

~ The Light and the Darkness ~

by Red Hope

Disclaimers

Violence ~ This will certainly have violence.

Subtext ~ Yes of course subtext or rather maintext here.

Copyright ~ Lets see, Universal and MCA both own Xena and Gabrielle. The rest of the characters, Manson, Mordred, Sir Williams, Sir Gawain, Sir Percival, Sir Galahad, Sir Marlory, and King Arthur I definitely own and nobody else along with the story line. I will admit however, the movie *First Knight* and television-movie *Merlin* influenced me somewhat, love those movies and actors.

Note ~ This is my first shot at my new fourth series. I hope everybody will like the opening story for my immortal series. I plan to keep up with it till I get to modern day. Enjoy and thanks for reading!

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Comments? Questions? Advice? Email me at redhope@redhope.net
Series Four: **History is Fickle** Story: **One**

Section 1

~*Part 1*~

The stallion's reins were pulled back and the horse came to a quick stop with a huff. The rider of the horse released one rein and turned in the saddle to gaze back. They studied back in that direction through the small opening in their helmet's visor. The rider saw nobody and heard nothing but the horse's breathing. Slowly the rider released the other rein and hopped off the horse, the heavy armor on their body clanking from the movement.

Gradually the rider reached up with both hands, their armor clad hands grasping the metal helmet over their head. The helmet was lifted up over the rider's head and the rider tucked the metallic helmet under their right arm still staring off in the direction they'd just rode from. The rider's right left hand came up to rest on the hilt of their sword. The rider then walked to the front of the horse and smile. "Thank God you're like your great grandfather Torqueo."

The horse nickered as he threw his head up and down making the chanfron, armor over his face, clank.

The rider smiled as a breeze picked up in the fall air blowing the rider's short blond hair back some. The rider leaned forward to place a gentle kiss to the horse's nose then straightened back up. "Okay we have a five minute break boy. Those knights are still on our tails."

The stallion nickered and bobbed his head.

The rider smiled and began to walk off the dirt rode. "Be back in a second Torqueo." The rider strolled into the surrounding woods to come to a lake. They leaned against a tree still holding the helmet under one arm while resting their left hand on the sword's hilt. The rider stared into the lake's water and her memories came to life taking her back.

Gabrielle sighed and tore her eyes away from the lake after staring at it. She flipped the sai in her right hand then inserted it into her right boot. Things were so peaceful for her now that she left the Amazon Nation all in order.

A small crack of a twig filled the air, which only made Gabrielle grin to herself. A warm set of arms soon wrapped around her chest. The Amazon Queen leaned back into her Soulmate's warm leather clad stomach.

"Beautiful area."

The small warrior nodded at her partner's words. "It is." Gabrielle lifted her right hand to grasp Xena's hands that rested on her chest. "It's nice to be traveling again."

The warrior nodded. "It is, that was a little to long in the Amazon Nation."

Gabrielle quietly laughed. "Even I have to admit it was." She sighed happily. "I still can't believe I'm Queen of all the Amazons." She shook her head. "Something else."

Xena grinned to herself as she stared over the lake. "It is but you'll be perfect for the job."

The small warrior nodded. "Hope so. At least we have a vacation before I have to take charge."

"Mmm, I would have forced your Amazons."

The small warrior grinned. "I know." She let her eyes drift shut. "It's nice that it's just you and I again traveling."

Xena let a smile take her lips. "It is." She leaned her head down closer to her partner's. "Just us."

Gabrielle grinned devilishly and opened her eyes to lift her head up to her Soulmate's. "Just us." She'd whispered in a low voice.

The warrior grinned and captured her partner's lips in a sound kiss. After it broke she began to talk again. "We should go into the camp."

Gabrielle nodded. "Yeah it's getting late. Thank the gods we had dinner early." She stood up and began to walk with Xena beside her.

Xena stared up to the trees and saw the wind ruffle the few brown leaves. Lowering her head she gazed over at Gabrielle. "It's going to be a cold night."

The Amazon Queen arched an eyebrow. "Well then, we'll just... have to find a way to get around it huh?"

The older woman grinned. "Count on it."

The pair entered into their camp after having a long day of traveling. They'd left the Amazon village for their vacation first in Amphipolis then in Egypt. Their plans after that were probably going to deal with the new Amazon Nation and getting everything in order.

But right now the Soulmates were falling into each other's touch and words. And something like that can only lead the pair to fall asleep. Their dreamscapes only being one and the same for they are Soulmates. Yet this dream the Soulmates had tonight was not of the normal, was not in their control.

