

~ Star Light, Star Bright, Is There A Chakram In The Sky Tonight? ~

by Aurelia

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FEEDBACK: I'm always open to comments, preferably nice ones, so let me know what you think at: aurelia_fan@yahoo.com.au, or visit my Yahoo Group at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aurelia_fan/.

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"Incoming!" Sergeant Harriman announced from his station. In the blink of an eye the relative quiet of the facility exploded into activity.

"Is it SG-3?" General Hammond spoke as he strode through the door, his eyes immediately seeking out the stargate.

"There's been no signal, Sir."

"Close the iris." Hammond watched the metallic pieces twist as they closed to meet at the center, feeling that sense of security as the barrier clicked into place.

"Iris secure, sir. Twenty seconds to arrival." Walter looked up at the General awaiting an order as the general alarm sounded throughout the base.

"General..." Colonel Jack O'Neill stood at the door, wondering what disaster was about to befall them. It always did. He was alone for mere moments before the rest of his team shadowed him.

"Colonel..." The older man acknowledged. "We have an unauthorized arrival." The klaxons were annoying but while the emergency existed the noise would continue. A unit of well-armed soldiers arrived on the floor, taking up positions around the gate.

"Ten seconds to arrival." Walter was getting nervous. Any second now whoever was coming through the stargate would come to a sudden, deadly stop.

Hammond had precious little time to make a decision. All eyes, including those of the other SG-1 crew members, were on him. "Open the iris."

"Is that wise, Sir?"

"Probably not, Colonel. I will deal with that later."

The metal covering slid smoothly back to reveal the glittering water of the stargate. It rippled and flowed as particles shifted and moved within the wormhole. Moments later two women stepped through. Rifles were locked and loaded and aimed at the two intruders, awaiting the signal to fire.

"Wow..." The word slipped from O'Neill's mouth before he could stop it.

Wow... indeed. Major Samantha Carter had stood in the background as the events unfolded, but the sight of the amazonesque duo brought her forward to stand at the window. Her eyes fixed on the taller one of the duo. The woman was... was.... What could she say? Magnificent. She stood there with such negligent ease the soldiers around her became restless, their once calm resolve now gone.

"What is the matter with them?" O'Neill muttered.

Sam knew what the matter was. They were mesmerized, just like she was. She could only guess her height, but the strength and confidence she exuded made it seem like she was taller than she actually was.

"Major..."

What a beautiful woman. Sam's eyes swept over the tall beauty, taking in the impossibly long legs, lean torso and finely chiseled face, all dressed up in a revealing leather and brass dress. The smaller of the duo stood beside the warrior woman, almost as imposing as her taller counterpart. Muscle rippled underneath sun-kissed skin revealed by the skimpy red outfit that she wore. Most notable was the absence of footwear on both women.

"Major!"

She had been caught staring. "Sir!"

"Go with the Colonel and see what they want."

"What is the matter with you?" O'Neill murmured as they left.

"Nothing... Sir." Sam picked up the pace, putting a few steps' distance between her and her superior officer. If the woman affected her from afar, what was going to happen close up?

* * *

What happened? One moment they were soaking their feet in a small pool, the next they were... here, wherever here was. They were surrounded by warriors, soldiers by the look of them, Xena easily surmised, all pointing things at them. Xena instinctively stepped in front of her partner, her hand seeking out her chakram.

"Where... are we?"

Gabrielle asked the very question that sat on her own lips. "I have no idea." The far wall disappeared and in strode, she assumed, the commander and his lieutenants. One is a woman? Interesting. So...

* * *

"??? ??????"

"Carter?"

"Give me a moment, Sir." Sam left the room, speeding up her walk until she was jogging back to the lab. The black metallic box sat on the highest shelf above her computer. Despite its value it lay there like it was just a box of tissues. This was going to be interesting...

* * *

"What do you want?"

"What are they speaking, Xena? Egyptian? Gallic?"

"I don't know. I've never heard it before." But the aggressive stance of the warlord's men spoke volumes. Xena raised her chakram ready for flight. It only needed one flinch from her enemy and she would send it on its way.

