



Fanfic cover by Silvermoonlight.

Seasonal Passion series, Vol. 5:

To you I belong

written by maggielassie

Genre: *Xena Warrior Princess* alternative fan-fiction; Xena/Gabrielle femslash.

Disclaimer: I don't own the *Xena Warrior Princess* characters. Universal/Renaissance does.

Timeline: This story takes place just after the Season Five episode *Amphipolis Under Siege*.

Warning: This story contains sexually explicit erotic moments between two consenting adult women. If this offends you, please refrain from reading. **If you are under 18 years of age, please do not read this** and come back later when you're older and you can read it. If lesbian romantic/sexual relationships are illegal in your country or state, please advocate a change in laws.

Author's note: (1) Obviously, it is not a first time story. I'm more interested in exploring the evolution of Xena and Gabrielle's intimate relationship as it must be taking place beyond the screen, in this *Seasonal Passion* series. (2) This is a seasonal X/G femslash series, which means there is one romantic and erotic X/G femslash story per XWP season –thus one more story to come in the future.

Many Thanks to: Norsebard for the proofreading and feedback; some people in the Xenaverse and lesbian culture for inspiring me; Donar (from TX) and Marcia (a.k.a. Amphodia) for the wonderful encouragements and support they express for my writing.

Feedback: see feedback page.

Through the little window of the wash room she was in, Xena noticed that night would be drawing near in another couple of candlemarks or so. The Warrior Princess was sitting in the hot tub that Cyrene had prepared for her. Her mother was downstairs with Gabrielle, taking care of baby Eve.

Cyrene had known that Xena and Gabrielle would need to bathe after all their energetic fighting during the siege of Amphipolis, so the tavern-keeper had poured several buckets of hot water to fill the bath. However, since Cyrene did not yet know that Xena and Gabrielle were lovers, the warrior had told her bard that the two of them would wash themselves separately tonight. Xena certainly did not want her mother to find this out in such a likely awkward way.

Moreover, the Warrior Princess needed a bath as soon as possible after what had happened with Ares earlier on today. Gabrielle also had to help Cyrene watch over Eve, in case Xena's mother might have to go see the wounded next door. There were so many injured people that Cyrene's tavern had had to be used as an infirmary to treat them all. Later, after dinner, Xena would go check on them again to see how they were doing.

For now, the warrior woman was bathing in a copper tub, in the middle of the small wash room at her mother's house in Amphipolis. The water was nice, warm and cosy –enveloping Xena's well-toned, curvaceous body. Now and then, the warrior kept rubbing soap onto the cloth she was using to wash herself with. She frantically scrubbed herself. Xena wanted to wash every single part of her body after getting so close to Ares. What had happened in his temple had been making her feel so nervous.

Furthermore, Gabrielle had been looking and sounding so worried and jealous after Xena had been telling her that she had 'felt something' when she had been making out with Ares. The warrior had detected a tinge of sulk in the younger woman's behaviour while they had been walking back to Cyrene's. Xena really wanted to have a talk with her lover as soon as possible tonight. Ares was still the last person she had kissed, and she clearly did not desire to keep things that way.

After she finished bathing in the tub, the Warrior Princess immersed herself deep in the water to rinse off the soap off from her body and hair. This bathwater needed to be kept warm for Gabrielle who was to come next, so Xena needed to hurry and get out now. The tall dark-haired woman stood up, got out of the tub and grabbed a towel. She started drying herself.

She could no longer wait for the moment when she and her lover would be making passionate love again. Hopefully, Gabrielle would not be too mad at her. The two of them had been fooling Ares so brilliantly after all. Xena had left her usual clothes lying on the floor while she had been bathing. She picked them up one at a time and began to put her leather outfit and armour back on for the evening, along with a clean pair of dark breeches she had brought for herself.

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“Evie!” Gabrielle smiled, completely beatified, at the little baby in front of her. Eve had been placed in a cradle that had been brought into Cyrene’s kitchen so that both women could watch over her.

Xena’s mother was boiling some crushed oats in hot water to prepare some fine baby cereals. After watching the cooking fire under the small cauldron she was using, she turned to look at Gabrielle and Eve. “Isn’t she nice, huh, my granddaughter?” The curly-haired woman of fifty-odd years of age beamed.

“She’s so beautiful,” the short-haired blonde replied as she briefly glanced at Xena’s mother. “I bet you’re proud, Cyrene?” Gabrielle turned back to the baby. “Oooh... Aren’t you a cutie?!” she tenderly exclaimed as she lightly stroked Eve’s cheek.

“Her mushy oats are ready. We’ll just need to wait until they cool down a bit,” Cyrene said while pouring the cereals into a bowl on her kitchen counter.

Gabrielle lifted Eve from the cradle. “Come with me, li’l one. Your supper’s ready.” The battling bard of Poteidaia carried the baby in her arms. She went to sit on a chair at the kitchen table. Placing Eve on her lap, she spoke to Cyrene: “Xena should be done soon with the bath, if she’s leaving any hot water for me, that is... I’ll be glad when I can go up there.”

“Ha...” Xena’s mother grinned as she brought the bowl and a spoon to the table. She put them down on it. “Don’t worry about Eve, Gabrielle.” She reached out for the baby. “Here, give her to me. I’ll spoon-feed her myself once it’s at the right temperature. Meanwhile, you can go upstairs and see if Xena’s still gonna be taking much time in the bath.”

“Okay, thanks.” Gabrielle handed the baby to Cyrene and stood up. While Xena’s mother sat down with Eve at the table and took care of her, the short-haired blonde woman walked towards the stairs.

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As Xena came out of the little wash room, she walked towards her bedroom –the bedroom she used to sleep in as a child. She opened the door and got in, and then she suddenly heard someone climbing upstairs. She quickly turned around, took a peek out of the door and saw it was Gabrielle coming up. Xena hurriedly went to their saddlebags – which had been placed in the warrior’s room– to get a fresh, dry towel and some clean underwear for her lover. She came out of her room and saw Gabrielle walking along the corridor, towards the wash room.

“Hey, sweetheart!” the Warrior Princess called out, extending an arm to show the things she had in her hand. She saw the blonde woman turn to her. Gabrielle displayed an unemotional countenance on purpose. Xena attempted a clumsy smile at her soulmate. “You’re going to need these... for after your bath.”

The battling bard of Poteidaia briefly pouted her lips. She could still remember the very disturbing ‘I felt something’ she had heard her older partner say earlier on about the session with Ares. The short-haired woman walked towards the long-haired one, unsmiling, and nonchalantly took the items from her taller lover’s hands. “Thanks,” she spoke in a somewhat cool tone, “Is the water still warm?” She walked back towards the wash room.

“Yes, Gabrielle,” Xena tried to respond cordially despite Gabrielle’s strange attitude, “very warm.” She could notice the battling bard was being sulky to some extent. The warrior did not like this. She saw the blonde woman get into the wash room and swiftly shut the door behind her. The Warrior Princess went back inside her bedroom.

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Half a candlemark later, Xena had been brushing her wet long hair while sitting before the lit fireplace in her room, hoping her hair would be dry soon, when she suddenly stood up and went to put down the hairbrush on her bedside table by the bed. She decided to go sneak in the nearby wash room. She had to go speak to Gabrielle, now. Her

mother was probably being too busy taking care of Eve right at this moment that she surely would not notice a thing. A fully clad Warrior Princess with semi-damp hair opened the door of her bedroom, got out and walked towards the wash room, where her blonde lover was.

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Gabrielle was relaxing in the hot tub and had her eyes closed when Xena entered the little room. Steam still faintly rose from the water, as the bath had remained warm enough. The battling bard opened her eyes as soon as she heard the warrior shut the door behind her. The short-haired woman looked up at her tall lover, who was now standing in front of the bath.

“Xena? What are you doing here?” Gabrielle asked, confused. “You don’t want your mother finding out about us this way, do you?”

“No,” Xena answered in a quiet voice, gesturing to the younger woman to speak lower, “I’ve been very careful not to make a noise so far... I came to talk to you.” The Warrior Princess pulled a chair that was in a corner of the small room, placed it in front of the tub and sat on it.

“What do you want?” the bard enquired in a lower tone. She rubbed a bar of soap onto her forearm as she kept enjoying her bath.

Xena seized another soap bar that had been lying nearby. She then reached inside the tub to catch one of her younger lover’s feet. She grasped Gabrielle’s leg, moved it above water and started washing her girlfriend’s foot with great loving care. “My beloved Gabrielle, all I want is you.” Her blue eyes took on a seductive hue as she gazed deeply and enticingly at the short-haired woman.

The way Xena was looking at her made Gabrielle’s heart melt a little and she began to smile slightly. “Fine. You can wash my feet for now!” The battling bard smirked. She moved her leg back into the water after the brunette had finished cleaning the first foot. She lifted her other leg and extended it out above the bath’s surface, towards Xena.

The warrior woman grabbed the foot that her short-haired lover was offering to her and leisurely lathered the sole and toes with soap while keeping her eyes on Gabrielle. She was so glad she had just managed to change her lover’s mood to some extent. “Can we talk, please, Gabrielle?”

“About what, Xena?”

“About the sort of face you’ve been pulling to me ever since we came back here earlier on?” After Xena was done with the cleaning, she put down the soap and immersed her soulmate’s lovely foot underwater to rinse it, without letting it go.

Gabrielle said nothing for now. She could feel that Xena still held a firm grip on her leg and wondered what she was up to. She kept a friendly, but reserved, expression on her face. She was not going to let the Warrior Princess have her way so easily. She first wanted some explanations for her lover ‘feeling something’ in someone else’s arms. She also wanted Xena to spill it all, about what had exactly happened in that temple today.

The older woman lifted her lover’s foot from the water and gently massaged it, making Gabrielle utter a faint moan of enjoyment. She knew her bard loved this. “I admit... I just don’t understand you, sweetheart. You were in this with me. This was our plan, to deceive Ares so that we could get his help in making Athena withdraw her army from Amphipolis. So what’s wrong, Gabrielle? Is this because I said to you that I felt a ‘little something’ you’ve been behaving like this since we came back here?” Xena asked clearly. She then softened up and looked compassionately at her short-haired lover. “Oh, sweetheart... Just let me know what I can do for you and I’ll do it.” She took her younger lover’s big toe into her mouth and started to suck on it tenderly.

Gabrielle did not answer Xena's questions. She just closed her eyes and delighted in the feel of her lover's mouth engulfing her toe. After a few silent moments, she re-opened her eyes and spoke: "Go back to your room and wait for me, Xena. We'll talk soon. I simply don't want your mom to catch us in here like this."

Xena stopped what she was doing and released the younger woman's leg, which then moved back underwater. "All right." The Warrior Princess stood up, walked around the tub and quickly bent down to kiss the top of her soulmate's blonde head. "I hope to see you soon, my love." She headed back out of the wash room door as the battling bard watched her leave. Just before she left, the long-haired woman turned to her younger lover. "I need you, Gabrielle," she stated in a pleading tone before shutting the door behind her on the way out.

