could provide a few hours entertainment, couldn't she, Aphrodite?

APHRODITE

Definitely. Too bad about that infection, though.

As Marcella hurries off, embarrassed, Gabrielle leans in to Aphrodite.

GABRIELLE

She's not nearly as attractive as you are.

APHRODITE

Duh. And by the way, I'm into bondage, not bonding. So save your estrogen.

CALIGULA

Speaking of estrogen, there seems to be a troubling lack of it. Perhaps I'll take my best Praetorian Guards and hunt your Zinia down. Then she might learn the importance of punctuality.

Gabrielle jumps up.

GABRIELLE

But my lord, you don't mean you'd leave before my performance?

CALIGULA

Performance?

GABRIELLE

Let's just say the first talent I ever managed was my own.

11 INT. PALACE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

XENA

Okay, Claudius, if you're truly Caligula's cousin, how are you still alive?

(CONTINUE

CLAUDIUS

When I was a baby, my mother sent me
to live in the land of the rising sun
so I'd be safe.

XENA

And now you've come back to claim the
throne. Why I should believe you're
up to the task?

CLAUDIUS

Because you can always come back if I
don't live up to what Rome deserves.
And besides, killing me now would only
cost another million Romans their
lives.

XENA

What are you talking about?

CLAUDIUS

You're aware of Julius Caesar's murder?

XENA

(guiltily)

You could say that.

CLAUDIUS

His dying without a successor left a
vacuum of power. And it quickly
filled with turmoil, chaos--

XENA

(realizing)

--and a bloody civil war.

CLAUDIUS

If you truly care for Rome's welfare,
you won't let that happen again.

12 INT. PALACE - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

12

The Musicians begin playing. Immediately, the room grows
enthralled with Gabrielle's sensuous moves. Possibly using
fans or scarves, she performs a dance unlike any we've seen.

Xena enters just as Gabrielle finishes and applauds loudly.

(CONTINUED)

XENA

I apologize for the delay lord Caesar,
but I was checking on my horses in
case you should honor me with a
chariot race.

CALIGULA

Finally someone around here
understands how to stimulate my
appetites.

APHRODITE

An appetite is only of use to one who
has interest in eating, my lord.
Which is why I've prepared one of your
favorite dishes, as well as mine...
Bring it in, boys.

As TWO SLAVES enter the room, dragging a thick rope that's
tied to a large cage on wheels. Inside the cage is ARES.
Xena and Gabrielle react.

APHRODITE

As soon as I laid eyes on this, this--

ARES

Spartacus.

APHRODITE

Well, I knew he'd make the perfect
player for a game of "Friend or Foe."

ARES

(hopefully)

And what exactly was it about me that
led the goddess to choose me above all
others? Something familiar, maybe?
A look or a gesture that stirred
something inside of you...?

APHRODITE

Oh, it's a look that stirred me, all
right -- the look your head's gonna
have when she--

(looks at Xena)

--serves it up on a platter.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

FADE IN:

13 INT. PALACE - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUING

13

Ares stares at his sister in shock.

ARES

You don't really mean that...

XENA

Is the goddess suggesting that I, the guest of honor, get inside that cage and make a foe of this dim-witted hunk of meat?

APHRODITE

My, you're a quick one, aren't you?

XENA

Caesar, I'm all for spectacle...but if you have no objection, I think we'd all agree he's much better suited to play the role of "friend."

Xena's lustful innuendo isn't lost on Caligula. As he considers:

APHRODITE

(weighing them)

Let's see -- trampy guest of honor, goddess who shares his bed. Tough choice.

CALIGULA

She makes a good point.

Gabrielle pulls Caligula aside, counsels him quietly.

GABRIELLE

Maybe it takes another woman to see what Aphrodite is up to, but her desire to execute the handsome slave isn't to thwart Zinia's desires...it's actually a barely concealed challenge to your authority. Women do this kind of stuff all the time. Very sneaky.

As Caligula absorbs Gabrielle's rationale, he suppresses his rage.