* * *

"Put the weapon down." O'Neill tried to keep his voice calm. There was obviously a language barrier and he didn't want to start a fight if it could be avoided. "Teal'c? See if you can talk to them."

The brawny man stepped forward, his bass voice soothing and dominant. He tried a number of different dialects but they responded to none of them.

"?? ??????"

"I am sorry, O'Neill."

"Colonel..." Sam arrived with the box, placing it on the floor and extracting two silver bracelets. "This is calibrated for alien dialects..."

"Spare me the science lesson, Carter. Just get on with it." But he smiled at her to take the sting out of the words.

"Hey..." Sam crooned. "I'm not going to hurt you..." She held up her hands showing she had nothing more than the bracelets in her hands. The woman's hand tightened around the metal ring as she approached, indicating a certain amount of suspiciousness and hostility. Slowly she reached out to touch the woman, surprised by the vivacity in those electric blue eyes. It was hypnotic. The bangle touched the sun-darkened skin and the woman flinched. "It's a translator, nothing more."

"Whence forth dost thou draw us here?" Xena startled at the strange sounding words. Her hand went to her mouth. Did she just say that? Sam put the bracelet on the brunette's wrist before doing the same for the smaller blonde standing nearby.

"Dost thou know from whence we came?"

Sam drew out a small screwdriver and made a slight adjustment to the bracelet's settings. "Try again."

"Hey yo, sister. Wassup?"

"Oops, too much."

"Just regular English is fine, Carter." O'Neill was getting impatient.

"Where are we?" Those words in that deep feminine voice was soul catching. Sam blinked. That voice was pure sex appeal and Sam felt something stir within herself. Something she had certainly not paid any attention to... until it bit her.

Jack stepped forward. "This is Stargate Command. I am Colonel Jack O'Neill and this is Major Samantha Carter."

"My name is Xena and this is my partner, Gabrielle." The charisma emanating from the dark menacing woman was electric.

"Where are you from Xena?"

"From?"

"Are you from Earth?"

"Earth?"

"The planet Earth."

"I am Xena of Amphipolis and this is Gabrielle of Potadeia," she said with finality, as if that explained everything.

"And where is Amphipolis?"

It... in northern Greece. You do not know of Amphipolis?"

"Greece? I've never heard of... of... Amphi...folies."

"Colonel, we may be asking the wrong question. Xena, when were you born?"

"When?"

"Alright, who were the leaders of your time?"

"I did fight Julius Caesar once or twice."

"Caesar?" Jack smiled.

"Colonel... in the Conference Room in five minutes." Hammond had been observing the meeting from the control room, but now it was time that he took charge of the operation.

"Aye, sir!"

"Carter, get our 'guests' settled, will you?" He just knew these women were going to be trouble.

"Daniel, could you..."

"I'm right on it." Dr. Daniel Jackson was already out the door and looking for a spare computer screen.

* * *

"Will you stop pouting."

"I am not pouting."

"Oh, yes you are."

"They took my weapons, Gabrielle."

"They took mine too. You don't see me pouting."

"I feel naked without my weapons." It was hard enough to exist in familiar surroundings without her weapons, but being in a total alien environment Xena did not feel herself.

"Xena, I have seen you naked... many times. You are more dangerous unarmed, wet and naked than you are bristling with an arsenal."

Sam choked on a swallow. *Wet and naked?* Where was her mind today?

"How is it you know just the right thing to say?"

"Because I know you, sweetheart."

Sweetheart? So, that answered one question. They were a couple, and a rather intimate couple at that. Sam wasn't sure if she should be disappointed or relieved.

"Here we are." The door slid open quietly to the infirmary. "Xena. Gabrielle. This is Dr. Fraiser. She is going to examine you."

Janet Fraiser had seen a lot in her days at the Stargate Program but the two women she had to say were the most... fit... women she had ever seen. "So, who have we here?"

