

Xena: Warrior Princess - Subtext Virtual Season 9



Production #V904 – Horsefeathers

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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. FOREST - EVENING

Xena is standing under a grove of trees brushing Argo, who is munching grass as she does. Behind Xena, Gabrielle can be seen moving around, apparently setting up their camp.

The sun is setting behind a high ridge of hills, causing a soft red glow all around them. The wind is blowing through the trees, not hard, but steady. The sky overhead is full of gray clouds that are moving quickly across the sky.

There is a loud crash and then from near the camp....

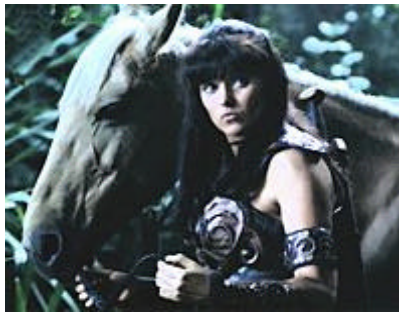
GABRIELLE

(offstage)

Damn!

XENA

You okay?



GABRIELLE

I smashed my thumb. I'll live.

XENA

Be careful.

She goes back to brushing Argo, who is swishing her tail as if to play with Xena.

XENA

Be good.

GABRIELLE

(offstage)

What did I do?

XENA

I'm talking to Argo.

GABRIELLE

(offstage)

Oh, snowstorm coming.

XENA

(amusedly)

Oh yeah? What makes
you so sure?

GABRIELLE

(offstage)

Please. After all these years?
If I can't smell a snowstorm by
now, I should go back to
Austinopolis and just spin yarn.

Xena chuckles and sends Argo II off with a gentle swat to her rump. She picks up a leather bag, placing the brush inside before slinging it over her shoulder.

As she walks back toward the camp it is very clear that Gabrielle has indeed been busy. There is a small tent pitched, a fire is burning with a rabbit roasting over the spit. A small tree trunk serves as a table, with a light blue tablecloth and packs set as soft stools. Two glasses of wine sit on top of it, separated by a single small candle and a plate of something that resembles hummus and a few pieces of flat bread.

XENA

Camp looks great.
Very homey.

Gabrielle mumbles around the thumb stuck in her mouth.

GABRIELLE

Nothing to it.

XENA

Let me see.

Gabrielle offers her smashed thumbnail to Xena, who looks at it and clucks her tongue.

XENA

That's going to be ugly
in the morning.

GABRIELLE

It's ugly now; it's going to
be hideous in the morning.
Come on, let's eat.

They settle down at the makeshift table and begin eating from the plates.

XENA

Gabrielle, are you sure you're not wanting to settle down?

GABRIELLE

No, Xena I'm happy on the road. Once in a while it's nice to make camp feel a bit more permanent, especially on a night like tonight.



XENA

You're right about the storm. We may have to spend a couple of days here if it snows too hard tonight.

GABRIELLE

(smiling)

And we're prepared for it. We have all the supplies we need and the tent is very... cozy.

XENA

(with mock surprise)

Why madam, do you intend to take me in there and seduce me?

GABRIELLE

(teasingly)

Only if you want to be seduced.

XENA

Yes, please.

Gabrielle chuckles through a sip of her wine and then begins digging into a pack next to her. She finds what she is looking for and holds them up in triumph. In her hand she holds, a deck of cards.

GABRIELLE

How about a game?

XENA

The strip version of
Gods and Mortals?

GABRIELLE

Only if we go in the tent first,
it's getting too cold out here.
The wind has picked up.

Xena looks around, sniffing the air and nodding.

XENA

It's going to be a good storm.
But we should be fairly well protected
here. You picked us a good spot.
The trees will give Argo plenty
of shelter, but leave enough grass
uncovered for her to graze.

Gabrielle takes the deck of cards, her wine cup and the candle then crawls for the tent.

GABRIELLE

She'll probably find some
guy with an apple....

Gabrielle disappears into the tent. Xena stands there watching her backside disappear through the flap.

XENA

(quietly to herself)
Wow.

Then she realizes the intent of Gabrielle's last comment.

XENA

(cont'd)
Oh, funny. Very funny.



FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. FOREST - EVENING

Argo is moving through the forest, taking the time to nibble various forms of plant life that she happens upon. The grass doesn't seem to interest her much and she wanders toward a patch of clover which seems to be more to her liking as she begins munching in earnest.

From the camp in the distance there is a loud squeal of laughter. The mare looks back and snorts in a disgusted manner. Shaking her head, she returns to the clover. When another round of laughter erupts from the camp, she all but rolls her eyes and moves further into the forest as if trying to escape the laughter of her traveling companions.

If someone didn't know better, they might think Argo was a bit put out.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVERBANK - EVENING

Argo stops by the back of a river to take a drink of the cool water. She tosses her head, noticing that it's growing colder. All the muscles in her body seem to ripple staring at her chest and working back to her hindquarters as if she is trying to shake off a chill.

Lowering her head back to the water, she starts to drink but looks up across the river as her ears prick forward. She watches intently as something moves through the trees. She paws the ground and whinnies.

After a moment the movement stops and there is a return whinny from the thick of trees.

Argo waits for a moment, and then there is another loud whinny and she steps into the water, crossing to the opposite bank, where she disappears into the woods.

CUT TO:

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Xena and Gabrielle are lying curled up around each other under warm blankets. A small candle in a holder provides a little light. They are both awake and seem to be listening to the wind blowing outside.

GABRIELLE

Do you think Argo is okay out there?

XENA

She's fine. She's used to finding shelter in weather like this. She's probably found a nice grove of trees. I don't think the storm will be that bad.

GABRIELLE

We should have put
a blanket on her.

Xena laughs softly and pulls Gabrielle even closer if that's possible.

XENA

You worry too much.