(CONTINUED)

CALIGULA

Party's over! Guard, free this slave, immediately! And find that whore Livia and a handful of assorted holy men. Alert the public there'll be an execution tomorrow. I feel the need to make others bleed.

A Guard goes to the cage, unlocks it.

CALIGULA

(to Xena)

He's yours. Do with him what you will.

APHRODITE

Caligula! How dare you do this to me! Me, Aphrodite, Olympian Goddess of--

CALIGULA

What, love? Please, your delusions are growing as old and tiresome as you are. You're as capable of love as my mother was, not to mention as crazy... and I killed her.

Aphrodite grabs a nearby vase, throws it at him, misses. As he exits the room, she grabs for a glass, but lightning quick, Caligula points his finger, and the object SHATTERS, frightening her, and slicing open her hand. She flees from the room, sobbing.

ARES

Sis, wait!

Xena restrains him.

XENA

Let Gabrielle go.

Gabrielle nods and follows after Aphrodite.

14 INT. PALACE - XENA & GAB'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

14

Gabrielle leads a dazed-looking Aphrodite in by the hand.

GABRIELLE

Sit down. I'll get something to clean that wound.

Aphrodite sniffles and sits while Gabrielle gets a wet cloth and some gauze. Aphrodite looks around, dazed, truly lost.

(CONTINUED)

APHRODITE

I'm going to die.

GABRIELLE

It's just a small wound.

APHRODITE

(covering her heart and
whispering)

Not in here...Here they claw at me all
day and all night. I feel their sharp
talons tearing at me...

GABRIELLE

Whose talons?

APHRODITE

The anti-gods...It's all part of their
plan.

GABRIELLE

What plan?

APHRODITE

Shh! Their spies are everywhere...
You're one of them, aren't you?

GABRIELLE

No, Aphrodite, I'm your friend. I
want to see you the way you once
were...

Aphrodite looks like she's about to cry, then suddenly starts
cackling hysterically like a lunatic.

GABRIELLE

Aphrodite...you don't have to keep
sharing your immortality with
Caligula. You can take it all back
and be whole again.

APHRODITE

Get away from me! You're trying to
trick me with your kindness!

GABRIELLE

No, I care about you, Aphrodite. I
care about what's happened to you.

Aphrodite looks around as if she's hearing voices, totally
delusional.

(CONTINUED)

APHRODITE
Out with the old, in with the new...
The old gods are gone...Love is dead.
Love is...

She begins to scream and puts her hands over her head as if the pain is excruciating.

15 INT. ABANDONED TEMPLE - DAY

15

Ivy grows along the walls. Xena and Ares make their way past remnants of an altar, crumbling statues of old, forgotten gods.

ARES
This place gives me the creeps.

XENA
Get over it. I'm gonna need you to stay here for a little while.

She turns to leave, but he grabs her.

ARES
Excuse me? My sister's become the slut for a scumbag with delusions of grandeur--

XENA
They're not delusions, Ares. His godhood is real.

ARES
Hey, it takes more than immortality to be a god.

She gives him a look.

ARES
Okay, so maybe it doesn't. But I think you could give me the courtesy of at least cluing me in to your plan.

XENA
My plan was to kill Caligula. That hasn't changed.

ARES
When Aphrodite started sharing her power with him, her life became joined with his. I thought you understood that.

(CONTINUED)

XENA

I do understand that, Ares. And I promise you, I won't do anything until I can be certain Aphrodite's safe. You're just gonna have to trust me on this.

ARES

Why does it make me nervous every time you say that?

As she exits:

ARES

Because trust is overrated, that's why!

16 EXT. ROMAN MARKETPLACE - DAY

16

A large and growing CROWD follows behind Eve. Vendors and customers get swept up in her preaching as she passes.

EVE

...I was once not merely like you, but I was all of you. I was Livia. I was Rome. Until the god of Eli found my lost soul and put it on the path to love and peace and salvation. This emperor of yours, Caligula, he isn't the true god.