"Janet, the General would like you to do a cursory examination of Xena and Gabrielle. They came through the stargate... unexpectedly." Sam's eyes touched the doctor's, sending an unspoken message of what they really wanted to know.

"Sure."

"Be back later. Give me a call when you've finished."

"Later, Sam." Dark brown eyes watched the tall blonde leave, but her perusal of the major didn't go unnoticed. The warrior and the bard exchanged knowing looks and sly smiles. "Now, ladies. Strip!"

* * *

"So what did we find?" The meeting had started later than anticipated, after a minor confrontation broke out in the infirmary.

"Dr. Fraiser has given them the all clear, after a few misunderstandings."

"Oh?"

"It was not my fault. She did not tell me she was a healer." Xena was indignant at being questioned.

"What happened?"

"We have to replace one stethoscope, a couple of thermometers..."

"That's all? I can't see what the problem is." Hammond was relieved that it was just a small tussle involved.

"... and an X-ray machine."

"She was trying to take my spirit."

"For the last time, she was taking a picture of inside you."

"Exactly." The dark brows on the warrior's face drew together in annoyance. "Janet could poke and tickle all she wanted on the outside. The inside is my own."

Sam and Janet had tried and tried to explain but to no avail. "We were looking for something."

"Something?" The bard stepped in. She was tired of Xena refusing to just accept Janet's care. "Like what?"

"Like a Goa'uld."

"A... what. Gold?"

"Goa'uld. It's an alien species that lives inside its host, a human."

Gabrielle's eyes shifted to Xena, who just shrugged. A quiet chuckle from the next seat along drew their attention. "Don't worry. She confuses me every single day." Jack could sympathize with their visitors. "It's best to just go along with what she said."

"And how do you explain how they got here?"

"Now this is most interesting..." The Colonel's eyes began to glaze over as Sam began her dissertation. Gabrielle nudged Xena in the side, nodding her head towards the rapidly relaxing man next to them.

Hammond gave her a couple of minutes of rambling before interjecting, "What's the bottom line, Major?"

"Well, General. I... don't... know how they got here. It shouldn't be possible, but here they are."

"It's not impossible. We traveled back to the 1960s." Jack finally caught up with the conversation.

"That was thirty years, Colonel. We are talking about two thousand years here, and not an exact date at that." Sam looked at the confused looks on the two women. "Somehow without any prior knowledge they managed to activate a stargate and travel in not only space but also time." As she spoke they all realized the enormity of the situation. "And, more to the point, we have no way of sending them back."

"Sending us back?" Agitated, Xena stood. "You mean we are stuck here?"

"For the moment, yes."

"I don't think so. Gabrielle..." The warrior reached down to the bard's hand and pulled her out of the seat.

"And where are you going to go, huh?" Jack's voice rose as they moved away. "For one thing we won't let you leave. For another, what are you going to do if you get out of here?"

Damn. Xena was pissed because she knew her captor was right. "So we're prisoners then?"

"No!" Sam stepped in before the General could speak. "It's just safer if you stay here for a while until we have time to examine the situation."

Xena looked to the Colonel for a translation. "She means 'yeah you are until we figure out what to do with you'."

"You make us sound like horse poo." Gabrielle's nose wrinkled up in distaste.

"Xena. Where were you when you errr... disappeared?"

"We were visiting the Oracle at Delphi. The place was empty so we decided to wait. There was a small pond nearby and we were just cooling our feet. The next thing we knew we were here."

"Sounds like a stargate."

"A star... gate?"

"It is a portal from one dimension to another by means of a wormhole." Xena rolled her eyes.

"Okay, I get the point," Sam huffed. "Somehow you activated it and it drew you in, the wormhole ending here." Her mind was already in motion. "Hmmm... okay a starting point. Delphi in Greece. What do you know of the Oracle?"

"Not a lot. Not many people have seen her. She is a mystery but her gift of prophecy is legendary." Gabrielle answered for her partner. After all, this was her area of expertise.

"Were you able to find out anything, Doctor Jackson?"