Gabrielle sighed. She swiftly rose and climbed out of the bath a few moments later. She dried herself with the towel Xena had given her. She put her brownish leather top, her orange skirt and the remainder of her usual clothes back on. It really was time now that she and Xena have a serious talk, for sure.

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"So you said earlier on that you 'felt something' when you were with Ares today, isn't that right, Xena?" The battling bard of Poteidaia stood, arms crossed, sternly looking down at the Warrior Princess –who was seated on the floor by the fireplace in her room, drying her long hair with the heat.

"Yes, this is right," Xena reluctantly admitted. She stood up and walked towards Gabrielle who had just arrived in her bedroom a minute ago. She worryingly looked at her younger lover. "Oh, sweetheart, I need you so much."

As she approached her soulmate, the warrior wanted to kiss her so badly that she tried, but the blonde woman motioned her to stop before she could even do it. "Not so fast, Xena..." Gabrielle's sea-green eyes solemnly stared up into her lover's azure blue ones. "I really need to know what happened in Ares' Temple today. I already know this was part of the plan you'd organised with me, but I do not want you to hide anything from me about what happened."

"Sure..." the warrior woman affirmed anxiously. "You know I really had to act the part convincingly in order to fool him to save our daughter and Amphipolis. What do you really want to know, Gabrielle?"

"Everything, Xena," Gabrielle earnestly requested. "I need to know all about what happened between you and Ares today. Please tell me." The short-haired woman went to sit down on Xena's bed, and her long-haired partner followed her.

Xena sat next to her shorter lover and started to talk, with slight qualm showing in her voice: "Well, when I first went to see him in his temple, I really acted as if he was going to get me as a lover and I was going to become his warrior queen, offer him my body, everything..." She gazed into Gabrielle's eyes with an embarrassed look on her face.

"And?" The battling bard tilted her head, ready to listen to everything the Warrior Princess was about to reveal to her.

"And before the first time I kissed him today, I felt so nervous. I hadn't felt the God of War's powerful charms penetrate deep inside my soul for years, but I knew this was going to be very intense. Nonetheless, Gabrielle... I could feel my body shaking like a leaf." Xena whimpered, "oh... I trembled inside just before my mouth and his made contact..."

"And after that? Please, Xena..." Gabrielle austerey nodded, somewhat peeved. "Carry on."

"Once he and I kissed... I could feel his godly influence working its dark magic on me, his intense powers controlling me to some extent." Xena tried to keep eye contact with her soulmate, despite her own anxiety. She

cleared her throat and continued: "I remembered when I used to be with him in the past, during the time when I was a warlord. I noticed this past attraction I used to have for him also put me further under his spell today." She shook her head tensely. "But Gabrielle, I never forgot our plan or the fact that we both had to deceive him so skilfully... He wouldn't buy what I was saying to him, so that's when you got into the picture and made him believe that what I was saying was true."

"Yeah, Xena, I know this part." Gabrielle put a warm hand on top of her soulmate's shoulder. She caressed the warrior's skin while keeping an intent gaze at the taller woman. "Please tell me more. Tell me about the second time you saw him in his temple today. What did you do exactly?"

"I had dropped my armour and clothes on the floor before I showed myself naked to him while dropping the furs that were covering my body. But I think I'd told you this was part of my plan to seduce and deceive him, hadn't I?"

"You did. What happened after that?"

Xena was now seriously worried about what she was about to reveal to Gabrielle. "As he approached me... I grabbed him and threw him onto a couch. I could feel his strong godly influence on me, so I had to attempt to keep the little bit of control I had left. Then I jumped on top of him and then..."

The battling bard of Poteidaia noticed the Warrior Princess tense up even more. "Then what, Xena?" She looked more closely and suspiciously in her older lover's eyes.

"Gabrielle..." Xena reluctantly carried on, "I'm sorry... It was as if I could feel myself being attracted to him somehow, for some reason. So we kissed and..." She hesitated, her face grimacing, disgusted at the recollection.

"Tell me everything, Xena." Gabrielle was becoming seriously irritated now. She placed a hand on the side of the warrior's face, slid it slightly down to lift her chin and made the warrior woman look at her more deeply. "Xena," the bard's facial expression showed some worry, "after all we've been through together, I really do think you can tell me how far you went with Ares. I really want to know. I just don't want you to hide anything from me. I never hide anything from you, so please... tell me the rest." The blonde woman waited apprehensively for her taller lover to speak. She prepared herself for the possibility of hearing something nasty, even though she already knew Xena had not had any penetrative sex with Ares. She slowly slid her hand down past the brunette's shoulder and clutched her upper arm, as if wanting to squeeze the truth out of Xena.

"Oh... sweetheart... this sort of god plays tricks on us all the time. It's like that other time when I was sleeping in the woods with Eve in my arms, and he started invading my head while I was asleep. He'd induced a disgustingly perverted dream in my mind that time, remember?" The Warrior Princess so desperately wanted Gabrielle to know that Ares had been exercising some sort of uncontrollable godly influence upon her mind. Both this and her past relationship with him caused her to feel very slightly attracted to him, but she wanted so much for her battling bard to know that Ares was first and foremost using his godly aura to draw women to him, and that Gabrielle mattered to her more than anything else.

"Xena," the short-haired woman replied in a rather annoyed tone, "I already know about that awful dream which was not really yours to begin with. You told me all about it, about how you'd felt completely invaded and controlled by him during your sleep that time." She tightened her grip on her long-haired lover's arm. "Now please tell me more about what happened when you were on top of him in his temple today? And tell me what that 'I felt something' meant? What did you exactly mean by that?" Her look was very serious. She wanted to know everything.

"Gabrielle... when I said I'd 'felt something', I basically meant that... because of a small part of my dark past I'd spent with him intimately, and the fact that his godly presence can use some powerful charms to control women, I may have been very faintly feeling something while I was in his arms, but there's nothing deeper to it, my love,

really..." Xena stared at Gabrielle in a pleading way. "You're the only one I love, Gabrielle." She placed a warm hand on the blonde woman's cheek and lightly caressed it.

The battling bard seized the Warrior Princess' hand and slowly moved it away from her face. "Xena, please tell me..." She was getting very impatient. The warrior was driving her nuts by not answering her main question. "What did you do when you were on top of him? Earlier on, you said that you nearly ran out of foreplay. I wanna know exactly... what kind of foreplay?"

Xena so much wanted this difficult conversation over and done with. She did not want to drag this on any longer. She told the truth to Gabrielle: "I briefly bit on his nipple, that's all..." A look of remorse could be observed on the warrior's face.

The younger woman contorted her features in repugnance. "Xena!" she grumbled.

"...very briefly," Xena added with insistence. "I'm sorry." She caught the blonde's arm as her lover was starting to turn away from her. "Oh... sweetheart... I didn't do anything else. I was just trying to keep him waiting. He so forcefully wanted to have sex with me. I was feeling so nervous, Gabrielle. I was so impatiently waiting on you to interrupt that damn session with all your fighting... and when you did, oh, I was so thankful for that, even though that bomb was a little much and I wasn't expecting it."

The short-haired woman freed herself from her older lover's grasp and stood up. She turned back to her lover, looking disappointed. "Oh, Xena, I knew you were waiting for me to save you from that mess but that doesn't mean you had to bite on his damn nipple for goodness' sake!" Gabrielle was exasperated. She could not help feeling more than a tad jealous.

Xena could not bear seeing her battling bard so upset. She got up and walked towards the short-haired woman. Facing her, she regretfully wailed: "Oh, baby, I'm so sorry... please... forgive me. I was feeling so nervous when I was in that temple. I never stopped thinking about you while I was there." She tenderly took Gabrielle's hands into her own. "You are my one, my only one... He does not matter to me. Do you believe me?"

The battling bard calmed down a little. She slowly interlocked her fingers with the warrior's and gazed up into the taller woman's eyes. "Yes, Xena... I do believe you. It's just that... I'm a bit angry and frustrated right now, that's all..."

Xena let go of one of Gabrielle's hand to be able to softly touch the short blond hair. She started bending her head down and spoke near her soulmate's mouth: "Will you let me kiss you? I need you so much. I just want to forget all about him and kiss you. Please?"

After giving it some thought, the shorter woman hesitantly yielded. "Uh-huh," she uttered, and her long-haired lover covered her lips with hers.

The kiss was sweet, mending for the both of them. The Warrior Princess felt so glad and excited when she felt the bard's tongue intermingling with hers. Now her soulmate was kissing her, and after such unease she had felt in Ares' arms, it felt incredibly comfortable and heartwarming to kiss Gabrielle again. It really felt like coming home for Xena, to the place where she belonged. After a moment, their mouths separated, and the taller woman stared deeply into her blonde partner's eyes.

The battling bard languidly shook her head. "That was nice... but Xena... I'm still very frustrated about what you did," she said, unsmiling.

"Oh, my love..." the dark-haired woman pleaded, "please... just let me know what I could do for you to get you to forgive me, and I'll do it."

This remark caused Gabrielle to suddenly smirk and then briefly bite on her lower lip. “Well, Xena... there might be something you could do to please me, my darling,” she hinted, smilingly pouting her lips. She walked around her lover, which caused Xena to follow her every move.

The short-haired woman went to lie partially on the bed; she laid her back and her thighs onto the mattress, placing her knees at the edge of the bed. Gabrielle’s lower legs dangled by the side of the mattress. She sensually and unhurriedly spread her legs while smiling up at the Warrior Princess.

Xena’s breath was caught in her throat. The long-haired woman lustfully looked under the blonde’s orange skirt. She could see that Gabrielle was not wearing the underwear she had given her; she was in fact not wearing any. The warrior licked her lips at the sight of blond curls and pinkish labia. She swiftly took off her whole armour, which she chucked on the floor. Still wearing her leather bodice, she went to climb on top of Gabrielle and kissed her again.

The smaller, but strong, woman wrapped her hands around her lover’s neck. “Hmmm...” she moaned against Xena’s mouth as the warrior’s hands travelled around her back and slightly lifted her in an attempt to fumble at her brownish top and remove it. Gabrielle helped Xena get this upper garment out the way.

Once the younger woman’s breasts were exposed to the tall brunette’s libidinous gaze, she raised herself up a little on top of her partner and stared deeply into the sweet sea-green eyes. “What do you want me to do for you, my love? I’ll do anything.”

Gabrielle looked so sexy, still wearing that little necklace around her neck and those thin pleated strips of brown leather around her upper arms. Gazing up into the Warrior Princess’s piercing blue eyes, she answered her question in a low, alluring tone: “Pleasure me, Xena... please... and make me forget all these annoying frustrations over you and Ares.”

“Yes... anything you want, my love.” Xena quickly kissed Gabrielle again. She then immediately trailed her lips and tongue over the younger woman’s chin and down her neck. When the warrior reached the bard’s breasts, she took a great deal of time in squeezing them in her large hands, feeling them with her fingers and firmly stroking them with her tongue.

