

SHIPPER SEASON NINE



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Logline

When Xena's chakram comes up missing, Xena and Gabrielle are in for a wild adventure when they must retrace their steps in the hopes of reclaiming the Warrior Princess' legendary weapon.

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TEASER

FADE IN

The camera pans down on the forest below, it's a bright sunny day. As we pan down, we hear someone whistling the Xena theme song, the sound growing louder. A wide shot of a river glittering in the sun. Zoom in on Xena sitting on the bank, her back to the camera, wearing her leather tunic without the armor. The camera pans over her sword and chakram, lying on the ground next to her, then around to show that she is holding a fishing rod. She casts out the line as she whistles out the rest of the tune.

Pan over to Gabrielle, who is squatting down by the water nearby filling up two water skins.

GABRIELLE (fastening the cap on one of the bottles):

Well? Are we ready to head out?

Xena sighs.



XENA:

Aw, come on. I haven't caught anything yet.

Gabrielle smiles and shakes her head. Then she rises and turns around. The smile is gone from her face.

GABRIELLE (irritably):

I think that's about to change.

Pan to Xena.

XENA (smirks):

Yeah, I know.

GABRIELLE:

That's not what I mean. We got company.

XENA (still smirking):

Yeah, I know.

The camera pulls to show four thugs standing in front of Gabrielle. They're your typical low-budget thugs with bad teeth, messy hair, and barbarian-like outfits. The thug leader, Barcanor, looks by far the ugliest and meanest of the four.



BARCANOR (grins):

Well, look what we got here, boys...

The thugs start to snicker menacingly. Gabrielle rolls her eyes.

GABRIELLE:

Guys--you really don't want to do this.

The thugs growl in unison and tightly grip their barbaric clubs, obviously asking to get their butts kicked.

BARCANOR (angrily):

I won't rest until I have the head of Xena!

Gabrielle can't help but laugh. Xena completely ignores the thugs and continues watching the fishing line, this time whistling the Hercules theme song.

GABRIELLE (putting her hands on her hips):

You're really asking for it, aren't you...

BARCANOR (to his fellow thugs):

Get 'em, boys!

The thugs give a hoarse disjointed yell that is supposed to be a thug war cry and begin to advance on Xena and Gabrielle.

Pan to Xena, still with her back turned to the thugs, as she pulls back her fishing pole fast, casting the line behind her. The line swishes through the air, lightning-fast, and Barcanor squeals and clutches at his mouth.

XENA:

The catch of the day.



She leaps to her feet. While Barcanor yelps trying to pull the fishhook out of his lower lip, Xena drops her fishing rod and slams him in the chest, sending him sprawling on the ground.

The camera pulls around to Gabrielle as she is being attacked by two other thugs. She swings around the waterskins, repeatedly smacking them across the face as they stagger back.

Pan back to Xena as Barcanor, his lip bloodied, tries to get up. Xena runs forward, slams her bare feet in his chest, knocking him down, then flips forward and knocks down the thug behind him with a head-butt.

As the fighting continues, the camera pans over to a dog wandering out of the bushes nearby, its tail wagging and its tongue hanging out. It looks like a collie. The dog wanders around the campsite, looking curiously at the fight in the background, then wanders over to the edge of the river and stops, sniffing at the sword and chakram on the ground.

Pan back to the fight. Barcanor gets up again only to have Xena elbow him hard in the face. He goes down with a yelp.

Pan back to the dog as it runs off into the woods, a flash of something metallic in its mouth.

Pan back to the fight. Gabrielle has just knocked down another thug, while Xena dusts her hands off.

GABRIELLE (looks at Barcanor closely, who is lying on the ground moaning):

Hey, aren't these the guys who attacked us last week at the village?

Xena pauses and looks over him.

XENA:

You're right. (to Barcanor) Okay, what's going on? Why do you keep attacking us?

Close-up on Barcanor. He is breathing heavily, his eyes darting this way and that.

GABRIELLE:

I could put the pinch on him.

Xena looks daggers at Gabrielle, then moves her still-bare foot up to Barcanor's neck and jabs her toes into his neck.

XENA:

All right--you got thirty seconds--

GABRIELLE (laughs, with some exasperation):

You are such a show-off.

XENA (irritably):

What?

GABRIELLE:

Now that I know how to put the pinch on people, you just have to find a way to prove you can do it better. (shakes her head) Putting on the pinch with your foot. And what are you going to use next time? Your nose?

The camera pans down to the thug as he begins making gurgling sounds.

XENA (sarcastically):

Well, pardon me for trying to be creative.

The camera pans down to the thug as starts to twitch.

BARCANOR (struggling, gurgling):

Guys! Guys! Guys!

XENA:

Oh yeah. (leaning down, menacingly) All right, buddy--you know the drill. What do you want with us? Who sent you?

BARCANOR (growling, yet still gasping for air):

I will not rest until I have defeated the legendary Princess Warrior!

XENA:

It's Warrior Princess, you--

GABRIELLE:

Xena, look, they're just a bunch of stupid thugs who aren't much of a threat to anyone...

BARCANOR (rasps):

Don't--call me--stupid--

XENA (rolling her eyes):

All right, all right. I'll make this simple...you attack us again, and next time we'll stop playing around and *really* hurt you. Got it?

Barcanor nods, obviously just wanting her to take off the pinch. (Of course, it has been a lot longer than thirty seconds so *technically* Barcanor should be dead already, but who's counting?) Xena starts to lift her foot, then glances at Gabrielle, leans down and takes off the pinch with her hand.

Barcanor gasps for breath and scrambles to his feet as his fellow thugs take off into the woods. He stumbles off behind them, looking back fearfully a few times.

GABRIELLE (sighs):

Thugs, warlords, thieves...do they ever learn?

XENA (with a crooked grin):

If they did, we wouldn't have anything to do this week.

GABRIELLE:

Yeah, and we could just have a normal day in the life. Wouldn't that be awful. (She picks up the waterskins) Well? Have you had enough fun or do you want to do some more fishing?

XENA:

Nah, let's hit the road.

Xena walks over and picks up her fishing pole, then walks to the edge of the water and picks up her sword. Suddenly she starts looking around, worried.



XENA:

Gabrielle. Where's my chakram?

Gabrielle looks around.

GABRIELLE:

Did you have it out here?

XENA (confidently):

Yeah. I put it down right here next to my sword when I started fishing.

GABRIELLE (looking around):

Are you sure?

XENA:

Yes, I'm sure. (angrily) They probably stole it--those rotten sons of a bacchae--

GABRIELLE (shaking her head):

Xena, they were nowhere near the river.

Xena scans the water but still doesn't see the chakram anywhere.

GABRIELLE (trying to be calm):

Maybe it's over there. (She nods toward where Xena's boots and breastplate were lying by an extinguished campfire)



XENA (forcefully):

It is not.

GABRIELLE:

It wouldn't hurt to check!

XENA (frustrated):

Fine, we'll do it your way.

CUT TO

Xena is pacing around the campsite scanning the ground. There is no trace of the chakram. Scowling, Xena picks up the breastplate and starts putting it on.

XENA:

All right, that's it. I'm going to go check the riverbank one more time, and then I'm going after those thugs. (to Gabrielle) Snap me up.

Gabrielle walks over and clips the back of Xena's breastplate. They walk back to the river's edge.

XENA:

All right--it was right here...

Suddenly, Xena bends down and her eyes widen.

GABRIELLE (interested):

What is it?



The camera zooms in on a set of paw prints.

XENA (raising an eyebrow):
Looks like we found our thief.

She slowly begins to draw her sword.

GABRIELLE (shocked):
Xena! It's a dog, not a thug!

XENA (gives Gabrielle a "yeah, right" look):
Let's just follow the trail.

CUT TO

Xena and Gabrielle following the trail of paw prints.

XENA (sighs):
I wish it was one of the thugs that had taken it.

GABRIELLE (shocked):
Why?

XENA:
Because dogs are smarter.

Gabrielle laughs.

GABRIELLE:
Well, let's just hope it's a one-headed one. (grins) Of course, we could always ask your dogcatcher friend for help...

Xena gives Gabrielle the "look," remembering their obsessive friend from *Who Let the Dog Out?*

XENA (through clenched teeth):
Let's just focus.

Suddenly there is a trademark flash of blue light. Ares materializes in mid-stride, walking beside Xena.

XENA (edgy):

Ares. What do *you* want?

ARES:

Oh--just wanted to stop by and see what you're up to, do you mind?

XENA (scanning the ground):

We're tracking someone.



ARES:

Let me guess. A warlord? An assassin?

GABRIELLE:

A dog.

Xena gives her an annoyed look and Gabrielle looks back at her with an innocent smile. Ares looks at them in shock as we:

FADE OUT

ACT ONE

FADE IN

Xena, Ares and Gabrielle walking down a path in a sparse wood. Ares looks amused, while Xena is quietly fuming as she watches the dog tracks.