Gabrielle rested in her Soulmate's arms as they sat on the ground. Her eyes were shut and she knew Xena's were too. Slowly she opened her eyes and gazed across the gray space of her dream. Directly in front of her was a huge black swirling cloud of dust. Her eyes instantly widen. "Xena?"

Xena gradually opened her eyes and her arms automatically tightened around Gabrielle. She saw what was in front of them and it made her eyes narrowed.

"Xena, what is that? How'd it get into our dream?"

"I don't know Gabrielle." Xena's blue eyes only went to slits now. "Let's take a look."

The pair of Soulmates stood up and gradually made their way over to the black swirling mass. They studied it trying to figure its purpose. Once they neared suddenly lightning bolts filled the swirling black dust and it spun faster till it almost seemed to be still. Then images began to appear before the Soulmates.

Gabrielle reached to her right to grasp Xena's arm as she watched the images. "What is that?"

Xena studied the images recognizing the first few then the rest she really didn't. "I'm not sure..."

Gabrielle was still examining the images she'd recognized a few herself then the rest of the images she couldn't. Then it seem to make sense to her. "It'sss the future Xena."

The first image was the death of Julius Caesar, the next were different images of the Roman Empire and its emperors. The next following were of the increase of the Byzantine Empire and a group of slaves in Egypt being freed by one man. An image of a man nailed to a cross and people mourning over this. An image flashed of Rome's great Colosseum being built along with the conquest of Britannia.

Numerous more images flipped by. One's of war and of peace. Changes and discoveries. Then the last image was of a white mushroom like cloud that disappeared and left behind an image of people dead on the ground, smoke rising, and buildings toppled over into rubble. It was nothing but a barren waste field. Earth's end.

This image stayed and the Soulmates stared at it with wide eyes, utterly surprised.

"Xena, we destroy ourselves."

Xena stared at the image and shook her head. "Looks like man finally did it to

themselves."

Gabrielle closed her eyes for a moment and released Xena's arms as she opened her eyes again. "I can't believe it."

A masculine voice then cut in saying, "Neither can I." Quickly to follow this was the dark dust mass disappearing and a man appearing in front of the Soulmates.

Xena narrowed her eyes at the man. "Zeus." She crossed her arms over her chest and took a step in front of Gabrielle. "What brings you to our dream?"

Zeus took a step closer. "I've come to ask for both your help."

Xena arched an eyebrow.

Gabrielle though took a step forward to stand beside Xena. She stared hard at Zeus. "Help with what? Xena and I are not just a service agency." She paused. "Especially when somebody invades our dreams."

Zeus nodded for a moment. "And I understand that." He took a deep breath. "But as you both saw just now, man destroys himself and I can't let that happen."

"And why would you care Zeus? The Gods have always beaten down on mankind." Xena's voice had come out hard and cold, almost threatening.

"If you remember correctly Xena, I created mankind. They are my creation and I intend to protect them. I have given them everything they need to survive against other Gods and nature. But I can't not protect them from themselves."

"And we come into this how?"

Zeus looked away from Xena to Gabrielle and he quickly answered her. "You both always speak of the greater good. The greater good is not a what it is a who. The Greater Good is you both of you and I am asking you now to take the next step and become the Greatest Good."

Gabrielle furrowed her eyebrows at Zeus.

Xena had a raised eyebrow with her cool look. "And exactly what are your intents Zeus and why?"

Zeus sighed and began to explain. "You both have always fought for good doing much as you could. But mankind needs protectors from themselves. I want you two to both become the protectors of mankind from themselves."

"How do you propose that Zeus?" Now it was Gabrielle's turn to cross her arms over her chest after asking her question.

"Simple, make you both immortal."

Xena's arms uncrossed and went to her hips. "I don't think so." She turned to Gabrielle. "We're out of here."

Gabrielle nodded and shifted closer to her Soulmate.

"Wait."

Xena sighed at Zeus's request. She gazed over at him.

Zeus took a step closer. "You both saw what will happen to man."

Xena shook her head. "Not my problem Zeus."

Gabrielle wasn't saying anything she was staring down to the dark ground.

Zeus knew he wasn't getting to Xena, so he decided to try the other half. He reached out to Gabrielle. "Gabrielle, I know you can't let something like that happen."

Gabrielle closed her eyes as she felt the man's hand disappear from her shoulder. She opened her eyes again and lifted her head up to Xena.