“Oh, yes... Xena...” Gabrielle slightly lifted her head, her eyes dreamy, watching Xena performing such loving ministrations on her. Her older lover really had to get herself forgiven, for sure. The short-haired blonde woman basked in the feel of her partner’s hands and tongue on her sensitive bust. Her breasts that had already hardened in anticipation.

Xena took one of Gabrielle’s nipples into her mouth and suckled it, wanting to forget absolutely everything about what had happened with Ares as she tasted more and more of the younger woman’s bosom. She groaned in bliss as she kept savouring her lover’s skin. The Warrior Princess’ mouth switched to the other breast and hungrily sucked on its nipple too. At the same time, she kneaded both the bard’s breasts again.

“Uh... Xena... Yes... more...” Gabrielle needed Xena to do everything she wanted right now, everything she requested, everything she desired –so the younger woman would be able to forgive her for her close moments with the God of War. “It’s so much better being with me, huh? Hmmm...” she asked her older lover.

“Oh, yes!” Xena seductively smiled at Gabrielle. The Warrior princess loved the battling bard’s body so much. She descended further on it and knelt in front of the bed, noticing that Gabrielle had become such a strongly toned and very well-shaped creature ever since becoming a properly skilled fighter at the start of the year.

Lifting her head to look more closely at her sidekick’s body, the tall woman relished the feel of her partner’s shape and contours as she ran her hands along her robust little frame. She unhurriedly felt her way around Gabrielle’s gorgeous abdominal muscles, watching them pleasantly twitch in response to her touch.

“Yes... Xena... more, please...” Gabrielle was becoming seriously moist between her thighs.

Xena used both her hands to pull up Gabrielle’s orange skirt and the brownish leather strips, which she all moved up and placed around the short-haired woman’s belly. Slipping her arms underneath the blonde’s thighs and pulling her lower body closer towards her face, the Warrior Princess lifted the battling bard’s muscular legs and put them over her shoulders. The warrior then spread the bard’s thighs a bit wider. She reached around her younger lover’s legs and gently caressed her labia.

She dipped two fingertips into the slippery wetness just outside her partner’s entrance. Having coated her fingers with the familiar nectar, she brought her hand to her mouth to taste the beloved liquid again. “Oh... Gabrielle... You are so mine...” As Xena sucked the juices off her fingertips, her azure blue eyes shone with desire as she stared at the short-haired woman’s face. So willing to please the battling bard, Xena lowered her head and softly nuzzled the golden hair at the apex of Gabrielle’s sex. She subsequently began to part her soulmate’s nether lips with her talented tongue, which then dove deeper into the blonde’s warmth.

“Oh, Xena... Yes!” Gabrielle immediately reached down and put a hand on top of Xena’s head. She entwined her fingers into the thick dark hair, driving the warrior woman even deeper into her soaking wet centre. “Yes... that’s exactly what I meant... oh... about what you could do for me... Good girl... Ah...” The battling bard felt completely ecstatic when she felt her dark-haired lover’s eager tongue thoroughly delving into her folds.

Xena enthusiastically licked her way around Gabrielle’s clit, causing the bard to utter more noises of pleasure and grip more tightly onto her head. The warrior woman’s tongue totally lavished her short-haired lover’s centre, rapturously travelling into reddened, swollen and fully excited bardic lips and textures before entering the welcoming sodden opening. Xena always enjoyed the warmth she found there. The long-haired woman pushed her tongue back and forth inside and hummed into her partner’s sex, bringing about some gratifying vibrations in the younger woman’s centre.

“Xena... oh... ah... yes...” Intense rapture consumed the battling bard.

Xena drank from Gabrielle’s delicious flowing passion as her nose pressed strongly onto the inner folds and nerve endings of her blonde lover. It sounded like music to her ears when she heard the younger woman blissfully cry out some more. After a while, the Warrior Princess moved her tongue back up to the battling bard’s little overexcited bud. She orally pleased it with intense fervour.

“Ah, yes! Xena... oh... that’s right... just like that.” Gabrielle took joy in every flick of Xena’s tongue, every suction from her mouth on her engorged clit. She kept her firm grasp on the warrior’s head.

The dark-haired woman brought her blonde girlfriend over the edge in no time, making her exclaim her name as she came. “Xeeenaaa!” The younger woman went limp, removed her hand from her partner’s hair and threw her head back onto the mattress. The Warrior Princess slowly licked off the essence from the short-haired woman’s spent body, worshipping every drop of her battling bard’s sweet taste. After lovingly kissing Gabrielle’s delicate folds, Xena placed her girlfriend’s legs back on the bed and swiftly climbed her way back up to kiss her.

Their tongues sought each other as they kissed, and Gabrielle could sense her own essence on Xena’s mouth. Then the taller woman used her arms to lift herself up slightly on the bed. The warrior’s sturdy shape hovered over the smaller woman’s robust one when Xena asked Gabrielle: “So? Am I forgiven now?” She gave her a slight half smile.

The battling bard chuckled, gazing up at her lover. “Yes, you are completely forgiven Xena... for now...” She winked.

The Warrior Princess sighed in relief. She dropped her weight onto the blonde woman before her head travelled back down to her bosom. “Hmmm...” Xena briefly kissed each of Gabrielle’s gorgeous mounds. “I’m never gonna

get enough of those boobs.” The remark made her younger lover laugh for an instant. The warrior laid her cheek onto the skin between the bard’s breasts. She happily rested there, closing her eyes.

The younger woman tenderly stroked her soulmate’s dark hair. “I love you, Xena.”

The warrior opened her eyes and slightly turned her head to look up at the short-haired woman’s face. “I love you too, Gabrielle... always...”

“Forever...”

“Nothing, no one can ever separate us... not Ares, not anyone or anything...”

“I know...” The tone of the bard’s voice was sweet and mellow.

Xena kept resting her head near Gabrielle’s breasts as her younger companion continued to caress her hair. That was when they suddenly heard the bedroom door open. Both women had been so excessively absorbed in each other’s emotions that they had not noticed Cyrene coming towards the room.

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The baby had been crying for a short while when Cyrene decided to climb up the stairs to her daughter’s bedroom. At the top of the stairs, she stopped moving, as she could hear strange kinds of noises coming from that room. Listening to those sounds, Xena’s mother could somehow discern the two women telling each other things that mere friends were not supposed to, as well as uttering some suspicious moans. Maybe she should not disturb them, but such an option was not possible right now. Eve needed her mommy.

Moreover, Cyrene felt very intrigued by what she was hearing. She really needed Xena to come downstairs and take care of the baby. At the same time, she had just realised there was something she was curious to find out –what exactly that was going on between her daughter and that young bard of hers.

The curly-haired woman started walking very slowly towards Xena’s bedroom. She was thankful that the corridor’s hardwood floorboards made it easy for her footsteps to go unheard when she was approaching at such a slow-moving pace. Cyrene got to the entrance to her daughter’s room and stood just outside of it for a short moment. She decided not to knock. Just after she had heard them declaring their devotions and going quiet, she seized the handle and opened the door.

She immediately saw Xena and Gabrielle cuddling each other a bit too closely. Her warrior daughter, though still dressed in her leathers, was lying in a compromising position on top of an almost naked Gabrielle with her head laid near the blonde woman’s breasts. After catching Xena with Ares earlier in the day, this was quite a shock for Cyrene. Her eyes widened in utter surprise.

Xena instantly lifted her head and turned it around. “Mom?” she asked in a totally awkward tone. This clearly felt like déjà vu to both daughter and mother.

“Xena!” Cyrene’s exclamation was, once again, an embarrassed one.

The Warrior Princess quickly grabbed the bed’s blanket to cover up her soulmate’s partially nude body, just before she stood up to face her mother. Gabrielle felt disconcerted herself, but she did not say a word. Keeping her naked skin well-covered, the blonde displayed a gawky grin at Xena’s mother.

Not knowing what to say, Cyrene changed the subject straight away. “Sorry, Xena... I really had to come and get you as soon as possible... Eve needs to be breastfed. Can you come downstairs now, please?” the curly-haired

woman requested in an insistent tone, just before she turned away from Xena and Gabrielle and headed back out, towards the stairs.

“I’m coming right down, mom,” replied the Warrior Princess. She glanced back at the battling bard who was still lying on the bed, looking abashed.

“I’m sorry, Xena. I didn’t want her to find out about us this way either.”

“We should have been more careful... I was hoping to take time to...” Xena looked a bit saddened. “... to tell her myself.” She sighed and shook her head. “You stay here for now, sweetheart. Get dressed. I’ll go take care of Eve and talk to mom.”

“Sure. Go, Xena. Your daughter needs you now.”

The warrior walked out of her bedroom –leaving Gabrielle inside– and closed the door behind her before she hurried right downstairs. Her mother was already there –trying to comfort the agitated infant.

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Stepping into the kitchen, Xena carefully took the crying Eve from Cyrene’s arms as the two women briefly exchanged a somewhat reserved look. The tall warrior woman went to sit on a chair near the table and gazed up at her mother. “Mom, can you please help me with my laces at the back?” She jerked her head sideways to imply what she meant. Cyrene instantly walked around Xena’s seat and undid the laces at the back of her daughter’s outfit. Still holding her baby, the Warrior Princess then swiftly used one hand to pull her leather garb down.

Once she had uncovered her bust, she moved Eve closer to her nipple. The young infant stopped crying and suckled on the breast. Xena affectionately and pleasantly sang a little tune to soothe her baby. Eve needed to be breastfed less often these days. The homemade baby food helped, but she still sometimes needed to be nursed, and the Warrior Princess was still lactating to some extent.

Xena’s mother stood by as her daughter carried on breastfeeding the baby until the little one was sated. “Take her, mom.” Xena handed a now sleepy Eve back into Cyrene’s arms. As the older woman went to place her back into her cradle, the warrior quickly lifted the leather straps of her outfit back up and covered her chest again. Still sitting on the chair, she reached back to the laces of her outfit to tie them back. After getting the infant to sleep, Cyrene turned back to her daughter. Awkwardly staring, she began to speak.

“Xena... I have to admit... what I saw upstairs was quite a bit of a shock. I mean, I knew you and Gabrielle were very chummy but... I certainly didn’t know you were *that* chummy. Can you please let me know what’s going on between you two?” Cyrene blinked, attempting a small, nervous smile.

From her seat, Xena earnestly gazed up at the older woman. “Mother... if you want to know everything, Gabrielle and I are best friends, soulmates and lovers.”

“But, Xena...” Cyrene faltered. “what about that... the God of War I saw you with today? Was it really all just a part of some plan between you and Gabrielle?” She felt puzzled.

“Yes, mom. We were supposed to fool Ares into believing that he was gonna get me to become the future mother for his child, so that we could get his help to save Eve, and to save Amphipolis.” Still solemnly, the warrior added: “I felt very embarrassed when you’d caught me earlier in his temple, but still it was only about me deceiving him, and there was nothing more to it.”