GABRIELLE

Part of the job, I guess.

XENA

I guess. Are you
warm enough?

GABRIELLE

(snuggling closer)

Oh yeah, you make a
great hot water bottle.

XENA

Ready to sleep?

GABRIELLE

(yawning)

Getting there.

Xena reaches up and snuffs out the candle between her thumb and forefinger putting them in totally darkness. The only sounds remaining are Gabrielle's gentle snores and the wind blowing against the tent.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FOREST - MORNING

Overnight it has snowed, leaving everything covered in a fine white powder about an inch deep. The area around the campsite is pristine. It's clear that no one has left the tent. A small smoldering fire continues to glow, the only sign of life in the area.

Inside the tent there is rustling, the sides move obviously pushed out by someone moving around inside. There's a squeal that's definitely not Xena.

GABRIELLE

(offstage)

Oooo... your hands are cold.

Xena's head pokes out of the tent, and she's smiling.

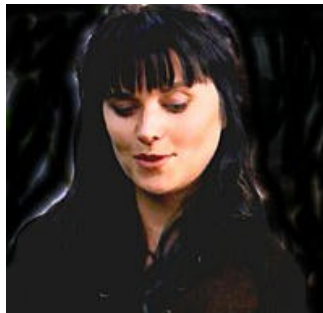
XENA
(*amusedly*)
Bitch, bitch, bitch.

She comes out of the tent, wearing a heavy sweater looking thing, much heavier and more covering than crucifixion garb. As she emerges completely her 'winter sleeping gear' is completed with leggings and something that looks like furry half boots.

XENA
I'll get the fire going and
we can decide if we're
going anywhere today.

GABRIELLE
(*offstage*)
How bad is it out there?

XENA
Could be worse.
Could be Rome.



GABRIELLE
(*offstage*)
I'm married to a comedian.

Xena chuckles to herself, and bends down near the embers of last night's fire. Lifting a piece of tarp, she takes a few pieces of tinder and places them on the embers. Blowing gently, she gets a small flame going. As she adds more wood, Gabrielle emerges from the tent. She's dressed like Xena, in warm, comfortable clothes.

GABRIELLE
It's beautiful out here.

XENA
Actually... it is.

Gabrielle's brow goes up and she smiles, moving in behind Xena and wrapping her arms around her waist.

GABRIELLE

You're going soft in your old age.



XENA

Probably.

Xena gestures to the fire,
which is now burning nicely.

XENA

(cont'd)

If you take care of breakfast,
I'll go check on Argo.

GABRIELLE

Go. Make sure she's okay.
I can handle this.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEADOW - MORNING

Xena, now wearing a heavy cloak over her winter outfit, is treading through the snow, leaving clear tracks in the snow. The meadow that she is moving through is also pristine, with no sign that Argo has been in it recently.

XENA

Argo! Hey girl, come on.

She stops and looks around trying to find the horse. Then she gives a shrill whistle, before setting off again.

XENA

(cont'd)

Argo!

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMP - MORNING

Gabrielle is turning the rabbit into stew and brewing something in a kettle that is coming to a stream as Xena comes back into the camp.

GABRIELLE

How's Argo?

XENA

I don't know. I can't find her. I came back for some rope and her halter.

GABRIELLE

Hold on. I'll go with you.



She turns and scrambles back into the tent. When she comes back out she has Xena's sword in one hand and her sais in the other. She tosses the sword to Xena as she gets to her feet and pulls her sais into her hands.

GABRIELLE

Let's go.

Xena gestures to the sais.

XENA

What are those for?

GABRIELLE

This is Argo we're talking about.
Something has to have happened.
She didn't just wander off and
the snow wasn't bad enough
that she got trapped somewhere.

Xena nods, conceding the point. She and Gabrielle gather up rope and the horse's harness and head out of camp.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RIVER BANK - DAY

Xena and Gabrielle are walking along the bank, following what are obviously horse tracks.

XENA

Looks like she crossed here.

Gabrielle looks at the river, which isn't running hard, but appears to be very cold.

GABRIELLE

Just my luck.

XENA

(teasingly)

I could carry you across.

GABRIELLE

No, no, I'll make it. That water just looks really cold.

Xena removes her cloak and rolls it up, laying it over her shoulder to keep it dry. Gabrielle follows suit and does the same.

Xena steps into the water.

XENA

That's because it is.



GABRIELLE

You're a big help.

She follows Xena and shivers the second her foot hits the water.

GABRIELLE

Ah yeah, that's COLD!

Xena smiles and without turning around, offers Gabrielle her hand. They make their way through the water, which comes to just over Xena's waist at the deepest spot and a little higher on Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE

Argo better be in trouble
or I'm gonna kill her.

Crossing over to the other side, Gabrielle quickly replaces her cloak as Xena picks up Argo's trail.

XENA
Interesting.

GABRIELLE
What?

XENA
It wasn't a guy with an apple
she followed this time.

Xena points at a second set of tracks.

GABRIELLE
Well what do ya know,
she found a friend.

XENA
A wild friend by the looks of it.
No shoes on the second set.

GABRIELLE
Apparently she found someone
to keep her warm last night.



XENA
ARGO!

FADE OUT.

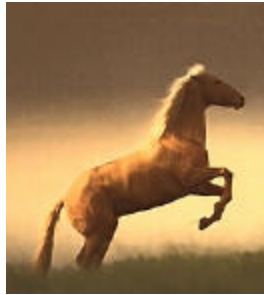
END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Xena and Gabrielle have traveled further into the forest still following Argo's tracks. Suddenly, the mare comes charging out of a thicket of trees right at them. She is rearing slightly, bobbing her head in a warning manner and generally trying to get them to back off.



XENA

Easy girl! Easy!
What's wrong?

They both approach her slowly but as they do, she dashes away from them, leading them away from the direction they were heading.