SEVERAL SOLDIERS rush to block Eve's way.

SOLDIER #1

Do you know what the penalty is for speaking that way about our lord Caesar?

EVE

Your lord is a petty tyrant with the power to abuse and oppress. Join me, Romans! Follow me to spiritual fulfillment, follow me--

Soldier #1 gestures to his fellow Soldiers, and they grab Eve. She doesn't resist.

SOLDIER #1

They'll follow you to prison, and then to death. Now if that's your idea of spiritual fulfillment--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED.

XENA (O.S.)
I've got your spiritual fulfillment
right here.

Soldier #1 turns around right into Xena's fist. As he returns
fire with his sword, the other Soldiers join in the fray.
Xena leaps over them and kicks the Two Soldiers holding Eve,
knocking them away.

XENA
Eve, get out of here!

EVE
I won't run, Mother.

XENA
I was afraid you'd say that.

Xena takes up position in front of her daughter and kicks the
crap out of several Soldiers. But they keep coming. Finally,
she flings her chakram, and it knocks down a huge vendor's
tent, covering the Soldiers and blocking off the street.

XENA
Don't make me carry you, Eve.

Eve reluctantly follows after her mother as they race off.

17 INT. CATACOMBS - DAY

17

Xena is frustrated and angry with Eve.

XENA
You didn't even try to resist when
those soldiers grabbed you.

EVE
You know my path isn't one of
resistance any more.

XENA
How about the path of survival?

EVE
My life, my death...my choice.

XENA
So you chose to come to the one city
in the world that happens to be the
most dangerous for you?

{CONTINUED}

EVE

It also happens to be the place from which the faith of Eli will spread across the world, where I can make the biggest difference.

XENA

If you live long enough. Look, Eve, you have a calling and a passion that I'm proud of. And I have no desire to get in your way. All I'm asking is that you leave Rome until I handle Caligula.

EVE

We both know you could have killed him by now if you'd wanted to. Something's stopping you.

XENA

Aphrodite shared her power and her lifeforce with him. If he dies, so does she.

EVE

But Michael said Aphrodite was already dead...or at least close to it.

XENA

(surprised and disturbed)

Michael?

18 INT. PALACE - XENA & GAB'S QUARTERS - DAY

18

Aphrodite is dancing around and humming to herself.

APHRODITE

Immortality is overrated. Did you know that? Caligula'll find that out, all right...boy, will he be disappointed...

She starts giggling like a young girl with a secret.

GABRIELLE

Why will he be disappointed?

APHRODITE

Don't talk to me!

(CONTINUED)

Aphrodite shrinks into the corner, hugging her knees and rocking.

APHRODITE

He's draining me...Every night he pulls at my soul while they eat away my heart. He wants the power? Let him have it, then they'll work their way inside of him and rip him to shreds!

Aphrodite doesn't resist as Gabrielle helps her up.

GABRIELLE

You're going to lay down and rest for a while, okay?

Gabrielle leads Aphrodite to the bed, helps her lay back.

APHRODITE

I'm so tired.

GABRIELLE

Then let yourself sleep. I'm right here.

APHRODITE

No, I'm all alone now. Everyone is dead...If I were dead too, I wouldn't be so lonely.

And her voice trails off as she seem to fall into a fitful sleep. Gabrielle eases herself out from under Aphrodite and crosses to a bowl of water. Dips a cloth in it. When she turns around, Michael is MATERIALIZING beside Aphrodite.

GABRIELLE

Michael. What are you doing?

MICHAEL

Clearing the path for Xena to finish her mission.

And as he raises his sword over the unconscious Aphrodite, we:

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

19 INT. PALACE - XENA & GAB'S QUARTERS - DAY - CONTINUING

19

Michael's about to plunge the sword into Aphrodite.

GABRIELLE

Michael, don't!

As she rushes at him, he raises his hand and hurls a BALL OF LIGHT. She flies backward, hits the wall hard.

MICHAEL

Xena's affection for the Olympians
can't be tolerated when it puts the
future in jeopardy.