“Really?”

“Yes, really.” Xena nodded.

“So you...” Cyrene stammered. “You and Gabrielle are really... lovers?” She came to sit next to Xena at the table.

“Yes, we are, mom.” The Warrior Princess looked at her mother with an intensely determined gaze. “And I love her very much. We’ve been together for years, and I honestly couldn’t imagine being with anyone else... ever. She’s part of my family, mom. Do you have any problem with this?” Xena wondered whether her mother was being bothered by the fact that her lover was a woman.

“No, Xena...” The older woman tried to smile. “Not at all. It’s just that I had imagined that you would be with a...”

“Man?”

Cyrene remained silent, but tried to keep a warm, serene expression on her face.

“Well, forget it, mom,” the warrior woman said in a calm tone. She kept her composure, as she knew this might be new to her mother—even though romantic attraction to members of the same sex was never really an issue in Greece. “Gabrielle is the one I love. We’re soulmates. And I don’t need a man, sorry...” She reached for the older woman’s hand on the table, and gingerly held it while giving her a soft-hearted stare.

Cyrene was thoughtful for a minute or so. She then lovingly squeezed her daughter’s hand and smiled radiantly at her. “You and Gabrielle, oh... of course! What was I thinking? Who could possibly make you happier than the woman you’ve been sharing adventures with all those years. Of course, I’m very happy for you.” She moved closer, and she and Xena hugged for a short, but happy, moment. Then they looked at each other again.

“Thank you, mom.” The Warrior Princess smiled. “I knew you would understand.”

“Of course I understand, Xena. I was just a bit surprised, that’s all, but if it’s a woman you love... and especially if it’s Gabrielle, and she makes you happy—then I’m glad for you. And with Eve, you really have built yourself a family, Xena.” They briefly hugged again.

“I have indeed, mom.” Xena beamed. She was so glad her relationship with Gabrielle turned out not to be a problem for her mother after all.

“I’m so proud of you.” Cyrene kept smiling warmly. “How long have the two of you been together, by the way?” She wondered.

“Nearly four years, mom.”

“But... during all those years you were on the road with Gabrielle... How come you never told me?”

“I’d been planning on telling you, mother, but I just needed to find the right moment for it.” The warrior looked apologetic. “I’m sorry that I didn’t get the chance to tell you, mom, and that you had to catch us like this to find out.” She sighed.

“It’s alright. Don’t worry about it. You’re my daughter, and you have found a beautiful, caring and loving partner to be with. That’s all that matters to me in the end.”

“That’s good.” Xena grinned.

“Plus, you’ve really trained her to become a very skilled warrior. I can see that she’s a completely changed woman now, thanks to you,” Cyrene remarked blithely.

“Huh!” The Warrior Princess blushed and chuckled softly. “Yeah, she is.”

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Through a window, Gabrielle noticed that night was falling outside. She had been putting her brownish leather top back on and arranged the blankets on the bed right after Xena had left the room. She had then quickly walked back to the wash room to retrieve the underwear the warrior had given her and put it on. She was back in Xena’s bedroom now, waiting for her soulmate to come back up. The short-haired blonde woman knew that the Warrior Princess wanted to talk to her mother alone, unless she called out for her to go downstairs –which she had not.

Gabrielle stood near the fireplace, looking around the beautiful room she was in. She loved her lover’s bedroom here in Cyrene’s house. It offered her tiny glimpses of the innocent child Xena probably used to be. The place was approximately sixteen square-feet big. Nicely-styled dark pink, brown and beige carpets with diamond-shaped criss-crossed motifs lay about on the solid hardwood floor. The walls were made of creamy-coloured stones. The double bed was wide, nice and comfortable; it had white linen and a warm woollen dark brown blanket on it. On the other side of the room, there were a few of Xena’s childhood dolls and other toys, old fishing lines and nets –all tattered with time. A small dresser with a mirror stood by in the corner. Xena had put the saddlebags on the chair near it after leaving Argo in Cyrene’s tavern stables earlier in the day.

Feeling genuinely at ease in the tranquillity of this room, Gabrielle walked away from the fire and went to sit down on the bed. Placing an elbow on her knee, she lowered her head and massaged her forehead with one hand. She remained peaceful for a moment or so, when a flashing light abruptly struck the room and a male godly presence showed itself before her.

She lifted her head and rose from where she was sitting, feeling amazed. “Ares?”

“You think you’ve got what it takes to really please Xena, huh?” Suave and haunting, the God of War mocked her by grinning contemptuously as he stared at her. He was so jealous and envious of her for having conquered Xena’s heart.

“What are you doing here? I thought Xena had made it clear to you that she isn’t going to sleep with you. Leave my soulmate alone.” The battling bard of Poteidaia gave him an icy glare.

Ares sneered, ignoring most of what she had just been saying. “I’m here to see Xena of course. I should have come earlier tonight, but I was busy rectifying the damages you did to my temple earlier on. I also had to get a few of Eli’s followers out of my sight.” He changed the subject. “You think I haven’t heard her say that she’d felt something after I left?” He smirked. “Beware, oh... little one, gods can hear everything, even when we’re no longer visible.”

Gabrielle shrugged and huffed dismissively before shaking her head coldly. “You never give up, do you?”

“No... as a matter of fact, I don’t.” The God of War kept smiling evilly.

“Forget it,” Gabrielle insisted. “She isn’t interested in you. She loves *me*. You’re wasting your time, Ares.”

“You know, Gabrielle. All those years, I’d been wondering...” Ares started walking around the room, away from the hostile woman while keeping an eye on her and glancing at her now and again. “... what exactly she saw in you, why you made her so happy. Oh, I’d found out pretty early on about your dirty little secret, that the two of you were lovers. But I was always completely baffled at what she’d possibly found in such a ridiculous bard like you that could inspire her so much in following the ‘greater good’ and other kinds of nonsense.” He now moved back towards Gabrielle, getting closer and closer to her while she stood there, looking at him with disdain.

“The greater good is not nonsense, Ares. It is real.”

“So then,” he continued, “I understood that she probably saw something in you that I hadn’t.”

“Yeah,” the battling bard smirked, “beats you, doesn’t it?” she taunted.

The God of War grimaced and shook his head. “The thing is, Gabrielle... Whatever light she may see in you, however strong her relationship with you may be, all this cannot change one simple fact: Xena needs the flame of war to burn intensely inside of her to make her whole, to inspire her, to arouse her real being. War is her nature. Nothing can change this. She keeps refusing to see it, but she knows somewhere deep down inside her that she needs to conquer the world, with me.” He grinned wickedly as he stood face to face with Gabrielle, staring down into her eyes. “You don’t stand a chance to really satisfy Xena’s true needs.”

“You really want her to go back to her old ways, don’t you?” The young short-haired woman asked in a disgusted tone. “I knew it. All you want is to possess her, to control her.”

“I never stopped wanting her to become what she was always meant to be: a Warrior Queen. I don’t believe you’ve got what it takes to fulfil Xena’s destiny. I do. Now please, don’t even try to interfere with my plans to get her back. I’m warning you. If you ever attempt to damage one of my temples again, I will not be so lenient next time.”

Gabrielle chortled in a totally derisive way. “You really don’t know her that well, do you?” On a more serious note, she added: “In her life, Xena always needed to find someone who could show her the path towards redemption, and I was that person. The love I have for her, the capacity to love I opened up in her heart –all this love Xena and I share is stronger than any forces of evil in the world, yours included. I was able to show her that there was light within her that she hadn’t explored enough –that love, care and consideration for others were really values that were part of her nature all along. I was able to open her heart –and this is what beats you, what bothers you the most.” As she carried on looking up at him with scorn, Gabrielle shook her head again. “Go away, Ares. Xena doesn’t want you here. She feels nothing for such a selfish, cold-hearted creature like you!”

Ares slightly backed away, keeping a confident expression on his face. Before disappearing, he stated: “Soon... the Olympians are going to come after Eve again. She’ll need my help once again. Then we’ll both see how wrong *you* in fact are –that it is *you* who just doesn’t really know Xena. It’s only a matter of time before she can be mine again.” In another burst of flashing godly light, he vanished.

Gabrielle sighed. She would need to tell Xena about this unexpected godly visit as soon as her lover came back up.

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Xena climbed up the stairs, leaving her mother making dinner downstairs for tonight, and Eve asleep in her cradle with Cyrene keeping an eye on her. The Warrior Princess walked along the corridor and opened the door to her bedroom. While she was going inside, Gabrielle immediately rushed towards her.

“Xena, Ares was here!” the short-haired blonde put both her hands on her taller partner’s upper arms as she revealed this with a solemn stare.

“Really? When?”

“Just a few minutes ago.” The battling bard briefly scanned their surroundings before moving her sea-green eyes back towards Xena’s azure blue ones. “He said he’d heard you say that you ‘felt something’ and that he was coming here to see you.” She let her hands gently slide down the long-haired woman’s arms and moved them back towards herself.

“Stubborn bastard...” The warrior chuckled and shrugged. She walked around Gabrielle and quickly inspected the room. Then she turned back towards her soulmate. “I can’t sense him here. He must be gone for now. Why do you think he came to see you instead of me?”

“I don’t know. You were busy talking to your mother downstairs. Perhaps he took the opportunity to try to send me a warning. He said he didn’t want me to interfere with his plans again, that he supposedly knows about your true needs better than I do, and that he wants you back. He wants you to go back to your old ways and become his warrior queen.” Gabrielle looked a tad apprehensive about the God of War’s relentless determination to get the Warrior Princess back. “Xena, be careful, I know he can have an effect on you, and I know he must be planning on coming back tonight somehow.”

“Gabrielle...” Xena rubbed her lover’s shoulder and the shorter woman put a hand on the warrior’s elbow. They shared a tender gaze. “You don’t have to worry about a thing. He’s talking nonsense when he says he knows better than you do. You’re the one I’ve always loved, Gabrielle. I have never loved Ares the way I love you, not even during my warlord days. It was just pure lust between us, nothing else. He can come back here tonight and he’ll get nothing from me. Gabrielle, I love *you*, no one else but you.”

“I love you too, Xena.” Gabrielle smiled and moved up her other hand to catch a few strands of the warrior’s long hair, which she held softly.

Xena lowered her head and they kissed passionately for a minute or so. Then the taller woman proudly said, grinning: “It’s time for you to come downstairs with me now. Mom’s making dinner. She’s very happy you and I are together, and she wants to see us both as soon as possible. She asked me to hurry up and come to get you. And I’ll probably have to go check on the wounded after dinner.”

The battling bard beamed at the Warrior Princess. “Oh, so she took things really well, Xena? I knew she would.”

“She did indeed, and I knew it too. Now please come downstairs with me. She’s waiting for us.” The taller woman quickly picked up her breastplate, which she had left lying on the bedroom floor. She would put her armour back on for the rest of the evening.