They look at each other and then again attempt to get near the mare. She prances nervously and backs away.

GABRIELLE

Easy, Argo. Easy now.

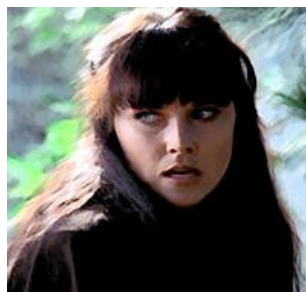
Gabrielle approaches her from the front while Xena tries to get around her side to put the rope around her neck. She turns and looks at Xena, snorting before backing away yet again.

GABRIELLE

Something has her spooked.

XENA

We need to get her calmed down
before she hurts herself.



Argo turns and runs further from the spot, forcing Xena and Gabrielle to follow her.

GABRIELLE

She really doesn't want us
near whatever is back there.

Before the sound of Gabrielle's voice has even left the air, there is a scream from the woods. It is clearly a horse. The sounds make it very apparent that it is in some sort of trouble. Argo becomes more agitated and begins rearing in very nearly a violent manner.

The noises come closer and even as the horse's painful cries can be heard, the sounds of men yelling can also be heard.

MAN #1

(offstage)
Get him!

MAN #2

(offstage)
Don't damage him!

Xena and Gabrielle watch as a huge white stallion comes into the clearing. They both take cover behind trees to watch as they hear men following the horse. Gabrielle notices a large gash across the stallion's chest that is dripping brilliant red blood, spraying it all over the clearing as the horse bolts around, trying to evade his hunters.

Then he does something that catches both Xena and Gabrielle by surprise. As the hunters come into the clearing, he spreads his wings.

GABRIELLE

By the gods.

XENA

A Pegasus.

GABRIELLE

We need to help him.



Argo moves to them and stares them down. It's clear she is blocking their path to the hunters and the hunted.

XENA

Easy girl. We're going
to give him a hand.

Argo lowers her head and takes a step forward. She's doing her best to move them back. There is another wild scream from the Pegasus. Xena and Gabrielle look past Argo in time to see two of the four men in the group throw a net over him. He stops for a second and turns his head to where Argo is standing. Then he rears again and whinnies loudly at her.

Argo turns and takes a few steps forward before rearing and calling back to him. Then she turns and runs away, past Xena and Gabrielle, apparently heading back to the river and to their camp.

Torn between going to help the Pegasus and following Argo, Xena and Gabrielle watch as the death blow is given and the Pegasus crumples to the ground.

XENA

Bastards.

The men crowd around. The leader obviously isn't happy.

MAN #1

You idiots, you
broke his wing!

MAN #2

Yeah, but the other
one will still bring a
good price in Athens.

MAN #3

What about that golden
mare he was with?

MAN #1

Leave her.
She's just a horse.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMP - DAY

Xena and Gabrielle are tending to Argo, who seems to be calmer now, but she is still twitching a bit even as Xena bushes her and Gabrielle offers her apple slices.

GABRIELLE

So, now what?

XENA

We give them time to do what they will, and then we go back there.



Argo swings her head around and seems to shake it 'no'.

GABRIELLE

I don't think she likes that idea.

XENA

All right then. We pack up and head into the next village and see if we can find information there. If someone is hunting the Pegasus I don't see how they can keep it quiet. They mentioned Athens, but they have to prepare them for shipment somewhere.

GABRIELLE

I think a nice warm stable is just the ticket for Argo too.

XENA

You read my mind.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TOWN - AFTERNOON

It's a fairly common village. Nothing out of the ordinary about it at all. The people seem happy enough as they go about their business, paying little attention to Xena and Gabrielle as they lead Argo into their village.

GABRIELLE

How many do you think they've killed?

XENA

One is too many, but I got the impression they've been doing this for a while.

GABRIELLE

I didn't think there
were any left.

XENA

If they keep this up,
there won't be.

Xena looks around and then points to a sign that seems to point to the local stable.

XENA

(cont'd)

Come on; let's get her settled.
Then we'll poke around a bit.

CUT TO:

INT. STABLE - AFTERNOON

Xena is brushing Argo down as Gabrielle stores her tack in a bin next to the stall.

GABRIELLE

How's she doing?



XENA

Better. She's calmed down a lot.

GABRIELLE

Why do you think she was
so insistent on getting
us way from there?

XENA

I can only guess that there were
more of the Pegasus' around,
probably hiding and she was
afraid that we might accidentally
lead those men to them.

Gabrielle dumps a bag of oats into a trough and gives Argo a pat on the neck.

GABRIELLE

Its okay, girl. We'll make
sure to stop them. No
one will hurt your friends.

Argo snorts, nods her head, and then nuzzles Gabrielle's neck.

Xena and Gabrielle look at each other. Even though Argo can't articulate it, they know that whatever she saw was horrifying to her.

CUT TO:

INT. INN - EVENING

Xena and Gabrielle are seated at the back of the room at a corner table, which affords them a perfect view of the entire place.

GABRIELLE

So far it doesn't look like
anyone is involved.

XENA

It's early. They've had a good day
hunting... they'll be here. They also
need someone to finance this little
venture and I'd bet my last dinar that the
innkeeper is in on this. He's obviously
one of the wealthiest men in town.

GABRIELLE

Zeus used the Pegasus to carry his
thunderbolts. I wish we had a few
of those now. Those men
need a bolt right up the....

Before she can finish, Xena points to two men entering the inn. They don't look that unusual except one of them has a few white feathers sticking from a bag slung over his shoulder.

The innkeeper gestures to the men who join him at the end of the bar. They don't seem to be the least bit interested in the keeping their conversation quiet.

INNKEEPER

How did you do today?

ERRILIS

We found the large white
one. He put up a fight,
but we finally got him.

The man with the bag opens it and places a few of the feathers on the bar.