He starts to bring the sword down when it's knocked from his hand by Xena's chakram. As the chakram rebounds off the wall and flies back toward Xena, a BALL OF LIGHT sends the chakram crashing into the bathtub, which is filled with water. Weaponless, Xena and Michael face off.

XENA

You should know better than to try and
force my hand, Michael. Besides
which, we both know you don't have the
power to kill immortals. That's where
I come in, remember?

MICHAEL

Before Aphrodite began sharing her
godhood with the emperor, she was
already suffering from the despair
that is now deteriorating into
madness. And as Caligula takes more
than his fair share of the force that
joins them, her soul is weakened by
anguish--

XENA

Allowing you to take advantage of her
vulnerability. Doesn't sound very
angelic to me.

MICHAEL

I'm a warrior for my god, Xena. I do
what I have to, unpleasant though it
may be.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL (cont'd)

Whereas you, even knowing what the stakes are, allow yourself to be hindered by sentimentality.

XENA

Not when it comes to you, Michael.
Bring it on.

And with that, Michael flies at Xena. What starts out as a fistfight becomes a wrestling match. Michael gets Xena in a chokehold.

MICHAEL

Come with me to kill Caligula at once
and we can stop this now.

Xena musters the energy to react -- not a chance. Then she succeeds in using her legs to get him off of her.

XENA

I won't be your errand girl anymore,
Michael.

They grab each other again. But it's an equally matched standstill; neither can get the other to the floor.

MICHAEL

And what about your daughter? If you
don't kill Caligula, it's just a
matter of time before--

XENA

Every mother fears for their child,
Michael. But at some point, you just
gotta cut the cord and let them take
care of themselves.

Whether she's bluffing or not, her seeming resolve catches Michael off-guard, and he weakens for a moment. Xena takes the opportunity to flip him into the sunken tub. She pushes him down, holding him under the water.

GABRIELLE

Are you sure you want to kill him?

XENA

Unfortunately, I won't have to.

She yanks Michael up; he's gasping for breath. To make matters worse, she puts her arm around his throat.

(CONTINUED)

XENA

There's got to be a way to keep
Aphrodite alive.

(off Michael's silence)

Fine. You wanna play it that way?

(giving him the pinch)

Now. I'll ask you again. Is there
any way for me to keep Aphrodite alive
after I kill Caligula?

MICHAEL

His death will have no effect on her
if you give her back full godhood
before you kill him.

XENA

I thought Aphrodite could only get her
godhood back by taking it from him?

MICHAEL

You can give her immortality by giving
up your ability to slay immortals.

GABRIELLE

Ares...

XENA

Does that mean I can restore Ares'
godhood?

MICHAEL

You can use the transfer of power only
once, and only on one who was formerly
a god. You must choose, Xena, because
afterward, your power to kill gods
will be gone forever.

Xena releases the pinch. Michael gasps for air, then gathers
enough strength to DISAPPEAR just as Ares comes dashing into
the room.

ARES

Look, I know you told me to stay put,
but--

Ares takes in Xena's soaking wet condition, notes the way she
and Gab look at him. Realizes some major shit has gone down.

ARES

What'd I miss?

Xena and Gabrielle walk through the streets, which are becoming increasingly like Sodom and Gemorrah.

XENA

Ares can't know I have the ability to restore his immortality until I've finished with Caligula.

GABRIELLE

And then what?

XENA

I think one of the reasons Aphrodite went mad and became vulnerable to such corruption was because Ares wasn't there to balance her out. Just like day would have no meaning without night, and good can't exist without evil, love needs war. In a strange way, they complement each other.

GABRIELLE

So you'd actually consider giving him back his godhood?

XENA

Well, you know what they say, "The god you know is better than the god you don't." At least with Ares, you know where you stood and what to expect.

GABRIELLE

Xena...you heard what Michael said. Once you've given Ares his power, yours will be lost forever.

XENA

If things work out the way I want them to, he may not want it back.