ARES:

Xena, Warrior Dogcatcher. This I gotta see.

Xena glares at him.

GABRIELLE:

The dog took Xena's chakram.

ARES (pauses to digest this):

A dog took your chakram. (chuckles) That's--

XENA (cuts him off with a murderous look):

--not funny.

GABRIELLE:

Oh, come on, Xena--it's no big deal. Remember when Horace stole your breastplate? And Ares' gauntlet? Just because your chakram is lost--

XENA (through clenched teeth):

It's--*not*--lost!

CUT TO

Xena, Gabrielle, and Ares stand still on the edge of the woods. A wide shot of a small farmhouse not too far away. In front of the farmhouse, we can see two boys playing catch with a ball as their dog runs back and forth between them--the same dog we saw in the teaser.

XENA (with a satisfied grin):

See? I think we found it...

CUT TO

Outside the farmhouse. The boys continue to play catch with the ball, as the dog barks, running back and forth between them. Suddenly one of the boys stops playing and looks up, then gapes in awe. Xena, Gabrielle, and Ares are standing there watching them.

The boys look slightly nervous.

GABRIELLE (to Xena):

I'll handle this. (smiles) Hey guys. I think your dog may have picked up something of ours--uh, of hers. You haven't seen a metal disk around, have you?

BOY #1 (nervously):

Well...

[FLASHBACK]

A different part of the riverbank. The two boys, their hair wet from a swim, are standing around looking for their dog.

BOY #1:

Here, girl!

Barking is heard.

BOY #2:

Oh, there she is!

Pan to the dog who stands nearby barking and wagging its tail.

BOY #1 (excited):

Well there you are, I've been looking all over for you!

The dog continues to bark.

BOY#1 (worried):

What is it, girl? (the dog continues to bark)

BOY #2:

Maybe Old Farmer Jonesius is trapped in a burning barn.

BOY #1:

Not *again!*

The dog barks some more as the boys come closer.



Then the dog bends its head down and picks up something lying at its feet. It's the chakram, the dog's teeth clenched around the handle in the middle. The boys' worried expressions turn to excitement as Boy #1 reaches over and takes the chakram from the dog.

BOY #2 (amazed):

Look what she found! This is so cool!

BOY #1:

What are you going to do with it?

BOY #2:

Here, let me show you.

He takes the chakram.

BOY #2 (to dog):

Fetch!

The dog takes off running as the boy throws the chakram.

BOY #2 (winces and looks at a cut on his hand):

Ow! (sucks on his finger)

The chakram flies through the air, the dog chasing it and barking excitedly, then begins to coast down. It goes too far over the water's edge and hits the water, sinking into the river.

The dog barks, looking back indecisively at the boys.

BOY #1:

Oops.

[END OF FLASHBACK]

Back by the farmhouse. Xena's eyes flash with anger; the boys look scared, even the dog cowers.

XENA:

You threw my chakram in the river?

The boy gives a very nervous nod.

CUT TO

Underwater. The chakram is resting at the bottom of the river. Suddenly a hook passes by it and gets caught inside the edge. It stays there for a moment, until it is tugged and moves a little.

CUT TO

Land. A fat old fisherman with a beard is pulling on his pole, trying to get off of the snag. He begins to pull a little more, then when his line gets closer reaches in the shallow area and pulls the chakram out of the water. The chakram reflects in the sunlight.

FISHERMAN (astonished by chakram):

Well, isn't that a pretty little thing. (smiling) Probably could fetch me a nice little dinar too.

The fisherman smiles, grabs his tackle box, and heads out with the chakram in his hand.

CUT TO

Later. Down by the river. Xena, Gabrielle, Ares, the two boys, and the dog are standing at the edge of the river.

BOY (pointing to river):

I threw it in right over there!

Xena nods and then takes off her boots, then her gauntlets, and then much to the boys surprise she begins unfastening her breastplate. Pan to the two boys as their eyes widen, then to Xena's breastplate and tunic falling to the ground.

GABRIELLE (worriedly, to the boys):

Shouldn't you be going home? (smiles) Thanks for your help.

ARES (irritated, to the boys):

Beat it.

BOY #1:

Shouldn't we stay here until she finds it?

GABRIELLE and ARES (in unison; Gabrielle sweetly, Ares emphatically and with a scowl):

No.

The boys run off with their dog. Pan to Xena diving into the river.

FLASH TO

Close-up on Xena as she surfaces, looking angry and upset.



Ares and Gabrielle are standing on the bank, staring at Xena with grim resignation.

XENA:

It isn't down there.



GABRIELLE (to Ares):

Can't you just, you know, do some god thing and make it appear?

ARES (sarcastic):

No, I can't do some *god thing*. First I'd have to know where it is, which I don't. Gods have their limits too, you know.

GABRIELLE (under her breath):

I've noticed...

ARES:

What's that supposed to mean?

XENA (not listening to them):

Maybe it went a little further downstream.

Gabrielle gives out a long sigh, as Xena dives back into the water. Gabrielle walks over and sits on a log. In a moment a fish flips at her feet and Gabrielle jumps. It's followed by another fish.

XENA (off-camera):

While I'm looking you can make lunch.

Gabrielle chuckles a little bitterly and picks up the fish. Ares laughs.

CUT TO

The riverbank, later. Gabrielle is cooking the fish over a small fire. Xena and Ares come walking toward her. Xena is wearing her tunic now but her hair's still wet.

XENA:

I don't get it. Where could it be?

ARES:

Maybe those brats still got it. How do you know they didn't lie to you? (Xena gives him a doubtful look) Now, if you went back there and put the pinch on them--

GABRIELLE (looks up, outraged):

She can't put the pinch on a *child*!



XENA (regretfully):

No, I can't. (looks questioningly at Gabrielle) Can I?

GABRIELLE (horrified):

Xena!

XENA (grumbles):

All right, all right. (pauses, then reluctantly and a little edgily) I was only kidding. I don't think they've got it anyway.

Xena starts putting on her gauntlets.

GABRIELLE (poking at the fish to see if it's done):

You know, I think there's a village downstream from here. Maybe we can go there and see if anyone picked it up.

XENA (nods):

Good idea. (abruptly) Let's go.

GABRIELLE:

Hey, what about the fish?

XENA (sourly):

I don't really want it.

Gabrielle throws up her hands in frustration.

CUT TO

The fisherman is walking alongside the road back to the village. He is carrying the chakram in his hand, and whistling happily as he makes his way to the village.

Coming toward him, from the village, is a man walking by the side of a large cart pulled by a donkey. He is dressed in a colorful robe and a turban, a costume somewhat resembling that of the traveling salesman in *Old Ares Had a Farm*. As he gets closer to the fisherman, he notices the chakram in his hand and looks at it with curiosity. He stops the donkey.

SALESMAN (brightly):

Good day there, sir!

FISHERMAN:

Good day to you too.

SALESMAN (curious):

What's that you've got there?

The fisherman holds up the chakram, grinning.

FISHERMAN:

Just something I found in the river. Pretty little thing, huh? (eagerly) You wouldn't like to buy it, would you?



SALESMAN:

Here, let me see. (He takes the chakram and examines it, then shakes his head, looking unimpressed) Well... It's very nice, but not quite what I'm looking for. (Off the fisherman's disappointed look) Well, I'll tell you what. You're obviously a good man, so I'll be nice and give you five dinars for it.

The fisherman's eyes widen--a whole five dinars!

FISHERMAN (grins, unable to believe his luck):

Well, sure!

The salesman nods and takes five dinars from the pouch at his belt. He hands the coins to the fisherman, who gives him the chakram.

FISHERMAN:

Thank you, sir!

The fisherman skips joyously back to the village, singing a tune. The salesman watches him leave, looks down at the chakram and smiles.

SALESMAN:

Sucker...

The salesman picks up the donkey's bridle and heads down the road with his cart.

CUT TO

Xena and Gabrielle are walking through a field while Ares tags along.

GABRIELLE:

I can't believe you had me start a fire and cook those fish for nothing.

XENA:

Look, I just don't feel like fish right now.

GABRIELLE (incredulous):

You don't feel like fish. (sighs) I guess you're just not yourself now that you've lost your chakram--

XENA (whips around, glaring at her and pointing a finger):
I did *not* lose my chakram! It was stolen.

She strides ahead, Gabrielle following her and Ares still trailing behind.

GABRIELLE:

Well, even so, you have no clue where it is, and--

XENA (turns around, blowing up):

That's right, Gabrielle, rub it in! I have no clue where my chakram is! Maybe I'll never see it again!
All right--I lost it!

Gabrielle is visibly taken aback.



ARES (under his breath):

You lost it all right... (aloud) You know--I really should be going. I have a, a--war to take care of--or something.

Ares dematerializes quickly.

XENA (frustrated yell):

Aargh!

