

THE SHIPPER SEASONS

XENA WARRIOR PRINCESS VIRTUAL SEASON EIGHT



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Logline

The act of killing again leaves Eve questioning her choices about fighting and when she is captured by a man out for her blood, Eve is faced with a decision about the path that she has chosen and if it is even the right one for her.

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TEASER

FADE IN

Xena, Gabrielle and Eve are walking down a wide, straight dirt road. Xena is leading Argo and is slightly ahead of Gabrielle and Eve, who are talking animatedly and leading their own horses.

GABRIELLE:

Eve, of course a person can become someone else--

EVE (interrupts):

Pretend to be someone else.

GABRIELLE:

But once you've started showing a false face to the world, who is to know what's real and what's not?

EVE:

You can't keep it up forever, though, can you? Sooner or later, no matter how good you are, something real will slip through the mask. It's bound to happen. And then what?

GABRIELLE:

Then, you have everyone so confused that they won't know it's real.

EVE:

But that doesn't answer the question. To become someone else, you need to convince *yourself* that you've become that person. Otherwise it's just acting.

GABRIELLE:

Don't you believe that if you do something for long enough, it becomes second nature to you?



EVE:

Doing and being aren't the same thing.



GABRIELLE (shakes her head, smiling):
You just won't let me convince you, will you?

EVE (smirking slightly):
Sorry.

XENA:
You've been trying since we left Amazon lands, Gabrielle. If you haven't convinced her yet, I doubt you ever will.

GABRIELLE (smiles brightly):
Yeah, well--we still have a way to go before we get to Eve's family's home, so never say never.

XENA (quietly, her face unreadable):
Yeah...

She walks off ahead a little way again. Eve and Gabrielle look at each other and Gabrielle shrugs. Eve goes to join Xena.

EVE (slightly warily):
You know, you don't have to come with me.

Xena puts a hand on Eve's shoulder.

XENA:
Eve, we've had this conversation. Since we're headed in the direction of Rome anyway, we might as well visit Orphelia. And as long as you want me to come with you, I'll come.

EVE:
I just don't want you to be--uncomfortable on my account.

XENA:
Look, it's not your fault I didn't get to raise you... (pause) Besides, when else will I get to meet the woman who did?

EVE:
Orphelia? I don't think you and she will get along, to be honest. She's not really your kind of person. She wasn't really close to me growing up. I think my brother Larus and I were a burden on her more than anything else.

XENA:
Perhaps she's mellowed out a bit since you last saw her.

EVE (pushing back her emotions enough to keep outwardly calm):

It's been a long time since I saw her. She and Toricles--my father--didn't like where my life took me after Larus was killed.

XENA:

People react in strange ways to losing a loved one. Especially a child.

EVE (closing the conversation):

Anyway--you can judge for yourself in a few hours.

XENA (nods, changing the subject):

You sure you don't mind having Sabina stay with the Amazons?

EVE:

I told you, it's all right.

Gabrielle appears behind them, with her sais ready to fight.

GABRIELLE (pointing further up the road):

I hate to ruin the moment, but there's trouble up ahead.

Eve and Xena look to see a group of about a dozen ruffians headed their way, swords out. Xena draws her own weapon and looks at Eve, who is also preparing to fight.

XENA (holds out her sword to Eve):

Do you want this?

EVE (looks at it for a moment before shaking her head):

I don't need a sword to look after myself, Mother.

Before Xena can reply, Eve flips over the heads of the ruffians, who look confused, not knowing who is likely to be more dangerous: Xena and Gabrielle, or Eve. They split into two rough, disorganized groups and each goes for one opponent. They obviously aren't used to fighting as one unit, as they are all trying to do different things, with no one person acting as the leader.

Pan to Xena and Gabrielle fighting in tandem to take out three men at once: Xena distracts them by flipping over them with a war cry, and Gabrielle knocks two out with the blunt ends of her sais, leaving the third for Xena to dispose of.

Pan to Eve, who is managing just fine without a weapon, using her fists, elbows and knees to great effect, though not quite as acrobatically as Xena; she is a lot stronger than she looks.

As all four of her limbs are occupied with two attackers, a third man comes at her from behind and knocks her to the ground. She falls on her back as the first two men try to hold her down. She wriggles frantically, giving the first a good kick. As the third man's sword comes down towards her throat, she manages to wrench free of the second man and yanks him into the line of the blade. His blood splatters all over Eve; he dies instantly.

Close-up of the shocked face of the second man, who wielded the sword. He lets go of the handle.

Pan back to Eve, who grabs the sword, seemingly without thinking, and unhesitatingly rams it into the stomach of the second man, then swings it around into the side of her final opponent.

EVE:

Nice try.

Her eyes have an odd look in them. We can see that she is not regretting her actions.

Pan to Xena and Gabrielle, who have taken care of their attackers and are watching Eve.

GABRIELLE (bewildered and clearly uneasy):
What is she doing?



XENA (slowly):
I don't know, Gabrielle...

Pan to Eve, who is running her sword through another man. The only one still left alive, obviously scared witless, turns and runs. Eve takes off running after him; Xena catches up to her and grabs her arm.

XENA (shocked):
Eve, what's going on?

EVE (trying to break free):
Nothing, Mother! Let me go.

Gabrielle comes over to join them.

GABRIELLE:
Eve, are you all right? You were scaring me there...

Eve's eyes slowly lose their murderous expression as she returns to reality. She drops the sword she has been holding and sinks to her knees.

XENA (worried):
What happened there, Eve?

EVE (upset):
I don't know...

GABRIELLE:
One of those guys almost killed her, Xena--she had no choice. It was them or her.

EVE (dully):
No, it wasn't. I could have gotten out of the way without killing anyone...

XENA (crouches down next to Eve):
Oh, Eve...

Quick pan to one of men downed by Gabrielle before, as he scrambles to his feet and runs away. Pan back to Xena and Eve, still in the same postures as before, and Gabrielle standing over them.

GABRIELLE:

Eve, if you had seen the look in your eyes just now...you looked like-- (breaks off her train of thought abruptly) --well, not yourself.

EVE (looks up, obviously sickened):

You mean I looked like Livia.

GABRIELLE (softly):

You could say that.

EVE (roughly shakes her head):

Well, don't get used to it. It won't happen again.

XENA (helps Eve to her feet):

Don't get yourself down about it. Sometimes you really don't have a choice about fighting.

EVE (anguished):

But I did then. I took that sword and I killed all these people. (gestures at the bodies around them) I don't think I should be allowed near weapons anymore. (to Gabrielle) Maybe it's just like I was saying before...you can pretend to be someone else--but sooner or later the mask starts to crack and the person underneath shows.

Eve walks away down the road before Gabrielle can reply. She and Xena look at each other in consternation.

XENA (changes the subject):

I wonder what those men were after...

Xena and Gabrielle walk after Eve.