Daniel rested his elbows on the conference table, leaning forward to speak. "I didn't have a lot of time General, but I did find some obscure references to a *Warrior Princess* named Xena. A rather *nasty* piece of business..." All eyes around the table noticeably widened. Meanwhile, Xena found a rather interesting spot in the far corner of the room to stare at while Gabrielle attempted to rub the stress from her temples.

"But it seems..." Daniel continued, "... she found redemption, tossed away her warlord ways, and became somewhat of a legendary hero. A bard traveled with her recording her exploits. With some time I should be able to turn up more."

"You could always ask me." Gabrielle had been nothing more than an ornament sitting in what they called a chair. It was not like any chair she had seen. Most of their lives involved benches, rocks or the ground, so a chair was a luxury.

"Yeah, she's the bard. Some days I can't shut her up."

"Hey! Miss 'I don't talk to anyone'!"

"I can't get a word in edgewise..."

"Ladies! Please!" Hammond didn't like being a referee in a chick fight. "Please just go along with us. We will try to solve the problem, alright?"

"Good." Gabrielle nudged her partner in the ribs. "She'll behave."

"Hey! I can talk for myself!"

"But you refuse to do so."

"Gods woman, sometimes you can be a pain in the ass."

"Heh! That's not what you said to me at that cosy little tavern..."

"Major, just... just get them out of here, please." He didn't need to hear this, although he wasn't so sure about O'Neill, who energetically straightened up his chair when the conversation turned intimate.

"Yes, Sir." Sam rubbed her forehead in frustration. She had way too much work to do and here she was babysitting. "Come on, girls."

"Girl? I ain't no girl."

"Do you know how tired that old chestnut is?" Gabrielle mumbled. "Now she's gonna say 'I'm all woman'..."

"I'm all woman!" Xena announced proudly.

"I think you've been hanging around her too long," Sam muttered from the side of her lips.

"You got that right."

* * *

"Janet. Are you busy right now?"

"Not this minute."

"You able to... to... "

"Babysit?" Xena cheerily supplied.

"...take care of our guests for the next hour or so? Somehow I have to find a way to get these two home."

"Not a problem, Sam. I don't mind assisting at all."

The Major touched the doctor's arm in gratitude. "Thanks." Janet followed Sam to the doorway, leaning against the door jamb to watch the blonde walk away.

"Do you think it'll take them as long to figure it out as it took us?"

"Hey! I fixed that, didn't I?"

"Yes, you did, Xena. And you were very eloquent. 'Even in death I will never leave you.' It was a real shame that I was dying at the time."

"A minor detail. We died a lot you know."

"I know. Why was that?"

"Maybe it was because we kept sticking our noses in other people's business?" That was the best part of do-gooding Xena thought. "After the first couple of times dying sort of became part of the job."

"It certainly made the story-telling more interesting." Gabrielle's peripheral vision noticed movement. "Shhhh, here she comes..."

"Now ladies, are you hungry?"

* * *

It certainly was an adventure watching the two women eat. Janet sat back sipping a cup of coffee, her mind swimming with images that would stay with her for some time. Food had been piled high on burgeoning plates. Where on earth did they put it all? And the cutlery... Janet suspected that Xena could make anything a weapon of choice. The tall woman had picked up a fork and examined it, dismissing it instantly as an unnecessary utensil. Xena flicked the offending cutlery over her shoulder, not even bothering to watch it bounce off the wall, zip through the array of salads and skewer the red jello on the end, the handle swaying violently as it came to a sudden stop.

"Show off..." Gabrielle mumbled, but could only smile when the warrior gave her that endearing half smile.

"If you argue all the time, why stay together?" Janet was curious.

"Because we love each other." Gabrielle nodded in agreement as Xena uttered those few words.

"As simple as that?" Janet didn't believe life was that uncomplicated.

"As simple as that."

The doctor shrugged and stood up. "I'll show you to your room."

* * *

The suite was palace accommodations to the two women. Xena sat down on the bed, bouncing up and down on the springy mattress. "This should make things more comfortable." She waggled her eyebrows in invitation.