GABRIELLE (trying to be conciliatory):

Xena--we'll find it. Look, there's the village.

She points to a village across the field. It's the same one we saw the salesman leaving before.

CUT TO

Inside the nearly empty village tavern. Xena and Gabrielle come in.

GABRIELLE:

Well, we've been to every single house. No one even knows what a chakram is...

Xena looks glum. They walk to the bar. The tavern keeper comes up to them as he finishes drying off a glass.

TAVERN KEEPER:

Can I get you ladies anything?

GABRIELLE:

No, we just wanted to ask you some questions. (Off his reproachful look) All right, I'll have some apple cider.

TAVERN KEEPER:

We got a nice special today. Fish sandwich.

GABRIELLE (glances at Xena):

No thanks-- (pats her stomach) I've had plenty of fish.

XENA (sits down):

I'll have one--I'm starving.

The tavern keeper nods and walks away while Gabrielle gives Xena an exasperated look.

GABRIELLE:

I thought you didn't feel like fish.

XENA (cranky):

Well, now *I do*.

GABRIELLE (with a wry, exasperated grin):

Fine.

The tavern keeper comes back with a fish sandwich and places it in front of Xena (talk about fast food...!) and puts down a mug of cider in front of Gabrielle.

TAVERN KEEPER:

So. You said you wanted to ask some questions?

XENA (picking up her sandwich):

Yeah. I'm looking for my chakram.

The tavern keeper gives her a slightly baffled look, then leans down and whispers.

TAVERN KEEPER:

Is that like, uh...uh--a--sex toy?

XENA (disgusted):

No!

The tavern keeper looks embarrassed.

GABRIELLE (trying to explain):

It's a weapon. A round metal thing, with silver around the edges--

XENA (chewing on her sandwich):

And bronze in the middle--

GABRIELLE:

Yeah, like a handle-- (shows the shape with her hands) and it curves--

The tavern keeper looks confused.

VOICE (off-camera):

Wait a minute, I think I found something like that by the river.

Xena whips around (whooshing sound). The camera pans to show the fisherman sitting at one of the tables.

XENA (her speech slurred because she's still got fish sandwich in her mouth):

You got it with you?

FISHERMAN (shakes his head):

Oh no, I sold it.

Xena chokes on her sandwich and starts coughing; Gabrielle thumps her on the back.

XENA (recovering but still in shock):

You...you sold it?!

FISHERMAN (grins):

Yeah, I made five dinars too!



XENA (gets up and advances menacingly on the fisherman):

Who did you sell it to? A street vendor?

FISHERMAN (nervously):

No, no--the man I sold it to was leaving the village. I think he was a traveling salesman. He had a cart with a donkey.

Gabrielle touches Xena's arm, gently restraining her from getting any closer to the obviously scared fisherman.

GABRIELLE:

What did he look like?

FISHERMAN:

Oh--an older man, long hair, huge beard... (wrinkled his forehead, trying to remember) He had on this blue turban--

GABRIELLE:

Do you know which way he went?

FISHERMAN:

Well, he was heading east. That's all I know.

XENA (sarcastically):

Well that's just great. (to Gabrielle) Looks like we got a salesman to track down.

She goes back to the bar, takes another bite out of her sandwich, throws a couple of dinars onto the table (does anyone know where she keeps those since she has no pockets?) and heads for the door.

GABRIELLE (to fisherman):

Thanks for the help!

The fisherman waves as they leave the tavern.

CUT TO

Outside the village. Xena and Gabrielle are examining the cart tracks in the road.

XENA:

He couldn't have gotten that far. We should be able to catch up with him.

CUT TO

A typical ancient Greek town, the Xenaverse version. A crowded city square. People are busy shopping, milling about, talking, carrying goods, snacking, and otherwise going about their business. The camera zeroes in on the salesman. He pushes his cart up to a fairly large, one-story building of colored brick, parks his cart, gets the chakram out of the cart, and walks into the building (seen only from the side).

Sounds of squeals, oohs and aahs are heard from inside the building, along with "ka-ching, ka-ching, ka-ching" sound effects of clinking coins.

CUT TO

Later. The salesman heads out of the store, grinning happily and tucking a money pouch away in his pocket.

CUT TO

Later. Xena and Gabrielle wander through the streets of the town, looking around for a man with a donkey and a cart.

CUT TO

Xena and Gabrielle in the town square, still looking around. Xena and Gabrielle are leading their horses behind them. The streets around them are somewhat busy. They scan the area looking for someone with a horse and cart, obviously they would stick out a little more though.

A long shot of Xena and Gabrielle stopping in front of a fruit vending stall run by an old woman. They talk to her, though we cannot hear their conversation. The camera zooms in closer, the sounds of their conversation fading in.

OLD WOMAN (nodding):

Yeah, he was here about an hour ago.

Gabrielle lets out a long sigh.

XENA:

Which way did he go?

OLD WOMAN (shrugs):

I didn't ask him. I think he was headed west.

CUT TO

Xena and Gabrielle walking through the square.

GABRIELLE (exhausted):

Xena?

XENA:

Yes?

GABRIELLE:

Maybe you don't really need a chakram. I mean, you're still a--

Xena stops and gives her the death glare.

GABRIELLE (sighs):

Let's go.

They walk on out of the city square, walking right past the colored brick building where we saw the salesman go. The camera pans over to the front of the building to show a chakram-shaped entrance and a sign. A translation appears on the screen: The Xena Gift Shop. Oblivious to this clue, Xena and Gabrielle walk away as we:

FADE OUT

ACT TWO

FADE IN

On a wooded area outside the city. The traveling salesman is walking down the road with his donkey and cart, humming some tune. A shrill whistle slices through the air behind him. He stops with a start and turns around.

He is facing Xena and Gabrielle, standing on the sides of the road.

The salesman gulps, his eyes bulge and he collapses on the ground in a dead faint.

There is a flash of blue light and Ares materializes between them. They stand staring at the salesman, in a tableau reminiscent of the three of them staring down "battling Siki" in *Old Ares Had a Farm*.



ARES:

What did you do to him?

XENA (irritated):

Nothing!

ARES:

So, he's got the chakram.

XENA:

Right.

She walks over to the cart and starts unloading it, opening boxes and dumping various things on the ground: jewelry, statuettes, pots, scrolls, household appliances, etc.

CUT TO

Later. Gabrielle is kneeling by the side of the still-unconscious salesman trying to rouse him out of his faint. All of the boxes have been turned over and the salesman's wares are now scattered over the ground. A furious-looking Xena stands over this mess.

ARES:

Maybe he sold it already.

Xena whips around and faces Ares, who backs off a little, raising his hands in a defensive gesture.

XENA:

Great.

Gabrielle takes a waterskin from her belt and sprinkles some water in the salesman's face. The salesman sits up, sputtering. The camera follows his point of view as he looks at Xena and screams, looks at Ares and screams again, then looks at Gabrielle and seems to calm down a little, panting for breath--then looks at his wares scattered on the ground and screams again.

SALESMAN:

What did...what did...*what did you do?!*

XENA:

I'm looking for something of mine. My chakram. It's a metal circle with sharp edges--you bought it off a fisherman--

SALESMAN (shocked):

You're...you're *Xena!*

XENA (rolling her eyes):

Yeah, yeah, I'm Xena. Now, tell me--

With a sudden burst of energy the salesman scrambles to his feet, runs toward his wares and starts digging through the stuff.

SALESMAN (mumbles):

Oh...I'm going to make a fortune off *this*.

Xena looks a little relieved, thinking he has her chakram. He runs up to her with a quill and a piece of parchment that has a crudely executed portrait of Xena on it.

SALESMAN (handing her the quill):

Could I have your autograph on this?

Furious, Xena slaps the parchment and quill out of his hand.

XENA (narrows her eyes):

All right, we can do this the easy way or the hard way. Where's my chakram?

SALESMAN (scared):

I...I don't have it.

XENA:

Well, spit it out. What did you do with it?

SALESMAN:

I--I sold it to a shop in town.

While they talk, Ares walks up behind Xena, leans down and picks up the parchment with the Xena drawing. He examines it with a disgusted look.

XENA:

Which shop?

SALESMAN (stammering):

Well, it--it specializes in this kind of stuff...

ARES (looks up at Xena):

You know, he deserves to be zapped with a fireball just for *this*. (points to the drawing).

The salesman's eyes bulge, he screams even louder than before and passes out again.

GABRIELLE (in disbelief):

This just keeps getting better and better...

XENA (very cranky):

All right, we get back to town and look for a weapons shop.

GABRIELLE (looks at her cautiously):

You know--Ares *could* get us there a lot faster... (off Xena's dubious look) And this *is* an emergency...

ARES:

She's right, you know.

Xena looks at him, obviously wavering.

XENA (sourly):

Well, I suppose--

CUT TO

Outside the town gates. A burst of blue light; Ares materializes with Xena and Gabrielle. Xena looks extremely displeased.