CUT TO

Inside a tent, a group of men are sitting around eating roasted meat. They are rough-looking people, with shaggy hair and beards, muscular and presumably good fighters but clearly not selected for their intelligence. Their rough, unkempt looks are mirrored by the surroundings. One man, young and blond, clearly the leader of the group, is seated at the table eating and drinking wine. He is very different from his men--clean-cut and, by the looks of him, well-bred and smart, but with a definite menace in his demeanor.

MAN #1:

Don't worry about that, I've heard she's turned into a complete pacific these days. Changed her name and everything--now she's Eve.

MAN #2 (blank look):

A what?

MAN #1 (rolling eyes):

A pacific. You know--she doesn't fight.



LEADER (smoothly):

You mean a *pacifist*, Borlos. I've heard the same thing, but it doesn't pay to take chances. Things can change fast. I've heard plenty of rumors about our dear *Livia*. (he spits out the name like an insult) Everything from how she's become the Queen of the Amazons to how she's raising cows on a little farm in Thrace.

BORLOS (completely serious):

Do Amazon queens raise cows in Thrace?

LEADER (irritated):

No, that's my point--you don't know how much of what you hear is true, so it's safer to assume none of it is. (strokes his chin thoughtfully) I'm getting a little bit worried about the men we sent after her, though.

There is a noise outside and the tent flap opens to reveal the two men who managed to survive the fight with Xena, Gabrielle and Eve. They stare breathlessly at the leader as we:

FADE OUT

ACT ONE

FADE IN

The same scene as before. The two survivors of the fight stumble into the tent.

LEADER:

Well, Cyrus? Did you get her?

CYRUS:

No, Resor-- (off his disdainful look) --excuse me, my Lord, we didn't. She was too strong for us.

RESOR (angry):

What do you mean, she was too strong? You outnumbered her twelve to one.

CYRUS:

No, my Lord, there were three of them--she and two other women. The other two were pretty amazing fighters--but it was Livia that killed by far the most of our men.

RESOR:

You mean you and Oran are the only ones still alive? (nods towards the second man)

CYRUS:

Yes.

RESOR (shaking head):

This just gets better and better. Did you recognize the other women?

ORAN (hesitantly):

No, we didn't. One was tall, with black hair. The other was shorter, and she had these two little daggers that looked like kebab sticks.

BORLOS (muttering):

Sounds like she kebabbed you all right.

RESOR (thinking):

No... It couldn't be them. (to Cyrus) The tall woman, did she give a loud, piercing war cry when she fought?

CYRUS (pleased to finally have something positive to say):

She did--gave me a headache too.

RESOR (furious):

No, it can't be them! (to himself) The fool scouts told me she was alone on that road... Do you fools know who those women are?

The men look around at each other doubtfully.

RESOR:

Does the name Xena ring a bell to any of you?

BORLOS (confidently):

She's the Goddess of War and Weaving.

RESOR (exasperated; slowly):

No, Borlos, that's Athena. Xena is the Warrior Princess--and Livia's mother!

The men look at each other again, this time with wide eyes. They start talking over each other:

--We're in trouble now!

-- Do you know, I think she's killed even more than Livia in her time.

-- Know what I heard about her and that blonde friend of hers?

-- I heard she's soft on the God of War.

-- (Borlos' voice) She couldn't have both... could she?

RESOR:

Shut up!

The men stop abruptly.

RESOR:

All right. This could be more complicated than I had thought. Leave me, all of you. I need to think.

The men lumber out of the tent, shoving and jostling each other.

Resor pushes his plate aside, spreads out a map and looks at it, tracing a line with a quill; there are several other similar lines on the map. Then he makes a note on a piece of parchment.

Footsteps are heard outside the tent; Resor looks up warily. The flap opens to show Virgil standing in the entrance. As they look at each other, Resor's face spreads into a smile. He gets up and goes over to meet Virgil; they embrace.

RESOR:

Virgil! It's been too long.

VIRGIL:

Two years and counting.

RESOR:

I guess we've both been pretty busy.

VIRGIL (steps back a little, the smile fading from his face):

Actually, that's why I'm here. I've been hearing stories that you've gotten into bounty-hunting. I was hoping it wasn't true, but-- (looks around him) --it seems I was wrong.

RESOR (abruptly):

I'm sorry if you don't like it, Virgil, but it's none of your business.

VIRGIL:

What are you expecting to get out of it? By the time you actually collect any bounty, you'll have spent so much money on all this (indicates tent) that you won't even get a profit.

RESOR (sneering a little):

I'll keep the operating expenses in mind when I set my fees. But actually, this time, I'm not in it for money.

VIRGIL (warily):

Then why?

RESOR:

I can't tell you yet--think of it as a surprise that's been a long time coming. But trust me, you'll love it.

CUT TO

Xena, Gabrielle and Eve, who are leading their horses towards a majestic-looking villa with vineyards in the background. The house itself is large, with a long road leading up to it. It is roughly square in shape, and appears to be built around a central courtyard, although it is still difficult to make out from this angle. The land is well-tended but the building itself looks dilapidated. The sun is low in the sky.

Eve stops and looks around, turning slowly to see all of it.

EVE:

Well...this is it.

GABRIELLE:

Home sweet home.

Eve stands for a moment longer and then suddenly turns around and heads back up the road they've just come down.

EVE:

You know, on second thoughts, I doubt anyone still lives here. I shouldn't have dragged you both all this way for nothing. We should leave and just--go collect Sabina.

XENA:

Hey, Eve, calm down. If no one answers the door you can at least show us the outside.

GABRIELLE:

I'm sure it's just as beautiful inside as out. I can't believe you grew up here, Eve. It's so different from any child's home I've ever seen.

EVE (embarrassed):

Come on, Gabrielle, you've seen young princes and princesses, surely. It isn't that different.

GABRIELLE:

Well, yeah, but that's different. You're one of us.

XENA (indifferently):
It's...nice.

Gabrielle gives her a penetrating look as Eve walks ahead.

GABRIELLE (quietly):
This is harder than you were expecting, isn't it?



XENA:

It's not that, really. (off Gabrielle's skeptical look) Well, maybe a little. I'm trying to put on a brave face for her, but just being here, knowing this was where she grew up--where she took her first steps, where she fell in love for the first time--it's hard.

GABRIELLE:

Sometimes I forget she's your daughter. She just seems more like a really good friend. There's so much about her we don't know, and you always expect to know everything about your child.

XENA (sighs):

Anyway...as long as she's happy. It can't be easy for her, either--not if her parents really objected to what she became.

GABRIELLE:

I know her mother didn't like it, but what about her father? She said he was a senator...perhaps he supported her publicly whatever he thought about it. Anyway, it'll be fine, Xena. We're both here for her.

CUT TO

Inside the villa. It has the same feel as the outside: that it was once a fine building, but has fallen into disrepair. We are in the kitchen, a cavernous old room with lots of grey stone everywhere. There is an entrance into the garden on one side of the room. Through a wide doorway at the far end of the room, we can see an atrium. Xena, Eve and Gabrielle enter, looking around--Xena and Gabrielle obviously curious, Eve lost in memories.

