

SHIPPER SEASON NINE

“Twilight Eve”

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Logline

As Demeter becomes deathly ill, the gods begin to fear that the Twilight is still in motion. As a result, Artemis tries to dispose of Eve by turning the Amazons against her.

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TEASER

FADE IN

ANNOUNCER:

Previously on Xena...

Montage of scenes:

--Angel Callisto touching Xena's stomach in "Fallen Angel"

--Eve being born in "God Fearing Child"

--Michael (in the form of a flame) appearing to Xena on the beach in "Motherhood."

CUT TO

Scene from "Lord of the Wings."

XENA:

A child should be born of love, but Michael used that power to bring about the downfall of the Olympians.

CUT TO

Scene from "Motherhood."

Xena killing Athena. Olympus starting to shake.

CUT TO

From "Harbinger of Twilight":

XENA:

The gods are in *Hell*?!

CUT TO

From "A Very Narrow Bridge."

In Xena crosses a bridge over an abyss lit by hellfire; Eve, Gabrielle, and Ares follow, holding onto the ropes on the side of the bridge.

CUT TO

A small glass sphere is shattered and a dazed-looking Athena arises from it; Zeus and Hera can be seen in the background.

CUT TO

EVE:

The gods are free. (she smiles) I hope they take advantage of their second chance at life and use it wisely.

CUT TO

From "Lord of the Wings."

RAPHAEL (to Xena and Gabrielle):

The Light will no longer try to expand its realm; there is no reason why we can't coexist peacefully with the other gods.

CUT TO

From "Set in Stone": Xena squaring off with Artemis.

ARTEMIS:

That's right--you killed my only son. (with a cruel smirk) It's ironic, you know. I decided to have a child when I found out about the Twilight prophecy. He was my insurance--the one who was supposed to keep my legacy alive.

XENA:

I killed your son to protect the Amazons--your own people!

CUT TO

Artemis talking to Athena.

ARTEMIS:

Athena, the gods have become jokes! We've lost most of our followers! Back in the days when we killed Niobe's children, we were feared--we were worshipped. Tell me you don't miss that.

CUT TO

Xena talking to Gabrielle.

XENA:

For a long time, I wondered if I did the right thing when I killed the gods. Now, I sometimes wonder if we did the right thing bringing them back.

[END OF MONTAGE]

FADE TO

Dusk. A temple comes into view.

The camera zooms in and sweeps over the building, and we see that it looks deserted and neglected, with grass growing through cracks in the front steps and moss on the chipped and peeling walls.

The camera moves into an inner courtyard, which looks rather like Demeter's temple in "Succession" and may even be the same place. Here, too, everything has a visible air of abandonment and neglect. The camera pans over the altar to show some offerings with nothing but some remnants of fruit and vegetables--rotted away, dried up, or eaten by birds--left on the plate. Pan to a broken statue lying in the corner, its unseeing eyes staring upwards.

The camera begins to zoom out.

DISSOLVE TO

A dark sky. Lightning flashes, illuminating a great palace on a mountaintop: Mount Olympus.

DISSOLVE TO

Main hall. Zeus, King of the Gods, sits in his throne holding his head. He is obviously in deep thought, and looks troubled. The rest of Olympus seems empty except for the echoing of thunder and flashes of light that appears in the halls.

The silence is broken by a flash of blue light. Ares appears standing in front of Zeus. Zeus lifts his head.

ARES (guardedly):

You wanted to see me?

ZEUS:

Son. (sighs heavily) There is--bad news.

CUT TO

A chamber on Olympus, richly decorated with gold and marble statues. The statues, the wall paintings, and the design on the draperies have agricultural themes (fruit, vegetables, grain, corn), suggesting that this is Demeter's chamber. Some of the figures, sculpted and painted on the walls, depict a little sitting in her mother's lap and then the same girl as a teenager. Panning over the room, the camera pauses on a wall painting of a woman who looks familiar: tall and with long curled hair.

There is a flash of purple light, and the woman in the painting appears in the chamber. We recognize her as Persephone, Goddess of the Underworld ("Who Let the Dog Out?")--only this time, with no trace of her former Fran-like perkiness, which has given way to a grief-stricken look.

PERSEPHONE:

Mother!

The camera pans over to show Demeter lying in bed, a worried-looking goddess sitting by her bedside.

The camera zooms in on Demeter. Her rich golden hair looks faded and graying; she looks weak and strangely old for a goddess.

The young goddess looks up at Persephone.

PERSEPHONE:

Leave us, Hebe.

Hebe stands up, bows her head and leaves.

Persephone approaches her mother's bedside and sits down, now openly weeping. Demeter manages a smile as she touches her daughter's face.

PERSEPHONE (through tears):

Why are you doing this to yourself, Mother?

Demeter looks at her daughter in disbelief.

DEMETER (with a bitter chuckle):

You think I'm doing this to myself?

PERSEPHONE:

Mother, I remember how you were when I first married Hades--

DEMETER (softly):

This is different. I feel weak now, Persephone. My body is aching. My powers are leaving me--I can feel my immortality draining away...

Crying, Persephone clasps her mother's frail hand.

CUT TO

Outside Demeter's chambers. Zeus stands outside the chamber door, cracked open so he can see his sister and her daughter. Ares stands next to him.

ARES:

Is she--

ZEUS (not looking at his son):

She has been growing weaker and weaker as the day passes.

ARES (shocked):

What's causing it?

Zeus begins to walk away from the chamber doors, and further down the hall. We realize this as the place where Ares confronted Xena in "Motherhood" and she threw him in chains.

ZEUS (embarrassed):

I...I don't know.

There is a short silence between them. A close-up of Ares; he looks confused and rather helpless.

As they continue to walk, purple light flashes and Persephone stands in their way, her face streaked with tears.

PERSEPHONE (shouting):

What's happening to her?

Zeus and Ares halt abruptly, Zeus holding his hands in a calming gesture.

ZEUS:

Just calm dow--

PERSEPHONE:

Don't tell me to calm down when my mother is dying!

The word has the effect of an explosion. A flash of lightning illuminates the chamber.

Ares, Zeus and Persephone stare at each other in shock. Finally, Zeus speaks, a new resolution in his voice.

ZEUS:

I'm going to go to The Fates--see if I can find some answers.

ARES:

You do that--Dad.

Zeus turns around, to face his son. There is a short, awkward tension between the two. Zeus manages a nod and then a slight; he walks off and vanishes in a flash of light in mid-stride.

Persephone starts to sob and leans on Ares' shoulder. He gives her a startled look, obviously not quite knowing what to do.

ARES (softly, struggling with words):
She'll, uh--she'll be all right.

He awkwardly pats Persephone's hair.

A flash of light. It comes across sounding more like a question than a statement.

A distant flash of lightning illuminates the hall again.

DISSOLVE TO

A lightning-filled sky.

DISSOLVE TO

An overhead shot of a village as a thunderstorm rages. The camera zooms in on one of the huts...

DISSOLVE TO

The Queen's hut. Eve is asleep in her bed. As the camera moves in we dissolve into her dreamscape...

DISSOLVE TO

Scene from "Motherhood"

Mount Olympus. Everything begins to shake. Athena looks worried.

XENA (voice-over, from "Seeds of Faith):

The Fates spoke of a time when mankind would no longer need the gods--they would lose their power.

CUT TO

Scene from "Seeds of Faith"

ELI (speaking out to the people):

We don't need to fear them, anymore. It's their turn to fear us!

CUT TO

Scene from "Seeds of Faith"

CALLISTO (softly):

The new world can only be built on the foundation of the old one. The order of the gods must fall. And you--

FLASH TO

Scene from "Eve"

Eve looking up at the blinding light.