Xena stared down into her Soulmate's eyes and saw that plead. That plead that meant Gabrielle couldn't turn her back on something. She sighed, her Soulmate had to big of heart at times but then it always made her smile because it would always be caught in Xena. But she wouldn't let it be known as she gazed over to Zeus. "Tell me exactly why you can't do it yourself? You're a god."

Zeus looked away then glanced back. "There is a prophecy that one day the Gods will be forgotten and only recorded into myths and tales. If I knew for certain I'd be around for all of eternity I would not have asked you both." He paused for a moment. "Everything you both have fought for will be destroy in a heartbeat one day. Everything will be left in nothing but ashes."

Xena closed her eyes as she turned her head away. She lowered her head down to Gabrielle's to let her forehead lean against Gabrielle's. "Immortality Gabrielle."

Gabrielle nodded her head her eyes shut tight. She kept weighting the good things and the bad things about such a thing. Then she considered the reason for being immortal. Could she and Xena really change mankind's destiny?

People have spoke of eternal life and of the grandeur it brings. But is it really all that grand? Even more so for a pair of Soulmates that have found each other in such a time period as this?

Gabrielle took a deep breath. "I've said the only thing I've ever needed or wanted is you Xena. And that has and never will change." Her eyes drifted open.

Xena's eyes opened and she lifted her head to peer down at her Soulmate. "The same for me love." She took a deep breath. "But do you want to be immortal in this life?"

Gabrielle smiled sadly. "With you, immortality? I wouldn't have it any other way." She grinned. "It would be loads of fun."

Xena grinned now. "It would be interesting." Why was she agreeing to this now? Xena knew why, the why was her other half standing here. Standing here and believing that her and Xena could change man's destiny believing it was worth the try.

Zeus cut in just then. "It is now or never for you both."

Both Soulmates turned towards Zeus.

Xena nodded her head.

Zeus nodded back and gazed over at Gabrielle in question.

Gabrielle nodded her head as well.

Zeus smiled at both and lifted both his hands up, one going to each Soulmate's heads. His hands began to glow a bright white then a white dust fell over the Soulmates.

The Soulmates closed their eyes and felt the dust began to glow over them and a certain strength and power filled them. The white glow grew strong and then centered in their chests then disappeared.

Zeus pulled his hands away.

Slowly the Soulmates kept their eyes closed as the power of immortality filtered through their bodies. And as they let this happen Zeus spoke.

"There are a few changes to your immortality Xena and Gabrielle. You both will still feel emotions, still have such things as hunger, and want sleep. But such things as being hungry or sleep are only wants not a need. Emotions will always be there even if I tried to rid them, for your love is too strong for me to try and destroy." He smiled as he gazed at the Soulmates still taking in the immortality. "But remember this, the days will disappear quickly but you will want them to go in reverse. Time only knows forward but there will be a day when you both will feel the need for reverse and you will have the chance to go to the beginning." Zeus took a deep breath. "Good luck to you both, I will always be watching over my creation." Zeus then disappeared from the Soulmates' dreamscape, his last words in whispers. "Just keep walking down to the end of the road."

The Soulmates gradually opened their eyes and found themselves staring into each other's eyes with their arms around each other. They were in the fire lit camp.

The Amazon Queen furrowed her eyebrows. "You think it was just a dream?"

"Only one way to find out." Xena kissed her partner's forehead and sat up after releasing the smaller warrior.

Gabrielle also sat up in the bedroll.

Xena turned to her right to grasp her chakram by the middle swirl handle. She lifted the dark chakram and stared at it then gazed at Gabrielle.

"Xena you're not going to..."

The warrior grinned. "Only way to find out." She held out her left-hand palm up. Carefully she placed the chakram's blade over her hand then pressed hard while running the blade down her skin.

Quickly the skin tore open then closed just as quickly.

Xena lifted the chakram up to see her palm the same as it was a second ago.

The younger woman's eyes were wide with surprise. "It was real Xena." She gazed up from her Soulmate's palm to Xena. "We're immortal."

The sound of horse beats filled the air and the rider quickly came out of her trance of memories. She raced away from the lake and came up to her stallion's rear. She gazed down the road to see three horses with riders coming at her. "Goddamn it they're good." She turned to her horse's rump and placed her helmet on the saddle and grabbed three arrows and a crossbow. She frantically placed an arrow into the crossbow and raised it at the first knight on horseback coming at her.