EVE:

Wow. It's exactly the same as I remember, only messier. It feels like a very long time since I've been here.

GABRIELLE:

How long ago were you last here?

EVE (quietly):

I left a few months after Larus was killed. I had just turned sixteen.

Footsteps are heard; a middle-aged woman comes through the doorway leading from the atrium. She is dressed simply yet she has an air of class and breeding.

WOMAN (briskly, her voice genteel but strained):
Whoever that is, get out of my house.

GABRIELLE:
We're sorry, we just wondered if--

She is interrupted as the woman sees Eve. Her face changes from irritated to stricken and a little nervous.

WOMAN (warily):
Livia? What are you doing here?

Eve looks at the woman, trying to gauge how angry she is before she replies.

EVE:
Orphelia, I'm not going to be here for very long. I wasn't sure if anyone was still living here. I just wanted to show (a pause as she decides how to refer to Xena) my mother where I grew up.



ORPHELIA (slowly):
I had heard rumors that you had found your real mother, that she was a warrior. Caesar never explained to us where he had found you, Livia.

EVE (indicates Xena):
This is Xena, my mother. (to Xena) This is Orphelia--she raised me here, with her husband.

ORPHELIA (sadly):
Toricles would have loved to have seen you again. It's a pity you didn't come a few months earlier--you could have seen him before he passed away.

EVE (puts a hand on Orphelia's shoulder):
I'm sorry.

ORPHELIA:
Don't be. He grew very sick after you left and had to give up his Senate seat. He was bedridden for years. At least now that he's dead, he's not suffering anymore.

Eve looks down guiltily, even though Orphelia hasn't directly accused her of anything.

XENA (taking over for Eve):
We just wondered if anyone was still living here. I wanted to see where Eve grew up.

ORPHELIA (a little defensive):
Well, here it is. She had a good childhood, we did right by her.

GABRIELLE (smiling):

So we see...she's a lovely young woman.

ORPHELIA (to Xena):

I'm sure you take most of the credit for that.

EVE (awkwardly):

No, you've both done so much for me. I was hoping you would still be here, so that I could show my mother that I had a happy life.

Orphelia looks at her, then slowly comes toward her and hugs her. Both of them look rather awkward. Xena and Gabrielle smile, also a bit uncomfortable.

ORPHELIA (smiles):

It's been a long time since I've had visitors...this will keep me going for years. You know, Livia--I have such a vivid memory of you right here in this room, standing at this table (points to a table) how you used to make bread at this table right here in this room. You used to love throwing the dough around.

EVE (looks at the table):

I loved doing that, but I remember only ever eating what I made if it was cheese bread. Anything else, I made it and left it there for the crows.

Xena and Gabrielle exchange uncomfortable looks; Xena is clearly uneasy with another woman having memories of her daughter's childhood.

GABRIELLE (trying to help Xena out a little):

So *that's* why you always complain about how the bread we get from anywhere else doesn't taste like bread...next time I buy bread, I'll get something with cheese in it.

XENA (with a notable lack of enthusiasm):

Sounds great.

GABRIELLE:

Or maybe you can make some for us, Eve.

EVE (looks at Xena's and shrugs non-committally):

Yeah, maybe. (pause) Listen, there's not too much light left; I want to go outside and look around the garden for a while. (looks first at Orphelia and then at Xena) Is that okay?

ORPHELIA:

Of course, go on. (to Xena and Gabrielle) We can go and sit down somewhere.

Eve smiles and goes through the main doors of the kitchen into the garden.

The other women head through to the atrium, their voices getting quieter as they go. Xena turns back briefly and watches Eve walk away from the house.

GABRIELLE:

So, tell us more about Eve when she was little...

CUT TO

The sun has almost set and the garden is much darker. We see the house some distance away. There is an olive grove at the edge of the garden, but most of it is grass, trees and flowers.

Eve is sitting on the ground below a large oak tree, picking at a leaf. She looks up at it as though considering climbing it (it has several branches that could serve as seats) but doesn't. She stands up and walks even further from the house, effectively out of view from any window. There is a pathway leading towards the olive grove next to her, flanked by thick bushes.

EVE (looks back at the tree):
The more things change...

There is a tiny noise, barely audible to the viewer. Eve stiffens and looks around. No one is there. She walks up the path a little way.

EVE:
Who's there?

A small band of men (among them are Cyrus, Oran and Borlos) emerge from the far side of the bushes and surround her. Eve does not look surprised, but she stands calmly, her hands at her sides.

CYRUS:
Don't make a sound.

EVE (not bothering to lower her voice):
This is private property. I suggest you leave.

ORAN (comes up behind her):
Oh, we're leaving in a moment. We just need you to come with us.

Eve turns around and raises an eyebrow at him.

EVE:
No. You'll leave now.

Oran raises his fist to strike her head; she ducks out of the way, and he loses his balance and staggers forward. With a nasty smile, Eve turns, kicks him in the behind and send him sprawling.

BORLOS (taken aback):
Well--so much for that pacific thing. Boys...I guess Livia isn't so reformed after all.

Eve's smile fades and she looks down.

CYRUS:
Nope. Once a killer, always a killer.

EVE (quietly):
What do you want?

CYRUS (reasonable-sounding):
We want--*you*. You come with us, we'll leave your family in peace.

EVE:
Or else--?

CYRUS (looks at her thoughtfully, having noticed her reaction):
Or else...you can kill us all right here.

Eve looks torn. The camera pans to Oran, who has snuck up behind her with a dagger in his hand.

CYRUS (continues):
Heck, maybe we won't even put up a fight since you'd beat us anyway--at least we'll save you and ourselves the trouble.

While Eve continues to hesitate, Oran raises the dagger and slams the handle down on her head. She crumples to the ground.

CYRUS (shrugs):
Done.

Two of the men pick Eve up roughly and carry her away. The camera follows them down the path, then zooms in on Eve's hair-clip which has fallen to the ground as we:

FADE OUT

ACT TWO

FADE IN

Resor's camp. We see several tents pitched, two with guards, although they are some distance from each other. One is bigger and grander than the other and we watch it for a second.

CUT TO

Resor and Virgil, in Resor's tent. They are arguing.

VIRGIL:

Look, Resor, I don't think you're doing the right thing here! Whatever it is, if you won't tell me anything about it, it can't be something I'm going to like. I know you too well.

RESOR:

I told you--it's just a surprise.

VIRGIL:

There are no good surprises in your line of work.

RESOR:

You might be my cousin, Virgil, but you aren't my keeper. If you don't like it, tough luck.



VIRGIL:

You know who you remind me of right now? (off Resor's wary look) Your father. I remember hearing him and Dad arguing a lot like this once. You and I hid upstairs because your dad was scaring you.

RESOR:

I'm not my father.