CALLISTO (voice-over):

--are the hammer. (short pause) There is no reason to be afraid.

CUT TO

Scene from "God Fearing Child"

Zeus stands in front of the Fates.

CLOTHO:

As it has been since time beyond remembering--you will continue to rule supreme among supreme--

FLASH TO

Scene from "Seeds of Faith"

LACHESIS (voice-over, from "God Fearing Child"):

--until such time, as a child not begotten by man is born--

Callisto reaches out and touches pregnant Xena's stomach.

CUT TO

Scene from "God Fearing Child"

ATROPOS (voice-over, from "God Fearing Child"):

--a time that is fast approaching.

Xena goes into labor as Gabrielle delivers the baby. Zeus approaches with a lightning bolt.

CUT TO

Scene from "Eve"

CLOTHO (voice-over, from "Looking Death in the Eye"):

Only in the essence of death--will the child find salvation--and the twilight be set in motion.

Eve raises the chakram half over Xena in the Temple. A blinding light appears. Eve covers her eyes.

CUT TO

A black room. All is silent except for a single heart beating.

CALLISTO (voice-over, from "Seeds of Faith"):

You wouldn't have been chosen if you weren't afraid. Remember--in everything you do--we are always with you.

SMASH CUT TO

Amazon hut. Eve jolts up from her bed breathing deeply and with a concerned look on her face. She then begins to wonder if she is awakening from the dream, or if it was because of something else. She senses something--or someone, rather.

She jumps up from bed, grabs the staff standing by the bed and whips around, assuming a defensive posture.

The camera pulls around to show a figure in the corner of her room, nestled in the shadows. A woman steps out of the shadows, the moon reflecting her long red hair.

It's Artemis.

ARTEMIS (soft sinister tone):
Sweet dreams, my Queen?

Eve holds tightly to her staff. The camera pulls on Artemis as an evil grin appears across her face, as we:

FADE OUT

ACT ONE

FADE IN

A busy Greek marketplace. Crowds of people are making their way through the city while the vendors try and sell them overpriced goods.

The words "Two Days Later" appear across the screen.

The camera pans through the crowd to show Xena, Gabrielle, and Darion walking through the marketplace. Xena and Gabrielle are leading their horses, neither horse enjoying the morning traffic.

XENA (under her breath, to Gabrielle):
I told you we shouldn't have stopped here.

GABRIELLE:
Darion wants something to eat, and we are still a couple hours from Corinth.

XENA (looking for a food vendor):
Well, we better hurry up and get back on the road, or we'll miss the festival.

They continue to walk, pushing their way through the crowded streets.

XENA: (indicating a stall):
How about fish?

Gabrielle frowns and wrinkles her nose.

GABRIELLE:

Ugh. No thanks.

Xena raises an eyebrow at her.

XENA:

Since when are you so picky?

CUT TO

Xena, Gabrielle and Darion walking through another village street. A commotion is heard off-camera and they stop to look. There is a crowd of people arguing. One man's voice rises above the din of the crowd.

MAN:

Accept the God of Love into your hearts!

The camera zooms closer to show the speaker, a tall man in his mid-forties wearing a long purple robe. On his robe is the fish of Eli, symbolizing his Elijan religion.

Xena and Gabrielle approach, Gabrielle protectively keeping Darion back.

XENA:

What seems to be the problem?

OLD WOMAN:

Them Eli people want to take over Demeter's temple!

She gestures toward a building in the background. It's a small shrine, much smaller than the one seen in the teaser but looking equally neglected.

YOUNG WOMAN #1:

And why shouldn't we? At least we'll get the place fixed up!

YOUNG MAN:

No one even comes here anymore!

GABRIELLE (to Xena):

There's no harm in their taking over the temple if it's fallen into disuse.

YOUNG WOMAN #2:

Everyone knows the time of the old gods has passed!

DARION (tugs plaintively at Gabrielle's arm):

Hey, are we going to eat? I'm hungry.

XENA (glances at him, then at the temple and the crowd, and turns to Gabrielle):

Come on. This is none of our business.

As they make to walk off, the tall Elijan in the purple robe calls out after them.

ELIJAN:

My friends! Have *you* accepted the God of Love into your lives?

XENA (brushing him off):

We're not interested.

The man steps in front of Xena, obviously not fearful of the Warrior Princess.

ELIJAN (raising his voice):

The God of Love and His angels will fill you with joy if you let Him!

XENA (moving past him, almost snarls):

Thanks. We've had our fill of his angels already.

As they walk past, the man shouts out, obviously not taking "no" for an answer.

ELIJAN:

He will give you peace if you open your hearts to him! (speaking louder) Accept him, or worship false gods and suffer his wrath.

Pan to Gabrielle, who shakes her head in disgust.

ELIJAN (taking notice of Darion):

Think of your little boy! Surely, you don't want to deny him--

As he speaks, Gabrielle whips around, a venomous look on her face; bringing up Darion was the last straw. She takes a step closer to the man, looking so furious that he breaks off, clearly intimidated.

GABRIELLE (angrily):

You know, if you're going to preach about Eli's message, at least do a little research first. Eli's message was about love--not condemning those who won't follow him!

ELIJAN:

Eli's God is the one true God. If you continue your sinful ways and defy Him, then Hell awaits you on the other side!

GABRIELLE (angrily):

Been there, done that.

Gabrielle whips back around and follows Xena and Darion away from the zealot.

ELIJAN MAN (shouting out to the crowd):

The sinners will be washed away by His power. A new day is coming, a day where he will vanquish all evil. Only those that side with Him will survive Judgment Day!

The camera pulls out as the man's voice begins to die down.

CUT TO

Later. Forest.

Xena and Gabrielle walk through the forest pulling their horses behind them. Darion is seated on Klio eating from the meal in his sack. Gabrielle seems to be lost in thought.

XENA (to Gabrielle):

Don't let him upset you, Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE (shaking her head):

It just seems so wrong that he can preach those things in Eli's name.

XENA:

Every religion has their zealots.

Suddenly there is a cracking sound above them, and Xena and Gabrielle both stop in their tracks. Gabrielle quickly draws her sais and looks above her. Xena scans the trees.

Suddenly a warrior woman leaps down from the trees and Gabrielle spins around, pointing her sais in a defensive posture.

The camera pulls around to show Lykia, getting up from her crouching position.

GABRIELLE (lowering her weapons, startled):

Lykia...

Lykia manages a short smile.

DARION (exclaiming):

Lykia!

Darion slides off the horse and runs up to her. They hug.

LYKIA (sighs):

I've been tracking you guys all day.

XENA (surprised):

What for?

LYKIA (uneasily):

There's trouble back at the Amazon village.

XENA (worried):

What's going on?

Gabrielle looks concerned.

LYKIA:

We've had some visits from the goddess Artemis. She says she wants to restore the broken bond between her and the Amazons.

Close-up on Xena, who looks angry and alarmed; then on Gabriele, who looks shocked and confused.

GABRIELLE:

Artemis? But she abandoned the Amazon tribes many years ago. She hasn't been part of their lives in a long time.

LYKIA:

Well, it seems like now she wants back.

XENA (hiding her anger):

And Artemis has been known to get what she wants.

LYKIA (nodding):

When Eve and some of the elders wouldn't accept her demands, she began to talk to some of the other Amazons--trying to turn them against Eve.

XENA (concerned):

How's Eve--

LYKIA:

She's okay. But...I think she's in danger. (softly) She doesn't know that I came here to find you-- she said she'd handle it herself...but--

XENA:

Well, you did the right thing. We'll head to the Amazon village straight away.

Gabrielle looks thoughtful for a moment; then she goes back to her horse and takes a small pouch of dinars from the saddlebag.