GABRIELLE (brightly):

Here we are.

XENA:

Yeah, and we would have been here half an hour ago if you hadn't insisted on putting all of that peddler's junk back into the boxes.

GABRIELLE (defensively):

Well, we couldn't just leave him like that--

XENA:

Sure, maybe you should have given him some flowers for selling stolen property.

ARES (looks from Xena to Gabrielle and back, obviously eager to avoid their bickering):

So. I figure you can take it from here?

XENA:

Sure we can. (pauses) Oh, and Ares? (making her best effort to be nice) Thanks.

ARES:

Sure you don't want me to go back there and zap the son of a--

XENA and GABRIELLE (in unison):

No!

With a shrug of resignation, Ares smirks at them and vanishes.

CUT TO

Back at the city square.

Xena and Gabrielle walk up to the same vegetable vendor they were talking to before (the old woman).

OLD WOMAN:

Oh, it's you again. Did you find your salesman?

XENA:

Yeah, we found him all right. Tell me, where's the weapons store in this town?

OLD WOMAN (shaking her head):

There isn't one.

Gabrielle looks puzzled.

GABRIELLE:

What else could he have meant?

OLD WOMAN (to Xena):

You know, I see a lot of people like you around here.

XENA:

Like me? (frowns) You mean, warriors?

OLD WOMAN (sarcastic):

I mean, weirdos. Coming here dressed up as Xena, Warrior Princess and Gabrielle, Bard of Potidaea. Always bickering with one another. (mockingly) Xena and Ares this, Xena and Gabrielle that. (laughing) Wasting money on stupid junk...

Xena seems confused.

XENA:

What junk?

OLD WOMAN:

At the store!

The old woman points across the square. Quick zoom on the multicolored brick building with the chakram entrance and the "Xena Gift Shop" sign.

GABRIELLE (amazed):

If that's not a sign, I don't know what is.

With a determined stride, Xena heads for the shop.

CUT TO

Inside the building. Xena enters with Gabrielle in tow; they stop and look around in amazement.



It has many of the same things Joxer and Meg's tavern did: Xena outfits, posters, toy swords and chakrams, scrolls, etc. The counter is staffed by a blond teenage girl in a Season 3 Gabrielle outfit--green top and brown skirt. The girl notices Xena and Gabrielle and breaks out into a smile.

GIRL (amazed):

Wow! You guys look like the real thing! I dig the outfits!

Xena walks around, shocked as she looks at the Xena dolls and other items. She picks up an Ares doll off the shelf.



It's very ugly with incredibly oversized muscles. As Xena holds it up, Gabrielle looks at it and can't help but grin.

GABRIELLE:

You think he'd be flattered?

Xena chuckles and puts the doll down. Gabrielle walks over to a shelf lined with scrolls. She picks one up and browses through it.

GABRIELLE (surprised and flattered):

Xena, my scrolls!

The girl hears them and her eyes widen. She walks up to them with an awed look on her face.

GIRL:

Excuse me, did you say--*your* scrolls? You mean, you're--

GABRIELLE:

Yes. Gabrielle.

GIRL (puts her hand over her mouth):

The Battling Bard of Potidaea!

Gabrielle smiles modestly, obviously pleased.

GIRL (nods over to Xena):

And that's--

GABRIELLE:

Yes, that's Xena.

GIRL (overwhelmed):

Oh wow... I'm so incredibly excited to meet you. I'm Andrea, by the way. (almost squealing) Your number one fan!

Gabrielle picks up a scroll from another shelf and starts reading it. Her expression grows puzzled.

GABRIELLE:

I didn't write *this*.

ANDREA (cheerfully):

Oh, I know. These are fan scrolls based on your stories.

GABRIELLE (indignant):

Based on my stories? (holds up the scroll) This one has a wedding between Ares and me. (venomously) That is *not* based on my stories. (holds up another scroll) And this--

ANDREA (sheepishly):

Well, it's fiction--

GABRIELLE:

Fiction. That's not quite the word I was looking for.

XENA (off-camera):

Hey--

Pan to Xena as she looks at a rack of chakram replicas. Gabrielle turns to look at her.

XENA (frustrated):

It's not here. (to Andrea) Did you buy a chakram from a traveling salesman today?

ANDREA (excited):

You mean the one that looked just like the real thing?

XENA (with a little sarcasm):

Yeah, that's the one.

ANDREA (nodding):

Yeah, we got it.

Xena lets out a sigh of relief.

GABRIELLE:

Thank heavens.

XENA:

Where is it?

ANDREA (smiling):

We sold it.

We can almost feel Xena's heart plunge.

XENA:

You just said you got it.

ANDREA (still smiling):

Yeah, we got it this morning. Then we sold it.

Xena clenches her fists and grimaces, obviously holding in a frustrated roar. Finally she breaks down and kicks at the counter with a loud battle yell. Andrea looks terrified. Xena turns to her and puts on a rather scary-looking smile.

XENA (takes a few deep breaths to calm down):

Okay. Okay. Who did you sell it to?

ANDREA:

Well only to our biggest fan--Sheena. She comes here all the time. And when she saw the chakram she bought it right away.

XENA (in disbelief):

Sheena. Where can I find her?

CUT TO

A long shot of a small farmhouse outside the town, Xena and Gabrielle coming up the path to the house.

CUT TO

Xena knocking on the door.

There is a long pause.

OLD FEMALE VOICE (off-camera):
Hold on, I'm coming. Who's there?

GABRIELLE:
Are you Sheena?

OLD FEMALE VOICE:
Yeah, that's me. Who wants to know.

The door swings open. The camera pulls in on Xena and Gabrielle as their jaws drop.

OLD FEMALE VOICE (off-camera):
Xena and Gabrielle!

The camera pulls around to show Minya, a much older Minya with long gray hair and a stunned look on her face. She is still wearing her old leathers, which are now REALLY old.



She unites them both in a big bear hug.

XENA (surprised):
Minya!

GABRIELLE:
It's so good to see you. (pulls back) So--*you're* "Sheena."

MINYA:
Yeah, I thought I needed a new name. Minya just doesn't sound like a real warrior's name, you know? Hard to get people to take you seriously. (grins hopefully) So what do you think?

XENA (slightly at a loss for words):

It's...it's a great name.

MINYA (shocked):

I can't believe you guys are here. (chuckles) I mean, we're none of us getting any younger. (Xena and Gabrielle give her the "look" as she laughs) But I recognized you right away.

MINYA (laughing):

It's just like old times huh? Come on in!

They smile and walk inside her house, which looks a bit messy but cozy.

Minya leads them through the hallway to the kitchen. She carefully sits down on the chair, and Xena and Gabrielle do the same sitting themselves by the kitchen table.

MINYA (excitedly):

So what have you guys been up to since I last saw you?

Gabrielle laughs, and looks at Xena.

XENA (shrugging):

Same old, same old.

Minya nods.

MINYA:

Yeah, same here. Busting heads, beating up baddies... (grinning) You know, the warrior stuff.

Xena and Gabrielle grin.

MINYA (excited):

Oh man, I can't believe you guys are here! (sighs) I wish Hower could be here to see you...

Xena and Gabrielle give her a sympathetic look.

GABRIELLE (putting her hand on Minya's arm):

I'm so sorry.

MINYA (confused):

About what?

GABRIELLE (gently):

Hower. How long has he been gone?

MINYA:

Oh, since this morning.

GABRIELLE (horrified):

Hower died this morning?

Minya bursts out laughing, startling Xena and Gabrielle.

MINYA:

He didn't die. Him and Hower Jr. went to town to buy a goat. So how did you guys find me?

XENA:

Well, what happened was--a dog stole my chakram. (Minya looks puzzled) Then a boy threw it in the water, then a fisherman found it (growing visibly irritated), then he sold it to a salesman, (more irritated) then the salesman sold it to some "Xena" store, and then (by now she's furious) they told me they had already sold it to "Sheena".

MINYA (jaw dropping):

So it really is yours!

XENA:

Yeah.

MINYA:

Wow. It looked so much like the real thing, I knew I had to have it. I bought it right away.

XENA:

Minya, I'm gonna need it back.

MINYA:

Well--sure! I mean it is yours and everything. (sadly) Only thing is...I don't have it anymore.

XENA (in disbelief):

What?

Gabrielle pounds her head on the table.

XENA:

What did you do? Sell it? Throw it in the river? What?!

MINYA:

Nah, it was nothing like that. See, this is how it happened...

[FLASHBACK]

Minya walks out of the Xena Gift Shop with the chakram in her hand, looking beside herself with happiness as she walks through the town square.

CUT TO

Minya walking through the fields.

MINYA (voice-over):

I was walking home from the store, when all of a sudden I see these guys stealing money from some helpless old man...

Minya sees four thugs--the same ones Xena fought in the teaser--robbing an old man with a cane.