She found an opening in his armor. She pulled the trigger and the arrow sped through the air and sunk deep through the chain mail into knight's chest. He fell off the horse in a second.

The other two knights on horseback however were coming fast and the rider had no time to string up another arrow. So instead she tossed the crossbow with arrows to the ground by her stallion and grabbed the helmet putting it on. She then unsheathed her sword and raced ahead to take on the other two galloping enemies.

The two knights unsheathed their swords and lowered them towards their opponent on the ground. One knight was ahead of the other and sped ahead aiming for their opponent.

The rider raised her sword and grinned as she gazed through her visor. The knight in dark armor came at her and she jumped a little to take out the knight with her sword. She struck him in the chest and he went falling to the ground. She landed back on the ground with the knight she'd killed in front of her on the ground. She lowered her head as the other knight on horseback breezed past her.

She stood up and turned around to see the last knight had stopped his horse and turned it around to face her again. The knight on horseback came at her again and she did her same trick but instead hit him lighter to knock him off his horse. His horse stomped off and she came to land on the ground beside this still breathing knight. She quickly placed her sword's tip down to go between his chest armor and helmet touching the skin of his throat. She bent down to one knee and with her free hand she pulled off the other knight's helmet. "You're not good as you thought huh?"

The knight in dark armor glared up at her. "To Hell with you bitch."

She grinned. "No I'm sorry, I believe it will be you and your leader that will be going to Hell."

The dark knight narrowed his eyes up at the female knight. "Either way Mordred will kill King Arthur." He then grinned evilly.

"I highly doubt it." She leaned down close to his face while pressing her sword more into his throat. "Now then, tell me how many others are following after me."

"Just us three."

"Don't play games with me." She sneered. "I know your second in command. He wouldn't send three knights after me knowing whom I am." Her next words came out in a growl. "How many and who?"

The dark knight felt the sword press hard and he couldn't breathe. "Alright there are five other knights including Commander Manson."

"Thanks." She then punched the knight hard in the face with her armored covered hand. She then slowly stood up while sheathing her sword on her left side.

The sound of louder horses' hooves filled the air and she looked down the road to see five knights in dark armor round the turn. "Oh Hell." She quickly ran to her horse, Torqueo, and got up onto his back in a fluent motion. She kicked her stallion into a gallop. "Let's go boy they're coming."

Torqueo picked up his pace and sped down the dirt road through the dark and hilly woods.

Directly behind the female knight could be heard her pursers. She gazed ahead trying to figure how long it would till she reached the end of the woods. "God Torqueo this is crazy. I hope she's there waiting for us."

Torqueo bobbed his head up and down in agreement as he galloped. The entire armor over his body clanked from the fast movement and it always slowed him down some.

The single female knight raced down the road in the woods on her stallion. Her five pursuing dark clad knights right behind her. Then within five minutes the end of the woods appeared, well at least the view of the rolling hills could be seen down the road. The female knight smiled under her helmet. "Come on Torqueo we're almost there." Turning back around in her saddle she gazed back to see that the five knights behind her were starting to fall behind her and that only made her grin.

Torqueo though came to the end of the woods and bursted through the woods into the open fields of the rolling hills of Wales. He continued to race ahead down the dirt road.

The female knight gazed ahead through her visor to see eleven knights down the road. They were all mounted on armored horseback with their armor bright and metallic, they were waiting. Torqueo and the rider went straight for them and soon as they came in talking distance the rider pulled back on the reins. "They're coming. There are five riders and one is Commander Manson."

There was one knight in the front of the other ten and nodded at the female knight. This knight then looked at the other ten. "Go stop them, kill them all except for Manson. Take him as prison as we planned."

The ten knights nodded and kicked their horses to race ahead to meet up with the five pursuing knights.

The female knight on Torqueo signaled her stallion to take a few steps forward and close to the other knight's horse. She then reached up to remove her helmet with a smile taking her lips. "Glad this worked."

The other knight nodded. "Figured it would." The knight released the reins and reached up to remove their helmet and soon as they did long dark black flowing hair came down. "Good job Gabrielle." Blue eyes twinkled deeply.

Gabrielle grinned as she shifted a little in Torqueo's saddle. "Just glad your plan

worked Xena."

Xena chuckled. "Our plan love." She then leaned towards her partner to place her right hand on Gabrielle's left cheek.

Gabrielle felt her Soulmate's hand against her cheek along with the cool chain mail. She leaned forward.