GABRIELLE (to Lykia, handing her the money):

Here. You can take Darion to the festival at Corinth.

LYKIA (hesitant):

Listen, I just came to warn you. If the Amazons are in danger, I should be with my sisters.

GABRIELLE (snaps):

He's your *brother*!

The camera pans down to show Darion, who looks hurt. Lykia scowls at Gabrielle, frustrated; then she glances at Darion and looks guilty.

LYKIA:

Darion...I'm sorry. Come on. (She takes his hand) We'll go to the festival.

GABRIELLE (dryly, handing her the pouch of dinars):

We'll meet back up with you in a few days at Corinth.

She bends down toward Darion, her expression changing to a warm smile.

GABRIELLE:

Bye, Darion.

Darion yanks his hand out of Lykia's and goes to hug Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE:

Be good.

DARION (softly):

Be careful, Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE:

I will. I'll see you soon, sweetheart.

Darion walks back over to Lykia, who grabs his hand almost roughly and gives Gabrielle a resentful look. They begin to head out of the forest, onto the road that leads to Corinth.

Gabrielle looks over at Xena.

GABRIELLE:

It doesn't make sense. Why Artemis would want the Amazons' worship after so many years?

XENA:

Maybe it's just a ploy to hide her true motive.

GABRIELLE (understanding):

You think she's just after Eve...for revenge because of the Twilight?

Xena mounts Argo with an abrupt motion and looks down at Gabrielle.

XENA:

Look, I killed her. (She clutches the reins brusquely.) And then I killed her only son. She's held a grudge over less.

Xena kicks the stirrups and brings Argo into a gallop down the forest path. Gabrielle jumps on her horse and follows behind her.

DISSOLVE TO

Amazon village, with the Amazons all going about their daily tasks. The camera pans in on the Queen's hut.

CUT TO

The Queen's hut. Eve is sitting at a table, rather stressed as she looks through some old scrolls.

Cyane enters the hut.

CYANE (softly):

Queen Eve.

Eve looks up.

CYANE:

Your mother and Gabrielle are here to see you.

Eve shakes her head, distressed. Xena and Gabrielle enter the hut behind Cyane.

EVE (holding back her frustration):

Mother, you shouldn't have--

XENA (cutting her off):

Lykia told us what's going on.

EVE (sighing):

We are having a Council Meeting tonight--to decide if the Amazons should embrace Artemis as their patron goddess.

XENA:

Do you think Artemis really cares about what the Amazon Council decides?

Eve ignores her, and continues looking through the scrolls.

GABRIELLE:

Lykia said Artemis was trying to get some of the other Amazons to overthrow you. If the Council decides against worshipping Artemis--

EVE (cutting her off):

That's the problem. No matter what the Council decides, there are still Amazons who will side with Artemis. (looking up at Gabrielle) And there are people in this tribe who have been against me since day one.

GABRIELLE (understanding):

Morai?

EVE:

Artemis stands for everything Morai believes in: war--worship of the gods--making the Amazons a powerful nation of conquerors. I've had a hard enough time with Morai trying to turn the Amazons on me, but now, with Artemis-- (trails off)

XENA:

Lykia said you were in danger.

EVE (sighs and looks away):

There was a hunting accident--

XENA (shocked):

Accident. You mean, someone tried to--

EVE:

I don't know for sure. It *might* have been an accident, or-- (shrugs tensely) An arrow came out of

nowhere--I caught it at the last second. (with a bitter, edgy laugh) Don't worry, Mother--I'm not that easy to kill. Runs in the family.

Eve continues rummaging through the scrolls, looking rather irritated and obviously not wanting to talk about anything else.

XENA (softly):

Something else is bothering you. (after a short silence) Eve, what is it?

Eve sets down the scrolls, finally giving in.

EVE (sighing):

I've been having dreams lately. (pause) Dreams about the Twilight.

GABRIELLE (disbelief):

The Twilight?

EVE (nodding):

Things I shouldn't even remember: Zeus' death, the Fates, Eli, Callisto...

Xena looks dismayed.

EVE (softly):

And that's when Artemis started showing up.

GABRIELLE:

Do you think that maybe--the gods still think you're a danger to them?

EVE:

None of the others have made an appearance.

XENA:

Maybe Artemis is the only one that didn't learn her lesson.

EVE:

Either way, she doesn't just want me dead. She wants the Amazons to worship her.

There is a short silence between them.

XENA:

I'm going to go talk to Ares. (Off Eve's look, filled with mixed emotions) See if he knows something we don't.

Xena leaves.

Eve and Gabrielle exchange tense looks.

DISSOLVE TO

Xena heads out into the woods and stops, as if she was waiting for someone.

XENA (harshly):

Ares!

Ares materializes, looking rather grim--his expression, in fact, a good match for Xena's.

ARES (dryly):

I take it this isn't a social call.

XENA:

It's about your sister trying to get my daughter killed. *Again*.

Close-up on Ares' shocked face.

ARES:

My sister. (pause) Athena?

XENA:

Artemis.

ARES:

Artemis--wants to kill Eve.

XENA:

Artemis wants the Amazons to worship her. Killing Eve is just a bonus. Or maybe it's the other way around.

Ares stares at her silently.

XENA:

What's this about, Ares? I have a hunch it's something more than vengeance. (pauses) It's something to do with the Twilight, isn't it.

ARES:

What makes you say that?

XENA:

Eve's been having dreams about it.

ARES (wryly):

Has she.

XENA (explodes angrily):

Never mind. I should have known better than to expect help from you when it comes to saving your own--

ARES (heavily):

Xena.

She trails off, looking guilty.

ARES:

You should know better than *that*.

XENA (brusquely):

Just tell me what's going on. (pauses, reluctantly) I'm--I'm sorry.

Ares thinks a moment, staring at her, then sighs.

ARES:

No one really knows for sure, but--the Twilight may be happening all over again.

XENA (not entirely shocked but confused):

What are you talking about?

ARES:

Well--Demeter's been very ill. Possibly--

He trails off.

XENA:

Dying?

Ares nods tensely. Xena looks at him expectantly.

ARES:

Zeus went to the Fates and they gave him one of those typical cryptic messages--

CROSS-FADE TO

The three Fates, whose image is superimposed on the scene of Xena and Ares talking.

CLOTHO:

A time is near--

LACHESIS:

--when the gods--

ATROPOS:

--will have one last chance--

CLOTHO:

--to make a choice of life or death--

LACHESIS:

--and change--

ATROPOS:

-- their destiny.

On those last words, the image of the Fates starts to fade until we see only the present scene again. Xena stares intently at Ares.

XENA:

What does that mean?

ARES (shrugs):

No one knows. But I suppose Artemis thinks that Eve has something to do with it.

XENA (disgusted and dismayed):

So it's starting again.

ARES (emphatically):

No. It doesn't have to. If you--

XENA (abruptly):

I need the Dagger of Helios.

ARES (disbelief):

To kill my family?

XENA (forcefully):

No. To protect *mine*.

Ares doesn't move, obviously conflicted.

ARES:

Xena--it doesn't have to be this way.

XENA:

Tell that to your sister.

She turns around and stalks off. Ares looks after her, shaking his head.

ARES:

Just like old times...

He vanishes as we:

FADE OUT

ACT TWO

FADE IN

A long shot of the Amazon village. The camera pans over to a field just outside the village, where about a dozen Amazons are discussing something. Morai (from "The Bonds We Chose" and "Grey Areas") seems to be stirring up trouble as usual.

MORAI:

With a goddess on our side, the Amazons will achieve the greatness we deserve.

The other Amazons nod and murmur in agreement.

AMAZON #1:

We should bring it up at the Council. A decision needs to be made!

AMAZON #2:

That's right!