MINYA (shouting to thugs):
Never fear, Sheena's here!

Barcanor, still having a gash on his lip from the fishhook, turns to see Minya.

BARCANOR (growling):
Beat it, old hag!

Pan back to a very angry Minya.

MINYA:
All right--I'm gonna give you guys to the count of three to leave, or else...

The thugs laugh, clearly not scared.

MINYA (forcefully):
One...(they laugh harder) Two... (and harder) Three! (crying out) *Ya ya ya ya ya ya--sheeeya!*

Still standing in the same spot, Minya holds up the chakram.



MINYA:
And now, feel the wrath of my chakram!

[END OF FLASHBACK]

Minya continues to tell the story to Xena and Gabrielle.

MINYA:
And then... (sheepishly) I threw it.

XENA (disbelief):
You threw it?

Minya nods her head, a little embarrassed.

[FLASHBACK]

Minya pulls back her arm and lets the chakram fly towards the thugs.

The camera follows the chakram as it makes a rather pathetic arc through the air and flops down right at Barcanor's feet.

All of the thugs begin to laugh.

BARCANOR (picking up the chakram):

Well look at this. It looks like one of Xena's little weapons.

MINYA (angrily):

You give it back--or else!

The thugs begin to laugh again.

THUG LEADER (mocking):

Or else what? We'll get a beat down by an old lady?

Still laughing, they walk off, Barcanor still carrying the chakram.

[END OF FLASHBACK]

Minya looks guiltily at Xena and Gabrielle. Xena is clutching her head in despair.

MINYA (sighing):

If only I had my warrior strength I had in my younger years.

There is a long pause.

GABRIELLE (to Minya):

So how many thugs were there?

MINYA:

Oh--a lot. Maybe thirty, forty...

Close-up on Gabrielle as she raises an eyebrow.

MINYA (stammering a bit):

Maybe more like twenty. Or a dozen...

Xena raises an eyebrow exactly the same way as Gabrielle.

MINYA (embarrassed):

Six. Uh--four.

XENA:

So they knew it was my chakram... What did they look like?

MINYA (makes a face):

A nasty-looking bunch. Their leader especially--big, ugly son of a--

XENA:

Did he have a cut on his lip?

MINYA:

Sure did.

XENA (to Gabrielle):

It's the same guys all right.

CUT TO

Outside Minya's house. Xena and Gabrielle are getting ready to leave, Minya standing in the doorway.

MINYA:

Well, I hope you find those dirty thugs and take a round out of them.

XENA:

Oh, don't worry. We will.

MINYA:

And hey, when you're done, come on by and we'll celebrate! We've got a lot of catching up to do. (smiles and points to the whip at her belt) You know, after all these years I still have your whip. Never leaves my side.

XENA (smiles):

Good-bye, Minya.

MINYA (sheepishly):

Could I ask you for a big favor? (awkward) Could you--could you call me Sheena? It would really mean a lot.

XENA:

Sure. Bye... Sheena.

GABRIELLE:

Bye, Sheena.

MINYA (grabs them both in yet another bear hug):

Bye!

Xena and Gabrielle start to walk away. Minya watching them leave, waving enthusiastically.

MINYA:

Bye, Xena! Bye, Gabrielle!

Xena and Gabrielle turn around and wave. Minya takes the whip off her belt, lets out a warrior yell and cracks the whip.

XENA (shakes her head):

First she gets my whip, then my chakram...what next?

GABRIELLE:

Better keep an eye on your horse.

XENA (chuckles):

Come on, we'd better get going and find those guys before they end up selling it or losing it. Minya thinks they have some kind of fortress around here.

GABRIELLE:

A *fortress*? Those guys?

CUT TO

A "fortress" comes to view. It's a rather pathetic wooden structure about two stories high, imitating a castle, with a skull and crossbones flag and chimes made out of bones.

DISSOLVE TO

Inside the fortress. The four thugs walk in.

BARCANOR (looking around):

Mom, we're home!

MOM THUG (off-camera, yelling):

There better be a head of Xena lying on the floor!

Barcanor looks scared. The Mom Thug walks out. She is an older woman in a patched-up black leather outfit, with white face paint, spike bracelets, etc. Typical Thug Mom stuff.

She looks around, obviously no head of Xena.

MOM THUG (obviously ticked, to Barcanor):

Well, Barcanor, what's going on here?

BARCANOR (shamefaced):

We didn't get the head of Xena, Mom.

MOM THUG (angrily):

And why is that?

THUG #1:

Cause her and the little blonde kicked the crap out of us again.

MOM THUG (furious):

You know I have had (her hand rising up) it up to here with you boys! I always have to sit around listening to all of the Warlord Moms talk about how their sons are sacking villages. You boys can't

even do one thing right! How do you ever expect to make it as warlords? You gotta make a name for yourself. Too many warlords, not enough villages. (sighing) This is a tough business, you know.

The thugs nod shamefacedly. Barcanor holds up the chakram.

BARCANOR:

We did get her weapon, though.

MOM THUG (pleasantly surprised):

You did? (grins evilly) You took it off her?

THUG #2 (spilling the beans):

No, some old lady threw it at us.

Barcanor kicks him but it's too late. Mom Thug looks furious.

MOM THUG (yelling):

So this is some old lady's weapon?!

BARCONOR (shaking his head):

No, no, mom, it's Xena's--I know it is.

Mom Thug reaches out and grabs the chakram, looking it over.

MOM THUG (grinning):

Well if it is her weapon, she's going to come looking for it.

THUG #3:

How will she find us?

MOM THUG (smiling):

Oh, she'll find us. She's Xena. And when she does... (laughing wickedly) We'll be ready for her.

The thugs laugh wickedly on cue.

MOM THUG (screams):

Now go to your room!

The thugs walk out as the Mom Thug looks over the chakram.

MOM THUG (in villain voice):

This is gonna be good.

The Mom Thug begins looking through the chakram as she holds it up, just like Callisto in the famous shot in *Callisto*. Suddenly, she cuts herself on the blade and drops it fast. Obviously, she is no Callisto.

MOM THUG (screaming):

Oh --BLEEP!

FADE OUT

ACT THREE

FADE IN

On Xena, Gabrielle and Ares walking through a forest clearing.

ARES:

I'm telling you--there's no fortress here.

XENA (looking around):

Minya said--

ARES (sarcastic):

Oh, well if *Minya* said it--I'm sure she knows a lot more about this than I do. I mean, I'm just the God of War.

GABRIELLE:

Maybe you don't know each and every little fortress.

Ares shoots her a mock-nasty look.

XENA (suddenly focused on something ahead of her):

Wait a minute.

She walks ahead toward some shrubbery. We see a large wooden post with a sign on it, nearly hidden by leaves. Xena comes closer and tilts her head, looks at the sign, while Gabrielle and Ares come up behind her. We see some Greek writing on the sign, half-hidden by leaves.

On-screen subtitles:

HUG F ESS



ARES (reading the sign):

Hug-fest? (to Gabrielle) Sounds like your kind of place.

Gabrielle gives him a "very funny" look. Xena pushes the leaves off the sign, revealing more letters. A new translation appears.

THUG FORTRESS

ARES (in disbelief):

You've got to be kidding me.

Gabrielle laughs. Xena grins in triumph and parts the branches behind the sign. We see the thug fortress with the skull and crossbones flag and the bone wind chimes.

XENA:

Minya was right.

ARES:

Those guys took your chakram? You know, that's a lot more humiliating than a dog.

XENA (stung):

They didn't *take* it. Minya threw it at them.

ARES (disgusted):

See, this is the kind of thing that gives thugs a bad name. Really.

Xena and Gabrielle walk up to the front door of the "fortress" while Ares stays back, a conspicuously bored look on his face.

GABRIELLE:

Think we should knock? (off Xena's sarcastic look) Well, it *is* the polite thing to do.

BARCANOR (off-camera, growling):

That won't be necessary.

Pan up to Barcanor standing on a ledge of the "fortress." With a hoarse battle yell, he and the other three thugs leap off the ledge intending to tackle Xena and Gabrielle, but miss their mark and flop on the ground, grunting and groaning pathetically.

XENA (smoothly):

I believe you boys have something of mine. Hand it over now and you won't get hurt...any more.



BARCANOR (groaning):
Over my dead body!

ARES (in the background):
You know, that's a very tempting offer.

Xena leans down and picks Barcanor up by the ear.

XENA (now seriously pissed off):
Listen up, pal. I've been tracking my chakram all day and I'm just about running out of patience. Now, where is it?

BARCANOR (groaning):
You'll have to kill me first.

XENA:
Just how stupid are you?

BARCANOR (manages a yell):
Get her, boys!

The other three thugs scramble rather reluctantly to their feet and charge Xena, who looks really fed up. She whips around, grabs two of the thugs, slams them into each other and then shoves them forcefully into the third thug. All three sprawl on the ground and seem quite content to stay there.