"Will you stop that!" Gabrielle huffed in frustration. "What is the matter with you?"

"What? We're not going anywhere and we've got nothing to do..." The warrior patted the bedcover.

"Ummm... "Janet tried to back away. Her beeper went off and she was never so grateful for an emergency. "Now, ladies, try and behave. Get some rest. I will be back later, hopefully with some shoes for you." She closed the door and leaned against it. Was it hot in here?

* * *

Sam had looked far and wide for her charges, finally finding them in the locker room and the showers. "Hey." At first she could not see the two women but she found Janet leaning against the doorway leading to the showers. The doctor didn't reply at first, her eyes fixated on something. Janet did not react as Sam moved closer. "Are you alright?"

"Huh?" Blood pumped wildly through her veins. The scene playing out in front of her stirred Janet's libido, drawing her carefully hidden desires to the surface. She was restless.

"What's going on?"

The doctor nodded her head towards the showers. As Sam followed her direction she gasped, drawing a smile from the smaller woman. "Oh..." But that didn't stop the Major staring either.

* * *

The warm water sluiced over their bodies. "Oh, this is wonderful."

"Told ya." Xena liked being right.

"But do we have to do this now?" An errant hand wandered over Gabrielle's water-slicked body, resting on a tingling breast.

"Why not?"

"Because they're watching..."

"I **know**. That's the point."

"The....?" An agonized moan escaped her parched lips. The bard opened her mouth to allow the water to quench her thirst.

"We're just giving them a subtle hint."

"Subtle? Kissing is subtle. This is hitting them over the head with a boulder."

"Are you complaining?"

"Hades, no!" Full, rich lips latched onto her and all rational thought fled with the onslaught. Gabrielle abandoned herself to the magic only her partner could conjure.

* * *

"Couldn't they have done this in their room?" But Sam just couldn't stop watching. It was intriguing.

"Xena said she didn't like being watched."

"But we're watching."

"That's different I suppose."

Not that she was one for such a public display, Sam could understand that she would want women rather than men watching her... them. "Hang on. How did she know about the camera?"

"I asked her the same thing. She said something about having many skills." Sam looked puzzled... how did she know? "Don't worry, I had the same question."

"Maybe we should stop..." The tall blonde made a move to enter the shower area, but she was stopped by a hand on her arm.

"Let them be." The words held power in them, stopping Sam in her tracks. Janet's hand sat there, burning a hole through her uniform. A cry of ecstasy from the shower touched her very soul and sent a shudder through her charged body. Without her knowledge her hand slid up the long arm and curled around the tall woman's neck.

Sam looked into those dark brown depths and saw something she had not seen before. An attraction that she didn't know existed. The touching of lips was tentative at first. It was a meeting of two people who had discovered something bright and new. Sam pulled back to study the smaller woman, wondering if there was a change of mind. She had barely had time to smile before Janet tightened her hold and pulled her in again for another touch, a touch that led to a gentle exploration.

* * *

"Our job is done," Xena murmured.

Gabrielle looked over her partner's shoulder. "How did you know they'd get together?" Her hand came up to scratch through the dark hair. "You got eyes in the back of your head or something?"

The warrior touched her ear. "They're pretty sharp."

"I know, one of your many skills. I especially like skill number twelve."

"Well, I can't disappoint you now, can I?" Xena bent to the task, using skill number twelve with great dexterity and enthusiasm. So focused on Gabrielle's pleasure Xena nearly missed the alarm going off.

* * *

Sam nearly jumped out of her skin as the claxon went off. "Unauthorized incoming!" She moved her head back a few inches, capturing the dark brown orbs in a silent conversation. "After you get off duty, come to my house. We... need to talk."

Janet said nothing, content to just nod in confirmation. The last few minutes had been a revelation for them both, opening up a brand new world that was full of limitless possibilities.

"I've got to go."

"I should be getting back to the infirmary." Janet looked at her arm still wrapped around Sam's neck, her mind taking a moment to realize where her hand was. She jerked it away as if she had been burned, only to find it captured in a larger hand.