VOICE (off-camera, calmly):

That's right.

The camera pulls around as the Amazons turn, startled, to see Artemis standing behind them, obviously un-noticed until now. A hushed silence falls over them as they are awed by the presence of a goddess.

MORAI (drops on one knee, bowing her head):

Artemis...

ARTEMIS (shakes her head):

Rise, Morai.

As Morai gets up, Artemis looks at the other Amazons.

ARTEMIS:

You are among the few who have seen that Eve has made the wrong choices. If you continue to follow her, the Amazon Nation will suffer.

Again, the group of Amazons nod and murmur in agreement.

ARTEMIS (continues):

Since when have the Amazons allowed some pathetic villagers to stay on their lands? (forcefully) The Amazons were once strong, feared *warriors*. What has happened to that?

The Amazons cheer, looking fired up. Mora flashes a gleeful smile.

ARTEMIS:

This is your chance to restore the glory of the Amazon Nation, with me at your side once again.

MORAI:

A council meeting has been requested, my goddess.

ARTEMIS (sneers):

Do you really expect the Council to go against the Queen? It's Eve who will decide whether the Amazon nation will worship me or not.

MORAI:

And if she's against it--

ARTEMIS:

Well, then we'll just have to do something about her.

XENA (off-camera):

Not so fast.

The camera pulls around to show a pissed off Xena with her sword extended, pointing towards Artemis. Artemis chuckles as she turns to face Xena.

ARTEMIS (contemptuous):

You know Xena, there comes a time when you should just let your daughter fight her own battles.

The other Amazons stand behind her.

XENA (angrily):

When a vengeful goddess is after my daughter, then it becomes *my* battle. Now you leave this tribe alone, or--

ARTEMIS (laughing):

Or what? Your power to kill gods is long gone, Xena.

Xena comes closer and points her sword at Artemis.

XENA:

I know you're worried about the Twilight happening all over again. Well, I can guarantee you that if you or any of the other gods come after Eve...then history *will* repeat itself. (snarls) I hear Hell is lovely this time of year.

This seems to strike a chord with Artemis and fear fills her face for a moment, but she quickly regains her composure.

ARTEMIS (irritated):

So I see Ares can't keep his mouth zipped--among other things. (sneers) Must be nice to have a god as your lap dog.

Xena gives her a cold stare.

ARTEMIS:

But don't worry, I won't make the same mistake twice.

With a smirk, Artemis vanishes in a flash of green light vanishes. Morai gives Xena a cold stare.

XENA:

I wouldn't get overconfident if I were you, Morai. *You're* not immortal.

Morai turns around without a word and walks off with the other Amazons. Xena stands watching them, sheathing her sword.

CUT TO

A montage of the sun sinking behind the trees. The camera pulls down to reveal the Council Chambers.

DISSOLVE TO

The Council meeting.

DISSOLVE TO

Ares' temple. The typical God of War temple comes to view. There is a flash of green light and Artemis appears next to the altar. With a snarl, she launches a green fireball at a statue of Ares, knocking it down, then throws another fireball at the wall, burning a black hole in a wall painting of a battle, and at another wall, causing a lot of swords and axes to fall down with a deafening clatter.

A priest, wearing a long dark robe, comes running out of a back room, a terrified look on his face.

PRIEST (shocked):
What are you--?

Before he can finish, Artemis launches another fireball at him, hitting him in the chest. He falls dead.

Ares appears in a flash of blue light.

ARES (angrily, looking at the dead priest):
What in Tartarus--?

ARTEMIS (shrieks in rage):
Traitor!

She launches another fireball at Ares, which he manages to duck.

ARES:
Stop it, Sis!

Artemis holds up her hand; one of the swords lying on the floor, with a skull handle, flashes into her hand and she charges Ares. He draws his own sword and their weapons clash. They go at each other with shouts of rage, spinning, kicking and sparring. After a few moments Ares distracts Artemis with a false thrust, then kicks the sword out of her hand; it flies up toward the ceiling and falls on the floor with a clatter.

ARES (sneers):
I'd stick to arrows if I were you.

Artemis takes advantage of this moment to kick out his legs from under him, and Ares sprawls on his back with a shocked "Whoa!" while Artemis kicks the sword out of his hand and sends it flying across the floor, grinning evilly. He, in turns, kicks at her ankles; she falls on top of him with a cry of rage, and he throws her back and gets up.

Artemis rises to her feet and they charge each other with bare hands, punching and kicking as blue and green sparks fly from their blows. The whole temple trembles as the two gods fight each other. Finally, Ares manages to grab one of Artemis' wrists. She swings back her other hand, forming a fireball in it.

ARES (yells hoarsely):
Enough!

Out of breath, Artemis lowers her hand. He lets go of her wrist and they both step back, glaring at each other.

ARES:

You know, this is *not* a good time to be killing worshippers-- (he nods toward the dead priest) or fighting each other!

ARTEMIS (spits out):

Or to spill everything to your little *girlfriend*.

ARES (rolling his eyes):

She's Xena. It wouldn't have taken her long to figure it out for herself.

ARTEMIS:

Yeah, but you had to go and make her job easier. (snorts) I can't believe the way she's got you wrapped around her little finger. (viciously) Of course, what should we expect after the first time you betrayed the whole family and sided with her!

ARES (in her face):

Don't you forget that Xena and I went down to Hell to save you.

ARTEMIS:

Yeah, well, I have no intention of going back there. Aunt Demeter is dying. The rest of us will follow if we don't do something. The last thing we need is Xena on our case.

ARES (shouting):

Xena wouldn't *be* on our case if you weren't stupid enough to go after her daughter!

ARTEMIS (with a sinister smile):

Are you so sure her daughter has nothing to do with the Twilight, Ares? The prophecy was about her.

ARES (angrily):

Yeah, a prophecy that fulfilled itself because you went after Xena and her child. Dammit, Artemis-- I don't plan on betraying my own family again--but you keep doing this, and you're going to get us all killed!

ARTEMIS (shaking her head):

No, I'll ensure my survival. Now stay out of my way, and let me do what I have to.

Artemis vanishes, as Ares lets out a deep breath and shakes his head.

DISSOLVE TO

Council chambers.

Morai is standing up in front of the crowd of Amazons and is shouting to get her point across.

MORAI (shouting):

With a goddess on our side, how can the Amazons lose? The Amazon Nation is weakened--we

need someone to protect us in our times of need. We can't just stand and let ourselves be pushed around by some pathetic farmers!

Eve raises her hand.

EVE (holding back anger):

Thank you, Morai--that's enough. Now, would someone like to speak for the other side?

Gabrielle stands up from her seat.

EVE (smiling):

Gabrielle.

Gabrielle turns around to address the Amazons.

GABRIELLE (speaking to the Amazons):

If you expect to find your answers in the hands of a god...then you're wrong. Just a couple months ago I saw Artemis seek deadly revenge against a woman who defied her nearly fifty years ago--*after* she killed the woman's husband and all of her children. (A murmur ripples through the crowd) Artemis doesn't give a damn about the Amazons. She only cares for herself. I'm saying this only because I want what's best for the Amazons--

The camera moves over Morai as she stands up in anger.

MORAI (shouting to Gabrielle):

No, you only want what is best for you and Xena!

EVE (standing up):

Morai, let Gabrielle speak!

Some of the Amazons start to chime in.

MORAI (shouting):

Whatever you say about Artemis, I would much rather have a goddess leading our tribe than someone who slaughtered our sisters!

GABRIELLE (trying not to shout):

No! I will not stand by and watch the Amazons fall into Artemis' clutches. Artemis has never cared for the Amazons in the past--where was she when the Amazons were in danger?