ALEXIE

One of his wings did get broken.

INNKEEPER

Too bad. They bring a good price in the Athens market. But the feathers sell well too. Those people at the Athens Academy love them... think they're quills blessed by the muses.

Gabrielle looks to Xena with a sickened expression on her face. Xena reaches over and takes her hand to comfort her.

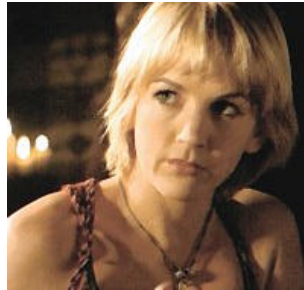
XENA

(whispering)

It's okay.

GABRIELLE

Stupid people. One day they'll learn using a feather from a Pegasus can't make them talented.



XENA

When we're done, there won't be a trade in the feathers or any other part of the animal.

INNKEEPER

Did you have any other trouble?

ERRILIS

None. The stallion was with a golden mare, but we didn't bother with her. She was a common horse. She was a pretty one though. I wouldn't have minded catching her for myself.

XENA

(under her breath)

She's too smart for you.

Xena and Gabrielle watch as the men conclude their business and leave the inn. Gabrielle tosses some coins down on the table and they get up to follow.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEY - EVENING

Quietly they follow the men down a semi-dark alleyway and watch as they enter a building at a side entrance. Almost immediately they start looking around for another way in and without speaking they decide the best way in will be through the second story.

Xena positions herself and give Gabrielle a foot up to the railing of a second story balcony. Once she has a hold, Gabrielle climbs up and over the railing. She turns and offers her hand to Xena who refuses with a shake of her head. She takes a few steps back then runs and jumps to the railing, hauling herself over with very little effort.

GABRIELLE

Show off.

Xena grins and shrugs as they turn to make their way in the balcony doors.



CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Moving silently down a long hall, they stop at the top of the landing leading down to the common room. Light from the room below them filters up the steps but allows them to remain hidden in the shadows.

There are several voices mixed together in low hushed murmurs. But threads of conversation can be heard.

MAN #1

We think there's still a
small herd out there.

MAN #2

We're going back out in the
morning. I wonder what a
colt would bring at auction.

Xena tugs Gabrielle's cloak and points towards the room they had entered through.

XENA

Let's go.

GABRIELLE

But

XENA

They aren't going anywhere until
morning. That gives us time.

Gabrielle nods and they head back the way they came.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. STABLE - EARLY MORNING

Xena crawls out from under a blanket on a pile of hay where she and Gabrielle spent the night. Stretching, she gathers up her cloak, and throws it around her shoulders. Reaching for flint and stone, she uses it to light a lantern on an overturned crate serving as a table.

XENA

Gabrielle, come
on time to get up.



GABRIELLE

(groaning)
I'm up.

She slowly moves from under the blanket and rubs her eyes.

GABRIELLE

(cont'd)
Just once I'd like a bad
guy that works normal
daytime hours.

XENA

If they had real jobs, they
wouldn't be bad guys.

GABRIELLE

Good point.

She stretches and crawls toward the edge of the loft to look down into Argo's stall.

GABRIELLE

Xena?

XENA

Yeah?

GABRIELLE

We have a problem.

XENA

What?

GABRIELLE

Come look.

Xena moves over and looks down into the stall.

XENA

No.

They both watch Argo who is lying on her side, obviously quite pregnant.

GABRIELLE

Weren't expecting
that were we?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STALL - CONTINUOUS

Gabrielle has Argo's head in her lap. Xena is inspecting her bloated belly.

XENA

She's in labor.

GABRIELLE

How long?

XENA

Shouldn't be too long.
By mid day I'd think.

GABRIELLE

We don't have that long.
We need....

XENA

I know. How about you
stay here and welcome the
little bundle into the world, and
I'll go check on our poachers?

GABRIELLE

I don't think we have much choice in the matter.



XENA

Okay, I'll be back as quickly as I can.

She notices Gabrielle is looking a little green around the gills.

XENA

(cont'd)

You all right?

GABRIELLE

Yeah, I'm fine. I just hope she can do this on her own. I have this thing about 'helping'. Maybe I should go and you should stay. You know, in case she needs 'your' help.

Xena pulls Gabrielle up and into a tender embrace.

XENA

You'll both be fine. Gabrielle, you're one of the best battlefield healers I've ever known.

GABRIELLE

Oh that kind of thing I can deal with. It's the sticking my arm....
Never mind. Just be careful.

XENA

You don't have to tell me twice.
Take care of her.

GABRIELLE

I will.

Xena picks up a large pack and a smaller sack, and shouldering both of them she winks at Gabrielle and heads out the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FORREST - MORNING

Xena is moving quietly through the woods. She has had little trouble picking up the trail of the hunters and she's following them at a discreet distance. As she follows them, her worst fears are confirmed when she sees several sets of prints in the snow that belong to other Pegasus.

She looks around to see what's available to her for stopping the hunters before they manage to follow the trail to the heard.

XENA

Rock slide?

(beat)

Done to death. I need
some new material.



She decides to take the high road that would have been the starting point for a rockslide. She knows that getting above them will give her a better vantage point.

CUT TO:

INT. STABLE - MORNING

Gabrielle is kneeling over Argo, stroking her coat and whispering nonsensical words of comfort to the animal.

GABRIELLE

Easy girl.

Argo lifts her head and seems to give Gabrielle a VERY annoyed look.

GABRIELLE

(cont'd)

I know, I know, but it'll
be okay. I promise.

She blows out a long breath and settles down next to the horse and continues to stroke her neck.

GABRIELLE

(cont'd)

So this is what you were doing the other night? Didn't anyone ever tell you it's a bad idea?

The horse snorts and we...