"Don't..." Sam flinched as Janet reacted. "Everything will be fine, Janet." Again, the doctor nodded. As Sam left the room, she took one last look over her shoulder at the smaller woman leaning against the shower door.

"Now, ladies, we have an emergency." The words were barely out of her mouth when Xena and Gabrielle rushed by her, flicking wet towels in her face and blocking her vision. By the time she had wrestled off the material by some trick of the eye they were already dressed. "Is this one of those many skills you keep telling me about?" She was tempted not to hand over the sandals that were in her hands.

"Of course. It's always handy in emergencies. Right, Gabrielle?"

"Right, Xena."

"Are you two joined at the hip or something?"

"No..." Xena studied the body part in question. "We have never been joined at the hip. Other parts maybe..." she smiled seductively, "...but not at the hip."

"Nooooo... we have been there too..." Gabrielle offered cheerfully.

"By the Gods I think you're right, Gabrielle." Xena laughed.

"Stop pulling my leg you two." Janet realized too late what she had said. "Don't even think about it. Just... just... forget what I said. Come on." She led the two warriors out the door and down the corridor to their room. "You'll have to stay here until the emergency is over, I'm afraid. I have to report back to the infirmary."

* * *

"I hope you have some good news for me, Sergeant." Hammond just hoped it wasn't another couple of wild warrior women intent on disrupting his base.

"It has the same signature as the first transmission, Sir."

"Well, then track it!"

"Already on it, Sir." In fact, Walter had been on it as soon as he pressed the emergency button.

"Major..."

"Sir..." Why did the General think she had all the answers before she even knew the questions? Sam sat down in the chair next to the technician, her fingers nimbly flying over the keyboard in front of her. "What have we got?"

"Another incoming... looks like it's originating from the same point as this morning's arrival."

"Open the iris." Hammond stood at the window overlooking the stargate floor, observing the troops finding positions for a clear line of fire if needed. "Get our visitors," Hammond ordered the guard standing near the back wall.

"Don't bother..." Xena strolled in, followed by her companion.

"How did...?"

"Don't ask, Sir." Sam eyes met the tall brunette's and saw a touch of merriment in their depths. Her gaze moved to her woman's shoulder. "I see you found your weapons."

"Guard!"

"Sir, considering we don't know what's coming through that portal, we may need as many soldiers as we can find at a moment's notice."

The general's eyes glanced from one woman to another. He had to admit that they had not made any aggressive move against anyone, so he backed down. "Remind me to have a talk with our security staff, Major."

"General, I am sure they did their utmost to repel them." But Sam knew better. These two could probably walk through walls if they put their minds to it.

"Ten seconds to arrival."

"Can you check those coordinates for me?" Sam went back to business, her analytical mind already in motion in an effort to get these women home.

The grinding of the huge metal ring began as it always did, the chevrons click in place one by one as the address was dialed out. "Chevron Five..."

The two Greeks stood at the window and watched in awe. The water in the middle of the ring rippled long moments before a lone figure stepped through. "How... how..."

"You should know. You came through that." Any more thorough explanation would be useless and Sam knew that. Two thousands years of scientific knowledge could not be supplied in the blink of an eye.

The figure just stood there, covered in a floor-length cloak, its hood firmly covering the face.

"I am Colonel Jack O'Neill of Stargate Command. You seem to have us at a disadvantage."

"Bring me Xena." The words were low and melodious.

"Xena? What makes you think we have a 'Xena' here?"

The cloak fell to the floor, revealing a statuesque woman with long blonde hair dressed in a long flowing robe secured over one shoulder. "I know all. Xena does not belong here."

"You got that right," he muttered. Damn women. They were a two-woman tag-team tornado, leaving a trail of destruction wherever they went. He looked the Oracle up and down. "You wouldn't happen to be the Oracle would you?"

"You have the gift of sight also?"

"If you want to call it that," Daniel murmured to a stoic-faced Teal'c. Damn, what did it take to make the man smile?