VOICE (off-camera, speaking loudly):

Dead, thanks to Queen Eve and her beloved Mother.

The camera pulls around to reveal the voice...it's Artemis. She is standing in the opposite corner of the council chambers.

The camera pulls in on the doorway to show Xena, standing in the shadows unseen by everyone else, with a tight grip on her chakram.

ARTEMIS:

You know, I find it very hypocritical of *you*, Gabrielle, to judge me for not "being there" for the

Amazons when they needed me. (pursing her lips) And where were *you*, Gabrielle? For years, you were a queen of this tribe--and what did you do except, make a couple of guest appearances every now and then? Mostly to use the Amazons as your personal army, as you did in the war at Corinth.

The camera pans over the Amazons' faces as they listen closely to the goddess' points.

GABRIELLE (forcefully):

But I defended them when they needed it. I can't say the same for you.

ARTEMIS (smiling):

You know, the way you act, you'd think I was going to do something awful like sell a lot of Amazons into slavery.

She grins to herself as the camera pans over to Eve, who looks distraught.

ARTEMIS (smoothly):

All I am asking is for the Amazons to accept me back into their lives. (to the Amazons, with an apologetic look that we can tell is fake) I'm sorry I wasn't there for you. I'm sorry I abandoned you when you needed me the most. (glaring at Eve) Because I should have stopped the Bitch of Rome from marching into these lands and slaughtering your sisters years ago. (after a dramatic pause) Who would have thought I'd return only to find her as Queen of the Amazons?

The camera pans across the Amazons in the audience, many of whom look distressed or angry, and then to Eve. She looks helpless.

ARTEMIS (to Eve, with quiet venom):

You don't deserve to rule the Amazons.

Eve abruptly stands up with a fierce look on her face.

EVE:

I challenge you, Artemis. (off Artemis' shocked look, there is a muttering of voices in the background) No god powers, no tricks--a fair fight. And if I win, you leave this tribe alone--forever.

ARTEMIS (pensively):

And if I win?

EVE (quietly):

Then the Amazons are yours.

ARTEMIS (astonished):

You are *unbelievable*. (pondering for a moment) I accept. I'll give you time to...say your goodbyes.

Artemis vanishes from the council chambers leaving the Amazons in silence, with shocked looks on their faces. Eve walks away, as Gabrielle gives Xena a concerned look. Morai looks pleased.

CUT TO

Eve's hut. Eve is wrapping up her hands, preparing herself for the fight. Xena storms into the hut, with Gabrielle behind her.

XENA (angrily):

What the hell do you think you're doing?!

EVE (brushing off her mother):

Ending this.

XENA:

By sacrificing both yourself and the rest of the tribe?

GABRIELLE:

Eve, she's a goddess. If you think you can beat her--

EVE (looks up sharply):

She promised no tricks or god powers. I have a chance. If I win, the Amazons will be safe.

XENA:

But if you lose...

EVE:

I will gladly die for the Amazons. I owe them that.

GABRIELLE:

And leave them in Artemis' control?

EVE (looking at both of them):

Please, for once, let me fight my own battle. (whispers) Have faith in me.

Eve walks briskly out of the hut. Xena looks upset and Gabrielle puts a comforting hand on her shoulder.

CUT TO

Amazon village square. All of the Amazons have gathered around the fighting mat used in "Path of Vengeance."

The camera pulls on Eve, who is talking to Cyane. Xena and Gabrielle come up behind her. Xena reaches out to her.

XENA (softly):

Eve--

Klymene (the teenage Amazon who became Eve's surrogate daughter) comes running as well.

KLYMENE (distraught):

Eve, you're going to fight *Artemis*?

Eve turns around, a pained look on her face, and quickly hugs Klymene.

EVE:

I'll be okay, I promise.

There is a "whoosh" and a flash of green light, and Artemis materializes on the mat. Eve quickly turns away from her mother, and stares at Artemis. She walks towards the center. Cyane follows her.

ARTEMIS:

I'm surprised. I thought you'd have Mommy fighting in your place. (glares scornfully at Xena)

EVE (angrily):

I can fight my own battles, Artemis.

CYANE:

The rules are simple. The first to stop fighting--dead or...otherwise (she gives Eve an anxious look) loses the match. If the Queen loses, then the title shall be passed on to the one who defeated her. Eve, as the challenger, you may chose the weapon.

EVE:

No weapons.

Artemis grins.

CYANE:

Then you may begin.

Cyane clears out of the way.

MORAI (from the crowd):

We're with you, my goddess!

Close-up on Artemis, who looks pleased.

Eve raises her fist in a boxing block movement. Artemis moves forward, kicking forward. Eve quickly blocks it. Eve swings around, striking her fist around only to be blocked by Artemis. She flings her leg around and her foot strikes Artemis' chest, pushing her back. Many in the crowd cheer for Eve. Pan to Xena and Gabrielle, who exchange a nervous smile, then to Mora, who looks grim.

Artemis charges forward, flipping in the air and striking Eve to the ground. Eve quickly regains her stance, but Artemis has the upper hand and side-smacks Eve across the face.

The camera pulls to Xena, who flinches, and quickly reaches for her chakram. Gabrielle grabs Xena's hand.

GABRIELLE (softly):

Not yet.

The camera pulls back on Eve, tripping Artemis and sending her to the ground. Artemis, enraged, gives a solid kick to Eve's shin, sending her falling to the ground. The pro-Artemis faction of Amazons, led by Morai, cheers loudly.

ARTEMIS (standing back up):

Did you really think you could beat a goddess?

Eve gets up to her feet. In one swift movement, she grabs onto Artemis and thrusts her foot to Artemis' stomach, then rolls Artemis behind her, sending her crashing into the ground. The pro-Eve Amazons cheer.

Artemis rolls back to her feet and then charges forward towards Eve. She gives a solid one-two punch and Eve crashes to the ground.

The camera pulls on Xena as she begins to move through the crowd of Amazons.

Artemis pulls back her foot and kicks Eve in the rib cage, causing her to roll over in pain. She kicks her again, even harder and Eve screams out in pain. Blood drips from her mouth.

Pan to the crowd. Gabrielle looks horrified. Xena is breathing hard, her jaw clenched, her face a mask of quiet rage.

KLYMENE (cries out):
Eve!

Artemis picks Eve up by the arm, as Eve struggles to break free. She pulls back and hits her across the face, letting her hit the ground. Before Artemis can make another move, Xena charges forward and points the chakram at her neck.

ARTEMIS (contemptuously):
Mommy to the rescue. I knew it.

XENA (furious):
It's over. You *won*.

Artemis grins in triumph and glances at the crumpled Eve, nearly unconscious, as Gabrielle comes up to help her. She looks back up at Xena.

ARTEMIS:
Good. Now, get out of my tribe.

Xena lowers her chakram, as Gabrielle helps Eve to her feet. The Amazons look stunned. Xena wraps her arms around Eve, and leads her away from the mat.

Cyane approaches Gabrielle.

CYANE (pained):
Gabrielle--

GABRIELLE:
Don't worry about me. It's the tribe you should be worried about. (Squeezes Cyane's hand) Be careful.

She follows Xena and takes Eve's other arm, helping lead her. Klymene starts to walk after them but Morai grabs her shoulder.

MORAI:
Where do you think *you're* going, little girl?

KLYMENE (distraught):

Eve--

MORAI:

She's not your mother. And she's not your sister--not anymore. You stay here with your tribe.

Pan to Morai, who raises her fist in salute.

MORAI:

All hail, Goddess Artemis, Queen of the Amazons!

AMAZONS:

Artemis! Artemis! Artemis!

Close-up of Artemis; she throws her head back in satisfaction as her eyes begin to glow a faint green.