As Xena moves off, Gabrielle looks after her quizzically.

21 INT. CATACOMBS - DAY

21

Eve faces TWO SOLDIERS who've come to volunteer. In the bg., a couple of dozen ELIJANS are sitting on the floor praying.

EVE

The faith of Eli takes all who are sincere, but only if you agree to walk the path of peace.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED.

SOLDIER

But if we put down our swords as you ask, we'll be powerless to help you.

EVE

The kind of help I need is not another's to give. I welcome you to our faith, and hope that even in my absence you will continue to practice the ways of love and non-violence.

Eve holds out her hands, and the soldiers reluctantly give her their swords. Eve's adding them to a pile of similarly discarded ones when she finds herself face to face with Xena.

XENA

Why do I get the feeling that this absence you mentioned isn't the departure from Rome I was hoping for?

Eve hesitates, but finally, reluctantly, confesses the truth.

EVE

The faith of Eli may only thrive upon my death, Mother. If that's to be my destiny, you have to let me die.

As Xena stares at her daughter, stunned--

ARES (V.O.)

I can't let that happen...

22 INT. ABANDONED TEMPLE - DAY

23

CLOSE ON - ARES

looking sadly at something O.S.

ARES

I can't let her die, Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE

She's not dying, Ares. She's just...

They both look over at Aphrodite. She's wrapping herself in ivy, winding the plant around her body, laughing and muttering to herself, then suddenly begins sobbing and sinks to the ground.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GABRIELLE

(quietly)

...going mad.

ARES

Well, that's a fine alternative to death, now isn't it?

Aphrodite crawls over to a decapitated head from a marble statue. Touches it lovingly.

APHRODITE

I'm sorry I let you down, Daddy.
Forgive me...

ARES

Boy, it's a real shame Xena's missing the show, isn't it?

GABRIELLE

Ares...

ARES

I mean, where is she right now?
Better yet; I'll tell you where she is. She's off trying to rescue that self-righteous, reborn daughter of hers. And the only way she can do that is to kill the emperor. And when that happens...

He looks over at his sister again.

ARES

So don't tell me my sister isn't dying, Gabrielle. And this is some way for her to spend her last few minutes here on earth.

GABRIELLE

Ares, if there's a way to spare Aphrodite, Xena will find it.

ARES

Sorry, but I don't do "ifs". This is the Goddess of Love we're talking about. I can't believe that I'm gonna say this, me, the God of War--

GABRIELLE

Former God of War.

(CONTINUED)

ARES

Couldn't let that one go, could ya?
My point is, the world can't survive
without love. C'mon, you may have
cropped the girlish goldilocks, pumped
up those pecs and learned how to beat
someone into the afterlife, but
beneath it all, you're still the same
sickeningly sentimental bard. If
anyone should understand how important
my sister is, it's you.

Ares walks over to Aphrodite, tries to touch her, but she
pushes him away, enraged.

APHRODITE

I gave you everything...but you took
my love and made it hate, made me
hate. I am hate! You hear me?!

As she hurries away from him to another corner of the temple,
Ares turns a glare on Gabrielle.

ARES

Didya ever think that maybe the reason
we all keep finding ourselves fighting
to keep that brat Eve alive is because
she's supposed to die? Well I say
it's about time we let fate take care
of itself.

XENA (V.O.)

Do you know how crazy that sounds?

23 INT. CATACOMBS - DAY

23

XENA

Eve, think about what you're saying.

EVE

No, you think about what kind of
message I'd send by running from
danger like a coward. But my
conversion...and if it comes to it, my
death, will send a message across the
world far more powerful than anything
I could do or say while I'm alive.

Xena stares at her daughter, suddenly realizing--

(CONTINUED)

XENA

That's not you talking. That's Michael, isn't it?

EVE

The only way to cleanse the blood from my conscience and find peace and redemption is through the ultimate sacrifice for my god.

XENA

Dying is easy. It takes more courage to live, especially when the present is painful and a dark past stares back from every mirror. But that's why you were chosen, Eve. For your strength and your commitment to change your life, not forfeit it.