Quick pan to Ares, who shakes his head in disgust.

Xena turns to Barcanor again and hauls him to his feet.

XENA:
All right. Am I going to put the pinch on you again or are you going to tell me where my chakram is?

BARCANOR (gasping):
I don't have it!

XENA:
Who has it?

BARCANOR (tries to struggle feebly):
My--my mom.

XENA (shakes her head):
What? You're making this up.

BARCANOR (still struggling):
No, it's true. My mom has your chakram. She wants revenge for what you did to her many years ago.

Xena looks confused and guilty.

XENA:

Who's your mom?

BARCANOR:

Her name is Nell the Nasty, and she is the baddest mother thugger around.

GABRIELLE (shocked):

The baddest *what*?

XENA (to Gabrielle):

He said "mother thugger."

Gabrielle looks confused and somewhat relieved.

ARES (in an "are you kidding me?" tone):

Nell the Nasty?

XENA (yanks at Barcanor's collar, making him gasp):

Well, where is she?

BARCANOR (gasping):

She's waiting for you at the cliff over on the edge of these woods, west of here. (tries to sound menacing but that's rather difficult since his voice is half-choked by Xena grabbing his collar) She said to come alone if you ever want to see your chakram again.

Xena lets go of him and he collapses with a groan.

XENA (irritated but also puzzled):

All right, we're getting out of here.

CUT TO

Xena, Gabrielle and Ares walking through the woods.

GABRIELLE:

So who do you think she is?

XENA:

I have no idea.

GABRIELLE (rolling her eyes):

Oh, come on, Xena.

XENA:

Gabrielle, I'm serious, I have no clue who this woman is.

GABRIELLE (irritated):

Why do I have to force it out of you every time something from your past comes up?

XENA (blows up):

Gabrielle, she could be anybody.

ARES (repeats the name, as if savoring it):
Nell the Nasty. (to Xena) Ever sack a brothel?

Xena, slightly ahead of Gabrielle and Ares, stops and whips around, looking daggers at them both.

DISSOLVE TO

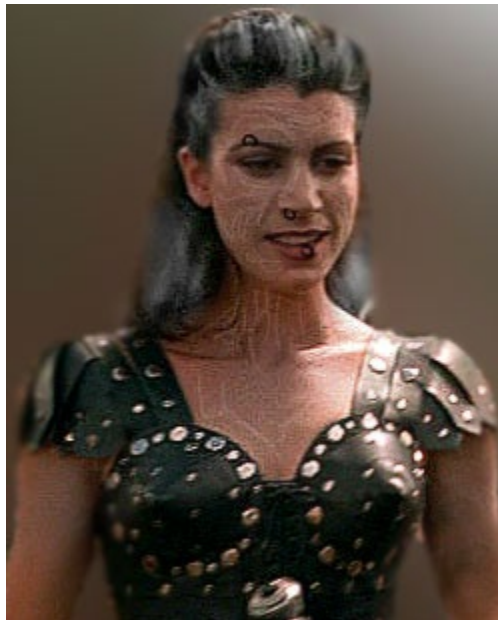
Nell the Nasty (Thug Mom) stands on top of a cliff, holding Xena's chakram in her bandaged hand. Behind her, the sun is already low--it's late afternoon.

Xena, Gabrielle and Ares come into view, coming up the hillside. Xena gestures to Ares and Gabrielle to stay back and continues to come toward Nell the Nasty.

NELL THE NASTY (hissing):
Why, hello, Xena. (holding up the chakram) Looking for this?

The camera pans over to Xena as her eyes widen. She walks fast toward Nell.

XENA:
Give it back!



NELL THE NASTY (grins evilly, extending her hand with the chakram over the cliff's edge):
You stop right there, Xena, or I throw it right over into the sea!

XENA (holds out her hands in a "calming" gesture):
All right, all right. Now calm down--

Xena slowly takes another step forward. Nell moves her hand as if to throw the chakram.

NELL THE NASTY:
I'm not kidding, Xena!

XENA:
Okay, okay... (softly) What do you want?

NELL THE NASTY (roaring):
Revenge!

XENA:
For what?

NELL THE NASTY (hissing):
You don't remember, do you, Xena?

Xena shakes her head no.

NELL THE NASTY:
Isn't that great. You scarred me for life and you don't even remember.

XENA (confused):
I scarred you--where?

NELL THE NASTY:
Do you remember Amphipolis, Xena?

XENA (even more confused):
Well, of course I do. I grew up there.

NELL THE NASTY (grins as nastily as her nickname suggests):
Well, isn't that a co-in-ci-dence. So did I.

[FLASHBACK]

Amphipolis. Kids are out playing and running around while the grown-ups are going about their business.

NELL THE NASTY (voice-over):
You and the other kids were playing ball...

The camera pans around to show a young Xena, about ten, playing catch with some other kids, mostly boys and a little older than her.

NELL THE NASTY (voice-over):
You looked like you were having so much fun. I really wanted to play with you, so I went up and asked...

Pan back to Young Nell, about six. She doesn't have any of the thug accessories on, just a plain old village dress and pig tails. She walks up to Young Xena.

YOUNG NELL (walking up to Young Xena):
Hey, can I play ball with you guys?

Young Xena gives her a dismissive look and shakes her head.

YOUNG XENA:

Go back and play with the little kids!

The other kids laugh.

The camera zooms in on Young Nell's hurt face, as Young Xena and the kids continue to play ball. A sad music swells up, gradually turning ominous as the air darkens and the little girl's sweet forlorn expression turns to an evil smile.



YOUNG NELL (wickedly):

You'll pay for this, Xena. (close-up on Young Nell's face as she shouts) I want vengeance!

A thunderclap erupts.

[END OF FLASHBACK]

DISSOLVE TO

Nell the Nasty holding the chakram over the cliff, a defiant look on her face. Pan back to Xena, who looks puzzled at first, and then breaks out into an incredulous smile.

XENA:

Are you kidding me?

Nell looks pissed off.



XENA (laughing):

This is about a game of ball when I was ten? So what was all this about being scarred?

NELL THE NASTY (angrily):

Well, I was. My soul--scarred for life!

Xena gives her a pitying but baffled look.

XENA (takes a deep breath):

Look, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have treated you that way. But I was just a kid. No one should hold a grudge for this long...especially over a game of ball.

NELL THE NASTY (tearing up a little):

I just wanted to play ball with the big kids.

Xena slowly nods, actually starting to feel guilty (it doesn't take much, does it).

XENA (sweetly):

Well, you know, Nell--if it makes you feel better, I'd love to play a game of catch with you.

NELL THE NASTY (sniffing):

Really?

XENA (smiling):

Really. (comforting, extending her hand) Now come on, step away from the edge.

Nell smiles and begins to walk away from the edge--but before things can turn totally warm and fuzzy, she spins around and chucks the chakram over the cliff.

Xena rushes forward, but it's too late--the chakram's gone.

XENA (shocked):

What did you do that for?

NELL THE NASTY (angrily):

For revenge. Bitch!

With a roar, Nell tackles Xena. Taken by surprise, Xena actually sprawls on her back and the two women wrestle, rolling on the ground. Xena succeeds in pinning down Nell just as Gabrielle and Ares come up.

GABRIELLE:

What happened?

XENA (angrily):

She threw my chakram over the cliff.

NELL THE NASTY (laughs hoarsely, out of breath):

How does it feel, Xena?! Huh? Now you know how I felt!

Nell struggles to break free as Xena tries to keep her pinned down with some difficulty.

ARES (lifts a sarcastic eyebrow):

Need any help?

XENA (still holding Nell down, to Ares):

Yeah. Go get my chakram before anything else happens to it.

ARES (teasing):

What's the magic word?

XENA (snarls):

Now!

ARES:

Yep, that'll do.

He vanishes. Medium close-up on Gabrielle as she smiles and shakes her head.

XENA (in the background):

Ow!

Alarmed, Gabrielle turns to see Xena clock Nell right in the head, knocking her out.

GABRIELLE:

What's wrong?

XENA:

The psycho bit me. (looks at her hand in disbelief as she gets up)

GABRIELLE:

I hope you have a good remedy for rabies.

BARCANOR (off-camera):

Hey! That's my mom you're calling a psycho.

Pan back to show Barcanor and the other three thugs, who obviously still haven't had enough, coming up the hillside with their clubs at the ready.

XENA (rolls her eyes):

I really don't have any more time for this.

Barcanor charges forward, the other three closely behind him. As he runs past Gabrielle, she spins around and kicks the club out of his hand. It flies up in the air and then plonks right down on his head with a "ka-pow" sound effect, knocking him out cold. The other three thugs stop, not sure what to do next.

XENA (to Gabrielle):

Nice shot. (to the thugs) Guys, you don't want to do this.

The other thugs look at each other uncertainly.

THUG #1:

But Mom said...

XENA (bluntly):

Your mom's unconscious.

The three thugs nod.

XENA:

So how about you take your mom and your brother home, because I really don't feel like beating you guys down anymore.

The thugs nod.

THUG #2:

I guess we could do that. 'Cause my face is still kind of sore from the last fight.

Two of the thugs pick up Barcanor, the third picks up Nell, staggering a little under her weight. They depart.

GABRIELLE (to Xena, smiling):

Nice diplomacy.

CUT TO

A rocky beach at the bottom of cliff. The sun is starting to set over the sea.

Ares is walking along the beach looking for the chakram and suddenly stops, obviously having noticed something in front of him.

The camera spins around and zooms in on a girl of about seven sitting on the beach next to a bucket full of toys, holding the chakram. She has curly blonde hair, wears a frilly blue dress and looks like the sweetest child to ever walk the earth. She seems quite mesmerized by the chakram.

ARES (walk up to the girl):

Okay, kid, hand it over. It belongs to a friend of mine.

The girl tight grabs the chakram's handle.

GIRL (angrily):

Finders keepers, losers weepers. Get lost, moron!

Ares stared at her in disbelief.

ARES:

Did you just call me a--

GIRL:

Moron!

She sticks out her tongue at him and laughs.

Ares takes a step closer.

GIRL (nastily):

You take one more step, Mister, and I'm going to scream "You're not my daddy" so loud, the entire Athenian army will be here in seconds!

Ares stands still, completely stumped.

WOMAN (off-screen, shouting):

Annabel! It's getting dark! Pick up your toys and let's go home!

ANNABEL:

Coming, Mom!

She throws the chakram in her bucket of toys, picks it up and runs off, turning back to stick out her tongue at Ares one more time. Ares stands frozen to the spot, completely stunned as we:

FADE OUT

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

Wide shot of the beach. Ares is still standing in the same spot while Xena and Gabrielle are coming toward him.

Zoom in as Xena and Gabrielle approach Ares.

XENA (to Ares):

Got it?

ARES (sheepishly):

Well...

XENA (exasperated):

Don't tell me you couldn't find it!

ARES (blurts out):

Someone picked it up.

Xena and Gabrielle stare at him in shock. If looks could kill and Xena still had the power to kill gods, Ares would be in serious trouble right now.

XENA:

Who?

ARES (embarrassed):

A little girl.

XENA (slowly, glaring at Ares with an expression that alarmingly resembles Evil Xena):

Let me get this straight. You let a little girl take my chakram?

ARES:

Umm...yeah.



XENA (yelling):

Why?!



ARES (holding up his hands):
What was I supposed to do?

XENA (angrily):
Get it back?! What, you can't handle one little girl?

ARES:
Easier said than done. You should have been there.

Meanwhile, Gabrielle tries to keep her cool.

GABRIELLE (to Ares):
Well, where is this girl now?

ARES (pointing over to the forest at the edge of the beach):
She went home with her parents.

Xena sighs, this is getting to be ridiculous.

XENA (pointing at Ares):
I give you (yelling) *one* (cooling herself back down) --one little job, and you let a little girl take my chakram!

GABRIELLE (smiles teasingly):
Come on, Xena. I think it's kind of sweet. Big bad God of War can't take a chakram from a little girl.

Ares makes a face at Gabrielle.

ARES:
Next time I see the little banshee, I'll zap first and ask questions later.

Xena steps between them, as if they were two children fighting.

XENA (taking a deep breath):
All right. We're going to find this child and we're going to get my chakram back. Period. End of story. Got it?

ARES:
We?

XENA (innocently):
Now, Ares, you aren't scared of that little girl, are you?

ARES (mock glare):
Let's go.

CUT TO

A wide shot of a lonely farmhouse on a hilltop, surrounded by fields, at dusk.

CUT TO

Exterior view of a the farmhouse up close. Xena, Gabrielle, and Ares walk up to the house and knock on the door. After a few moments there is the sound of someone coming to the door. The door opens and a blond woman in her late twenties, in peasant garb, comes to the door. It's Annabel's mother.

MOTHER (surprised):
Can I help you?

GABRIELLE (smiles):
Sorry to bother you, ma'am--does a little girl named Annabel live here?

MOTHER:
Yes, she's my daughter--I was just about to put her to bed. (nervously) Why, is something wrong?

GABRIELLE:
I'm afraid your daughter has something that belongs to my friend. It's a metal disc she picked up on the beach--actually, it's a weapon and could be very dangerous, so if you could just--

MOTHER (looking concerned, turns back and raises her voice):
Annabel! Come here a minute.

Pan over as Annabel, looking as sweet and innocent as can be, comes out from inside the house and stands next to her mother.

ANNABEL:
Yes, mommy?

MOTHER:
Did you pick up some kind of a metal disc on the beach?

ANNABEL (completely innocent):
Why no, mommy--you know I would never pick up anything on the beach, you've told me not to.

MOTHER:
Are you sure? You know, if you have it, it's better if you--

Annabel suddenly wails and clutches at her mother's skirt.

MOTHER (alarmed):
What's wrong?

ANNABEL (pointing at Ares):
Mommy, that man was on the beach today! He said he'd give me candy if I would get into his chariot!

The mother's eyes go wide, as she looks at Ares in disgust. Ares is speechless. Unseen by her mother, Annabel sticks out her tongue at him.

MOTHER:
I don't know what this is, but I want you out of here at once!

XENA (shakes her head):

No, wait, she--

MOTHER (yelling):

Do not make me get my husband!

She slams the door in their faces as we hear bolt after bolt locking inside.

Xena, Gabrielle, and Ares just stand frozen on the spot.

ARES (sarcastic, mimicking Xena):

What, you can't handle one little girl?

A tapping sound is heard. Xena, Ares and Gabrielle look to a window in the side of the cottage. There's Annabel, smiling sweetly, tapping the chakram on the windowpane.

XENA (jaw dropping):

That little--

GABRIELLE:

Xena! She's just a child.

ARES:

So...what now?

XENA (stabs her finger into the air, seriously pissed off):

All right. I have beaten gods, warlords and kings. I am *not* going to be defeated by a six-year-old.

She pauses for a moment, then turns away from the cottage and begins walking away.

GABRIELLE (to Ares):

You think she has a plan?

ARES:

I hope she does.

CUT TO

Later. A moonlit night. Xena, Gabrielle, and Ares are all crouched down in some bushes near the farmhouse.

GABRIELLE:

It just doesn't seem...right.



XENA (in an angry whisper):

Gabrielle, that little b-- (off Gabrielle's reproachful look, restrains herself) --banshee's got my chakram in there. I've been chasing it all day and I'm getting a little tired of always being one step behind it. At this rate, it's going to be in Jappa by next week. And believe me, I have *no* intention of going back there. So I'm getting it back--*right--now*.

GABRIELLE (unsure):

I don't know... I mean, it's kind of like breaking in.

XENA (turns to Ares):

No, more like *zapping* in. That's all we have to do. You get in--grab the chakram--get back out.

ARES (nervously):

What if the kid wakes up?

XENA (amused):

Oh, don't worry, Ares. Gabrielle and I will come and save you.

ARES (scowls):

You're trying to embarrass me into doing this little job, aren't you? (off Xena's innocent look) Okay, fine. I'll do it. But you *owe* me.

XENA (teasing):

I owe you *what*?

ARES (smirks):

Oh--maybe a nice war or two.

XENA (smirks back at him):

I'm sure we'll figure something out.

GABRIELLE (losing patience):

Can you two cut the banter and just get it over with?

ARES:

Right.

He vanishes in a burst of light. A flash of blue light is seen inside the window where we saw Annabel before.

XENA (sighs):

Well, this has been one long day.

NELL THE NASTY (off-screen):

It's not over yet, Warrior Princess.

Pan to Nell the Nasty, with Barcanor and the other three thugs behind her. Pan back to Xena and Gabrielle, who look utterly exasperated.

GABRIELLE:

I don't believe this.

NELL THE NASTY (menacingly):

You don't just knock me out and walk away.

Xena rolls her eyes, and stands up to face Nell and her boys.

XENA:

Nell. I'm tired. I'm cranky. I really don't want to beat the stuffing out of you guys yet again.

NELL THE NASTY (drawing her sword):

No, Xena! We end this here and now.

The thugs all growl, grunt and snarl evilly as they advance on Xena and Gabrielle.

MINYA (off-screen):

Hold on, Xena! I'm coming!!!!

Minya comes running onto the scene--actually, more like hobbling at a really fast pace. She steps in front of Xena and Gabrielle, cracking her mighty whip.

XENA (open-mouthed with shock):

Minya?

MINYA (to Xena, in a stage whisper):

It's Sheena. (growling at Nell) I could smell your stench a mile away, Nell. When I saw you following Xena, I knew she might need my help.