Then, pan to Xena, Gabrielle and Eve. They have stopped for a moment, looking back at the Amazons cheering Artemis. Eve is barely conscious and bleeding. All three women look utterly sickened as we:

FADE OUT

ACT THREE

FADE IN

Stream. Gabrielle is tending to the horses, while Xena sits near a small stream running through the forest. Eve is on her back next to her, the color is drained from face and she seems to be in intense pain. Xena applies a pressure point to her daughter's midsection.

XENA (softly):

Looks like you broke a couple ribs. We'll have to get you patched up as soon as we can.

Eve closes her eyes, not wanting to think about the pain. Gabrielle comes up next to her, having soaked a rag in the river. She gently begins to clean Eve's wounds.

EVE (mutters):

I'm sorry, Mother...

XENA (confused):

What?

EVE:

I'm sorry...you warned me and I didn't listen. I thought I could take her on, and now--because of me--she has control of the Amazons.

Xena brushes back her daughter's hair, as we notice the weariness in Eve's eyes.

XENA:

No, she doesn't. Not for long.

Zoom in on her resolute face.

CUT TO

An abandoned temple. The exterior of the temple has caved in, but some of the statues and pillars still remain.

Artemis appears in front of the temple, with Morai by her side.

ARTEMIS:

One of my greatest temples--destroyed by Velasca many years ago.

As the camera moves on the temple ...

DISSOLVE TO

[FLASHBACK]

From "A Necessary Evil".

Velasca destroying the temple to Artemis.

[END OF FLASHBACK]

MORAI:

We will rebuild the temple in your honor, my Queen.

ARTEMIS (nods):

Start at once. It will affirm the renewal of the bond between the goddess and her people. (thinking)
Put the children, the old, and weak to work on it at once. I want it completed as soon as possible.

MORAI:

What about the others?

ARTEMIS:

I have other plans for them. My first act as your patron goddess and Queen will be to wipe out that pathetic little village that has settled on our lands.

Pan to Morai, a flash of wild joy on her face.

ARTEMIS (continues):

Get the Amazons ready to attack by morning.

MORAI (eagerly):

Yes, my goddess. (pauses for a moment) But--

ARTEMIS (frowns):

But what?

MORAI:

What about Xena and Gabrielle?

ARTEMIS:

What about them?

MORAI:

They're not going to go along with this.

ARTEMIS:

I'm a goddess, Morai. I don't have to worry about (sneering) *Xena and Gabrielle*. Especially now while they're busy tending to poor little Eve.

CUT TO

We fade into the village from "Grey Areas"--the Lanis settlement. The camera moves in on a small home on the outskirts of the village.

CUT TO

Inside the home. Caleb, the boy put on trial in "Grey Areas," is bringing two cups of some beverage to Xena and Gabrielle, who are sitting by a bed where Eve lies sleeping. He hands them the mugs.

CALEB:

Here you are.

XENA (nods):

Thank you. (she starts to drink)

GABRIELLE (softly, taking the mug):

We can't thank you enough for letting us stay here, Caleb.

CALEB (smiles):

It's the least I can do.

The camera pulls over to show his mother, sitting at a table, nervously tapping her fingers on the tabletop.

CALEB'S MOTHER (fearful):

If they find out we are housing an Amazon, they could throw us out of the village.

XENA (reassuringly):

We'll be out of here by morning. (Looking at Eve, softly) Besides--she isn't an Amazon anymore

Zoom in on the sleeping Eve. She begins to shake her head, as if having a nightmare.

EVE (muttering):

The Twilight is upon us. (whispering) A new day is a coming.

Pan to Xena and Gabrielle, who exchange a shocked look.

CROSS-FADE TO

The sun setting behind the trees.

DISSOLVE TO

A field at dusk. Xena is striding through the field, looking grim. Ares materializes in front of her. She continues to walk, brushing past him. He follows her. Tension fills the air between them.

XENA (coldly):

I hope you're happy.

ARES (sarcastic):

Oh yeah. Aunt Demeter's dying, all of us may be next, Dad is getting cryptic messages from the Fates about life-and-death choices...never better, thanks for asking.

XENA (forcefully):

Well, *my* daughter almost died today at your sister's hands. And you still won't give me a weapon to protect her.

ARES:

Artemis. Yeah, we had a few--words before.

XENA (bitter):

Did you. Well, I'll have a few *words with her* before this is over--with or without your help.

Ares walks ahead of her and stops, blocking her path. He puts his hands on her shoulders.

ARES (trying to be gentle, his voice strained):

Xena. I won't let any of the other gods hurt you--or Gabrielle or Eve. But no more Xena, Slayer of Gods. (his voice rises) Once was enough.

XENA:

So you're siding with your family.

She walks around him and starts to walk away.

ARES:

And you're siding with the God of Eli--even though you defied his angels and brought the Olympians back from Hell!

XENA (stops and turns her head toward him abruptly):

I'm siding with my daughter. What do you expect me to do? She's a part of this and I'll protect her.

ARES (quietly):

So a god creates a child--one whose sole purpose is to wipe out the other gods and bring about a new order. And he chooses a mother who'll do whatever it takes to protect her child. Except there's a flaw in his plan...

XENA:

What's that?

ARES:

Gabrielle finally saw through Hope.

Xena looks as if she has been struck in the heart.

XENA (vehemently):

You're comparing *my* daughter to *Hope*?

ARES (shaking his head):

No, I'm just saying there are certain--similarities. You were used as a weapon once--

XENA (bristles):

And what do you expect me to do now?

ARES:

Come up with a better plan than kill first and ask questions later.

XENA (cuttingly):

Nice advice from the God of War. (Their eyes meet and she looks away rather guiltily, then looks at him again) How do you know that what's happening to the gods now even has anything to do with Eve? Or with the God of Eli?

ARES (shrugs):

I don't. (looks at Xena intently) That's just the thing. Nobody knows anything.

DISSOLVE TO

Nightfall. Inside Caleb's house.

Gabrielle is seated in a chair, the house only lit by a few candles and moonlight. She is writing in a scroll. Across from her, Eve is sleeping in her bed. The door opens and Xena comes in. Gabrielle looks up.

GABRIELLE:

You saw Ares?

XENA (stoned-faced):

Yeah. He wasn't much help.

GABRIELLE:

What did you want from him?

XENA:

The dagger of Helios. (off Gabrielle's appalled look) Gabrielle, believe me, I'm not in a hurry to kill any more gods. But if she's after my daughter--

GABRIELLE:

I'm not so sure about that. I think she's mainly after the Amazons.

XENA (gives her a questioning look):
And that's all right with you?

GABRIELLE (reluctantly):
Look, maybe we should give her what she wants. She was the Amazons' patron goddess before-- maybe it's not that bad if they follow her again. Do you really want to risk Eve's life over this?

The camera zooms in on Xena's conflicted expression.

CUT TO

Night. Exterior shot of the ruins of Artemis' temple, the area lit with torches. The older and younger Amazons are working on rebuilding it, with Morai supervising the work.

The camera pans to Klymene, who is pushing a wheelbarrow filled with bricks toward the temple. The look on her face clearly says that she is doing this work reluctantly. She stops to rest.

MORAI:
Move along, girl! I didn't say you could take a break.

KLYMENE (defiant):
Well, I need one.

Morai cracks a whip and Klymene shudders.

MORAI (snarls):
Move it. You ever give me attitude again, you'll regret it.

Klymene nods sullenly and starts pushing the wheelbarrow again.

MORAI (shouts):
Pick up the pace, people--this temple needs to be completed as soon as possible!

There is a flare of green light and Artemis appears next to her.

MORAI (bows):
My Queen.

ARTEMIS (surveys the area):
The reconstruction is going well. (smiles) I'm pleased with you, Morai. How are the preparations for the battle going?