Eve starts to look uncertain. Xena is finally getting through.

EVE

But Michael made me believe...

XENA

Eve, I have no doubt Michael truly thinks that making a martyr of you would help advance the cause of your god and all the Elijans. But you were the one chosen to be the messenger for Eli's god, not Michael. Listen to your heart, your own instincts.

MICHAEL'S POV - FROM THE SKY

Eve and Xena embrace.

EVE

How could I be so foolish? I can't possibly make others understand that their lives are precious if I don't value my own.

XENA

I promise you Eve, leave Rome today, and soon you'll return without any fear for your safety, or that of all Elijans.

Michael grimly watches Xena and Eve, then DISAPPEARS...

25 INT. PALACE - MAIN ROOM - DAY

25

Caligula sits on his throne, barking at his CAPTAIN.

CALIGULA

What do you mean you can't find the goddess? Being inconspicuous isn't exactly one of her strong points.

CAPTAIN

We're searching every corner of the palace and the city, my lord Caesar. Every effort is being undertaken.

Caligula juts out his hand, and the Captain begins to choke, as if held by an invisible hand around his throat.

CALIGULA

I have promised the people an execution...

A somber but resigned Michael APPEARS, surprising Caligula.

MICHAEL

And so you shall have one.

Caligula looks at Michael, intrigued.

26 INT. ABANDONED TEMPLE - DAY

26

Xena enters and crosses to Gabrielle and Ares. In the bg., Aphrodite rocks herself in a corner.

XENA

How's she doing?

ARES

She's alive. And she's gonna stay that way.

XENA

Ares, I have no intention of letting your sister die.

ARES

Look, Xena, I may have loved you once, okay, maybe I even still burn for you a little bit, but there's no way in Tartarus that...What did you say?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

At that moment, Claudius comes racing in.

CLAUDIUS

Xena! Xena, I need to speak to you!

XENA

Claudius, it isn't safe for you to be here.

CLAUDIUS

An angel told the emperor where to find your daughter.

GABRIELLE

Michael...

CLAUDIUS

Even as we speak, Caligula's parading through the streets. When he reaches the end, he's going to burn your daughter at the stake as a symbol of his might over the god of Eli and all others.

XENA

Gabrielle, make sure Claudius remains safe until this is finished.

ARES

Xena, don't.

Xena sends a brief, pained glance at Aphrodite, then turns to go. She's heading for the exit, when Ares lets out a roar and rushes at Xena. Gabrielle steps in the way.

GABRIELLE

Ares, stop.

Ares sends Gabrielle flying, continues toward Xena. At the last second, Xena ducks, and Ares stumbles past her.

XENA

I don't want to hurt you, Ares.

ARES

Then don't do this.

XENA

I have no choice.

(CONTINUED)

ARES

There's always a choice.

He gets up and lunges for her again with everything he has. But his emotion makes him less effective, more vulnerable.

XENA

No, there isn't. Not for a mother.

Reluctantly, Xena holds Ares off with a flurry of kicks and punches. Not enough to do serious damage, but enough to waylay him so she can make her exit. As Ares crumples:

ARES

After everything I've sacrificed for you...

XENA

Prepare yourself, Ares. If this works the way I want it to, you'll have the chance to make one last sacrifice.

And she exits. Ares staggers to his knees, yells after her...

ARES

Xena!