CUT TO:

EXT. RIDGE - MORNING

Xena is slightly ahead of the hunters now, keeping a watchful eye out for the herd. She knows she's getting close because her ever sensitive nose can tell they're in the area. Glancing down she sees that the hunting party has stopped to have a bite to eat and rest.

XENA

Small miracles. That's all I need to make this work.

She checks to make sure they're staying put for a bit then heads off to where she thinks the herd maybe.

XENA

(cont'd, to herself)

Carried Zeus' thunderbolts huh?
Now there's an idea. Take
your time eating boys.
I have work to do.

CUT TO:

INT. STABLE - MORNING

Argo is fully committed to giving birth to her foal and Gabrielle is doing a fine job of coaching her as much as a human can coach a horse.

GABRIELLE

There you go. You're almost there girl.

She helps as much as she can by cleaning the colt as it is born front legs and head first. Agro whinnies and the colt is fully born, with a gush of fluid that splatters up on Gabrielle's arms and chest, just missing her face.

GABRIELLE

(cont'd)

This is why I didn't want
to live on a farm.



She grabs a large cloth and begins cleaning the colt as Argo gets to her feet and turns in the stall to look at her baby.

Argo is nosing him as Gabrielle dries him. Almost as soon as she removes the cloth, he is struggling to his feet. Getting up on wobbly legs he immediately begins searching for a warm meal, which Argo is ready and willing to give.

Taking another cloth to wipe off her arms and chest, Gabrielle watches with a satisfied smile as the colt nurses. She moves a bit closer to inspect him and notices to small growths on his back. They look like small bird wings that have yet to grow feathers.

GABRIELLE

(cont'd)

Peachy, just peachy.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY

Xena is still above and ahead of the hunting party. She has stopped at the river that she and Gabrielle had crossed on the lower ground. This is a faster running branch that feeds the one below from a waterfall. Looking down Xena can see the land bridge near the falls that the hunting party uses to track the herd. Across the river there are several large fallen trees begging her to use them.

XENA

Perfect.

Finding what she needs to cross the river she takes a run toward the bank and leaps to the middle of the river, landing neatly on a rock submerged just below the surface.

XENA

(cont'd)

And Gabrielle says I can't walk
on water. You just need to
know where the rocks are.

Grinning to herself, she leaps from the rock to the opposite bank.

Jogging through the woods, she looks down the hill and sees the herd. Stopping, she takes just a moment to watch them. Another large stallion is wandering around in circles protecting three females and two colts. The colts appear to be newly born, still staying very close to their mothers.

XENA

(cont'd)

So that's why you don't fly away.
You can't leave your babies.

Finding a rocky path down the side of the cliff she begins her climb down.



CUT TO:

INT. STABLE - DAY

Gabrielle is now standing outside the stall, leaning against the wall, watching Argo and her baby. The colt is now stretching its bare wings and trying to flap them without much success.

GABRIELLE

He's adorable, but I'm not
sure what we're going to
do with a baby Pegasus.

Argo nuzzles her baby and then looks to Gabrielle, who pats the horse's nose.

GABRIELLE

You did good, girl.
He's beautiful.

Argo nods her head and steps forward to closer nuzzle Gabrielle.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DAY

Xena carefully approaches the herd. She stops in her tracks when the stallion turns and stares at her.

XENA

I'm not here to hurt you.

He snorts and takes a step toward her. His muscles ripple in his chest as he paws the ground in warning.

Xena is undaunted as she takes a very slow step forward. She holds her hand out palm up and speaks to him in low soothing tones.

XENA

(cont'd)

It's okay. I'm here to help.

He snorts and shakes his head, his mane whipping wildly about his head as he does. He rears up slightly, just enough to try and warn her off.

XENA

(cont'd)

I bet you just want to protect your family, huh? I can help you. It's okay.



She takes another step forward. He looks at her and takes a step back. She smiles, knowing that she has won the battle. The war however, is still going strong.

He takes two steps backward as Xena takes another step forward. With a lunge, she grabs him around the neck and pulls herself onto his back. He immediately starts trying to throw her, bucking and flapping his wings. He's doing his best to rid his back of the uninvited visitor.



Xena laughs as she tightens her hand in his mane and grips his sides with her legs.

XENA

(cont'd)

You're going to have to do better
than this to get rid of me. I've
been on your Norse cousins.

The Pegasus is not amused and he spends his energy moving between rearing and twisting, leaving the ground a few feet to try and dislodge her.

CUT TO:

INT. STABLE - AFTERNOON

Gabrielle is crouched over a small pot simmering on a very tiny fire built in what looks like a frying pan. She is stirring a spoon through stew. Taking a taste, she determines it is about ready to eat when the door to the stable opens. Looking up, she recognizes one of the men as the owner of the inn.

Standing up, she moves backward to Argo's stall to block her and the foal from view. Both men are involved in a conversation and haven't noticed her yet.

INNKEEPER

I expect Errilis and his men to be
back tonight with another catch.
I told them I would pay them double
if they brought me a live colt.

Gabrielle turns, grabbing a horse blanket from a wall as she dashes in the stall and throws it over the foal. This movement causes the men to notice her.

INNKEEPER

You there!

Gabrielle smooths the blanket over the foal and steps from the stall.

GABRIELLE

Yes?

INNKEEPER

What are you doing here?

GABRIELLE

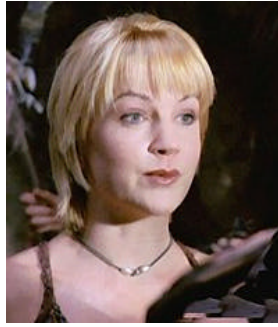
Waiting for my partner
to get back.

INNKEEPER

The tall one with
the black hair?

GABRIELLE

That's her.



INNKEEPER

And where has she gone?

GABRIELLE

If it's any of your business,
she's gone to get supplies.

He looks at her and then slightly behind her, which causes her to move to block his view.

INNKEEPER

What do you have there?

GABRIELLE

You know the first question
is free... after that they're
usually a dinar. My partner
and I paid to stable our
horse here. She'll be back in
a bit and we'll be on our way.

He stiffens at the way she is talking to him, but after noticing her sais tucked in her boots,
he decides not to push it.

INNKEEPER

Fine.

He looks to her cooking fire.

INNKEEPER

(cont'd)

Just try not to burn
the place down.

He and the other man leave and Gabrielle has a very childish reaction.

GABRIELLE

(mimicking)

Try not to burn the place down.

(louder)

You old goat, the last place I
burned down was an inn.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Xena is now working with the Pegasus stallion, who seems to have accepted her begrudgingly. She has a rope looped around his neck and the other end tied to several large fallen trees. Tying off the rope around the trees, she moves to him and pats his neck.

XENA

That's it boy. Let's give
them a surprise.

He snorts and begins moving the load of wood toward the river and the falls. Xena picks up several long thin poles that have had points sharpened on one end. The stallion stops at the edge of the water and waits patiently for Xena.

Several of the large logs have been moved into place behind a quickly constructed rope barrier that is keeping them from going over the falls, but still allows the water to flow freely.

XENA

(cont'd)

We're almost ready fella.



She removes the rope from his neck and uses her sword to cut the rope binding the logs. She puts her weight against them to move them into the river with the others. One of them refuses to move, putting her back into it, she grunts with the effort to move it.

The stallion moves to her, puts his head down on the log next to her and helps her push it in with the others.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - EVENING

Xena is mounted on the back of the Pegasus. She has several of the pointed poles tied in a bundle on his side. Next to her, stuck in the ground is a small torch. In her hand is the end of a rope, which holds back the logs. She watches as the men in the hunting party move toward the land bridge.

XENA

That's it, you bastards.
Come to Xena.

She waits until just the right moment and pulls the rope, setting the logs on their downward plunge to the bottom of the falls and the men walking next to them.

As she lights one of the poles, she yells and send the Pegasus off the edge of the falls and into the air.

Below her the men are scrambling to get out of the way of the logs. They are running in every direction, including into the freezing water as the logs begin to roll over them.

One of the men notices the Pegasus and as he runs out of the way of one of the falling logs, he decides to try and save the day. He prepares a net and is getting it ready to toss when Xena throws the pointed, burning spear. The flames seem to spread up the shaft as it flies through the air, looking very much like a lightening bolt.

Xena makes the horse return to the top of the falls where she lights yet another spear. The three remaining men stop and look up as she and the stallion move off the edge and hover above them.

XENA

(cont'd)

How dare you hunt
the steed of Zeus!

Before they can do anything she throws the second burning spear. Taking a third, she reaches back and sets it alight.

XENA

(cont'd)

Go now, before I send
the wrath of Zeus down
upon you! And never
hunt these animals again!

She throws the third bolt, which lands right between the legs of the youngest man, coming very close to setting the crotch of his trousers on fire.

She hopes they can't hear her laugh as she watches them run towards the town.

When they return to the ground she slides off the stallion's back and pats his neck.

XENA

(cont'd)

Not a bad impression of
a god's messenger.

The Pegasus whinnies and nods his head.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. STABLE - NIGHT

Gabrielle is sleeping right in front of Argo's stall. The foal is curled up in the back of the stall and Argo seems to be standing guard over her youngster.

The door to the stable opens and a figure slips into the darkness.

Gabrielle opens one eye and waits as the figure moves slowly across the floor.

GABRIELLE

Don't make me hurt you, Xena.



Xena drops down next to her and runs her fingers through Gabrielle's hair.

XENA

You wouldn't hurt me.

GABRIELLE

Don't be so sure.
It's been a long night.

She yawns and rolls onto her back.

GABRIELLE

(cont'd)

And you're a grandmother.

She gestures to the stall. Xena crawls over to the stall and looks inside.

XENA

He's cute.

GABRIELLE

He has wings.

XENA

You're kidding.

Gabrielle sits up and points.

GABRIELLE

Check, 'cause they look
like wings to me.

Xena enters the stall and rubs Agro as she moves past to the foal.

XENA

Well, I'll be damned.
He's got wings.

Gabrielle stands up and looks in.

GABRIELLE

What about the others?

XENA

They're safe for now, but we're
going to need to move them.

GABRIELLE

Everyone in this village wants to
hang their heads above their fireplaces.
Moving a herd won't be easy.

XENA

Eh, it's a small herd. A male, three
females and two little guys like him.
I've been thinking about it and I think
I know someone who can help us.

GABRIELLE

Who?



DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROAD - MORNING

Xena and Gabrielle are walking down the road. Argo and the foal are following slowly. The foal has a blanket thrown over him, but it is rippling with the effects of him trying to move his wings.

XENA

It shouldn't be too much
further if I remember right.

Xena begins looking through the trees. Gabrielle glances back at the foal, who is using his teeth to pull the blanket off.

GABRIELLE

Xena, your grandson
is misbehaving.

Gabrielle stops and waits for Argo and the foal, who drops the blanket right at her feet. His little wings seem to be getting small white feathers that are set off brightly against his golden coat.

GABRIELLE

(cont'd)
Oh no you don't!

She grabs the blanket up and tries to put it back on him, but he kicks up his heels and runs away from her.

GABRIELLE

(cont'd)
Why you little....

Xena has wandered into the woods and calls to her.

XENA

Over here!

GABRIELLE

Xena! He's trying to fly!

Xena runs back to the road and skids to a halt. She watches as the foal kicks his hind legs up and flaps his wings.

XENA

(laughing)
He's not very
good at it is he?

GABRIELLE

He's good enough.

She tosses the blanket and manages to get it over him. She gathers it around his neck and leads him to his mother, where she retrieves a rope.

XENA

Spunky isn't he?



GABRIELLE

He's his mother's son.
Did you say you found it?

XENA

Yeah, it's right over here.

CUT TO:

EXT. TEMPLE - MORNING

Xena tethers the foal to a small tree as Gabrielle investigates the building.

GABRIELLE

Do you think she'll come?

XENA

If she hears us, I don't see why
not. She's very fond of you.

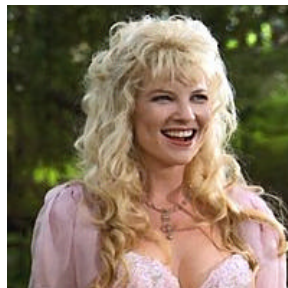
GABRIELLE

Aphrodite!

There is a flash and the air around them seems to shimmer as The Goddess of Love
materializes in front of them.

APHRODITE

You rang?



CUT TO:

EXT. TEMPLE - MORNING

Aphrodite is running her hands through the foal's mane.

APHRODITE

Isn't he a cutie?

XENA

We need your help.

APHRODITE

I totally figured as much.
You never write. You never call.
(beat)
Oh wait, yes you do.

She turns to Xena.

APHRODITE

(cont'd)

When you like, need something.
Would it be too radical to ask
for you just to give me a yell
for drinks some time?

Gabrielle gestures as she steps towards the goddess, knowing that if it's left to Xena, they'll be trying to move a herd of Pegasus without Aphrodite.

GABRIELLE

I'm really sorry, Aphrodite. We
don't mean not to stay
in touch. It's just that....

APHRODITE

I know, I know. Villages to
save, virgins to defile....

XENA

Hey!

Gabrielle steps between them and puts her hands up to separate them.

GABRIELLE

Please! Come on you two. We've
got a real problem here. Aphrodite,
there are men in a village not too
far from here that are killing the
Pegasus. We need to get them
moved to a safer place.

Aphrodite tries to look unconcerned as she studies her fingernails.

GABRIELLE

(cont'd)

Come on, you can't really
make me believe you'd
see them slaughtered.

APHRODITE

Why not?

XENA

Aren't you the
Goddess of Love?

APHRODITE

And what does that like,
have to do with the price
of papyrus in Egypt?

The foal nibbles Aphrodite's fingers, apparently looking for a treat. The action seems to melt her heart and she smiles.

APHRODITE

All alright. For you.

She scratches the foal's head then turns to Xena and Gabrielle.

APHRODITE

But you two are
sooooo on my list.

Xena leans over and whispers to Gabrielle as Aphrodite returns her attention to the foal and Argo.

XENA

Now I'm scared.

APHRODITE

I heard that.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Gabrielle, Xena and Aphrodite are standing among the remaining herd. The Pegasus seems delighted with the attention of the Goddess and even allow Gabrielle to touch their wings. The stallion is standing next to Xena trying to chew on her hair.

XENA

Stop it!

GABRIELLE

(grinning)

I think he likes you.



XENA

I'm not his type. I don't
have enough legs.

APHRODITE

I could fix that.

Before Xena can say anything, Gabrielle steps up to Aphrodite and rubs her hands together.

GABRIELLE

So! Where do you think
we should take them?

APHRODITE

There's only one rockin'
place I can think of
that would be totally safe.

GABRIELLE

Where?

APHRODITE

Mount Olympus.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNT OLYMPUS - DAY

Xena and Gabrielle are each mounted on a Pegasus, holding a foal in their arms. Aphrodite appears on Argo, holding her foal. The stallion and the third mare follow as all the horses touch down.

Dismounting, Xena looks around the grounds where they have landed. There is lush green grass growing in the area where they stand but above them on a cliff stands the remains of Zeus' palace. Now it is nothing more than a ruin, compared to the golden domain it had once been when the gods resided there.

Aphrodite joins Xena and Gabrielle as the Pegasus and the horses begin roaming around the pasture.

APHRODITE

I don't come up here
much any more.

XENA

Aphrodite....

The Goddess holds up her hands to stall her words.

APHRODITE

Xena, please. We totally settled
that already. It's okay. Sometimes
it's just like, hard to realize I really
don't have a home anymore.

GABRIELLE

You could, um, maybe fix
the place up a bit?

APHRODITE

I dunno... what's
the point really?



XENA

Actually, you wouldn't believe
how therapeutic it can be.

GABRIELLE

Xena and I spent some time
in Amphipolis recently.

APHRODITE

Well, I suppose I could do a little like,
remodeling. It couldn't hurt could it?
I'll so have to come up from time to
time to check on them. Having a
bodacious place to crash
would be like, useful.

GABRIELLE

Sure and think about the
parties you could have.

A dreamy look crosses her face and her eyes seem unfocused as she smiles.

APHRODITE

Cool.

XENA

We could um, well, lend
you a hand if you like.

APHRODITE

Really?

Gabrielle realizes what Xena is trying to do and smiles as she wraps her arm around her partner's waist.

GABRIELLE

Sure, we could spend a couple
of days. Do a little painting....

APHRODITE

Totally cool!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GARDENS - EVENING

In the middle of what is now a beautiful garden, Xena is putting the finishing touches on a small open stable. It's a just a place where the animals can rest and find shelter if they want it. On Mount Olympus it's unlikely they'll need it.

Gabrielle wanders down from the palace grounds. She looks happy and relaxed as her hands glide idly over waist high flowers.

GABRIELLE

Looks good.

Xena appraises her handy work.

XENA

Yeah, I think it'll do.
How's she doing up there?



GABRIELLE

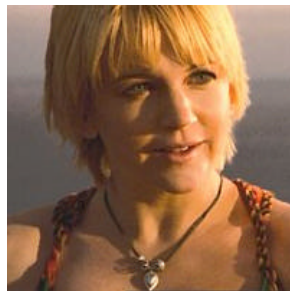
She's having a good time.
She's got about half the place
remodeled. She'd really like
you to come up and see it.

XENA

I don't know Gabrielle. The
last time I was up there....

GABRIELLE

She's not working anywhere
near the main hall. She'd
really like you to see it. I
get the impression that
your opinion is important.



XENA

Why?

GABRIELLE

I'm not about to try and figure
out how she thinks. She
just keeps saying she
wishes you'd come up and
see what we've done.

XENA

So what you're saying
is you think I should.

GABRIELLE

Pretty much.

As they turn to leave, Argo's foal comes prancing up and butts Gabrielle in the, well, butt with his head. She turns and stares at him though, with a smile on her face. His wings have come in completely and he's growing at an obviously accelerated rate. He rears up at her and spreads his wings giving them a strong flap. When his feet return to earth and his wings fold up, a single white feather falls to the ground at Gabrielle's feet. He knickers at her and turns to run back to his mother.



Xena steps forward and picks up the feather, which she runs through her fingers before handing it to Gabrielle.

XENA

I think he wants
you to have this.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE - EVENING

Xena is truly amazed when she enters the west wing of the building. The inside is beautiful and tastefully decorated. There are no signs of the condition the building was in when they arrived.

XENA

She must be exhausted from
zapping things back together.

GABRIELLE

Would you believe me if I told
you some of it was done with
good old-fashioned hard work?

XENA

Really?

GABRIELLE

Yeah. We've been working
together on a lot of it. Just
doing this and that and talking.

XENA

Good talks?

GABRIELLE

Very good talks.

Gabrielle takes Xena's hand and tugs her down the hall.

GABRIELLE

Come on, what she wants
you to see it this way.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL - CONTINUOUS

Gabrielle stops outside a large door with a small golden plaque on it.

GABRIELLE

This is it.

Xena peers at the plaque.

XENA

What is a TRM?



GABRIELLE

Totally Radical Mortal.

XENA

Gods.

GABRIELLE

(amusedly)

Come on.

She opens the door and gestures for Xena to step inside.

CUT TO:

INT. CHAMBERS -CONTINUOUS

Inside the room, Xena finds a large apartment of rooms that seems to consist of a sitting room, a bedroom and a bathing room.

XENA

Wow.

GABRIELLE

Wow is right.

These are for us.

XENA

What?

Gabrielle moves to a large overstuffed sofa type piece of furniture and takes a seat.

GABRIELLE

Aphrodite created this for us.

XENA

She doesn't expect us to
stay here, does she?

GABRIELLE

No she doesn't, but she wanted
to give us a place we could come
when we needed a place to rest
or just to come, sort of a 'home'.

Despite herself, Xena smiles as she looks around the apartment.

XENA

That was very nice of her.

GABRIELLE

It made her feel better about
coming back up here too. I
told her we could stop in from
time to time. You know....

XENA

I know.



GABRIELLE

She's out on the patio. Go check that out. I'm sure we'll find lots of uses for it.

Xena heads toward the doors to the patio, with Gabrielle right behind her.

CUT TO:

EXT. PATIO - EVENING

Out on the patio, Aphrodite is looking at an empty spot that doesn't seem to be making her happy. It is on the far side of a large stone hot tub. The entire area has plants and flowers of every kind, and small statues scattered about. The view overlooks the garden where Argo, the herd and the foals are enjoying life. Xena tries to hide her smile but isn't very successful as Gabrielle gives her a playful nudge in the ribs.

Aphrodite hasn't heard them or is just ignoring them as she zaps a small waterfall into the empty spot that runs into the large stone tub. She turns and smiles, hand on her hips.

APHRODITE

Too much?

XENA

It's very nice, Aphrodite.
Thanks.

It looks for a moment as if the Goddess might tear up, but she smiles wider and nods.

APHRODITE

You're welcome.



XENA

It'll be nice to have a place to come once in a while when we need to get away from things.

GABRIELLE

Speaking of that.... How exactly are we supposed to get here?

APHRODITE

Just say, "Take me to Olympus." You'll just 'pop' in. Right inside there. The room has been enchanted to like, listen for you.

XENA

That's convenient.

APHRODITE

Radically. But for the next few days, just relax and totally enjoy yourselves. I don't think Argo will be ready to leave her bodacious little one just yet. He's growing fast, but...

XENA

I think we can afford a few days. Wouldn't want to separate them too soon.

FADE OUT.

END ACT FOUR

TAG

FADE IN:

EXT. PATIO - EVENING

As the sun sets in a brilliant explosion of color, Xena and Gabrielle are enjoying their built-in hot tub. Gabrielle lounges with her back against Xena's chest. She's sipping from a golden goblet as Xena runs a washcloth over her shoulders.

XENA

I almost hate to leave.

GABRIELLE

Really?

XENA

Sure, I mean there aren't very many places where we have whatever we want just by asking for it.

GABRIELLE

I'm glad we discovered that enchantment. Who knew, "I wish I had chocolate and strawberries." would work like that?

XENA

The tub is nice.

GABRIELLE

The tub is Elysia. I think I'm going to be tempted to be brought back here the next time I have mud in all the wrong places.

Xena chuckles and takes the goblet from Gabrielle to take a drink.

GABRIELLE

It was nice what you did for Aphrodite.

XENA

What did I do?

GABRIELLE

You took her gift without arguing about it.

XENA

Well, you know what they say.
Beware Greeks bearing gifts.



As the sun sets and the herd frolics in the garden below, Xena and Gabrielle continue to enjoy the hot tub and each other.

FADE OUT.

DISCLAIMER

Someone tried to hurt the Pegasus in this episode, but Xena's pretty sure they won't be trying that again anytime soon.