VIRGIL:

Not yet. But if you carry on doing this, one day you'll look in the mirror and see Jett, not Resor.

RESOR:

You don't know what you're talking about.

Before Virgil can respond, Cyrus enters the tent.

CYRUS:

Sir--we've got her. She came with no trouble this time.

RESOR (smiles):

Good.

CYRUS:

We didn't see her mother or the blonde.

Virgil looks shocked.

RESOR:

Well, as long as we have Livia, the rest doesn't matter so much.

Virgil is stunned; clearly a lot of thoughts are running through his head at once.

VIRGIL:

You mean Xena's daughter?

RESOR (smiles):

I told you it was a surprise. The bitch that murdered Joxer...now she'll pay for it.

VIRGIL (disbelieving):

You mean you're planning to kill her?

RESOR (sarcastic):

No, throw her a party. What did you think?

VIRGIL (not impressed):

I thought you didn't buy into violence. You used to tell me you wanted to be just like Dad.

RESOR:

What can I say? I've had second thoughts. Sure, Joxer's way of living was--admirable. (Virgil rolls his eyes at the formal turn of phrase) But sometimes, being the good guy just isn't practical.

Virgil shakes his head.

RESOR:

I'm going to avenge my uncle...are you going to help me or not?

VIRGIL:

You know, I was wrong. (Resor nods, obviously pleased) You already are your father.

Close-up of Resor's shocked face.

CUT TO

Inside another tent. Eve is alone, bound by her wrists and ankles to a thick wooden pole sticking out of the ground in front of her. She listens out for a moment and we hear voices outside: her guards.

VOICE #1 (gleefully):

My game. That's three times in a row I've beat you now.

Eve waits for a second and then starts trying to wriggle her hands out of her bonds. They are tightly tied though, and she fails. She pouts. She leans forward against the pole sadly and sighs.

CUT TO

The garden. It is now dark. Xena, Gabrielle and Orphelia are walking around.

XENA (looks around and calls out, uneasy):
Eve?

ORPHELIA (calm):
Don't worry, I'm sure she's all right. (pause) She used to love this garden. She would hide out here for hours on end--days, sometimes--and pretend she was a brave warrior fighting against villains. (chuckles)

Xena and Gabrielle exchange thoughtful, wistful looks.

XENA:
It's not like her to disappear for this long without telling us.

ORPHELIA:
She won't get into any trouble out here, she knows this garden like the back of her hand.

They have reached the oak tree Eve was at earlier by now.

GABRIELLE (notices the olive grove near the path by which Eve was taken away):
You have a beautiful estate, Orphelia.

ORPHELIA (smiles):
Thank you. I'm afraid I can't take much credit for it though, we have a few men who come in and tend to the olives and the vineyard.

GABRIELLE:
Really? Maybe we could try some of the wine later?

Xena has wandered off down the path and now comes back, her face grim. In her hand is Eve's hair-clip.

GABRIELLE:
What's that?

XENA:
It's Eve's.

Gabrielle and Orphelia both look shocked.

ORPHELIA:
What happened?

XENA:
That's what we're going to have to find out.

GABRIELLE:
But where is she? She can't have gone far.

XENA:
No, she can't. We'll find her.

ORPHELIA (stricken):
B-but, she was here an hour ago. Who would have taken her? She wouldn't just wander off.

XENA (awkwardly soothing Orphelia):
I don't know yet, but we'll find her.

Orphelia doesn't look reassured; she looks very upset.

GABRIELLE:
Don't worry...it'll be all right, we'll have her back before you know it.

On Xena, who looks typically determined.

CUT TO

Resor's camp. It's night and all is quiet. Eve is dozing in her tent, still bound.

She jerks awake at a noise outside, in time to see Virgil enter, closing the tent flap to block out most of the noise.

EVE (angry and surprised):
Virgil? What are you doing here?

VIRGIL:
Ssh, the guards are still outside. I wanted to talk to you.

EVE:
How did you get past them without being noticed?

VIRGIL (coming closer to her and speaking more quietly):
There are perks in knowing the boss.

EVE:
What?

VIRGIL:
Stay quiet, and I'll tell you. (Eve nods.) The leader, Resor--have you seen him yet?

EVE:
No.

VIRGIL:
He's my cousin. (off Eve's incredulous "This just gets better and better" look) My dad had a brother named Jett, who wasn't the nicest guy in the world. Resor is his son. He was very close to me, he stayed over with us all the time. He really loved my dad.

EVE (bitterly):
I can guess where this is leading. (she looks down at her bound feet stonily)

VIRGIL:
So obviously he's happy to have me here. I wanted to have a word with you in private, so we can work on getting you out of here.

EVE:
Let him have me, if he wants me dead this badly.

VIRGIL (ignores this):
Is Xena around?

EVE (sighs):
She and Gabrielle are at my old family's villa. (slightly sarcastic) I take it you're going to go and find her?

VIRGIL (nods):

I can come and go from here whenever I like without making anyone suspicious. I'm going to get her and Gabrielle and we'll get you out of here.

EVE (whispering forcefully):

No. He has every right to want me dead, leave him to it. (sadly) I don't want to break up your family any more than I already have.

VIRGIL:

I can work things out with him later, don't worry. It'll be fine.

EVE:

Why are you doing this? Putting me ahead of your family? Virgil, just leave, please.

VIRGIL:

Even so, he's doing wrong by you. (changes subject) By the time we come back, be ready to get away. (Eve opens her mouth to protest but he beats her to it) I'm not giving you a choice. Be ready.

He leaves. Eve looks very doubtful.

CUT TO

The kitchen of the villa. Orphelia is standing at the table she pointed out to Eve earlier, with several jewelry boxes in front of her. She is sorting through them feverishly.

She picks up a diamond necklace and puts it in a pile with some other expensive-looking pieces.

ORPHELIA (muttering to herself):

Maybe they'll take all this in exchange for her...

Xena and Gabrielle are standing a little way away, near the door, watching her. Xena is heading out somewhere.

XENA:

I won't be gone long, Gabrielle, don't worry. I want to see if I can find out where they've taken her.

GABRIELLE:

Are you sure you don't want me to come with you?

XENA (jerks her head towards Orphelia):

No, stay here and make sure she stays calm. I don't think giving whoever has Eve some pretty jewelry will help much, but it can't hurt for her to have something to do other than worry.

GABRIELLE:

I think she really loves Eve.

XENA:

She's certainly nothing like Eve said she was. Losing her husband must have affected her a lot.

GABRIELLE:

I hope she and Eve get some time alone to catch up once we get her back. (Xena nods, pursing her lips; Gabrielle pauses and changes the subject) If they went to such a lot of trouble to get Eve, why would they give her up so easily?

XENA (worried):

I don't know. It must have been quite an operation for them to get her though, and I don't know what they want yet. I hope she's okay.

There is a noise at the door. Xena and Gabrielle turn around suspiciously.

ORPHELIA (whispers):
Is it them?

GABRIELLE:
Could be.

Orphelia grabs handfuls of her jewelry and gets behind the table. Xena reaches for her chakram, Gabrielle for her sais.

The door opens and Virgil enters. Xena and Gabrielle relax, although they are still surprised to see him. Gabrielle gives him a hug. Orphelia looks on.

GABRIELLE (smiling):
Virgil! It's been a long time since we saw you.

VIRGIL:
Yeah, I've been busy.

GABRIELLE:
You know, you have quite a sense of direction. (beckons Orphelia over) Guess who this is?

VIRGIL:
Eve's adoptive mother?

Orphelia is stunned. Xena and Gabrielle exchange a curious glance.

ORPHELIA:
How did you know that?

VIRGIL:
She isn't with you right now, is she?

XENA (slowly):
No...she isn't here. Do you know where she is?

VIRGIL:
You want the good news or the bad news first?

Gabrielle and Xena speak at the same time.

GABRIELLE:
Good.

XENA:
Bad.

Virgil raises his eyebrows.

ORPHELIA:
Good.

VIRGIL:
I spoke to her earlier tonight. She told me where to find you.

XENA:
I take it that's the good news.

VIRGIL:
She's been captured by a man named Resor. He's planning to kill her to avenge his uncle's murder.

Orphelia looks worriedly at Gabrielle.

XENA:

Where do you come in?

VIRGIL:

Resor is my cousin.

Xena's eyebrows arch right up.

GABRIELLE (whispers):

Joxer...

VIRGIL:

When Resor was little, he worshiped Dad. Then again, with Uncle Jett as the alternative, who wouldn't? When he heard about--what happened, he was beside himself. (lowers his eyes and sighs, then looks up) I hadn't seen him for a while--and then the next thing I know, he wants to kill Eve.



XENA:

Does he know you don't want him to hurt her?

VIRGIL:

Yes...I told him he was turning into his father, the way he was going.

GABRIELLE:

Nothing else?

VIRGIL:

No.

XENA:

How many men are there?

VIRGIL:

Maybe twenty, twenty-five. Eve could fight her way out on her own...

GABRIELLE (looks at him understandingly):

But she won't.

There is a silence.

XENA (briskly):

Well then. We'll just have to get her out ourselves then, and worry about the rest later.

Pan to Orphelia, who looks distressed. She is playing with a gold chain she has been holding, obviously unhappy that her plans for ransom have all been in vain.

VIRGIL:

I can come and go from the camp as I like, and I can talk to her whenever I want to--do you want me to give her a message?

XENA (glances out of the window at the dark sky):

No, I want to see her myself. We have enough time before dawn. (to Orphelia and Gabrielle) You two stay here.

GABRIELLE:

Good luck.

Virgil and Xena leave.

Orphelia sits down at the table and puts her head in her hands. Gabrielle goes to her and puts her arm over her.

GABRIELLE:

It's going to be okay. I promise.

CUT TO

The moon in the night sky. Then pan down to Xena and Virgil riding through a forest.

CUT TO

Resor's camp. It's quiet and dark, except for a torch outside Eve's tent. Her two guards are playing a game of dice. The first guard rolls and smiles jubilantly; the second scowls and hands over a few coins.

GUARD #2:

I'll get you next time, don't worry.

GUARD #1:

Don't get your hopes up.

Guard #2 gathers up the dice and prepares to roll. We pan around to the side of the tent to see Xena crouched down, a large stone in her hand.

There is a muttered oath from Guard #2. Xena throws the stone towards a group of trees a little way away (where the front of the tent is not visible) and it lands with a *thump*.

We stay on Xena as we hear the guards hurry over to the trees. She waits for a second and slips inside the tent.

CUT TO

Inside the tent. Eve is dozing lightly but jerks awake as Xena enters.

EVE:

Wha--?

Xena comes over to Eve quietly and covers her mouth with her hand.

XENA (whispering):

Don't talk, the guards are probably back by now. Start untying yourself from there. (she takes a small knife out of her boot and presses it into Eve's hand)

She moves back over to the tent entrance. The guards look around at the noise and she slams a fist down on each of their foreheads. They fall to the ground and Xena props one up to look like he's still awake; the other will look asleep from a distance.

XENA (still quiet):

We don't have much time. Virgil's gone to wake Resor up so everyone thinks he's been here all night, they should be turning up anytime now. Come on.

She turns around to see that Eve hasn't moved at all. The knife is on the floor by her hand.

EVE:

Then you need to get out of here before they come.

XENA (hissing exasperatedly):

Eve, get moving!

EVE:

No.

Neither woman moves for a moment, but Xena scowls.

XENA:

Too late anyway, they're coming.

Eve glares down at her feet as Xena picks up the knife.

The tent flap opens wide to reveal Resor, Virgil and several other men behind them. Xena, Eve and Virgil's eyes widen as we:

FADE OUT

ACT THREE

FADE IN

On Virgil's stunned face. He looks like he's about to blurt something out but Xena raises her eyebrows at him and shakes her head almost imperceptibly.

Resor comes around behind Eve and checks her bonds.

RESOR:

Well, well, what have we here? (he sees the knife in Xena's hand) I wonder, are you here to kill Livia...or to rescue Eve? (he moves back in front of Eve and Xena and studies them intently for a moment; pantomimes a sudden realization and friendly greeting) You must be Xena. It's an honor to meet you. (now serious) You don't want to get in my way, Xena. Since you wanted to be in this place so badly, you can stay a while longer. (to his men) Take her.

Virgil closes his eyes in frustration as Xena smiles and draws her sword. The men hang back, obviously intimidated: Cyrus and Oran remember her from the earlier fight, while the rest recognize the name.

XENA:

Well, come on--

EVE (interrupting):

No, Mother, don't. Just leave, please.

XENA (shocked):

Eve, no!

VIRGIL (to Resor):

Listen, you know how much Dad liked to talk about Xena, right? She was a good friend to him--why not repay her for that and let her leave? She won't try this again, Resor. (looks at Xena meaningfully) Trust me.

RESOR (indecision shows in his face):

If you were as good a friend as all that, Xena, you would let me do what you can't--avenge him.

XENA:

Joxer would have hated to have seen this, Resor, don't you know that? (pause; no answer; Xena looks at Eve) I'm still going to get you out of here.

Before anyone can try to stop her, she flips over Resor's men, letting out her "A-yi-yi-yi-yi-yi!" battle cry, and runs out of the tent.

Close-up of Eve, and Virgil both scowl.

CUT TO

Virgil and Resor in Resor's tent. They are both angry.

VIRGIL:

How many times do I have to say it, this is not going to work.

RESOR:

Virgil, if you don't like it, just go, please. I'm going to do it no matter what you think.

VIRGIL:

You mean, you're going to try. It's not going to happen, Xena won't let it. I know her. She could take this whole camp on her own, with her eyes closed, if she had to--and not get even a scratch.

RESOR:

Then why hasn't she?

VIRGIL (shrugs):

How should I know? I'm just trying to tell you what you're letting yourself in for here. Even without Xena, her friend Gabrielle could do some serious damage--and that's before we even start talking about Eve. (pause) You *know* what she can do.

RESOR:

Even more reason to stop her now. Although, I really was expecting more resistance from her after what happened with the first lot of men I sent after her.

VIRGIL:

Exactly. Just because she isn't fighting you at the moment doesn't mean she's not going to.

RESOR:

I'll worry about that when it happens.

VIRGIL:

You won't have time to worry when it happens--you'll be dead.

CUT TO

The villa. Xena is pacing around the kitchen, obviously angry. Gabrielle is trying to calm her down.

XENA:

I thought we were past this phase of putting everyone else's lives in danger so she didn't have to fight, you know. I thought spending some time with the Amazons would help her see that sometimes she won't have a choice.

GABRIELLE:

Xena, perhaps this Resor being so angry about Joxer--and Virgil being there--got to her a bit, who knows? But if anyone can get her back, you can. Don't get so worked up about it, I'm sure she doesn't want that.

XENA:

I don't understand her, Gabrielle. Why can't she see she's just going to get herself killed?

Gabrielle grabs Xena's shoulder and turns her around to face her.

GABRIELLE (gently):

I do. I remember, when we went to India, I was lost. I didn't know who I was, why I was this person I had turned out to be, whether it was what I should have been or not, nothing. I was so worried about myself after what happened with Hope, you know. I didn't want to blame you, and there was no one else but myself.

XENA:

But it wasn't your fault.

GABRIELLE:

Maybe not. But it was easier to explain that way, with a culprit. At the time I thought it would be easier to get over as well. (shakes head) In the end, the only thing I could do was to ignore it, because it hurt too much for anything else.

XENA (takes Gabrielle's hand):

I'm sorry...

GABRIELLE:

You have nothing to be sorry for. I decided in the end that if I changed who I was then maybe I would find myself and have a chance at being happy again. We went to India, and when I met Eli, I just thought his ideas made so much sense. If I lived like that, I could work through all my pain.

XENA (closes her eyes):

And you think that's what's wrong with Eve.



GABRIELLE:

It might be, but if it is, I think she probably feels even worse than I did. She killed so many people--she can't just get over that immediately. I remember feeling like it was my fault for being so preoccupied with fighting that Hope turned out...like she did, so the obvious conclusion was to stop. Even when you were pregnant and Eve was a baby, I only ever did it because I didn't want you to have to.

XENA:

Oh, Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE:

And I think how awful that time was for me--at times I really didn't care whether I woke up the next day--and I

can't help but wonder if that's how Eve feels too, only a thousand times worse. Violence must really scare her.
(pause) Tell me something?

XENA:

Sure.

GABRIELLE:

When I first met you, how did you feel about fighting?



XENA (slowly):

I'd given up. I only got involved with those slave girls in that forest because I wanted to know what Draco was up to. I didn't want to fight in case I-- (she pauses and has clearly realized something) --couldn't stop. (she looks at Gabrielle wretchedly) And that's what Eve feels too.

GABRIELLE:

I think so.

XENA:

Why did it take that long to realize it?

GABRIELLE:

Does it matter? We got there.

XENA:

We still have to convince her to let us help her, though.

GABRIELLE (hugs Xena):

We'll do it, don't worry.

CUT TO

Resor's camp; daytime. There are now five or six guards outside Eve's tent, and they are paying more attention to what's going on than the ones the day before.

Virgil walks over to them; they block his path.

VIRGIL:

Is there a problem?

GUARD #1:

No one's allowed in without permission from Resor.

VIRGIL (shrugs):

Are you going to let me through then, or would you like me to fetch him over to tell you himself? (he taps his foot)
I don't think he'd be too happy.

The guards look around at each other.

GUARD #1:

All right.

CUT TO

Inside the tent. Virgil comes over to Eve so they can talk more quietly. He isn't happy.

VIRGIL:

What were you playing at last night?

EVE (sarcastic):

Hi, Virgil, how are you?

VIRGIL:

I'm serious, Eve. You could have got Xena killed, not to mention yourself.

EVE (looking down):

She could get out of here, no problem. Me...I deserve whatever I get.

VIRGIL (touches her cheek lightly and turns her head towards him):

What?



EVE:

You heard me. I tried to atone for what I did...but I realized I'll never be able to. The best thing for everyone I hurt is for them to get what they want: revenge. They can have me dead, alive, whatever. I'm past caring.

VIRGIL:

Eve, you can't think like that. The only thing it'll accomplish is destroying the people who love you.

EVE:

Virgil, for every one person who loves me, there's a hundred that hate me--more.

VIRGIL:

No, you're wrong.

EVE (shaking her head):

It's the right thing, you know it. I'm done fighting.

CUT TO

Virgil, Xena and Gabrielle talking in the villa.

VIRGIL:

She wouldn't listen to me, I tried. Believe me.

XENA:

I do.

VIRGIL:

I take it the plan hasn't changed, though?

XENA:

No--it's just a bit more challenging.

GABRIELLE:

I almost lost you in Jappa because I didn't save you when I had the chance, Xena. I don't want the same to happen this time round.

XENA (smiles at Gabrielle):

Don't worry, it won't. We'll just have to get her out by force and talk to her later. (off Gabrielle's look) I know she won't like it, but we haven't got much choice. (pause) We need to distract Resor and get as many men near him as possible, so someone can get Eve out of that tent.

VIRGIL:

You could go and talk to him. It would look less suspicious if I was near the tent than you--and there'd be less men everywhere you weren't-- (smiles) --would that work? I could get Eve out safely that way.

GABRIELLE:

What about me?

XENA:

Someone needs to stay here with Orphelia--in case they go after her.

They walk over to the kitchen door.

XENA:

We won't be long.

VIRGIL:

Hopefully.

XENA (raises her eyebrow at Virgil):

Let's go.

GABRIELLE:

Good luck!

CUT TO

Resor is sitting in his tent, writing something on a scroll. He blows on it to dry the ink.

There are loud noises outside, and at least one punch can be heard finding its mark. Resor looks up to see Xena enter, Borlos and several men close behind her. Resor stands up and comes around to Xena.

BORLOS:

She came bursting in here asking where you were, my Lord, and she beat up all the people who tried stopping her.

RESOR:

I thought we agreed you were going to stay out of my business, Xena?

XENA (dismissively):

I don't recall ever agreeing. Now, you have a choice. Either you can sit and listen to what I have to tell you--or you can find out just how useless your men are at capturing something that fights back.

RESOR:

I'll listen. For now. (to guards) Leave us.

CUT TO

The front of Eve's tent; we see a slight commotion by Resor's tent, but there are still plenty of guards all over camp. Pan round to the back of the tent, where Virgil is crouching, watching.

VIRGIL (whispering angrily to himself):

Come on, Xena, they should all be over there by now.

CUT TO

Resor's tent. Resor has sat down again; Xena is standing in front of his table.

RESOR:

Well?

XENA (conversationally):

Resor, you know, I knew your uncle.

RESOR:

I know.

XENA:

What do you remember about him?

RESOR (tries to keep his voice steady but it soon starts to falter):

He always had time for me, even though he had his own children to think about. My father-- (off Xena's look) -- Jett--was never really there for me and my mother died when I was still a boy--so Joxer and Meg were the closest thing I had to parents. I remember he always used to talk about you and your friend--everyone thought you were dead, but to him it was like you were always there. He even looked after your horse for you.

XENA (moved):

I know... He was a good friend. He always used to pretend that he was a bloodthirsty warrior--why, I don't know--but in reality he hated bloodshed. When he first killed...he didn't know how to deal with it.

RESOR (nods sadly):

He would tell us stories about you, and he'd always tell us that there was a way beyond the killing--there was no better proof than you two.

XENA:

Then why are you *doing* this, Resor? Didn't what he said mean anything to you?

RESOR (shouting):

I thought it did! Then she proved us all wrong. There is no way beyond it. He was the last person in the world to deserve a death like that, and he got one anyway!



XENA (upset):

You think I don't know that? You think I don't wish it had never happened, that my daughter hadn't killed one of my best friends? (shakes her head) It's certainly not the easiest thing in the world to forgive and forget--

RESOR:

You can say that again.

XENA:

--but you know what? I guarantee you that she feels much, much worse about it than you think, worse than anyone else does.

RESOR:

I don't believe you.

XENA:

Trust me, I've been there. She does. She knows it's all her fault and that she can't do anything to fix it--and that's punishing her more than anything you can do to her.

RESOR (anguished):

But why him?

XENA (sadly):

I don't know. (long pause) Tell me something, Resor: how do you think Virgil feels about Eve?

RESOR (has no idea where she's going with this question):

I--I don't know. I never asked.

XENA:

He loves her, you know.

RESOR:

What?

XENA:

He's in love with her--and she loves him too. (Resor opens his mouth to say something, but Xena carries on) Believe me, he felt just like you do about her once, but over time he realized that he didn't have to kill her to punish her for what she did. Every day she lives, she punishes herself.

RESOR (to himself; confused, but not angry):

So that's why Virgil was so dead set against it...

XENA:

No, Resor. It wasn't just because of that. It was because he knows that if you do this to avenge Joxer, you're going to betray the best things about him.

Resor looks very thoughtful.

CUT TO

Virgil, behind Eve's tent. He sees that the guards aren't going anywhere, sighs, and starts pulling a bit of cloth away from the ground and hacking at it with his dagger to make a space to climb through.

CUT TO

Inside the tent. Eve is watching the growing gap until Virgil finally pushes his way through.

EVE (scowls):
Virgil, go away.

VIRGIL (dully):
I'm sorry, Eve.

Before she can reply, he slams his fist into her head; she goes limp. Virgil looks at her for a moment, sadly--he looks almost sick at what he's done--and then he starts untying her.

He looks dubiously at the hole in the tent, and starts chopping at it again with the dagger. It doesn't take long to make it big enough for them to fit through. He picks Eve up and lays her gently over his shoulder.

VIRGIL (looks in the direction of Resor's tent):
Better late than never, right, Xena?

He goes through the gap and tries to steal away. Eve comes to and starts to squirm on his shoulder.

EVE:
Virgil! What are you doing?

Pan to the guards at the tent. They turn around and spot Virgil.

GUARD #1:
Hey! Stop right there!

Virgil starts running and the guards give chase; several other soldiers join in. Eve breaks free and jumps down just as the men catch up with them. Virgil knocks one of them down with a kick and punches out the other. Before Eve can think, she flips backward so that she finds herself behind the men and slams two of them into each other, knocking them out.

At the noise, Resor and Xena come out of the tent. We see Xena's face: she doesn't appear surprised or worried. Resor is shocked. He turns to Xena in confusion; she raises her eyebrows at him. The fighting stops. Eve looks sickened. Virgil looks up at Resor defiantly, breathing hard, as we:

FADE OUT

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

Inside Resor's tent. Resor is standing behind his table, Virgil in front of it. Eve is sitting on a stool while Xena kneels next to her, checking the bump on her head.

RESOR (reproachful):
I was expecting better from you, Virgil, I really was.

VIRGIL:

Well, I'm so sorry to disappoint.

RESOR:

I thought if anyone would want Joxer to be avenged, it would be you. I wonder...is it just your principles?

VIRGIL (frowns):

What do you mean?



RESOR:

There has to be something else. (looks at Virgil, Xena and back at Virgil) You don't hate her at all, do you?

VIRGIL (looks at Xena, who keeps her face blank):

I love her.

Pan to Eve, whose expression is unreadable except for a touch of sadness, and then to Resor, who nods, unsurprised.

VIRGIL (to Eve):

I'm sorry I hit you, Eve. You wouldn't have let me get you out of there otherwise. (to Resor) Yeah--I love her. And I'm not going to let you kill her.

RESOR (to Xena):

I didn't believe you when you first told me...but now... (he pauses, then turns to Virgil) You know how much I loved Joxer. And I've always loved you. Maybe I'll never understand how you can love the woman who killed your father...but I'll try. (quick pan to Virgil, who smiles) I don't know that I'll ever be able to forgive her--but can you forgive me?

VIRGIL:

Of course. You were sure you were doing the right thing.

RESOR (thoughtfully):

Maybe that's the most dangerous thing for a warrior...to be sure that you're doing the right thing. So sure that you never stop to question what you're doing or what you've become.

Eve is listening closely to Resor; she nods slightly, looking pained. Xena touches her shoulder gently.

RESOR (to Eve):

Is that how it started for you? You were sure that what you were doing was right?

EVE (quietly):

Yeah.

RESOR (looks at Virgil, then back at Eve):

If Virgil believes you're trying to make amends for what you did...I guess that should be good enough for me. Whatever you're doing, just keep doing it.

EVE (sadly):

I don't think I'll ever be able to atone for what I've done... (pan to Xena, who gives her an anguished look) But I couldn't live with myself if I didn't try.

XENA (squeezes Eve's shoulder):

Come on...let's go.

As they start leaving, the camera zooms in on Virgil who is watching Eve, a very melancholy look on his face. Resor, too, looks after Xena and Eve, then turns to look at Virgil. Virgil turns to him and musters a smile.

VIRGIL:

You know something? I'm really proud of you today.

RESOR:

Good.

VIRGIL:

I'll tell you something else. My dad would have been proud of you, too.

RESOR (quietly):

I hope so.

He and Virgil look at each other and then hug.

CUT TO

Eve and Xena as they leave the camp. They walk a little way. Xena looks at Eve, who is staring ahead.

XENA:

Eve...

Eve stops and looks at her.

EVE:

What?