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

- 27 EXT. ROMAN PUBLIC SQUARE - DAY 27
- EVE'S WRISTS are bound; EVE'S ANKLES are tied together and then also bound to the stake, her flesh already bruising beneath the coarse rope. A beaten-up Eve fights to maintain consciousness and composure, refusing to show pain or fear.
- 28 EXT. ROMAN MARKETPLACE - DAY 28
- Xena pushes her way through a crowd of Spectators and then through the parade of Soldiers. At the forefront, she sees TWO CHARIOTS. Caligula and one of his Generals each climb onto one. As she finds herself forced to punch, shove, leap and kick her way through the procession:
- 29 EXT. ROMAN PUBLIC SQUARE - DAY 29
- As the large stake is stood up on its end, Eve's dazed eyes fight to bring her surroundings into FOCUS. She looks down first at the faces of the rapidly assembling, bloodthirsty Crowd, then at the PILE OF KINDLING surrounding her, and realizes what's coming...
- 30 EXT. ROMAN STREET - DAY 30
- CLOSE ON - A FLAMING BRANCH
- It's end brought to a large torch, igniting it.
- CALIGULA
- smiles wickedly at the torch he holds.
- CALIGULA
- Neither god nor man will challenge me now, Eve. Not even yours.
- 31 EXT. ROMAN STREET - DAY 31
- Xena jumps onto the chariot, and easily knocks the General off with a few well-placed punches. Up ahead, she can see another chariot: Caligula's. Xena grabs the reins and charges her horses to gallop toward Caligula.
- CALIGULA
- turns and sees Xena swiftly approaching. He smiles at the challenge. Shouts back at her--

{CONTINUED}

CALIGULA

Ah, what a dramatic moment you choose to reveal yourself, Xena.

XENA

If you know who I am, then you know I have the power to kill you.

CALIGULA

But first you'll have to catch me.

He excitedly thrusts the torch up over his head and gives a command that sends his horses racing. Xena continues to pursue him, grabbing her chakram. She's about to hurl it when she hears a commotion coming up behind her. She turns to see--

Ares coming up quickly behind her on a chariot. He drives his horses with an impassioned rage.

32 EXT. ROMAN PUBLIC SQUARE - DAY

32

On either side of the square, two solid walls of Spectators have formed, leaving a wide swath up the middle for Caligula's chariot. A Roman NOBLEMAN steps forward from one side.

NOBLEMAN

Death to Livia! Traitor of mother Rome!

As the Crowd yells in agreement with him, an ELIJAN MAN steps out from the other side. Yells over the Crowd:

ELIJAN MAN

Long live Eve! Leader of the Elijans, speaker of truth!

As others shout in agreement with him, the TWO FACTIONS take up opposing chants: "Long live Eve!" and "Death to Livia!"

33 EXT. ROMAN STREET - DAY

33

Ares charges at Xena with a focus and fury we've never seen. The gap between them is closing with dangerous speed.

XENA

Sorry, Ares...but you need to be with your sister right now.

She throws the chakram. It rebounds off some statues lining the street, then homes in on the wheel of Ares' chariot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED.

The chariot veers off course, and Ares jumps out only moments before it smashes into a stone wall. As Xena's chariot disappears from view...

ARES

Damn you, Xena!

34 EXT. STRAIGHTAWAY TO THE PUBLIC SQUARE/PUBLIC SQUARE - DAY

34

Xena sees Eve at the far end of the public square, tied to the stake. She reacts, bringing her chariot alongside Caligula's. Xena swings her sword, Caligula waves his torch menacingly at Xena, as both try to still steer their horses. It's a brutal and well-matched battle. They struggle to stay upright as their horses become wild. Xena brings a leg around to kick Caligula, but he's impressively quick and grabs the limb, shoving her back with it.

CALIGULA

I'm not one of your pathetic Olympians, Xena. It's my destiny to succeed where other gods have failed.

XENA

Destiny is in the eye of the beholder, Caligula. And right now, I foresee teaching you just how short immortality can be.

THE PUBLIC SQUARE

It's like they've entered the arena. The Crowds' yells, combined with the thunder of the horses, creates a deafening roar.

CALIGULA

Turn back now, Xena, and you won't have to witness your daughter's fiery demise.

XENA

I'd prefer to stick around and witness yours.

As they draw ominously near to Eve, Xena lunges with her sword, and Caligula grabs it, yanking it so she's stretched out between the two chariots as they start to veer apart. As Xena's chariot is pulled out from under her, she flips up and into Caligula's chariot, stabbing him.