Pan over to Xena and Gabrielle, both in a state of shock. Gabrielle drops her head, pressing a hand to her forehead.

GABRIELLE (faintly):

Xena--remember I told you about that weird underwater dream I had with Joxer and the sea-creature children?

XENA (pained):

Uh, yeah?

GABRIELLE:

This is worse.

CUT TO

Annabel's room. In the moonlight, we can see that it looks like a mini-temple of Aphrodite, with lots of cushions, flowers and dolls.

Close-up of the chakram lying on a small bedside table. Pan to Annabel curled up in her bed, sleeping peacefully.

Suddenly, the chakram moves and rises from the bedside table, floating in mid-air.

Annabel opens her eyes and notices the floating chakram. She screams. Ares becomes visible in a flash of light, holding tightly to the chakram. Startled by her screaming, he stumbles and falls backwards on top of the girl's rocking horse and toy box.



ANNABEL (screaming at the top of her lungs):

You're not my mommy!

CUT TO

Outside the cottage. Xena and Gabrielle both turn their heads at Annabel's scream. Before they can do anything, the thugs charge them.

XENA:

A-la-la-la-la--cheee-ya!

The thugs freeze, startled. Xena does a backflip and slams her boots into Barcanor and another thug. As they fall down, they knock down their two brothers who are still standing.

Pan to Minya as she swings her whip around at Nell, who does her best to dodge it.

NELL THE NASTY (yelling):

Stay out of this, Minya--this is between Xena and me!

MINYA (growling):

You mess with Xena, you mess with me.

Ares materializes outside the cottage, chakram in his hand.

ARES (grinning):
Look what I got.

On the word "got," Minya's whip flies through the air and wraps itself around the chakram. Quick pan to Minya as she pulls the whip back, quite unaware of her catch--her eyes are still on Nell--and yanks the chakram out of Ares' hand. The chakram flies off the end of the whip and into a tree behind Nell.

Nell knocks over Minya and dives for the chakram. Xena leaps toward the chakram, flipping in the air--but, being much closer, Nell actually gets it first. With a wicked laugh, she takes off running, with Xena on her trail.

Cue in rapid music from the farcical chase scene in the caves in *The Quill Is Mightier*.

The door of the cottage opens and Annabel's parents stand on the threshold. They quickly survey the scene, then duck inside. Sound effects of the door being bolted shut.

Minya scrambles to her feet, groaning.

Xena catches up with Nell and tackles her. As she goes down, Nell gives the chakram a kick and sends it rolling fast down the hill. Xena wants to go after it but Nell has a death grip on her hair.

XENA:
Nell! Don't make me beat you up!

Growling, Nell snaps her teeth at Xena's ear. The two women tumble to the ground.

Gabrielle starts running toward Xena but doesn't notice Minya, who starts running in the same direction too. The two women collide; Minya clutches at Gabrielle as she falls, taking Gabrielle down with her.

Barcanor, now back on his feet, jumps right over them and takes off after the chakram.

Pan to Ares, who shakes his head incredulously.

The camera follows the chakram as it rolls rapidly down the hill. Barcanor runs after it while Xena is still trying to free herself from Nell's grip without using excessive force on the old woman. Finally, she manages to push off Nell and get to her feet.

CUT TO

A country road at the bottom of the hill. The salesman we saw before is walking in the moonlight by the side of his donkey and cart.

Rolling downhill, the chakram bounces off a stone, flies through the air and lands on the ground right in front of the salesman, whose eyes widen in fear. He screams and takes off running.

Barcanor comes running down the hill, pounces on the chakram and grabs it, holding it up in the air.

BARCANOR (shouting):
Victoryyyyyyy!

Xena comes running down the hill after him.

XENA (yells furiously):
Give it back!

Barcanor takes off running. Xena continues to run downhill, with Gabrielle tailing Xena, the other three thugs running after Gabrielle, Nell running after them swinging her sword, and Minya running after her swinging her whip.

CUT TO

Further down the road. The salesman is still running for dear life away from the chakram when Barcanor comes running behind him holding the chakram in the air.

SALESMAN (shouting in fear):
No! please! I don't want it!

XENA:
Chee-yah!

She flips in the air and kicks Barcanor in the back, knocking him down on the ground. As he falls, he drops the chakram. Xena bends down and grabs it, overjoyed.

GABRIELLE (comes running up to Xena):
You got it!

Behind her the other three thugs come running down that path. This time Xena's ready for them.

XENA (teasingly):
You want it?

She hurls the chakram towards them; it knocks the clubs out of their hands, then bounces off a couple of trees, slices the top off Nell's sword, swishes past Minya, bounces off another tree and makes its way back to Xena as she extends her arm and grabs it, pulling it close and blowing on the blade.



Nell drops to her knees and pounds her fists on the ground in frustration.

Gabrielle gives a smile of relief.

A sound of applause behind Xena. She turns and sees Ares standing behind her.

ARES:

So you finally got it back. (grins) Admit it, Xena, you couldn't have done it without me.



XENA (raises an eyebrow):

Right. No way I could have handled (teasing) *Annabel* on my own.

ARES (dryly):

Don't underestimate Annabel.

Xena smiles and looks down at the chakram and then back up at Ares, moving in a little closer.

XENA (teasingly):

Well, technically, I'm the one who got it back. But thanks anyway.

She moves closer to him.



ARES (playing along):

Technically, I'm the one who gave it to you in the first place.

They laugh and start moving in for a kiss when suddenly, Minya's whip flies between them. Ares jumps back.

MINYA (yells):

Beat it, Ares!

ARES (taken aback):

What are you doing?!

Minya walks up to him.

MINYA:

Get it through your thick skull, Ares! Xena will never be your Warrior Queen. (preens) And neither will I. (She looks over Ares and hesitates, tilting her head coyly) Then again...

Ares looks helplessly at Xena as she shrugs slightly and smiles, as if to say, "what can I do."

ARES:

You know, I just remembered I have to be--as far away from here as I can.

He and Xena exchange an amused look just before he vanishes in a flash of light.

In the background, Nell the Nasty can be seen chasing after her sons, waving her fists and screaming.

MINYA (grins):

We showed him, huh? He never learns. Always trying to seduce butt-kicking chicks like you and me. (She gives Xena a hard slap on the shoulder) Well, Xena--it's been great fighting at your side again!

XENA:

Minya-- (off Minya's hurt look) Sheena. It was good to see you again. Say hi to Hower for me.

MINYA:

I sure will. Well, I should be going. (to Gabrielle) When you write this story down, don't you forget--it's Sheena.

GABRIELLE:

Um...sure. Good-bye... Sheena.

Minya walks off. Xena and Gabrielle look after her.

In the background, Nell is still chasing after her boys. She stumbles and falls with a yell.



GABRIELLE:

This is one for the scrolls, for sure. What a story. First your chakram gets picked up by a dog, then a kid throws it in the river, then a fisherman fishes it out and sells to a traveling salesman...

XENA:

Who sells it to a (raises an eyebrow) *Xena Gift Shop...*

GABRIELLE:

...which sells it to Minya, who throws it at some thugs who gives it to their psycho mom, who throws it off a cliff...

XENA:

And then it gets picked up by a child who makes Callisto look like a follower of Eli.

GABRIELLE:

And then--

She's interrupted by Thug #2 who comes up to them, looking rather sheepish.

THUG #2 (to Xena):

Excuse me, ma'am. I know we've been a lot of trouble and all, but...could you help get Mom to a healer?

XENA:

What's wrong?

THUG #2:

She tripped--I think she might have broken her hip.

XENA (sighs):

Let me see what I can do.

CUT TO

Some time later. Xena (the chakram now on her side where it belongs) finishes setting Nell's leg while Gabrielle, Barcanor and the other three thugs look on. When she's done, she jabs her fingers into Nell's thigh.

XENA:

I've taken off the pinch, so it's going to hurt. You better get to a healer and get her something for pain relief. (She gets up and looks sternly at the thugs) You won't be causing any more trouble, will you now?

THUGS (in a disjointed chorus):

No ma'am.

XENA:

Good. (turns to Nell the Nasty, trying to be conciliatory) Nell...

Nell snarls at her. Giving up, Xena shrugs and turns to Gabrielle.

XENA:

Let's go, Gabrielle.

They start walking away.

GABRIELLE:

Well, you got your chakram back, that's all that matters. (pauses, smiling) I'm glad you helped out Nell.

XENA:

It was the right thing to do.

The camera pans back on Nell the Nasty, as she watches the duo walk away.

NELL THE NASTY (growling):

The right thing to do? (sneers) That's what *they* think.

The four thugs exchange worried looks while the camera zooms in on Nell's demented evil grin, and the audience fervently hopes never to see her again, as we:

FADE OUT

THE END

[Xena's chakram was not damaged during the production of this motion picture. Ares, however, is still traumatized by his encounter with The Bad Seed.]