With Xena having an arm around Gabrielle’s shoulders and holding the smaller woman closely, the two women exited the bedroom. The warrior swiftly shut the door behind them.

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“I am so, so happy for the both of you,” Cyrene both looked and sounded euphoric. The three women were sitting at the kitchen table –Xena and Gabrielle next to each other, facing the warrior’s mother. The baby was soundly asleep in her cradle.

“Thank you so much, Cyrene.” The short-haired woman gave her a wide smile before getting another spoonful of the succulent and nutritious soup her lover’s mother had been making. “You’ve always been so supportive of Xena and I.”

“Yes, and the fact that you are lovers makes me even more supportive. It’s so good to see such a happy family.”

The Warrior Princess said nothing. She just sat next to her younger partner, occasionally grinning coyly at her mother while eating her food. This was the first time Cyrene was seeing the battling bard and her together after getting to know they were a couple.

“Oh, definitely, Cyrene,” Gabrielle took one of Xena’s hands in hers, and the lovers’ fingers interlocked as they joyfully gazed at the warrior’s mother, “we couldn’t be happier.”

Cyrene smiled back. That was at this precise moment that everyone heard a knock coming from the house’s front door. The tavern-keeper stood up and went to see who it was. She opened the door. “What is it?”

“Is Xena here? It’s urgent.” A neighbour –who was a man in his mid-thirties– stood on the porch, looking very worried.

“Yes, Phaedrus, she’s in the kitchen.” Cyrene offered him to come in. He walked straight to the tavern-keeper’s kitchen.

“Xena?” Phaedrus stared at her, impatient, distressed and needing the help of Xena and her fine medical skills as soon as possible.

The Warrior Princess rose from her seat. “What is it?”

The bard just remained seated, listening to what was going on. Her lover’s mother was back in the kitchen, wondering what the emergency was.

“You’ve got to come to the tavern and see the wounded. My brother Alexis is losing some blood. I think he might be haemorrhaging,” he warned.

“I’ll be right there.” Xena glanced at Gabrielle, then at her mother. “Looks like I’m gonna have to go there earlier. I’m going there alone. You two stay here and finish this dinner together. I’ll be back as soon as I can.” She followed Phaedrus as he was leaving to go to the tavern next door.

“Sure, Xena,” Gabrielle said, “we’ll be waiting for you.”

“Yes,” Cyrene added, “I’ll be keeping you some food for when you come back.”

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The talented healer that Xena was had been able to stop Alexis’ bleeding in no time. It had only be a minor haemorrhage, and the patient had been a lot more frightened than actually hurt. Phaedrus had just gone home after the Warrior Princess had made his brother drink a sedative medicine that she had prepared in order to calm him as he needed a rest. Now Xena was walking past bunk after bunk to check on each of the injured people. They had all been fighting pretty well today and the number of casualties had not been too serious.

A couple of townswomen, Demetria and Berenike, had been keeping watch on those wounded, as well as bringing them food and water. These town ladies were currently helping Xena out by providing her with clean healing tools, bandage material, fresh linen and buckets of water with soap to care for the sick. As the warrior woman moved through her mother’s tavern, which had been turned into a temporary infirmary, she carried on examining each person after another. She had been dealing with frequent broken limbs, minor cuts and lacerations, shell-shocked minds and small fevers when she finally completed the inspection of all the patients.

Noises of footsteps made themselves heard from some place at the back. Her attention was immediately drawn there. As Demetria and Berenike walked back towards the other end of the room, getting out the door while carrying dirty linen and other materials to washing areas in town, Xena turned around a dark corridor that was in a corner just outside the main room in Cyrene’s tavern. She was about to light a torch when she suddenly saw bright flames igniting themselves one at a time before her. Some strange force had been lighting each of the torches that hung along the wall. The Warrior Princess could sense, but not see, the godly presence she knew. She relaxed and sighed.

“Show yourself, Ares!” Xena ordered as she was standing in the middle of this red-carpeted alleyway.

Right in front of the dark-haired woman, flickering, flashing brightness became steady and the strongly muscular, masculine and ruthlessly charming godly entity materialised. “Hello, Xena.” His intense gaze was tormentingly fixed upon her eyes. “I could hear what you said earlier on after I left, you know?”

“What are you talking about?” Xena grimaced. “What are you doing here?” The tone of her voice was utterly unfriendly.

“When you said you ‘felt something,’ I heard it. How long are you going to continue to deny the intense connection that we share, you and I? The ever-burning passion we both have for each other?” His stare became steely and lascivious.

“Speak for yourself!” the warrior woman retorted harshly. “I share my own passion and connections with Gabrielle, no one else, and certainly not a bastard like you.”

The God of War snickered derisively. He shook his head in dismissal of what this beautiful woman he had been obsessed with for so long had just been saying. “Xena, oh, Xena,” he said in a hauntingly seductive tone, “she can’t possibly give you what I’ve got.”

Looking at Xena, Ares was completely fascinated by what he perceived as being a very valuable sexual object. He yearned so much to possess her entirely, to master her and to rule her. He was completely obsessed with the possibility of getting supreme power over her as well as complete ownership of her. He had already had her once, but he had lost her.

On the surface, he was very much fond of this warrior woman, but within the depth of his cold and stony heart, he somehow knew that he did not really love her—not the way that short-haired blonde battling bard of hers loved her. Deep down, he only loved her like a heavily prized mortal female trophy he had to get for himself. She had become such an independent and good-willed woman in recent years, but he knew she still had a precious dark side he needed to tap into to be able to get her. No other woman had such great skills for warmongering, bloodlust and violence as Xena did in her past.

He really had to have her again. He knew there was this ever-burning rage buried somewhere deep inside her, which he could help ignite, and he also really thought he was the best person who could satisfy her sexually and emotionally. What made him so sure of himself was primarily the way she had been giving herself to him at one point during her raging warlord days. He had been able to see her submission to his warring lust and plans as well as her supreme appetite for destruction. In Ares’ mind, Xena needed to be dominated by his godhood in order to be able to accomplish her true destiny, and he would make good use of her sexual and reproductive abilities as soon as he could get her. He really had to sire a child through her, to plant his godly seed in her.

As a less desirable option for him, he would become a mortal in order to get even the slightest chance in Tartarus to intimately possess her again; but this would be chosen only if the Twilight prophecy ever turned out to be true. In the meantime, he believed it was merely a myth. Right at this precise moment, he kept attempting to pierce his way through her antagonistic shield, to break through her mental barrier with the powerful force of his godly aura.

Xena could feel the dark deity trying to bring her defences down through the depth of his intense look. When he started touching her upper arm, she backed away. “Maybe I just don’t want or need what you’ve got!” she spat out bitterly. She had nearly fallen for his mental tricks today, and this certainly was not happening again.

“Xena...” Ares admonished, “after the way I’ve helped you today,” he grasped one of the Warrior Princess’ shoulders with a sturdy but gentle hand, “after the way I fought Athena and saved your child and your town, the least you can do is speak to me in a respectful tone, don’t you think?”

The warrior woman reflected on what he was asking for a minute. “I neither want nor need what you’ve got, Ares,” she repeated in a slightly quieter tone.

“But you very much used to like what I’ve got,” he insisted. “You used to love it, actually...” He moved his hand up to her forehead, generating some memories to bring back into her mind as a radiant, supernatural brightness emanated from the palm of his hand.

Xena stood immobilised, completely enthralled and controlled by the psychic pushing and digging into her mind despite trying to resist it. The sight of her surroundings faded to black, as she was abruptly being mentally transported to the past –a long, long time ago, six years ago as a matter of fact...

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Evil Xena stood at the top of a Greek hill, sniggering at the resourceful lands ahead –which were hers to conquer as soon as she could. Ares, the God of War, stood right next to her with an arm around her shoulders. The Warrior Princess' army were somewhere behind them, waiting for their commander to give signals or instructions.

Xena warmly looked back at Ares. She was wearing a voluptuous red velvet warrior outfit which he had given her the night before. They had been having madly intense sex, and he had also given her an interesting weapon. It was a chakram, which he had stolen from a foreign god of war's temple. She was gleefully carrying this weapon as she remained thankful to Ares for all the flaming, battling fury and hunger for war and conquest he had been fuelling inside of her bitterly resentful being.

She hated all the pathetic pacifist people she often encountered while travelling. She cheerfully and mercilessly rammed her sword through their worthless hearts if they did not shut up. Xena grinned at Ares. "Thank you so much for the chakram and these awesome clothes. That was some night we spent together last night, huh, God of War?"

"Hmm... yeah, it was, my Warrior Princess babe." Ares slid his hand down to the dark-haired woman's waist and held her closer and more tightly. "And now you're going to conquer Greece for me..." He stared deeply into her eyes as he added: "... and perhaps the whole world also. I can assure you that as long as you're willing to serve Ares the God of War with your utmost loyalty and worship, to satisfy me and all my needs for war and bloodlust with all your relentlessly awesome fighting and warring abilities, I will make you happy and powerful in all your rage." He softly caressed her cheek with his free hand.

Xena chuckled blithely. "Sure, I will give you my entire devotion, God of War. You've been doing so much for me already." Proud of the wonderful circular weapon this handsome god had given her, Xena was fully controlled by the almighty spell he vehemently kept exercising upon her mind. Surely, she had already been conceitedly evil before meeting him a few moons ago –when he had appeared to her all of a sudden in the middle of a forest, saying he had something she would be looking for– but he kept feeding in, nurturing the dark side within her in a dangerously charming way. He had been such an amazing mentor to her. Her mind could not stop wandering back to last night's sexual sessions with him. He had used one of his interesting godly tricks to kindle some sort of a red glowing light inside of her abdomen to force her to enjoy their activities even more. He was very possessive and she kind of liked this. "Let's start with Greece first of all." Xena glanced at the peaceful valleys in front of them. "How do you want me to conquer it?"

"Xena," he slightly moved her body with the bewitching touch of his hands so that she was totally facing him, "a good place to start would be the complete destruction of Hercules. I want you to go after him now." His intense gaze penetrated hers.

"Sure, Ares," the Warrior Princess smiled maliciously, "whatever you want, God of War." She wrapped her arms around his neck. He was the only way she could get to achieving supreme authoritative power over all people. In this world of men, Xena believed that for a woman to be able to rule it, she needed to get as close to the centre of phallic power as possible. Ares embodied the most masculine facet of male power –the patriarchy itself. She would willingly serve this male-supremacist system as a proud and devoted handmaiden of it, becoming an ever-more raging female warlord and conqueror. Through her allegiance to this Greek God of War and her respect for him, one day she would be able to hopefully get the same social powers, the same privileges as men did. Now that she no longer had Borias, she needed Ares. Things would work even better now since this one was a god too, not just a man.

The God of War encircled his hands around her waist and the two of them kissed voraciously. A few moments later, they parted and Xena climbed up on her horse and began riding down the hill.

“Go, Xena!” Ares cheered her on, “You’re my future Warrior Queen. Make me proud. Destroy Hercules! Conquer Greece! Conquer the world! Fight for the glory of Ares! You’re full of ever-blazing power and beauty. Make the world whatever you want it to be. Rule it!”

The Warrior Princess briefly turned to simper at him as she left and then continued her ride the other way. She instructed her army to follow her and the men did. Ares carried on watching her as she travelled down the valleys while she spurred her horse on to a hurried pace. Neither she nor the God of War knew that Hercules –and then later on Gabrielle– would soon help her turn her life around, and she would never come back to Ares.

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Xena’s strong and vigorous independent mind struggled incessantly to break the mental chains of Ares’ induced flashback. After the constant battling of her mind against the god’s control, she managed to rouse herself from the blackout. “Stop it, Ares!” Xena shouted, grabbing his hand and pulling it away from her. He let go. “As I’ve said before, I will not ever become your little Warrior Queen. I feel *nothing* for you!” she yelled. They were both still standing in the middle of this torch-lit corridor somewhere at the back of Cyrene’s tavern.

“You’re lying,” he objected. “I’d heard you say that you felt something about what we were doing in my temple earlier on, the way you seduced me.” He leered at her. “Oh, I’d bet you felt the exact same delightful excitement you used to feel when you were mine, remember?”

The Warrior Princess took a step back and became thoughtful for a moment, about this memory of her warlord past the God of War had just been provoking within her mind. She was also thinking about what had happened earlier in the day. She looked at Ares again. “Quit it. I was only with you for a short while.” Her voice sounded bitter. “I was living in a state of complete darkness at that time. I hated everyone. My whole life was being consumed by hatred. Now things have changed, and I’ve met Gabrielle. She’s the one I love. She’s the one I belong to.”

“No, Xena, you belong to me,” he asserted, as he advanced towards her again and smoothly ran the back of his hand against her cheek while never breaking eye contact with her. “Now please, let’s conclude the deal we both accepted earlier on today. As I said, Gabrielle does not have what I’ve got to keep you happy. She can’t possibly fully satisfy you.”

Xena took another few steps back and began to laugh uncontrollably for a few seconds at what he was saying, before she spoke again: “No kidding... Is this why you’ve been annoying her tonight while I was talking to mother? Oh, you must clearly know that she indeed makes me happy if you worry so much that she might interfere with your selfish plans, huh?” She sneered.

Ares said nothing. A long time ago, he had been the one who had trained her to become the even better, more skilled warrior she had become. Now he really had to keep a stoic, unaffected and unemotional stance to prevent the ungrateful woman from chipping away at any slightest bit of his strong, proud and godly masculinity. She had been messing with him too much today already, and it drove him mad. He had to keep his feelings under control.

“Who the hell do you think you are coming here and trying to control my mind with flashbacks of someone I no longer am? Just like you attempted to control it by invading my sleep with absurd dreams, huh?” Xena taunted. “Do you really think I forgot about the way you’ve been poisoning my life ever since I decided to change for the better?” She scowled. “Like the way you drove me insane with the furies and you wanted me to kill my mother? Or when you sided with Dahak and manipulated Gabrielle? Do you really think I could forget these things and go with you? I don’t believe you would ever change. You’re too obsessed with your own selfish self!”

The God of War became a bit less stoic, changed his mind and decided to try the tactic which he thought would most likely work: “You’re wrong, Xena. Things have changed, and I love you. I want to be beside you, to fight beside you.” He looked at her with his sinister yet alluring gaze.

Although feeling his charms trying to force themselves upon her mind, the warrior woman remained unsusceptible. “You *don't* love me. This is only part of your game. You just want an offspring to carry on your line, and you're just seeing me as a tool for doing the mother job...”

Right at that moment, Gabrielle arrived in the corridor where Ares and Xena were standing. She held her pointed sais in both hands. The battling bard had been looking for her warrior lover in the makeshift infirmary when she had suddenly heard indistinct shouting noises coming from the back of the tavern. She had gotten her sais out of her bootlegs and ran there, keeping her sharply pointed weapons out in case the Warrior Princess was about to fight some mortals and she had to help. Now that she saw it was the God of War who had indeed come back to irritate Xena, she quickly bent down to place her weapons back into the sides of her boots. She walked closer to her soulmate while keeping an occasional eye on Ares. “Xena? Is everything all right?”

The taller woman briefly turned to her partner. “Yes, everything is fine, Gabrielle. Don't sweat it. I'm just wrapping up all I had to say to Ares for tonight.” Xena looked back towards Ares: “About the deal you thought we had today, I was just desperate when I tried to get your help. I had no choice after Athena had poisoned the town's water supply during the siege. Now forget all about this so-called deal...” Xena lightly shook her head. “Nevermind. You will never take ‘no’ for an answer anyway. Get lost, Ares!” Just after Xena said these words, Gabrielle glanced at the God of War, mischievously smirking at him while raising her eyebrows, giving him the very same smug type of look she had thrown at him earlier on. This made him mad.

The Warrior Princess took her soulmate's hand and they both started walking away from the passageway. “Stop annoying me and my soulmate. Stop asking for something you're never going to get. Leave us both alone,” she said as they were slowly leaving. “You've heard her, Ares,” added Gabrielle, “Leave us alone.”

Ares felt exasperated at Xena because she refused to sleep with him, because she denied there had been a real deal being agreed upon between them today, but he gave up for now. “The Olympian Gods will keep coming after your baby, Xena. They will keep wanting Eve dead, and you know it. You will need my help, and you will come back looking for me. See you next time, Xena.” The God of War was totally fed up seeing her denying what he thought was what she really needed. He had to take a short break from this. A gleaming blast of bright light he had just psychically summoned prompted his disappearance from the corridor. The lit torches on the wall extinguished themselves instantly.

The two women watched him go as they turned away from the passageway at the back of the tavern. They crossed the temporary infirmary again, making sure the sounds of Xena's argument with Ares had not been disturbing the wounded too much. After checking up on a few patients who were having trouble getting back to sleep, Xena and Gabrielle got out of the tavern to get back into Cyrene's house next door. They left Demetria and Berenike to watch the injured and take care of them overnight. The townswomen had explained to them that they would do so and would not need to get Xena unless there were to be an emergency.

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The Warrior Princess carried her baby into Cyrene's bedroom as her mother was preparing some warm little blankets for Eve. The curly-haired woman got the baby linen out of her closet and went to put it inside the cradle, which had been moved into her room. Gabrielle stood near when Xena delicately put the infant into her cradle. The short-haired woman smiled, standing in the doorframe.

Cyrene smiled warmly as the warrior began humming a song to get Eve to sleep. The baby had been breastfed again as soon as her daughter had come back into the house with Gabrielle after going to check on the wounded in the tavern. Xena had asked her mother to take the baby with her for the night, and Cyrene was very enthusiastic to look after Eve for now. She understood that it was now getting late and the two lovers were probably wanting some peace and quiet for themselves.

“Thank you so much, mom.” Xena grinned kindly after Eve had finally fallen asleep. “Come knock on my bedroom door if there's any problem with the baby.” She walked towards her lover.

“Sure, Xena. And I’m so glad to be helpful. I love children so much, and I love my granddaughter more than anything.” The older woman watched her daughter leave with the battling bard as they were just getting out of her bedroom. “Goodnight, you two. Don’t do anything I wouldn’t do,” she joked.

Xena and Gabrielle laughed. “Goodnight, mom,” the tall woman said, blushing. “Goodnight, Cyrene,” the blonde added. They shut Cyrene’s bedroom door and made their way along the corridor towards the warrior’s room.

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It was very dark outside Xena’s bedroom window and very late in the evening when the Warrior Princess and the battling bard were taking their clothes off to get ready for bedtime. Gabrielle was the first to get into bed. All in the nude, she slipped herself under the sheets and blankets. She tucked herself in and waited for her older lover to join her. The room was lit by a few bright candles that stood on the bedside table.

Xena had taken her armour and boots off when her eyes pensively fell upon her chakram, which she had put down on top of the dresser. It no longer mattered to her that Ares had given her this weapon. She had thoroughly mastered it and made it completely her own thing over the past few years. She carried on undressing herself absentmindedly while thinking about her chakram and about the flashback the God of War had induced in her mind tonight. It was fascinating how yonical the weapon Ares had given her looked; she bet that the god himself had not even thought of this.

Moreover, ever since the chakram of darkness had been fused with its lighter counterpart and such a balance had restored her to her real self after she had come back to life the last time, this weapon felt even more intrinsically and organically linked to the fair and independent female warrior she had become. She no longer wanted to rule the world, nor did she need to seek the help of any patriarchal sort of power to instigate this. She had become her own free warrior woman fighting for a better world, no longer interested in conquering it.

Xena was perfectly happy with the inherent good-natured power that resided within a great part of herself. The chakram was a yonic symbol, and it represented all the self-determining and uncorrupted strength for doing good she had been building for herself over these past few years. Gabrielle’s love also redeemed her. When she was experiencing this kind of love and she was reciprocating it to the young bard, she needed no army, no evil bloodlust to deprave her life. With Gabrielle and Eve, they would help promulgate Eli’s Way of Love around the world, but their plans to fight for the greater good had existed long before Eli had even shown up in their lives. It was very rare in this day and age to see independent women like her and Gabrielle roam the world. They both cherished this fact.

“Are you coming to bed, Xena?” The battling bard stirred the Warrior Princess from her pondering thoughts.

Xena was making her leather bodice slide down her well-toned frame as her younger lover asked her this. Glimpsing at the bard, she replied, “I’ll be right there, sweetheart.” She got herself fully undressed and then climbed into bed beside Gabrielle. They had made a great choice in deciding to sleep together naked again for tonight.

The short-haired blonde woman immediately covered her partner’s sturdy body with her own and smiled affectionately as the warrior caressed one of her ears. She brought her mouth to her soulmate’s to kiss her deeply. Both women enjoyed the very warm and pleasant contact of each other’s skin as Gabrielle lay on top of Xena. The two were intensely hugging one another while their nipples were making delightful contact, breasts pressing against breasts.

They continued to kiss –their tongues ardently pushing and passionately wandering around one another within their mouths. Underneath the bedsheets, Xena’s legs were spread and Gabrielle’s warm centre felt so good against hers. As their faces parted, the battling bard lifted her head to gaze down into the azure blue eyes of the person she loved so much.

“Xena, I need to know something.”

“What?” The Warrior Princess puzzlingly looked up into the sea-green orbs of the woman she loved so profoundly.

“Has Ares really always gotten to you in some ways?”

“Gabrielle...” Xena frowned.

“Be honest, please,” Gabrielle requested solemnly as her hands lay beneath her lover’s shoulders and lightly squeezed the skin of her back.

The older woman sighed while she continued to stare up at the strong little bard on top of her. She reached up and tenderly stroked the short hair. “Yes, Gabrielle, in a certain way he always got to me. I have remote memories of him as a mentor and as one of my ex-lovers. He also has some sort of a distinctive power that draws women to him, but this entirely comes from his godly presence and tricks, you know?”

“Yeah, I noticed.” The battling bard’s features displayed some soft-heartedness. She trusted her partner even though she wanted to know everything about the warrior woman’s interactions with and emotions about other people. Gabrielle also knew that the God of War had this strange attractive aura emanating from his dark self. She remembered how he had been playing with her own mind twice, once during one of his sick portal games and the other just after he had killed Eli –when the God of War had been making Gabrielle feel the shimmering glow of his powers. Therefore, she remained largely unsurprised because she knew what Xena was talking about.

“Anyway, you really don’t have to be jealous or worried about anything, Gabrielle. He means nothing to me. It is to you that I belong, and I love you more than anything. My heart belongs with you.” The Warrior Princess was very sincere. “We were both crucified together on a cold and snowy mountain. We died together. We went through heaven and hell together. We came back to life together. We went through so many things together. How could I not love you more than anything? No one can ever get in the way of what we feel for each other.”

“You’re absolutely right. I love you so much, Xena.” They kissed and held one another tightly again. Gabrielle was still lying on top of Xena, feeling the mesmerising harmony of their bodies never breaking the sweet contact.

The long-haired woman softly ran her fingers along the skin of her younger partner’s back. “I love you too, and I belong to you. Just please never forget it if I ever have to kiss some man again as part of some plan to get ourselves or anyone out of trouble.”

“Well,” Gabrielle grumbled, “I cannot say I’m not peeved whenever you do that, but I trust that you are mine, Xena.”

“And you should, because I am yours. I belong to you. Now please, make love to me, Gabrielle. I need you now. I’ve already made myself forgiven earlier on for what happened with Ares, remember?” Xena winked.

“Oh, yeah!” Gabrielle beamed at the thought of the lovely way Xena had been pleasuring her. Her warrior always knew how to please her. She moved her hands towards her older lover’s and entwined her fingers with the warrior’s. “I would never forget that.” The energetic battling bard of Poteidaia surprised her soulmate as she pinned the Warrior Princess’ hands down onto the pillows while she lifted her own upper body up. The little twinkle in her lustful gaze expressed victory.

Xena giggled at the bold move, her hands caught in Gabrielle’s grip. She liked to see this smaller, yet muscular and firmly toned body on top of hers. Her little bard had become a very strong woman now. “Hmmm... ’you trying to impress me, sweetheart?”

“Maybe...” Gabrielle answered in a seductive tone as she kept smiling down at her long-haired partner. “You know, I’m no longer the little innocent virgin you met, Xena.”

“Oh, I can see that!” The Warrior Princess chuckled loudly. “I have changed you, sweetheart. And you changed me too.”

“Yep, for the better... Xena, I’m going to make love to you now. I’m gonna make you feel *something*,” the battling bard began to grin wickedly, “something that will show you that you really don’t need Ares, or any other man for that matter.”

“Gabrielle, you know the only one I need is you,” the long-haired woman asserted heartily.

Gabrielle softened and let go of Xena’s hands as she once again lowered her weight onto the dark-haired woman’s and buried her face into her neck, her arms lying on each side of her body. The warrior moaned softly as the blonde woman planted kisses onto her skin. Her own hands were now languidly moving along the sides of the battling bard’s abdomen.

Yearning for more, Gabrielle quickly moved her way downwards to Xena’s magnificent breasts. She always loved the nice, full and warm way they felt every time she kneaded them. As she carried on manipulating her long-haired lover’s beautiful bosom, she covered one nipple with her mouth.

“Hmmm... Gabrielle... yes... more...” the Warrior Princess urged her soulmate on while gently rubbing the back of her neck.

The short-haired blonde unhurriedly feasted on the brunette’s bust. She adored the gorgeous ample breasts so much. She eagerly switched from one to the other while her older partner kept uttering noises that indicated absolute delight. After Gabrielle had fully treated herself with Xena’s marvellous bosom, she moved the blanket and bedsheet away from them, uncovering both their bodies. Then she swiftly returned her attention to her dark-haired lover’s body and planted hot and lingering kisses all over her tummy.

What the two lovers did not know was that Ares was standing in a corner of the bedroom. Having made himself completely invisible, he was silently watching them both as they were making love. He depressingly knew Xena would be way too enthralled by Gabrielle’s touch to even notice he was here. He was totally jealous and upset by what he was seeing. He hated the way such a stupid bard had managed to steal his Xena from him. Xena was always meant to come back to him, and he certainly would not give up. He would keep trying to get Xena back. Gabrielle might have won the battle, but to him she had not won the war. Soon his fellow Olympians would go after Xena’s child, which would surely prompt the Warrior Princess to come to him for help again. He continued to watch as Gabrielle traced warm and wet circles onto Xena’s belly with her tongue, eliciting more rapturous sounds from the warrior woman.

These sounds made the God of War feel very unhappy. All these years, unbeknownst to the two women, he had occasionally made himself invisible like this and spied on them while they were having sex. It had usually made him feel bizarrely horny and he had often gone back to his temple straight afterwards to masturbate. However, tonight there would be no masturbation for him, just frustration. Now it demoralised him so much seeing the woman he desired the most on earth making love with another woman – a bard who had never looked like she could possibly make this warrior happy as much as she really did. Why was he even watching this? Complete obsession with and fascination for Xena’s body perhaps? Ares sighed inwardly. Keeping himself invisible, he left the room.

Both women were utterly oblivious to their surroundings, not caring whether someone had been standing nearby or not. Gabrielle kept making unhurried, delicious love to Xena. She parted her soulmate’s legs, bent the knees and lowered herself down until her head nearly made contact with her centre. The battling bard planted another series of kisses along each of the warrior’s inner thighs, one at a time –entrancingly teasing and pleasing her lover. Gabrielle’s nose and mouth lovingly brushed the dark patch of hair covering the warrior woman’s sex. She blew some pleasant heat into her warm fur.

“Gabrielle... uh... yeah...” Xena reached one of her hands down and lightly ran her fingers over her partner’s soft blonde short hair. The Warrior Princess’ other hand lay near the pillows.

Gabrielle could not delay this any longer. Xena’s familiar and wildly exotic scent was threatening to wreck havoc on her senses, making her dizzy. She had to invade those gorgeous lips ahead with her tongue, possess the long-haired woman’s sumptuous flower again with her mouth –show her soulmate once more that no man, or anyone else for that matter, would ever be able to pleasure her the way she did. Gabrielle first flattened her tongue and licked each of the outer folds. Xena urged her to dive deeper as she kept caressing her hair softly. The bard then reached around the warrior’s thighs and used her fingers to fully open her centre. She subsequently drove her mouth to it and plunged her tongue right in.

“Oh, yes! Gabrielle... Oh... Gabrielle!” The Warrior Princess threw her hand back towards the pillows behind her head. She staunchly grasped the cushiony material with both hands. She emitted more sounds of joy as the battling bard slid her tongue deeply into her sensitive nether lips. Xena closed her eyes and threw her head back as she thrust her hips up to move her sex closer to Gabrielle’s brilliant mouth, revelling in every moment of the blonde’s expert tongue laving her centre.

Loving the familiar taste of Xena as usual, Gabrielle passionately licked the whole of her lover’s intimate area. Gliding her tongue into every inner fold and crevice, she thoroughly circled the clitoral nub, without touching it directly.

“Oh... yes... Ah... Gab... rielle... Uh...” The warrior’s hands kept clutching at the pillows and her hips kept pushing up to meet her soulmate’s face. She felt totally blissful when the battling bard’s tongue went inside her. When it made pleasurable backwards and forward movements in the way it stroked her inner walls, it felt so exquisite a sensation to the long-haired woman. Xena was trying not to make too much noise, remembering her mother was sleeping in a nearby room.

Gabrielle rubbed a fingertip around her partner’s swollen, fully excited sexual node at the top as she carried on invading her entrance with her tongue. She withdrew it after a short while and proceeded to orally focus on Xena’s clit. As she vigorously sucked on it, the short-haired woman moved her hand back around, somewhere beneath her chin. She abruptly claimed her long-haired lover’s dripping wet opening with two skilled fingers.

“Whoa... Gabrielle... Ah!” Too surprised to notice she was becoming a bit loud, Xena spread her legs a tad wider and welcomed Gabrielle’s deep touch. The Warrior Princess’ damp and hot body quivered in delight when the battling bard slightly twisted her fingers inside, stimulating her inner spot, while she continued to fervently tongue her engorged bud.

After making love to her dark-haired woman in enjoyable swirling motions for a few seconds, the blonde refused that her soulmate would come so soon. Gabrielle immediately stopped her movements, making Xena moan in frustration. She climbed back up the warrior’s body while still keeping her fingers deep inside her.

“Gabrielle, why are you stopping? I was so nearly there.”

“Hold on, love.” The sexy short-haired woman grinned down at her lover in a wickedly alluring way. “I want to come with you.” She shifted her lower body to straddle the warrior woman’s thigh. Gabrielle supported herself onto one arm as her other hand was otherwise engaged into Xena’s centre. She started to rub herself against her lover’s skin, directing some strong rapture into her own clit as she resumed her moves inside the brunette’s hot cavern. “Feeling something now, huh?” She smirked.

“Oh, yes!” Xena placed a hand onto Gabrielle’s back and urged her anew. The battling bard stuck a third finger inside the Warrior Princess and moved her thumb near the clit. She intensely looked down into those azure blue eyes she had always loved so much. The other woman gazed back up at her.

“Harder, please... Gabrielle.”

“Oh, I will take you harder soon, my love...” Gabrielle concentrated hard on keeping eye contact while carefully synchronising the movements of her fingers with the ones of her hips. “First...” she breathed heavily, “I want you to tell me who you belong to again. Tell me, Xena. Who do you belong to?”

The warrior surrendered completely. “I belong to you, Gabrielle.” When the short-haired blonde accelerated her incredibly skilled fingers’ motions inside her while continuing to please her clitorally with the thumb, Xena felt herself being filled and loved with such an unbelievably sultry vehemence by this younger woman.

Her Gabrielle had really become so enticingly agile and muscular. This woman was clearly no longer the little virginal girl the warrior had awoken and guided sexually a few years back. No, her bard was fully erotically mature now. “Oh... yes, Gabrielle... just like that...” Xena groaned, utterly thrilled by her smaller lover’s audaciousness. This little woman had changed so much over the past year, especially since she had chosen the way of the warrior. Her splendid and stunning Gabrielle now wanted to take the lead a lot more often than ever before.

The sexy battling bard of Poteidaia carried on making deep and hard love to her long-haired lover, thrusting back and forth within the warrior’s sex. She could blissfully feel the slippery wet heat tightly engulfing her rapid fingers. She was glad she was making love to Xena this way. She might be only a sidekick, but she was loving her dark-haired partner like a true warrior should.