(CONTINUED)

XENA

Someone should've taught you to stick
with your strengths. You're a much
better charioteer than you were a god.

As she throws him over the side, the torch sails onto the pile
of kindling just as Caligula is trampled beneath the horses.
Xena then dives from the chariot over the igniting kindling to
cut Eve free. As she pulls her to safety, Guards rush to keep
the Crowd from turning into a rioting mob.

As mother and daughter embrace, Claudius, dressed in regal
attire, approaches with a small band of Soldiers.

CLAUDIUS

All of Rome owes you a debt of
gratitude, Xena.

XENA

And I trust you'll repay it by turning
this into the kind of Republic where
people have the right to live and
worship as they choose without fear of
oppression.

CLAUDIUS

That has been my lifelong dream. And
I was hoping your daughter might be
persuaded to help me fulfill that goal.

XENA

I think that's something the two of
you should talk about.

And as she hurries off--

35 INT. ABANDONED TEMPLE - DAY

35

Xena races in and stops cold at the tragic sight of Ares
holding his dead sister in his arms, Gabrielle beside him.

ARES

Don't say anything, Xena. Don't
insult me by pretending you care.

XENA

I do care.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARES

Look at her, Xena. Look at her! She was once so beautiful, so full of fun and life. You did this. She was one of the only things I cared about in this world, and you destroyed her.

XENA

Ares, you once gave something up to save the people I loved. Now I've found a way I can give it back.

ARES

My immortality?

XENA

If I give up the ability to slay gods, and transfer that power to you, you'll be immortal again.

ARES

You would do that?

XENA

(looking at Aphrodite)

Yes. But I can think of another way to use that transfer of power.

GABRIELLE

Xena, you're right! If Ares could bring me and Eve back by giving up his immortality, it makes sense that you'd be able to do something similar to revive Aphrodite!

ARES

Do it.

XENA

You have to be sure, Ares. Because if it works, my power to return you to godhood will be gone.

GABRIELLE

And so will your ability to protect your daughter from the gods, Xena.

(CONTINUED)

XENA

I think we've both learned that just because you can't kill something doesn't mean you can't defeat it, Gabrielle. Ares?

ARES

She's all the family I have left, Xena.

Xena closes her eyes and lays her hands on Aphrodite. Suddenly Xena's body tenses, and a GOLDEN GLOW radiates out from her and down to Aphrodite. Aphrodite's glow INTENSIFIES as Xena's FADES. After a tense moment...Aphrodite's eyelids flutter.

GABRIELLE

Xena...It's working.

Aphrodite finally opens her eyes. All three stare down at her. She reacts, completely confused by the weird tension.

APHRODITE

Who died?

The three of them start laughing. Ares hugs Aphrodite in close to him, practically suffocating her.

ARES

Good to have you back, sis.

As an emotional Ares hugs Aphrodite to him again, he looks at Xena gratefully over his sister's shoulder.

36 EXT. BEACH - DAY

36

Gabrielle helps steady Aphrodite, who trips and wobbles awkwardly in the sand. She yells back to Xena and Ares, who follow behind.

APHRODITE

This whole walking mortal thing really sucks, y'know that?!

ARES

Looks good on you, though.

APHRODITE

I'm supposed to be the goddess of love. GOD-dess. Get it?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

APHRODITE (cont'd)
Immortality, special powers, yadda
yadda yadda? I can't believe this is
what you resurrected me for. It is so
unsexy.

ARES
Deep down, she really is grateful.

Ares and Xena watch as Aphrodite kicks the sand in
frustration, then nearly falls again.

ARES
Okay, really really deep down. And so
am I. Thank you, Xena.

XENA
Thank yourself. It was your
selflessness that made this happen,
Ares. I'm proud of you.

ARES
Well, don't get carried away. Believe
me, our little slice of immortality's
out there somewhere. And even if I
have to walk all the way to Tartarus,
I'm gonna find it.

XENA
I have no doubt that you will.

THE END

FADE OUT: