

## Xena: Warrior Princess - Subtext Virtual Season 9



**Production #V914 – Poke**

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## TEASER

FADE IN:

### EXT. VILLAGE – EVENING

Xena and Gabrielle wearily walk into a village. They look like they've seen better days. Xena is covered from the waist down in what can only be assumed is mud. Gabrielle has a bandage on her right bicep; her hair is sticking up in every direction possible. Her face and the rest of the exposed skin is marred with soot and dirt. They're both covered in a variety of bruises and cuts. Even Argo looks like she has had better days; her head is down, her ears are back, her fur dirty and she's limping on her left front foot.

**XENA**

Earthquakes, fires, mudslides  
and riots... what ELSE could  
be in store for us?



**GABRIELLE**

Personally, I'm hoping for a  
hot bath and a warm bed.

**XENA**

Food?

**GABRIELLE**

*(nodding)*

Oh yes, food is a must.

**XENA**

You go find an inn and I'll  
get Argo to the stable  
and find a blacksmith.

**GABRIELLE**

I have dirt in places that may  
never come clean and I think  
my boots have finally given up.

**XENA**

I think a couple days  
off are in order.

**GABRIELLE**

You know, we could use the place  
Aphrodite set up for us. Less  
chance of something coming up.

**XENA**

I'd rather keep my feet on the  
ground, and last time I checked  
Olympus doesn't have a blacksmith.

**GABRIELLE**

*(tiredly)*

Point taken. I'll get a room.  
Meet you there.



**XENA**

I won't be long.

**FADE TO:**

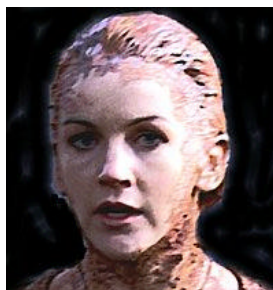
**EXT. INN – EVENING**

Hefting her saddlebags on her shoulder, Gabrielle eyes the local inn, which seems to be bustling with activity. Women are seated at tables outside the inn, talking and drinking and generally having a good time. She's really too tired to notice that the majority of people there seem to be women who are either tall and brunette or shorter and blonde.

As she makes her way to the door a few of the women stop to stare at her. This she notices. Stopping in her tracks, she straightens and turns to face them.

**GABRIELLE**

What?



They don't say anything as they all look away or shrug before going back to whatever they were doing.

With a glare and a groan she continues inside.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. INN – EVENING**

Moving through a packed common room, Gabrielle finally makes her way to the counter where the innkeeper and several assistants are busy taking care of the rowdy clientele.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

Excuse....

She raises her hand to try and capture someone's attention. Anyone will do but she's not having a huge amount of luck.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

Excuse... hey... could...?

All around her, men and women are laughing and drinking. Generally a good time is being had by all, except for Gabrielle who is being shoved and jostled around the busy counter.

Having had enough, there is a shrill ear-piercing whistle that stops all movement and sound in the place. Every set of eyes turn to the irritated little blonde at the bar.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

Finally.

She looks up, seeing the innkeeper and beckoning him with the crook of her finger.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

C'mere. Now.

The innkeeper gulps and takes a tentative step forward.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

You don't have to say  
a word. Just nod.

The innkeeper nods, a slight sweat starting to trickle down the side of his face.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

I need a room.  
Do you have one?

He nods again.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

Can I get a bath  
and a meal?



He nods twice.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

Good. The key please?

Turning to a bank of small boxes on the wall he pulls a key out and drops in on the counter by her hand almost afraid she's going to take his hand off if he gets too close.

Gabrielle takes a few coins out of her pouch and lays them on the counter next to the key.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

Is that enough?

He nods for the last time as Gabrielle takes the key and heads for the steps. When she is on the third step the entire room breaks out into a round of whistles and applause for her performance at the counter.

With a smile that borders between embarrassed and amused, she gives the crowd a slight wave and continues up the steps.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. VILLAGE – EVENING**

Xena is walking through the village, which she notices seems to be filled with people that are somehow familiar, but yet very strange.

As she proceeds through the crowded streets she bumps into a woman, wearing something that resembles Amazon leathers.

**XENA**  
I'm sorry.  
(beat)  
Do I know you?



**WOMAN**  
(leering)  
Oh no. If we'd met  
I'd remember you.

**XENA**  
Right... hold that thought.

Xena manages to escape before the woman can say anything else.

Continuing through the streets, she just can't put her finger on what's bothering her about this village. She just knows that there is something not... quite... right.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. INN – EVENING**

Xena enters the same inn where Gabrielle has procured a room. If it is possible, the crowd is larger and drunker now.

Xena is watching everyone and she notices that the crowd is predominantly female. There are a few men strewn through the room but they are as scarce as hen's teeth.

She shoulders through the crowd to the counter. The barkeep looks harried, but he gives her a smile.

**BARTENDER**  
What can I get you?

**XENA**  
My friend came in here,  
looking for a room.

**BARTENDER**  
Lady, do you know how many  
rooms I've rented? Can you  
be a little more specific?

**XENA**

What's going on here anyway?

**BARTENDER**

They're here for some  
symposium. Great for  
business; lousy for my nerves.

Before Xena can comment, she feels a hand on her arms and turns to find Gabrielle.

**XENA**

Hey there.

**GABRIELLE**

Come with me. I have  
something to show you.

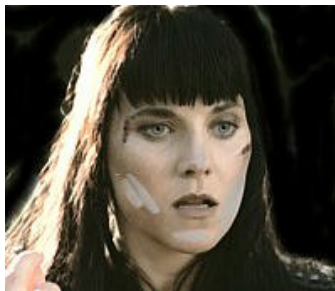
Xena follows Gabrielle through the crowd to the rear of the inn. The crowd has thinned out and Gabrielle points to a sign in the wall.

The sign reads:

Eighteenth Annual Symposium for  
Bards and Warriors  
Guest of honor  
Autolycus, The King of Thieves

**XENA**

What in hades?



**GABRIELLE**

I don't know, but I have  
a feeling it involves us  
to some extent.

**FADE OUT.**

**END OF TEASER**

## ACT ONE

FADE IN:

### INT. DINING ROOM – MORNING

Xena and Gabrielle enter the room to find it packed. Every table is full except for one in the center with a couple empty seats.

**XENA**

Let's try there.

Moving through the room, they notice that people are watching them with significant interest. Ignoring it for the moment, they stop at the table with the empty seats.

**XENA**

*(cont'd)*

Excuse me?

Can we join you?

The women at the table all smile and nod. They take their seats, Gabrielle signals to the waitress making the rounds of the room.

One of the women extends her hand to Xena.

**KAZIA**

I'm Kazia. Those  
are great costumes  
by the way.

Xena and Gabrielle look at each other and then back to Kazia.

**GABRIELLE**

Uh... thanks.

**XENA**

*(to Gabrielle)*

When we get done  
eating we need  
to find Autolycus.

Another woman at the table perks up at his name.

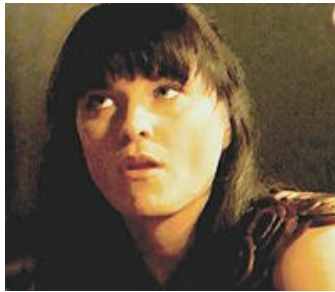
**JANEE**

Oooo, do you  
know him?



**XENA**

Too well.



**JANEE**

He's just so cute. I hope  
he signs autographs.

**KAZIA**

Knowing Kadmus, he'll  
charge extra for them.

Gabrielle leans over so she can whisper in Xena's ear.

**GABRIELLE**

Is it just me, or are  
things getting  
stranger and stranger?

**XENA**

It's not you.

**GABRIELLE**

This is our first time to  
one of these things.  
What exactly goes on?

**JANEE**

Oh it's great. We get to  
see people who actually  
knew them and....

**XENA**

Knew who?

**JANEE**

Xena and Gabrielle,  
of course.

Xena grins and nods her head at Gabrielle.

**XENA**

Now it makes sense.

The waitress places bowls of a hot breakfast cereal in front of them and pours some harmless looking liquid in their mugs.

**WAITRESS**

House special for the  
symposium. If you want  
something else it'll be extra.

**GABRIELLE**

This is fine, thanks.

**XENA**

*(to Kazia)*

So do you know what  
room Autolycus is in?

**KAZIA**

Oh he won't be here. He'll be in  
the inn down the street. Kadmus  
never puts his guests in the  
same inn. He's afraid they  
might actually be able to  
speak to us on their own.

**XENA**

I take it this Kadmus fellow  
is the one who organizes  
this little shindig?

**KAZIA**

Yeah, I suppose I should  
be more grateful, but it's  
hard ya know.

**GABRIELLE**

Why?



**KAZIA**

You've really never been to  
one of these. It's just that  
there's a charge for everything.  
If he could figure out how  
to charge for air, he would.

**XENA**

So he's making lots of  
dinars on this deal?

**KAZIA**

Tons.

**GABRIELLE**

So other than Autolycus,  
what else happens  
at these things?

**KAZIA**

Well, there's the marketplace  
where you can shop. There's  
a costume contest, which I  
think you'll win if you enter.

**JANEE**

And don't forget  
the auctions.

**KAZIA**

Right... the auctions.

**GABRIELLE**

You don't sound thrilled.

**KAZIA**

Don't even get me  
started on the auctions.

**GABRIELLE**

So if there's so much  
you dislike about it,  
why do you come?

**KAZIA**

My friends. I come here to see  
them. Most of us only get to see  
each other once a year. So we  
all gather here, we get to spend  
time with each other and do  
something we enjoy.

**GABRIELLE**

Sounds reasonable  
enough to me.

**XENA**

Come on, we need to go find  
Autolycus. Excuse us, but  
we really need to get going.



**JANEE**

Sure, we'll see you later.

**XENA**

Count on it.

**FADE TO:**

**EXT. INN – MORNING**

Xena and Gabrielle move to the front door of the inn only to be stopped by a large fellow whose head seems to be growing directly from his shoulders. Xena stops and just considers him for a moment before gesturing Gabrielle off to one side.

**XENA**

I get the feeling he's there  
to keep the general  
population out.

**GABRIELLE**

And how do you suggest  
we convince him we're  
not the general population?

**XENA**

I'm glad you asked that.  
Here's my plan....

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. INN – MORNING**

Gabrielle, looking a little more 'seductive' than normal, saunters up to the guard and tries to get his attention while Xena hangs back and waits for the chance to get in around him.

**GABRIELLE**

Hey handsome.



The guard says nothing. His eyes flicker to her for a moment but then return to stare straight ahead.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

I was wondering what  
you're doing later tonight?

Xena has as much as she can to stifle back chuckles as she watches Gabrielle try her best to get his attention, with no success.

As Xena watches, Gabrielle tries a couple more tactics that fail miserably. Finally, in a bit of a huff Gabrielle returns to Xena's side.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

I think he's dead.

**XENA**

He's very committed  
to what he's doing,  
that's for sure.

**GABRIELLE**

Any more brilliant ideas?

**XENA**

None that don't involve  
him being in pain.

**GABRIELLE**

I don't think we  
should hurt him.

**XENA**

Probably not. It's wrong  
to hurt the brainless.

**GABRIELLE**

Of course, you could  
go try 'your' feminine  
wiles on him.

**XENA**

It looks like your wiles  
put him in a coma.  
Mine will kill him.

**GABRIELLE**

Time to sneak in, isn't it?

**XENA**

Yup.

Xena takes a good look at the structure in front of them.

**XENA**

*(cont'd)*

I think we should be able  
to get in the second story.  
Feel like a little acrobatics?

**GABRIELLE**

Sure, I haven't done  
anything acrobatic in days.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. REAR OF BUILDING – MORNING**

Xena looks around and points to a second floor balcony.

**XENA**

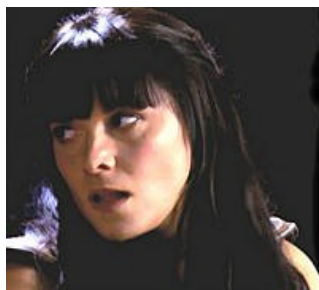
That looks like a good spot.

**GABRIELLE**

Good as any.

**XENA**

Shall we use number four?



**GABRIELLE**

That should do the trick.

Gabrielle takes a spot below the balcony with her back to it. Xena takes a few steps back and runs toward Gabrielle, who laces her fingers, cupping her hands in front of her. As Xena approaches Gabrielle stoops slightly at the waist, allowing Xena's foot to rest in her hands. With a groan, she lifts her hands and vaults Xena up into the air.

Landing on the front side of the balcony, Xena tests the strength of the railing and then loops her arm through it, reaching down for Gabrielle.

**XENA**

Up you go.

Xena pulls and swings Gabrielle up to the railing, where she grabs hold next to Xena.

**GABRIELLE**

Well, that was fun.

They both climb over the rail, moving to a door of the second floor. Xena gives it a gentle push and it opens easily.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. INN ROOM – MORNING**

When they step inside, they find a young man with a sheet wrapped around his waist and a young woman in a similar situation, except she is reclined on the bed.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

Excuse us.

We got locked out.



Without another word, they exit the room.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. HALLWAY – MORNING**

Closing the door behind them they both mask grins as they lean against the wall.

**GABRIELLE**

Good thing we weren't  
a little earlier.

**XENA**

Or a little later.

**GABRIELLE**

Good point. So which  
room do you think  
belongs to Autolykus?

**XENA**

Dunno. Guess we'll have  
to narrow our choices.

Gabrielle lifts her thumb to point behind them.

**GABRIELLE**

We know it's not this one.

**XENA**

One down.

**FADE TO:**

**INT. ROOM – MORNING**

**XENA**

This one has to be it.

Gabrielle is looking around, pulling open a closet door she nods.

**GABRIELLE**

This is it.

Taking a step back, she shows Xena a small chest secured with several chains and padlocks.

**XENA**

Don't touch it; knowing  
him it shoots  
poison darts too.

**GABRIELLE**

Right.

She closes the door and shrugs to her partner.



**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

So now what? Want to get comfortable and wait for him to get back?

**XENA**

It's tempting, but I think we'll find him down at the other inn. He's probably getting ready to charm the masses.



**GABRIELLE**

Remember when we find him... he's our friend.

**XENA**

And?

**GABRIELLE**

You shouldn't kill him.

**XENA**

I'll try to remember that.

She starts to leave, but hesitates and pulls her sword.

**GABRIELLE**

What are you doing?

Xena takes her sword and pokes the chest with it. When it doesn't explode she seems relieved, but still cautious. She ushers Gabrielle back and hefts the sword, bringing it down on the chest and breaking the locks off of it. With the tip of the sword she lifts the lid. Still nothing happens.

**XENA**

He's getting sloppy  
in his old age.

Sheathing her sword, she reaches down and removes one of two bags. Opening it, she just shakes her head.

**XENA**  
(*cont'd*)  
I take it back.

Taking a fist full of the contents, she shows Gabrielle common pieces of metal.

Gabrielle chuckles and drops the metal back into the bag.

**GABRIELLE**  
He's still on top of things.

**XENA**  
Let's go find him.

**FADE TO:**

### **INT. INN – MORNING**

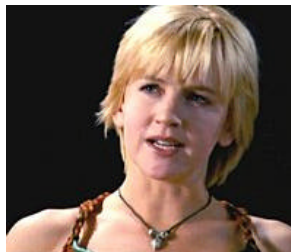
The inn is once again bustling with people. As Xena and Gabrielle make their way toward the area where the symposium is being held, two men block their path.

**MAN 1**  
Tickets?

**XENA**  
What?

**MAN 1**  
I need to see your tickets.

**GABRIELLE**  
We don't have any.



**MAN 1**  
Then you can't come in.

The second man sighs and shakes his head, seemingly not shocked at his friend's lack of communication skills.

**MAN 2**  
If you'd like a ticket, you can  
get one out front. There's a  
registration table set up out there.

**XENA**

We really don't need a ticket;  
we won't be here that long.  
We just need to see Autolycus.

**MAN 2**

Look I'm sorry; there are three  
hundred people here who  
want to see him. If you want  
in you have to pay to get in.

**GABRIELLE**

In the main room?

**MAN 2**

The main room.

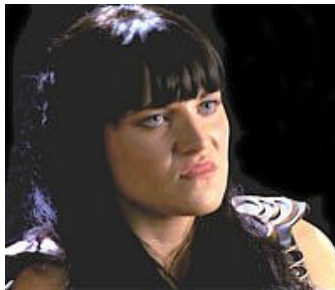
**XENA**

Fine.

As they turn to walk away, Xena lowers her voice so only Gabrielle can hear her.

**XENA**

I'm going to have to hurt someone  
very soon if I get told one more  
time I can't do something.



**GABRIELLE**

Then I won't bother to tell you  
that you can't hurt someone.

**FADE TO:**

**INT. MAIN ROOM – MORNING**

Xena looks at the line of people waiting before the table they have been directed to.

**XENA**

You've got to be kidding.  
Oh I know we're going  
in there now.

**GABRIELLE**

The curiosity is killing  
you, isn't it?

**XENA**

It is now.

From the front of the line, their friend from breakfast spots them and waves them over. A few people behind them grumble causing Kazia to turn around.

**KAZIA**

They were supposed to  
meet me here, okay?

A couple of the loudest grumblers take one look at Xena and capitulate.

**GABRIELLE**

Thanks.

**KAZIA**

No problem. Hey, I didn't  
get your names at breakfast.

Gabrielle moves closer and whispers to Kazia.

**GABRIELLE**

Do you promise not to  
make a big deal out of it?

**KAZIA**

Sure.

**GABRIELLE**

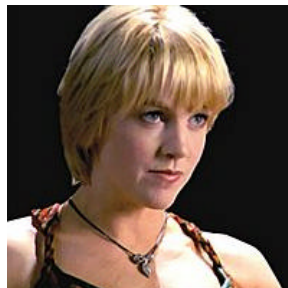
I'm Gabrielle....

Before Kazia can scream Gabrielle places her hand over the girl's mouth.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

You promised. Right?



Kazia nods slowly. Gabrielle removes her hand and gestures to Xena.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

So you know  
who this is?

Kazia nods again, completely speechless.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

We're going to check things  
out here and we really don't  
want a bunch of people  
knowing we're here. You  
have to keep this to yourself.

**KAZIA**

I promise.  
Can I say one thing?

**GABRIELLE**

Of course.

**KAZIA**

I just... I just want  
to say, thank you.

**FADE OUT.**

**END OF ACT ONE**

## ACT TWO

FADE IN:

### INT. SMALL ROOM – MORNING

Autolycus is seated at a small table enjoying a breakfast fit for The King of Thieves. He's not paying attention to the noises around him and barely flinches at a loud crash just outside the door.

He does look up when the door is thrown open. For a moment he is speechless then a broad smile lights his features as he stands up.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Xena! Gabrielle!

They are standing in the doorway, neither of them looking particularly happy. Autolycus is on his way around the table to hug them until he gets a look at them.

**AUTOLYCUS**

*(cont'd)*

Good to see you?

**GABRIELLE**

Autolycus, what's going on here?

**XENA**

And why are you a part of it?

**AUTOLYCUS**

One at a time.

He gestures to the table.

**AUTOLYCUS**

*(cont'd)*

Hungry?

**XENA**

Not particularly.

**GABRIELLE**

Please, just tell us....



**AUTOLYCUS**

Okay. It's simple really. This fellow Kadmus, he got wind of the fact there were people out there in the world who were fans of yours. He decided that holding the symposiums were a great way for them to get together.

**XENA**

While he makes a small fortune charging them for the right.

**AUTOLYCUS**

I'm sure that's what it seems like on the surface....

**GABRIELLE**

You mean it isn't?

He hesitates for a moment then smiles.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Okay it is like that, but really Gabrielle, it's not like he forces these people to come here. They come of their own free will.

**XENA**

And that's supposed to make this all right?

**AUTOLYCUS**

I get the feeling that no matter what I say; I'm not going to win here.

**XENA**

I'm glad your leg healed so nicely. It'll make a better noise when I break it.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Now Xena....

**XENA**

Don't you 'Now Xena' me, you....

**GABRIELLE**

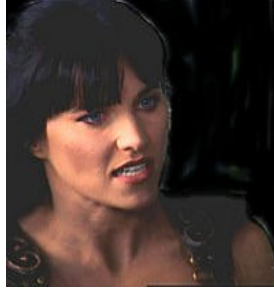
Autolycus, why are you doing this?

**AUTOLYCUS**

Because they pay well?

**XENA**

That was totally the  
wrong thing to say.



**AUTOLYCUS**

How could I turn it down? I got  
a message a few weeks ago.  
Kadmus offered me a small fortune  
to come speak at this thing.

**GABRIELLE**

Define small fortune.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Five thousand dinars.

**GABRIELLE**

Yup, that's a small fortune.

**XENA**

Autolycus, Gabrielle and I  
aren't wild about someone  
using us to make money.

**AUTOLYCUS**

I'm getting a sense of that.

**GABRIELLE**

Xena, before we do something  
rash I think we need to understand  
this thing from both sides.

**XENA**

And you suggest?

Gabrielle takes Xena's arm and pulls her off to the side for a private conference.

**FADE TO:**



## INT. MERCHANT'S ROOM – MORNING

Xena is now alone and walking through a room with tables arranged all around it. As she looks at the tables she sees they are piled high with scrolls and pictures and replicas of her sword and chakram and Gabrielle's sais.



**XENA**

Oh, this just gets better and better.

Approaching the table she picks up one of the chakrams. It's much lighter than the real one, but the detail is pretty good.

Xena motions to the woman behind table.

**XENA**

*(cont'd)*

How much?

**WOMAN**

Hundred and fifty.

**XENA**

Right.



She places it back on the table and continues to walk around the room. In a corner she sees several young people sitting at a table playing something that looks like a card game. As she approaches, she listens to their conversation.

**BOY 1**

I have a Joxer I'll  
trade for a Caesar.

**GIRL 1**

Yeah, right. Keep dreaming.

**BOY 2**

How about an Aphrodite  
for an Ares?

**GIRL 1**

Sure. Dite is  
more fun anyhow.

**XENA**

Isn't that the truth?

They stop what they're doing and look up at her.

**GIRL 1**

Excellent costume!

**XENA**

Thanks, it's just something  
I threw on. What are you  
guys doing here?

**BOY 1**

We're trading to  
complete our decks.

**XENA**

Gotcha. You enjoy this game?



**BOY 2**

It's great! After you trade and  
make the best deck you can,  
then you can play and Xena and  
Gabrielle can beat the bad guys.

**XENA**

Who's the best card?

**GIRL 1**

Why, Xena of course. She  
beats just about anything.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. HALLWAY - DAY**

Gabrielle and Autolycus are moving down a hallway, crowded with people who apparently work for Kadmus.

**AUTOLYCUS**

He should be around  
here somewhere.

Autolycus spots his quarry and leads Gabrielle over.

**AUTOLYCUS**

*(cont'd)*  
Kadmus?

A middle-aged man turns to him. The first thing Gabrielle notices is that he appears to be in a perpetually bad mood.

**KADMUS**

Autolycus, what can  
I do for you?

**AUTOLYCUS**

Actually, I think it's more what I  
can do for you. This is a very dear  
friend of mine that I think you'll  
enjoy meeting. Kadmus, may I  
present Gabrielle, the Battling Bard?

**KADMUS**

My, my. It is a pleasure  
to meet you.

Gabrielle smiles and nods, but remains quiet.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MAIN ROOM – DAY**

Xena has gone back out to the inn's main room where the symposium attendees are gathered. Seeing a small group seated at a table near the fire, she makes her way over.

**XENA**

Can I ask you a  
couple questions?

The women all smile and gesture for her to join them.

**XENA**

*(cont'd)*

I don't mean be  
rude, but why?

**ADEL**

I'm not sure I understand?

**XENA**

Well, why come here and listen  
to stories about someone else?  
Why pay good money to do this?

**ADEL**

Because the stories are great.  
Gabrielle wrote some of the most  
amazing scrolls about their  
adventures and it's nice to hear  
people who really knew them.

**XENA**

But why Xena and Gabrielle?  
Why not Hercules and Iolaus?



**KATHA**

Because Hercules and Iolaus  
are not two ass kicking babes.

**XENA**

Ass kicking babes?

**KATHA**

Sure, not only are they two  
women out on their own, but  
damn, they're beautiful too.

**XENA**

I see. And this  
is appealing?

**KATHA**

Have you been  
under a rock?

The strain is starting to get to Xena and she pinches the bridge of her nose as she tries to stop an oncoming headache.

**XENA**

Apparently.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. STAGEROOM – DAY**

Autolycus, Kadmus and Gabrielle are walking through a large room with a stage set in the front of it and several benches set up through it for the audience.

**KADMUS**

And this is where  
our guests speak.

**GABRIELLE**

And exactly what  
do they speak about?

**KADMUS**

Knowing you. They come here  
and tell their adventures with you.  
Then they answer questions.

**GABRIELLE**

Questions about us?

**KADMUS**

Yes.

**GABRIELLE**

I can only imagine  
the questions.

Autolycus affects a falsetto voice and swoons.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Oh, is Xena really that  
tall? Are Gabrielle's  
eyes really green?

**GABRIELLE**

Aren't you in enough trouble?



**KADMUS**

So I'd like to offer you the  
chance to speak here.  
I'll be happy to pay you.

**GABRIELLE**

Really?

**KADMUS**

Of course.

**GABRIELLE**

How much?

He seems to be thinking about it before he finally shrugs out his answer.

**KADMUS**

A thousand dinars?

Again, Gabrielle doesn't say anything, she just gives him a smile, that Autolycus knows isn't a happy one.

**KADMUS**

*(cont'd)*

I have a couple of things to  
attend to before the show starts.  
Why don't you think about it  
and I'll be back in a while?

Gabrielle watches him leave then turns back to Autolycus.

**GABRIELLE**

And he's a dirty thief too.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Hey! I resent that. He's  
a crook, not a thief.  
He's got no style.

He sighs and shakes his head as he lays his hand on her shoulder.

**AUTOLYCUS**

*(cont'd)*

I'm sorry about that.  
I didn't realize.

**GABRIELLE**

It's not your fault. Just goes to  
prove if something sounds too  
good to be true, it probably is.

**AUTOLYCUS**

You're going to get  
him, aren't you?

**GABRIELLE**

You know it.



**CUT TO:**

**INT. MERCHANT'S ROOM – DAY**

Xena is back to inspecting the tables. This time Kazia is with her.

**XENA**

Thanks for the rescue  
back there.

**KAZIA**

No problem. I know how  
some of them can get.

**XENA**

Nuts?

Kazia chuckles as they continue through the room with Xena inspecting each table.

**KAZIA**

It's not that. Really. They're just  
very passionate about all this.

**XENA**

See, that's the part I don't understand. Why not get passionate about their own lives?



**KAZIA**

Because most of our lives are boring as wheat growing in Amphipolis.

**XENA**

Okay, THAT I understand.

**KAZIA**

Exactly, and your adventures give us something more in our lives. It's not that we don't do fine the way we are, but most of us don't have the courage or even the means to go out and do what you two did. By celebrating your adventures, we get a little adventure of our own.

**XENA**

But why not just get together on your own? All of this costs a lot of dinars.

**KAZIA**

Simple answer?

**XENA**

Sure.

**KAZIA**

Because it's fun.  
Come here.

Kazia takes Xena to a table piled high with scrolls. She picks one up and hands it to Xena.



**KAZIA**

*(cont'd)*

Your adventures have inspired other bards to start writing. Some stories are about you, fictional accounts of adventures. Look at this.

Xena takes the scroll; she reads a few lines and looks to the guy running the table.

**XENA**

How much?

**MAN**

Ten.

With a sigh she, retrieves a few coins and hands them over, then she sticks the scroll in a pouch at her belt.

**XENA**

Gabrielle's gonna freak.



**FADE OUT.**

**END OF ACT TWO**

## ACT THREE

FADE IN:

### INT. HALLWAY – DAY

Xena is standing with Kazia and a couple other people talking quietly as people move past them. Xena is even smiling and seems to be enjoying herself at the moment.

Kadmus is making his way down the hall, looking like he has a bad smell under his nose when he see the small groups of people standing in the area.

#### KADMUS

Okay folks, this section isn't open yet. What are you doing here?

#### XENA

Standing?



#### KADMUS

Well could you 'stand' somewhere else? With you here, people will think it's time to come back here.

#### XENA

You must be kidding.

#### KADMUS

No I'm not. Now please move out of this area.

The grin that crosses Xena's face is one of disbelief as she does take a few steps away, back toward the room with all the merchandise.

Kadmus watches to make sure they're moving then he turns and walks the other way.

#### XENA

That man is an idiot.

**KAZIA**

No, an idiot wouldn't make the money he does. He's just a control freak.

**XENA**

So you don't spend a lot of dinars at this thing. Why do you come?

**KAZIA**

To be with my friends. We only get to see each other once or twice a year and this makes it fun. There are some things he can't charge for and the chance to be with good friends is one of them.

**XENA**

I like that. That's good.

**KAZIA**

Well, we gotten a lot from this and we've learned a lot about ourselves. It's not all bad.

**XENA**

I'm beginning to get it. Now all we have to do is fix the Kadmus problem.

**KAZIA**

There's a lava pit not far from here.

**XENA**

That is a possibility.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. LOUNGE – DAY**

Gabrielle and Autolycus are once again in the room that is behind the stage area. Autolycus is seated and Gabrielle is pacing back and forth.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Is that doing any good?

**GABRIELLE**

It's how I think.

**AUTOLYCUS**

I'll bet you go through a lot of boot leather. A thousand dinars could buy a lot of boots.

**GABRIELLE**

Be careful or I'll put a boot where you least expect it.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Sorry.

**GABRIELLE**

Money aside... why are you doing this?

**AUTOLYCUS**

There has to be another reason besides money?

**GABRIELLE**

Yes. Autolycus, you retired a wealthy man. You don't need the money. Why?



**AUTOLYCUS**

People don't remember me.

**GABRIELLE**

What?

**AUTOLYCUS**

They don't remember 'The King of Thieves'. You, you and Xena, they remember. It's nice to be a part of something so positive.

These people love you and regardless of who brings them together, they all have one thing in common... you and Xena.

**GABRIELLE**

Xena and I don't deserve this.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Why not? You have spent  
your entire lives trying to  
make things better....

**GABRIELLE**

You're overstating it. We did  
what we had to do. That doesn't  
make us worthy of this kind of thing.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Oh get a grip, Gabrielle. They're  
not trying to deify you. They are  
simply finding some pleasure in  
what you've done. You give them  
hope. You're the one who wrote  
the scrolls. You should have  
seen this coming.

**GABRIELLE**

This is not what I intended.

The door behind them opens, stopping what is quickly turning into a heated argument.  
Gabrielle turns to find Xena coming in.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

Well this is surprise.  
How did you get in?

**XENA**

You have to ask? But I  
will say Midas had less  
security at his palace.  
How go things on this end?



**GABRIELLE**

Fine. He took it hook, line  
and sinker. I'll be going  
on stage later today.

**XENA**

I'll be in the audience.

**GABRIELLE**

And then?

**XENA**

We lower the boom. When you finish up your time, take questions from the audience.

**GABRIELLE**

You're being evil, aren't you?

**XENA**

Pretty much.  
But it should be fun.

**AUTOLYCUS**

You both scare me sometimes.  
You know that right?

**XENA**

We do try. Now....

She pauses and gives Gabrielle a kiss on the forehead.

**XENA**

*(cont'd)*

I have a few things to do before you go on stage. In the meantime, relax. It's not as bad as we first thought. We just need to put things into perspective for Kadmus.

Xena turns to Autolycus.

**XENA**

*(cont'd)*

You're in, right?



**AUTOLYCUS**

How can I say no to the  
two most dangerous  
women in the world?

**XENA**

Good.  
(to Gabrielle)  
I'll see you later.

**FADE TO:**

**INT. STAGE ROOM – SHORT WHILE LATER**

The room is packed with people. Every seat is filled with a body and there are even a few people standing along the sides against the walls. The stage is empty at the moment, but it's clear that people are waiting for something to happen.

All the attention turns to the stage when Kadmus enters from behind a curtain.

**KADMUS**

Hi everybody... are you  
all having a good time?

The crowd responds with varying degrees of enthusiasm, but all the responses are positive.

**KADMUS**

(cont'd)

Good, that's what we like to hear.  
And we actually have an unexpected  
surprise for you today. We have a  
guest that came in at the last minute.  
I think you're all going to be very  
pleased. But before we bring her  
out we have something that we're  
going to offer up for auction.

An assistant brings out a pair of odd-looking boots and sets them on a small table next to Kadmus.

**KADMUS**

(cont'd)

These were acquired for auction  
from a close friend of Xena and  
Gabrielle's and they are the boots  
that Gabrielle wore during her  
adventure with Xena when they came  
to Tara's aid for the second time.

**CUT TO:**

## INT. BACKSTAGE – CONTINUOUS

Gabrielle backhands Autolycus on the arm as she glares at him.

**GABRIELLE**

You stole my boots?!



**AUTOLYCUS**

Actually I didn't steal them.  
You left them behind.  
I just picked them up.

**GABRIELLE**

Why in the name of  
Zeus.... Never mind,  
I don't want to know.

**CUT TO:**

## INT. STAGE ROOM – DAY

The auction continues with bids going higher and higher.

Kazia is seated in the back of the room with a fellow that looks strangely familiar. The clothes are different than the last time he appeared, but it's definitely Anthrax.

**KAZIA**

Are you sure this  
is going to work?

**XENA**

Positive. I'll pop up after Gabrielle  
is done speaking. Then we'll  
put the screws to Kadmus in  
front of the entire crowd.

**KAZIA**

See, this is why we love you  
two. There's always a plan.



**XENA**

Even if we have to do it on the fly,  
Gabrielle and I are good together.



They return their attention to the auction. Xena just shakes her head slowly when the price of the boots reaches five hundred dinars.

**XENA**

*(cont'd)*

I don't get this.

**KAZIA**

All right, I admit...  
neither do I.

**FADE TO:**

**INT. STAGE ROOM – DAY**

Kadmus is now finished with his auction. After handing off the boots to an assistant he turns back to the group.

**KADMUS**

All right, now is the time. We have  
a special surprise guest for you  
today. I know it's going to be hard  
to believe, but here she is...  
Gabrielle, the Battling Bard.

At this point the crowd goes crazy, screaming and yelling. Whistles can be heard piercing through the general din of the room. All the attendees are on their feet as Gabrielle slowly makes her way on stage.

She has a huge smile on her face as she gets a look at everyone. She spends a moment or two just waving to the crowd as the noise continues.

When everyone finally quiets down and retakes their seats she perches on a stool that has been provided for her.

**GABRIELLE**

Wow! Thanks, guys! You know,  
I had no idea that people get together  
like this. I was just passing through  
and here you were. You made  
it really hard to get a room.

There is a ripple of laughter through the room and Gabrielle continues to just take it in.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

I have to admit that's its kind  
of bizarre. I mean Xena and I....

At the mention of Xena's name there is another round of cheers and applause that makes Gabrielle laugh.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

I feel that way most of the time too.  
So you all get together once a year,  
just to come talk about us?



There is a murmur of yes among the audience.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

Well, when I heard you were here,  
I thought I'd come tell you a few  
stories I haven't had a chance to  
get down on a scroll yet.  
You okay with that?

Audience reaction is as expected... enthusiastic.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

At least you're easy to please.  
Okay then. You're all familiar  
with Palaemon and Vidalus?  
Well we got to see them again  
recently. Yet another interesting  
adventure for us, but I got to put  
Xena in this really skimpy outfit....

**FADE TO:**

## INT. STAGE ROOM – CONTINUOUS

Gabrielle is walking around the stage now, getting the crowd involved in the story that she is just finishing up.

### GABRIELLE

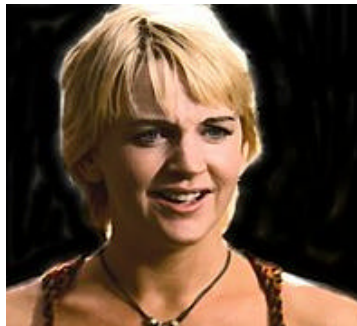
So Xena, in true Xena style, informed the king exactly how things were going to be. He didn't argue; the wedding went off without a hitch. Xena and I got a scroll from Vidalus the other day and he says that Val and his wife are already expecting a baby. So it worked out just fine.

Moving back to the stool, Gabrielle takes a drink from a mug that has been placed on the table near her.

### GABRIELLE

*(cont'd)*

Okay, I'm done. I suppose the thing to do now is take some questions.



She looks over the crowd as every hand goes up, but she's looking for one particular hand.

**FADE OUT.**

**END OF ACT THREE**

## ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

### INT. STAGE ROOM – DAY

Gabrielle laughs, nearly giving everything away when she finally finds Xena in the audience. And since every hand in the place is up, she feels guilty and decides that Xena can wait while she answers one real question.

**GABRIELLE**

Down in front there.  
In the red tunic.

A woman stands up, folding her hands in front of her as she appraises Gabrielle.

**WOMAN**

Will you please settle  
a raging debate?

**GABRIELLE**

If I can.

**WOMAN**

Xena and Ares....

**GABRIELLE**

Okay, stop right there. I know  
where this is going and just let  
me say, she likes what I do.



The audience roars with laughter and the woman does not look pleased.

**WOMAN**

But in your scrolls you write of  
Xena and Ares' relationship. How  
can she like what you do if she's  
obviously in love with Ares?

A coughing sound from the section where Xena is sitting, once again nearly trips Gabrielle up.

**GABRIELLE**

Ares understood Xena when she  
was struggling with her path in life,  
but he also manipulated her and you  
can't have love based on manipulation.  
I personally think there was some  
mutual respect. But Xena never  
has and never will love Ares.

Turing away from the woman in the front Gabrielle picks on a young boy on the right side of the room.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

Do you have a question?

The boy looks like he's about to faint, but he stands up and Gabrielle can tell he's shaking.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

It's okay. I don't bite.

**BOY**

Can I give you a kiss?

This makes her laugh as she steps down off the edge of the stage.

**GABRIELLE**

Sure. C'mere.

To the delight of the audience Gabrielle puts her arms around him, giving him a kiss on the cheek and a hug. The room responds appropriately with a chorus of 'awwwww'. Gabrielle takes the time to talk quietly with him before he returns to his seat and she goes back up on stage.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd, turning to 'Anthrax')*

How about you?

Very straight faced, thumbs looped in belt, looking like she might spit at any moment, Xena stands. The audience still hasn't bought a clue.

**XENA**

Can you tell me what  
it's like to kiss Xena?



**GABRIELLE**

Come up here  
and I'll show ya.

From somewhere in the back someone shouts "It's Xena!" The game is on now as Xena moves through the crowd and takes the stage with Gabrielle. Every person in the room rises to their feet in a deafening roar of approval and applause.

They have to wait for several beats before the room quiets enough for them to continue. They are amused and laughing with the room as everyone begins to settle down. Gabrielle turns to Xena.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

I believe I promised  
you a kiss.

There is absolute silence in the room. You could hear the proverbial pin drop.

Leaning over, Xena takes Gabrielle's face tenderly in her hands and kisses her. From somewhere in the back of the room is a noise that sounds suspiciously like someone fainting.

The woman in the red tunic down front gets up from her seat and marches over to the door. The security there isn't going to let her leave until Xena gestures from the stage.

**XENA**

Oh, just ship her  
the hell out of here.

They open the door and she leaves.

**XENA**

*(cont'd, to audience)*

Ares? Give me a break.

Gabrielle reaches for 'Anthrax's' mustache.

**GABRIELLE**

Let's get you out of that.

**XENA**

You're asking me  
to break character.

**GABRIELLE**

Yes I am. Here  
let me help you.

The crowd rumbles quietly as Gabrielle takes the hat off Xena's head and runs her fingers through Xena's hair, freeing it from the knot it had been in under the hat. Xena gingerly removes the mustache and patch of hair at her chin.

**GABRIELLE**

That's better.  
*(to audience)*  
Isn't that better?

Gabrielle gestures to the people once again standing and applauding.

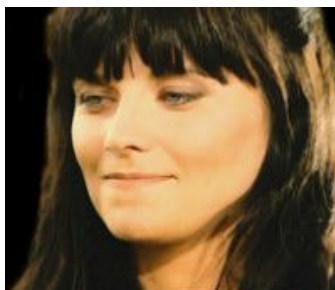


**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd, to Xena)*  
See?

**XENA**

Was I arguing?



A second stool is brought up on stage and Xena takes it, placing it down next to Gabrielle's stool.

**XENA**

*(cont'd, to Gabrielle)*

You do this really well. We should come to these things more often.

Everyone in the room agrees...loudly.

**XENA**

*(cont'd)*

You know, Gabrielle and I travel so much, it's hard to tell where we'll be next year, but if we can stop by, we will. Since Kadmus has made such a generous offer we really should come by to support his effort.

This has Kadmus' attention and he moves forward toward the stage.

**GABRIELLE**

That's right. I think you all will be pleased to know that Kadmus has agreed to donate thirty percent of his profits to a charity that you all choose.

Kadmus looks like he wants to die on the spot... the spot that Xena and Gabrielle have so expertly put him on.

**XENA**

Come up here. Let the folks see what a generous guy you are.

It's as if Xena's stare has a magnetic pull on him, forcing his feet to move even as he's trying to will them to go the other direction. Putting on a brave face, he joins them on stage and finds himself between Xena and Gabrielle, who have holds in a couple discreet places on his body that he is pretty sure could be lethal.

**KADMUS**

Yes, yes, Xena is right. They've given so much to us it's time for us to give something back. We'll be setting up a table out in the hall where you can drop off your suggestion for the charity.

**GABRIELLE**

And this isn't just for this year; he's going to do it every year you all get together.



**XENA**

And when we're in the area,  
we'll stop by to help out.

The crowd is on their feet on last time and we....



**FADE TO:**

**EXT. CAMP – EVENING**

Xena is lying with her head on a pile of blankets, playing some kind of game with a string. Gabrielle is looking down at a scroll, but she's not writing. She's contemplating, which actions that include humming, tapping her foot and scratching the side of her face with the feather end of the quill.

**GABRIELLE**

I think I'm going to call  
this one, The Sting.



**XENA**

Good one. He wasn't  
expecting that.

**GABRIELLE**

Speaking of expecting...  
where's Autolycus?

**XENA**

He'll be here.

**GABRIELLE**

Xena if he succeeded....

**XENA**

He'll be here. He knows  
we know where he lives.

**GABRIELLE**

True.

A beat later, several sets of feet can be heard coming through the trees. The sounds stop just short of the camp.

**AUTOLYCUS**

*(off camera)*

Are you decent?

**XENA**

Yes, come on in.

Autolycus, followed by Kazia and about a half a dozen others from the symposium come into the camp. After saying hello and shaking hands with Xena and Gabrielle, they all take seats around the fire.

Autolycus drops a larger bag of dinars at Xena's side.

**AUTOLYCUS**

There's about ten thousand there.  
It's what I could lay my hand  
on while you were on stage.

**XENA**

You haven't lost your touch.



**AUTOLYCUS**

With you two acting as  
decoys, I couldn't lose.

**KAZIA**

You should have seen Kadmus  
running around looking for that  
money. That was worth the price  
of admission. So what are you  
two going to do with all that?

**XENA**

Nothing. You're going to take it and  
give it out to as many people you  
can who attended that thing. We  
know it won't cover everyone,  
but it's a nice start.

**KAZIA**

And again this is...

**KAZIA & XENA**

... why we love you.

**XENA**

*(cont'd)*

Yeah we know. Just get as  
much of it back as you can.

**KAZIA**

I will I promise.

*(to Gabrielle)*

Umm... we were wondering is....

**FADE OUT.**

**END OF ACT FOUR**

**TAG**

**FADE IN:**

**EXT. ROAD – DAY**

Xena is walking slowly, leading Argo. Gabrielle is walking slowly behind her, engrossed in a scroll.

**GABRIELLE**

This is just twisted.

**XENA**

Oh come on Gabrielle. You know what they say; imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

**GABRIELLE**

Xena, look at this.

Xena stops, Gabrielle takes the scroll over and points to a section.

**GABRIELLE**

*(cont'd)*

Is that even possible?

Xena reads the scroll, considers it and smiles before turning to walk on.

**XENA**

It would be if I had three hands.

**GABRIELLE**

Xena!

**FADE OUT.**

**DISCLAIMER**

No fans were harmed during the making of this motion picture. We swear. Really.