The far wall slid back and in walked the subject of the conversation. "You two talking about me?"

"Come, we do not have much time."

"Hey, hey, hey! Hang on a minute. You can't just waltz in here, demand Xena and then waltz out again!"

"We must go... now!" The final word brooked no argument, and Xena gave none. The duo moved towards the ramp and the Oracle.

O'Neill stepped in, grabbing Xena's arm. "Not until we're satisfied that it's safe to go."

"It's fine, O'Neill. We are going home." Xena spoke softly but her intent was plain to see. Gabrielle stood to one side as the three of them faced off against one another.

Xena turned to Sam. "We won't need these any more. I... **we** won't forget you." Xena reached for the bracelet, but the Major stopped her.

"Before you remove that, thank you... for everything." Sam's heartfelt words echoed in her blue eyes.

"I wouldn't be surprised if Aphrodite was behind it all."

"Really? Aphrodite?" Daniel's curiosity was piqued.

"Daniel! It's too late now." Sam pulled the warrior in for a brief hug, the whispered words for her ears only. "I'll say goodbye to Janet for you... personally."

"Glad we could help." Xena reluctantly removed the bracelet and handed it over. Somehow it felt like the magic was over.

While Gabrielle struggled to undo the clasp on hers, the Oracle whispered, "I need you..." Before Xena could even respond, the Goddess pulled her in, planting her lips on the surprised warrior. While she was not one to refuse such an advance it was so out of place that she struggled. Held firm in the embrace of the Oracle, Xena put all her considerable strength into separating them.

The woman's eyes glowed with an unearthly fire, drawing a rustling in the background. The roar of her own blood in her ears slowed down her reflexes. No longer able to heed the cries of those around her, Xena struggled against the superior strength of her captor. Something wriggled against her stomach, scratching against the leather of her battle dress. She pushed hard and opened up a gap, her vision looking straight down at a... a... lizard... a slug... something that was trying to get to her skin.

Xena was tiring against the pull and she looked into those smiling ghostly eyes. There was a sudden movement out of the corner of her eye, something so fast that it defied her considerably good sight to follow it. Something brushed by her stomach and continued its journey until it hit the far wall. A second blur followed the same path, also ending up in the far wall.

Xena took the distraction and punched her fingers into the base of the Oracle's neck. The Goddess's smile faded, as did her eyes, the woman slumping to the ground in defeat. The warrior gave her partner a wink, smiling as Gabrielle's fingers rose one by one. The bard couldn't help but count every time she put on the pinch. As much as she wanted to leave it there, she removed it with two seconds to spare.

* * *

Sam's heart thumped erratically as she watched the events unfold. The tell-tale glowing eyes triggered her reflexes to reach for a weapon, but no opening presented itself. To shoot the Oracle would probably result in Xena's death as well. What she hadn't been prepared for was Gabrielle's reaction. The smaller blonde threw... something... twice. She wasn't sure what it was, the woman was so fast.

"Oh... my... God," she muttered. There, stuck in the wall with two forks, was a Goa'uld. The creature was wriggling defiantly against the metal prongs skewering its body moments before it died. Sam stared at the... warrior. Sam had never thought of Gabrielle as a warrior. After all, Xena was a warrior and the small blonde lived in her shadow. But Gabrielle had proved herself today.

The bracelets were gone, and so were the words, but her smile and her eyes told Xena what she wanted to say. Sam nodded her head towards the open wormhole, encouraging them to go home. Xena bowed then extended her hand towards Gabrielle, the two of them walking back through the stargate towards home, supporting the unconscious Oracle as they crossed the surface of the water.

"They were certainly something else." Jack joined Sam on the platform. As the wormhole began to break up, two pairs of sandals popped through the shrinking portal.

Sam looked at the dead Goa'uld hanging on the wall like some trophy and laughed out loud.
"They certainly were."

THE END.

I always love hearing from the readers so please don't be shy. Let me know what you think at: aurelia_fan@yahoo.com.au, or visit my Yahoo Group and join in the fun at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aurelia_fan/.

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