XENA:

You said before that you were going to swear off fighting again. Did you mean that?

EVE (defensively):

Is that a problem for you?

XENA (hastily):

No! I just wonder what kind of life you see for yourself... Are you going to start preaching again?

EVE (looks down):

I guess that was even less successful than the fighting...but at least it wasn't my fault that it didn't work out.

XENA:

What do you mean?

EVE (slowly):

When I was the Messenger of Eli...it all went wrong because Michael used me for his own power play. I had no idea what he was up to. But if I'm a warrior and things go wrong...it's going to be because of what I have inside me. The violence--the bloodlust... (pan to Xena's face; she looks horrified) I know I've been fighting for good. But I heard

what Resor said in there...the most dangerous thing for a warrior is to be completely sure that you're doing the right thing. (quietly) What if, once I start down this path, it leads me right back to killing innocent people?

Xena hugs Eve a little awkwardly.

XENA:

Oh, Eve. Is that what's been troubling you?

EVE:

Shouldn't it? What if, the next time it happens, you aren't here to stop me?

XENA:

You can always stop yourself.

EVE (laughs bitterly):

Are you so sure of that?



XENA:

Eve...when you're fighting, you often don't know if you're doing the right thing or not. You just have to trust your instincts--or lose your life.

EVE:

Maybe that's better than losing my soul.

XENA:

Hey--look at me. (touches Eve's chin and looks into her eyes) I won't lie to you. It's not going to be easy. But no matter what you do--whether you fight or don't fight--it's not going to be easy for you if you want to make amends for the past.

EVE (softly):

I'm scared.

XENA:

Of what, Eve?



EVE:
Of what's inside me.

XENA (sighs):
I wish I had an answer for that.

CUT TO

The kitchen of the villa. The door to the garden is open and the sun is shining through into the house. Xena, Gabrielle, Orphelia and Eve are standing, talking. Orphelia is standing next to Eve, clearly relieved.

ORPHELIA:
So everything's okay now?

XENA:
I don't think Resor's going to go after Eve again.

ORPHELIA:
Good. (pause) Are you going to stay for a few days?

Xena, Gabrielle and Eve exchange a look.

XENA:
We do have--business.

ORPHELIA (disappointed):
Right now?

EVE (nods to Xena and sighs):
Yeah...I'm sorry. But...I really enjoyed getting to see you again. Maybe I could come back sometime?

ORPHELIA (hugs Eve):
Of course, whenever you're in the area, you come see me.

The camera pans for a view of the garden through the door; Virgil is standing in the middle of the lawn, watching the house. Pan back to Eve, who glances at him--obviously the only one who has seen him--and then turns back to the others.

EVE:
I'm going to go outside a while.

CUT TO

A close-up of Virgil in the garden. He looks very pensive.

The camera pulls back to show Eve walking up to him quietly.

EVE:

Virgil, are you okay?

VIRGIL (jumps at her voice):

Wh--oh, it's you. (he smiles) I'm fine.

EVE:

I wanted to thank you for helping me back there. I didn't do a good job of showing it, but I'm very grateful.

VIRGIL:

You're welcome. How's your head?

EVE (mock-pouts and rubs the sore spot):

Hurts. (shakes her head and smiles) No, it's fine.

VIRGIL:

Good. (pause) Can I talk to you? (Eve nods) When I said that I loved you before...the way you reacted... You looked sad. Almost as if--you didn't want me to love you.

EVE (considers this for a moment):

Well...sometimes I do wish you had fallen in love with some nice farm girl who would look after you really well. You deserve it.

VIRGIL:

But I don't want to be in love with her.

EVE:

I want you to be happy--and I don't think I'd be able to make you happy.

VIRGIL:

Eve--what I want is to be with you. More than anything.

EVE:

You say that now--but what if, in a few years, something reminded you of your father and you started to hate me? I don't ever want that to happen, and as long as I'm with you--it could always happen sooner or later.

Virgil takes her in his arms; they hug fiercely. He steps back so that she's still holding him, but he can see her face.

VIRGIL:

I've thought of that, too. But, you know what, I think that if Dad could see you today maybe he'd feel as long as you're doing your best to be a good person, his death wasn't in vain.

EVE:

Would he really think I'm a good person now?



VIRGIL:

Eve...I remember the first time I saw you, you were in a victory parade in Rome, and I couldn't imagine you as anyone's daughter, anyone's friend, being loved by anyone. Now I can't imagine you not being loved by someone, because you've worked so hard to turn your life around. (pause) And I want to be with you always--to see what happens next.

EVE (sighs):

Virgil...the reason I looked sad when you said you loved me was because--I love you too.

VIRGIL:

Eve...

They kiss passionately. When they separate, Eve rests her head on Virgil's shoulder. He strokes her hair.

VIRGIL:

But why does that make you sad?

EVE:

Because I'm not sure I deserve your love. And because I don't think it can ever work.

VIRGIL:

So that's it? We just say that it's not going to work and never see each other again? And then spend the rest of our lives wondering if we could have made it happen?

EVE:

I... (sighs) Virgil--I will find you again.

Virgil nods, and they kiss again. The camera pulls back for a long shot of them, then pans around to a window in the villa, where the silhouettes of Xena and Gabrielle can be seen.

CUT TO

Xena and Gabrielle inside the villa. Xena is closing a curtain over the window looking out over the garden.

GABRIELLE:

I'm sure they'll work it out, don't worry.

XENA:

I hope so. I worry about her, you know.

GABRIELLE:

I know. But she'll be fine, she's a big girl.

XENA:

She'll always be my little girl.

They both smile.

XENA:

Which reminds me, did you ever settle that debate?

GABRIELLE:

About whether you can reinvent yourself? (Xena nods) No, we never had another chance to talk about it.

XENA (pensively):

Maybe Eve is right. (Gabrielle mock scowls) Sooner or later, who you are is going to show through who you pretend to be, whether you like it or not.

GABRIELLE (troubled):

What are you thinking about?

XENA:

Livia showed through Eve...



GABRIELLE (shakes her head decisively):

No. Long before that, Eve showed through Livia. That's who she really is.

Xena looks at her intently; then her expression softens into a smile.

XENA:

Didn't you just admit that you were wrong and Eve was right?

GABRIELLE:

Oh...I guess you have a point.

XENA (teasing):

You'll have to admit it to Eve.

GABRIELLE (laughs):

Oh, the pain. Perhaps we should just forget this conversation ever happened, huh?

XENA (deadpan):

Gabrielle--since when do you take the easy way out?

GABRIELLE:

The easy way out? Not a chance--not with you around. (they laugh; Gabrielle's voice starts to fade as the camera pulls back) Come on, let's go find Eve.

A long shot of the front of the villa. We see Eve saying goodbye to Orphelia and Virgil while Xena and Gabrielle approach as we:

FADE OUT

THE END

[Gabrielle never did get to try Eve's cheese bread during the production of this motion picture.]