“Who makes you happy the most, Xena, huh?” she inquired in a husky voice, “Who fulfils all your desires?”

“Oh... Uh... *You* do, Gabrielle! You make me... Ah... Oh... so much happier than... Oh... Umm... anyone else I’ve ever slept with... Ah...” Xena intermittently released these words from her mouth with an impassioned sincerity as she kept enjoying being taken by Gabrielle. “I’m yours, Gabrielle!” she quickly added, then continued to make noises of delight.

“Mine, huh? Oh... Uh... Xenaaa...” The battling bard’s clitoral friction to the Warrior Princess’ thigh made her come at that exact moment. She nonetheless would keep making sweetly intense love to Xena until the long-haired woman found release.

“Ah... Gabrielle...” The older woman ran both her hands across her short-haired lover’s back and clung to her smooth skin. “Oh... Yours... always... yes...” All of a sudden, Xena felt Gabrielle change her movements within, and the blonde woman swirled her talented fingers strongly against the hardest spot inside her already overexcited centre. A mind-blowing, earth-shattering orgasm overcame the warrior woman’s senses. “Gabrie-e-e-e-elle!”

Gabrielle had no time to waste. She really wanted to treat her Warrior Princess with some gratifying post-orgasmic tender and loving care. The battling bard instantly withdrew her fingers and swiftly slid her way down Xena’s body to taste her lover again. She softly flicked her warm tongue over her older partner’s sexual nerve endings, which were still twitching.

“Oh... Gabrielle... you make me so happy...” Resting and getting great pleasure from her younger soulmate’s generously loving oral activities in the aftershocks of their lovemaking, Xena tenderly caressed the blonde head. Unexpectedly, Gabrielle brought her over another delicious edge in no time. She tried, and succeeded, to tone down the sound of her orgasm this time as she came.

The battling bard of Poteidaia licked her long-haired lover dry, kissed her heated nether flesh and moved back up her beautifully toned body. Gabrielle made Xena taste herself during a heartily hungry kiss. Her fingers were still coated with the warrior’s nectar. She frenziedly painted her taller partner’s lips with it and possessively kissed her.

As their mouths separated, a bewildered Xena simpered at Gabrielle and stared up intensely into the magnificent sea-green eyes of her wonderful lover. The bard had never marked her with her own juices in such a way or

displayed such a bold possessive attitude after making love to her. “What’s going on, Gabrielle? How dare you do to me something I used to do to you when you were such a young, long-haired and innocent thing?”

Gabrielle smirked wickedly, chuckling. “Payback time, Xena.” She affectionately nuzzled the warrior woman’s nose –briefly remembering, for instance, when Xena had smeared her lips with her own wetness before kissing her possessively during an intimate day at the beach a long time ago. The battling bard softened up. “I’m kidding.” She looked warmly at the woman she had just been making love to.

“I love you, my gorgeous battling bard.” Xena moved her lips up to meet her younger lover’s. Tangling her tongue with hers, she enthusiastically groaned against her mouth. She interrupted the kiss to speak again. “You’ve really become quite something, Gabrielle.” The warrior delicately pulled the bard closer onto her chest in a heart-warming hug. She lovingly caressed her blonde hair and her soft skin. “I love it when you make intense, hard love to me like this. I love you, Gabrielle.” She tightly held the woman she loved more than life itself.

“I love you too, Xena.” Gabrielle warmly kissed Xena’s big breasts and then closely snuggled up to her, resting her head onto her chest and joyfully relishing the scent of the warrior’s skin. After a while, they shifted and covered themselves up with the sheet and blanket again. Then the battling bard turned around on the bed. Feeling very sleepy, she settled herself onto her side. The Warrior Princess quickly nestled up her sturdy frame behind Gabrielle. She tenderly encircled a strong arm around her, threaded her legs with hers, pointed the nipples of her ample bosom into her back and moved her head closer to her ear.

“I love the way you make love to me so wonderfully assertively... but I can still spoon you, sweetheart,” Xena stated in an apparently victorious smug tone, and she smirked.

“You can spoon me all you want,” Gabrielle retorted as her eyes were alternatively opening and shutting. “Just don’t forget who’s in charge when we make love now.”

The warrior uttered a short, low laugh. “Oh, but you’ll still let me be in charge too, sometimes?”

“Yeah, sure... when *I* decide you should be.” The battling bard was slowly drifting into sleep as she felt her soulmate kiss the back of her shoulder.

“Oh, you don’t seriously mean this, Gabrielle?” Xena mildly grumbled.

“As I said...” Gabrielle was about to enter the Land of Morpheus, “payback time, Xena...” She fell asleep nearly right after saying this.

The Warrior Princess smiled wistfully, put her head down onto a pillow and closed her eyes. Deep down, she was willing to give her battling bard whatever the younger woman wanted. As the years had gone by, the warrior had become softer and softer in the bedroll.

Xena fell asleep spooning Gabrielle, totally fascinated by the passionately intense lovemaking she had just been sharing with her smaller, but robust, partner. Her hand rested onto those well-shaped abs. The warrior woman joined her lover into the Land of Morpheus, thinking about the absolutely superb abdominal muscles the short-haired blonde had worked out during battle. She loved this completely transformed, stronger shape of her lover.

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Xena had been up and dressed in her leathers not too long after the sun had broken through her bedroom window a couple of candlemarks earlier. She had not yet put her breastplate or any other of her armour items back on; this could wait. For now, the dark-haired woman sat by the dresser, thoughtful. She did not need to go assist the wounded this morning as she had been told by her mother that a physician from another town had just arrived and was already there helping out while townspeople were also watching over the injured.

Gabrielle was still in bed. The warrior had briefly gone to her mother's bedroom earlier on after she had woken up, to breastfeed Eve. Cyrene had already gotten the baby fully changed before Xena had come to her room. The Warrior Princess had not been able to tell whether her mother had heard the noises she and the battling bard had been making the night before. Xena was relieved Cyrene would likely never dare mention it if it were to be the case. Her mother had simply smiled at her, telling her once again she was proud Xena had built such a happy family, one that was solidly bound together.

Now back in her bedroom while Cyrene was carrying on taking care of Eve, Xena was sitting on the dresser's chair, pensively absorbed in thought. It had been quite a day they had all gone through yesterday. First, Amphipolis had been besieged. Then she had nearly forced herself to make a sinister deal with Ares. The warrior woman thought about the clever plan she had been able to work on with Gabrielle in order to fool the God of War. She was very satisfied by the way things had turned out, so happy she had not slept with Ares again after all these years of breaking free from his control.

If, assuming for a minute, there would have been no explosion in that temple, nothing interrupting them, or if it had been her baby instead of the doll wrapped up in the blanket Xena had been carrying towards Athena, the Warrior Princess would have had to go through with Ares' horrible deal. She would have had to prostitute herself, to submit herself to the God of War's will and force herself to cheat on her soulmate for the life of her child. The tall woman shook her head and sighed. Ares was not going to get her, not now, not ever. Her heart belonged with Gabrielle. She suddenly sensed her lover move on the bed.

Xena rose from her chair, turned her gaze towards the battling bard as she slowly approached the bed. Her short-haired blonde partner was still asleep even though she had just lightly stirred on the bed. The younger woman lay supine onto the mattress, her upper body uncovered and the reflection of a ray of sunlight glowing against her skin. Gabrielle's well-toned abdominal muscles could be distinctly defined by the warrior's wandering eyes as the blonde's beautiful chest and belly rose and fell while she was breathing deeply in her sleep.

Xena kept thinking about how much her bard meant to her as she quietly sat on the edge of the bed, silently and admiringly observing the little strongly built blonde beauty before her. The warrior loved Gabrielle more than anyone else on earth. It was to her that she belonged. She never needed Ares, any man or anyone else when she had her battling bard. Gabrielle gave Xena a devoted, absolute and loyally faithful love –something which was way beyond the cold-hearted God of War's possibilities. It had been pointless for him to come back and annoy them last night, but he would never take 'no' for an answer. The warrior shrugged. She focused her attention back to Gabrielle.

This younger girl had come into her life and made her believe in herself again, helped her remain strong through dire, trying times. She had trusted her unconditionally, given her intense support when everyone who had known the warrior's past self had hated her. The young storyteller had warmed up the older woman's gloomy heart with enthusiastically told stories on campfire nights. The Warrior Princess had in return taught the bard how to fight, making her a well-trained fighter. They had become lovers, and Xena had helped Gabrielle become a woman.

They had experienced soul-connecting passion of the flesh during all their plentiful lovemaking sessions over the years. They had also experienced dangerous adventures, harsh trials, suffering, death and resurrection together. And now they were bringing up a child together. They were eternal lovers. This was the way things were meant to be. They loved each other so fiercely, so profoundly that anyone or anything that tried to stand in the way of their everlasting bond was more than likely to fail. Ares had seriously been kidding himself when he had been trying to get Xena to leave Gabrielle for him while the warrior had been putting her clothes back on in his temple after that disgusting session with him the day before –like he could stand a chance compared to her highly valued, adorable and admirable little short-haired sexy beauty. No one or nothing would ever make Xena leave Gabrielle.

The battling bard gradually opened her eyes. She had to adjust her sight to the morning sunlight coming from the window. Once she had done this, she saw a leather-clad Warrior Princess climb and crawl towards her on the bed.

“Hello, gorgeous!” Xena said with a delighted smile. Her upper body was now hovering over Gabrielle’s as she bolstered herself on her hands, which she had placed on either side of the bard’s body. She swiftly lowered her head to kiss her blonde partner.

Gabrielle reached up and wrapped her hands around Xena’s neck while they both deepened the tongue-mingling kiss. “I love you, Xena,” she affirmed when they ended the oral contact.

“I love you too, Gabrielle.” The Warrior Princess began to softly nip at the battling bard’s skin, wanting to savour every inch of her younger lover’s body again. “You’re really the best thing that ever happened to me, the best thing I’ve ever had in my entire life...” The long-haired woman moved herself down, took one succulent nipple into her mouth; then a minute later she took care of the other. “And I’m very proud... so proud to have you,” she added as she teasingly played with the blonde’s breasts. “Let me show you how much...”

“Oh... Xena...” Moaning in joy, Gabrielle sensed her own heart beating faster in utter love for this wonderful woman she was with. With one hand, the battling bard quickly grabbed the other side of the blanket, pulled it and covered them both as she felt Xena moving her mouth further down onto her body, planting hot little kisses onto her midriff and her abs along the way...

The two women were at it again. There would hopefully be the whole morning for them to lazily lie in bed and thoroughly enjoy the scrumptious taste and the soft feel of each other’s bodies again and again –to revel in the euphoric sensations all this would bring, once again, to the core of their beings.

There was no need to mention that all this would make them completely forget about breakfast, but they clearly did not need a morning meal when they had the taste of each other to delight in. With some luck, Cyrene would not dare bother the two lovers, and the baby would not need her mother until lunchtime.

**THE END**