MORAI:
The troops are ready, my Queen--just as you ordered.

ARTEMIS:
Excellent. You have earned my favor. (pauses, smiling coldly) We will attack an hour after dawn. By noontime, that village will no longer be a blot on our land.

The camera pans to Cyane and Antiope approaching.

CYANE (bows her head with outward respect, but clearly resentful):
Artemis. The orders you gave for the attack--

ARTEMIS:
Yes?

CYANE:
With all due respect, all battle plans must be approved by the Amazon Council--

ARTEMIS:
With a goddess to lead you, you don't need the council. Those villagers are on Amazon lands. They will be taken care of. End of story.

Artemis gives Morai an encouraging smile and vanishes. Cyane and Antiope exchange uneasy looks.

CUT TO

Mount Olympus.

Lightning flashes across the sky. The camera moves in on Olympus as we notice that it is nothing but ruins. Broken pillars and statues cover the mountaintop.

The camera pulls around fast to reveal Eve standing in the midst of the ruins. The camera zooms in on her face.

VOICE (off-camera):
The time of the many gods has come to an end.

The camera pulls out to reveal Eli standing next to her.

EVE (softly):
Eli?

Eli smiles.

ELI:
The Twilight is coming, Eve. The way it was always meant to. Not through bloodshed, but through free choice.

EVE (puzzled):
Free choice?

ELI:
The choice of mortals--to worship or not to worship. To follow many gods blinded by their whims and their powers, or one god who is the love within every heart.

EVE (uncomprehending):
Why now?

ELI:
When you embraced your destiny as my Messenger five years ago, the Twilight was set in motion.

EVE:

But I gave it up to lead the Amazons. (uneasy) I--turned my back on you, Eli.

ELI (smiles benignly):

You never turned your back on *me*, Eve. And it doesn't matter. When Livia, the ruthless Champion of Rome and the worst enemy of the followers of Eli, walked away from wealth, power and war to become Eve of the Elijans--that was the greatest victory of our faith, a victory that drew multitudes to my message--and yours. That you then dedicated your life to the service of the Amazons--another people you had persecuted--only served further to show what a change God's love can make in a human heart.

Eve nods wordlessly, her eyes filling with tears.

ELI:

The miracle of love and freedom has already happened. The old gods now have their powers--only by grace of humanity.

His figure starts to fade and become transparent.

ELI (continues):

When mortals turn their backs on the gods...

Eve suddenly notices something and walks towards a fallen pillar. She reaches down and pulls out a sword. Its Ares' sword. The blade has been broken in half. She holds it up, looking at it.

ELI (whispering):

The gods will fall.

SMASH CUT TO

Eve jolts up from her bed, her breathing ragged. Xena rushes to her bedside.

XENA:

Eve. What is it?

Eve is silent, breathing heavily. A noise is heard outside the cabin.

EVE (panting):

Someone's outside.

Xena picks up her sword, its blade gleaming in the moonlight, and turns to the door as we:

FADE OUT

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

End of previous act. Night in Caleb's house. Xena picks up her sword, its blade gleaming in the moonlight, and turns to the door.

She walks out of the room and toward the front door of the house, pushing it open. A figure steps out of the darkness. As moonlight illuminates the figure, we see that it's Klymene.

KLYMENE (overjoyed):

Xena! I'm so glad I found you.

XENA (surprised):

Klymene. What are you doing here?

KLYMENE:

Cyane sent me. Artemis is going to attack the village by morning.

Xena stares at her, shocked.

CUT TO

Inside Caleb's house. The main room, lit by a few candles.

Caleb and his mother stand on one side of the room, looking worried. Eve is sitting on a chair while Klymene sits at her feet, her head resting on Eve's knees while Eve strokes her hair. Xena is standing by the wall while Gabrielle paces around the room.

GABRIELLE:

There has to be something we can do to stop her from controlling the tribe.

EVE (staring straight ahead):

I know now why she's after the Amazons.

Everyone turns to look at her.

EVE:

Eli appeared to me in a dream. He said the time has come when the gods derive their powers only from their worshipers. When mortals turn their backs on them, the gods will fall.

XENA (whispers):

That must be why Demeter is dying.

KLYMENE:

Yeah, but how do we get the Amazons to stop worshiping Artemis?

XENA:

I have an idea.

CUT TO

The sun begins to rise over the Amazon village. Inside the village gates an army of Amazons warriors is assembling. Artemis is standing up on a podium giving a speech to the Amazons. Morai stands at her side.

ARTEMIS (shouting):

This war will ensure our survival as a culture. It's about time we changed the world! Let them all know the power of the Amazons.

The camera pans across the Amazon warriors. Some look proud, others unsure, others worried.

ARTEMIS (continues):

Morai, you will lead the Amazons in battle.

Morai descends from the platform and stands in front of the troops. She salutes Artemis.

MORAI:

We will defeat them in your name, my goddess.

Artemis smiles.

CUT TO

A long shot of the Amazons marching out of the village.

DISSOLVE TO

A medium shot of the Amazons, led by Morai, marching through a field. Suddenly, a familiar battle cry is heard. Morai stops and signals her warriors to do likewise.

MORAI (through clenched teeth):

Xena!

Pan to Xena galloping toward them on Argo II. She pulls to a halt, dismounts in a leap, and then flips toward the Amazons, leaps upward, drawing her sword in mid-air, and lands in front of them, a dangerous grin on her face.

MORAI:

Stay out of this, Xena! Eve isn't an Amazon anymore. Take her and go where you want. You have no business here.

XENA:

Neither does Artemis. She's corrupting the tribe for her own personal gain. Follow her and go to your deaths.

Artemis appears in a flash of green light. She grins evilly.

ARTEMIS:

You first. (to the Amazon warriors) Kill her!

Many of the Amazons look reluctant, but six of the warriors charge Xena, wielding swords. Xena kicks one in the shin and side smacks another. She parries with another, and then drives her elbow into the stomach of one attacking from behind.

She knocks down the Amazon she is parrying with, and then smacks the other with the hilt of her sword. She then leaps forward and front kicks the last warrior trying to attack her.

Xena glances up at Artemis with a sneer, breathing hard. Artemis looks enraged.

XENA:

Oh, by the way, Artemis--I think you have a problem at your temple.

Artemis shrieks in fury and vanishes.

CUT TO

As Artemis materializes in front of the still-unfinished temple, she sees Gabrielle and Eve in the entryway, spilling some sort of fluid from jars. Eve has a torch in her hand.

EVE (glances at Artemis, then to Gabrielle):

What do you think, Gabrielle? Is this paint flammable?

Artemis' eyes go wide.

CUT TO

XENA (smiling):

So now it's just you and me, Morai.

MORAI (points to the Amazons):

And them.

XENA:

Oh, I wouldn't count on them if I were you.

Morai charges Xena with a furious cry. They spar briefly and Xena manages to down Morai with a powerful kick.

XENA:

Give up, Morai.

MORAI:

Never!

Morai leaps up and charges at Xena, who parries the thrust of her sword and evades another thrust. Morai manages to nick Xena's arm but Xena spins around and runs her sword through Morai's stomach. With a cry, Morai falls to the ground.

Xena looks regretful as she sheathes her bloody sword. She looks at the other Amazons, steadying her breath. Cyane steps forward and nods tersely.

XENA:

Let's finish this.

CUT TO

In front of the temple.

ARTEMIS (hissing):

You think destroying a temple is going to defeat me? I have control of your entire tribe!

The young and old Amazons who have been working on the temple exchange uncertain looks.

CUT TO

Xena and the Amazons running through the woods.

CUT TO

The temple. The camera pulls on Eve as she extends the torch out, ready to drop it.

Artemis' eyes widen.

Eve begins to loosen her grip on the torch.

Artemis in anger shoots a fireball at Eve. Gabrielle grabs hold of Eve and tucks and rolls out of the way. The fireball strikes the side of the temple, causing a spark to hit the oil spilled on the ground. The flames erupt, leading into the temple and then causing an explosion. The entire temple begins to cave in as the flames engulf it.

Artemis screams.

Gabrielle and Eve scramble to their feet.

ARTEMIS:

You fools! All I want is to make the Amazons stronger--make sure they won't be wiped off the face of the Earth.

XENA'S VOICE (off-camera):

No.

Pan to Xena, who stands with Cyane, Antiope and the other Amazons.

XENA:

You want to ensure that *you* won't be wiped off the face of the Earth. You don't want to end up on your deathbed like Demeter.

Artemis screams and throws a fireball at Xena, who jumps out of the way and lands hard on the ground.

XENA:

Tell them, Eve!

EVE (raises her voice):

Listen to me! You know I was the messenger of Eli before I was your queen.

Artemis launches a fireball at Eve but Xena, still on her back, throws her chakram, deflecting the fireball so that it strikes the burning wreckage of the temple.

EVE (continues):

Last night, Eli appeared to me in a dream. He said that the end of the Olympian gods is near...

Pan to Xena for a medium close-up as she catches the chakram, glaring at Artemis. Off-camera, Eve continues.

EVE'S VOICE:

...and that the gods still have powers only because mortals continue to worship them. When the gods lose their followers--they will fall.

Artemis screams at the Amazons.

ARTEMIS (pointing at Xena, Gabrielle, and Eve):

Kill them!

The Amazons don't move.

XENA:

Looks like you're losing your worshippers, Artemis.

Fear fills Artemis' eyes.

EVE:

The Twilight is upon you.

Artemis turns toward the Amazons. Cyane and Antiope are standing in front of the tribe defiantly.

ARTEMIS (shouting):

Kill them!

The temple continues to erupt in flames behind her.

The Amazons don't move.

Artemis screams and fires a fireball straight towards the Amazons, but it dissolves in midair.

The Amazons look shocked.

XENA (with grim satisfaction):

She's losing her powers.

Pan to Artemis, who is looking down at her hands, horrified. She begins to tremble and then disappears in a feeble burst of green light.

The arch of the temple collapses as the fire roars.

The camera pulls back as Cyane rushes over to Xena and Gabrielle, and Klymene comes running toward Eve. They embrace.

Wideshot of the burning temple and the Amazons.

CUT TO

Mount Olympus.

Demeter's chambers. Persephone is kneeling by her mother's bedside. Demeter's hand is wrapped around Persephone's. Suddenly Demeter's grip loosens, and Persephone looks worried.

PERSEPHONE (worried):

Mother...

Persephone begins to shake Demeter. She isn't breathing.

PERSEPHONE (screaming):

Mother!

Her body begins to slowly dematerialize, becoming a gray cloud of smoke and a flickering light. Persephone screams. Zeus, Athena, and Ares appear in the chamber as Olympus begins to shake.

CUT TO

Amazon Council chambers. The circle of the twelve council members is in the center of the chambers. Eve's seat is left vacant. The rest of the tribe has gathered in the council chambers.

Eve is standing in the middle of the circle. Xena and Gabrielle are standing off to the side with the others.

NARI:

By Amazon law, you have been banished from this tribe by Artemis. We have to uphold the law, Eve.

CYANE (sarcastically):

Well, according to Amazon law Artemis is still our Queen. So we should probably get back to working on that temple.

OTHILA:

Artemis is no longer our Queen, I think we can all agree on that. But only the next queen can lift Eve's banishment--that's the law. And for that, we need a queen.

NARI:

The Council will select a new Queen as Eve's replacement.

EVE:

Very well.

She turns and leaves the chamber, followed by Xena and Gabrielle.

OTHILA:

I can think of no better queen than Cyane.

Close-up on Cyane's face. She looks like she has an idea.

CUT TO

Amazon village.

Xena and Gabrielle are tending to their horses, Eve is next to them.

EVE (hiding her emotions):

So where to next?

GABRIELLE:

Stop by Corinth, and pick up Darion and Lykia.

Cyane walks up next to them.

EVE (smiling):

Cyane...

CYANE:

Sorry to keep you waiting so long... (looking at Eve) my Queen.

EVE (startled):

Queen? But the council--

CYANE:

The Council chose me as the new queen. I abdicated in your favor.

EVE:

But the laws! The law says that once a queen has been deposed, she can't--

CYANE (smiles):

We remembered that laws are made by people. And people can change the laws.

Xena smiles.

CUT TO

Exterior shot of Mount Olympus.

DISSOLVE TO

Main hall. Persephone is sitting in the corner, looking out the window. The camera pulls out to show Zeus and Ares standing in the distance.

ZEUS:

What is on your mind, my son?

ARES:

How much longer until we all end up like Demeter.

ZEUS:

You know, for thousands of years, I watched mortals do unthinkable things when threatened with death. I never quite understood it until I was faced with my own. (He takes a deep sigh.) I was willing to kill an innocent child to ensure my survival, and that is something I'll always regret. But--

ARES:

But what?

ZEUS (vehemently):

But I never want to go back to that *place* ever again. I won't let my family go back to that netherworld. And if I have to do unthinkable things to keep that from happening--

ARES (softly):

I understand.

A brief pause.

ZEUS:

There is something else you need to know. (Off Ares' guarded look) I went to speak to the Fates again--to ask them about that choice they said we'll have.

ARES (chuckles bitterly):

I bet they cleared it up.

ZEUS:

They said that one woman is the key--

CROSS-FADE TO

The three Fates, in medium close-up, superimposed over Zeus and Ares talking.

CLOTHO (her voice fading into Zeus):

One woman--

LACHESIS:

--with three faces--

ATROPOS:

-- Roman warrior--

CLOTHO:

--Messenger of Peace--

LACHESIS:

--Amazon Queen.

CROSS-FADE TO

Zeus staring at Ares.

ARES (quietly):
Eve.

The camera pans over and zooms in on Persephone, as a ghostly figure appears by her side. It's Demeter, who gently reaches out and touches her daughter's face.

PERSEPHONE (raises her head):
Mother?

They share a warm smile. Pan to Zeus and Ares, who look at them in amazement.

CUT TO

Xena and Gabrielle sitting in a hut in an Amazon village.

GABRIELLE (quietly):
Can't sleep.

XENA (sighs):
Me either.

Xena continues to polish her chakram. Gabrielle sits next to her.

GABRIELLE:
Reminds me of the old days. You'd stay up all night watching over Eve.

XENA (whispers):
Protecting her from gods.

GABRIELLE:
Funny how history tends to repeat itself.

XENA (whispers):
Yeah, it does.

Xena polishes her chakram and then looks up at Gabrielle.

XENA (softly):
Gabrielle, when I was pregnant with Eve... (searching for words) how did it make you feel?

Gabrielle looks taken aback.

GABRIELLE:
What are you talking about?

XENA:
Did it...hurt you? It was so much like...what you went through--and I never thought about how you might be feeling. I just--told you that I knew she was good, and that was good enough for me. But you--

GABRIELLE (tears filling her eyes):

Xena, I-- (shakes her head) Hope was evil. I know that now.

There is a brief silence.

XENA:

I handled it all wrong. I'm sorry. (a pause) If I had another chance, I'd do things differently.

GABRIELLE (softly):

Thank you.

Gabrielle puts her hand on Xena's and they share a tender look as we:

FADE OUT

THE END

[The temple of Artemis was not covered by fire insurance during the production of this motion picture.]