Xena did the same and their lips captured each other's. The kiss was long and deep. At first they heard the sound of battle in the background then it faded out, as they became lost in the kiss.

Gabrielle pulled back slowly with a smile. "Thanks for getting here."

The warrior nodded. "Anytime." A small grin.

The small woman chuckled and kicked Torqueo forward to turn him around and come up along beside Xena's horse again but to face the woods now. "You really think Manson knows enough of Mordred's plans?"

Xena shrugged her shoulders, the armor shifting up and down with her shoulders. "I would think so. We'll find out. If I know Mordred he'd be stupid enough to tell Manson his plans."

"I just hope they're the real plans Mordred intends." Gabrielle turned her head to Xena. She then let a grin slip into place. "So who's doing the interrogating? You or Merlin?"

The warrior chuckled. "Whoever King Arthur wants."

Gabrielle grinned and gazed back towards the woods. She then saw some of the metallic knights coming out. Two of them were walking and in the middle of them was a knight dressed in dark armor and tied. Other knights were following behind on horseback. "I guess it depends on whether King Arthur wants the information from Manson by magical means or physical ones."

The taller knight nodded as she watched King Arthur's knights returning with Manson captured. "I think it depends more on if Arthur wants Manson alive or dead after the interrogation."

Gabrielle laughed and nodded. "True." She let her hands rest on her armor clad thighs watching the other knights. "By the way, thanks for teaching me how to string up a crossbow in record time."

Xena grinned to herself. "Helpful isn't it?"

The small warrior nodded. "Definitely."

Now the ten knights came up with the dark knight in the front with his helmet gone and his arms tied behind his back.

Xena and Gabrielle both gazed down at the dark knight, he is Manson the second in command to Mordred.

Xena grinned evilly down at Manson. "How's your day been Manson?"

Manson glared up at the knight on the horse. "It seems to just keep getting better Xena."

"Good to hear." The warrior quietly laughed. "I do believe you have... a meeting with King Arthur."

Manson's eyes narrowed. "Hell if I'll tell you all what Mordred's plans are."

The warrior laughed and leaned forward. "Manson... you were never the bright candle were you? I'm glad now that you told me you do know Mordred's plans." She only laughed again and sat back in her saddle. "Take him to the dungeons in Camelot." Xena watched the ten knights walk past her horse and continued to head down the road towards Camelot. She watched them go for a distance then gazed back to her Soulmate. "He might not know the plans."

Gabrielle raised an eyebrow. "Because he said he wouldn't tell the plans."

The warrior nodded and turned her horse around to face towards Camelot. "Yes, it might be a setup." She watched to see her partner do the same with her horse.

"I guess we'll find out huh?"

Xena nodded and gazed down at her mare. "Yeah." She took a deep breath and brought her hand down to her mare's neck. "Ready to go back Argo?"

The mare nickered and threw her head up and down.

Xena chuckled and lifted her head to Gabrielle. "She's a lot like Argo."

The smaller warrior grinned. "I know what you mean. Torqueo is a lot like is great grandfather." She sighed. "Ready to go back?"

The taller woman nodded. "Yup." Reaching down she lifted her helmet and put it on over her head. Glancing over at Gabrielle, she saw Gabrielle do the same with her helmet. "Let's go."

Gabrielle nodded and kicked her stallion into a trot with Xena right beside her.

~*~*~*~

Gabrielle carefully knocked on the large wood door. She waited for a moment and saw the door open with her Soulmate's head poking out. "Hey."

Xena grinned. "Was wondering what took you." She shifted out of the door's opening and let Gabrielle come in.

The small knight came in with her right hand resting on her sword at her right side. She gazed over at her partner. "You haven't gotten out of your armor yet?"

The warrior chuckled. "No, I am slow after so many years."

Gabrielle rolled her eyes. "Right." She walked across the large bedchamber and came to sit at the foot of Xena's bed. She sighed.

Xena ambled over to the bed near her Soulmate. Xena still wore her armor along her

arms and legs. Her helmet and breast armor was gone along with her sword that rested in the closet. She raised her left arm and began to remove the armor. "Is Manson in his cell?"

Gabrielle nodded. "Yeah, I just came from there. King Arthur says we have a meeting in twenty minutes about this."

The warrior sighed. "Great. Is Merlin suppose to be there?"

The younger woman gazed up with a grin. "Yes." Gabrielle sat in a white knit long shirt. Then she had on black pants with boots and her sword on her right side attached by a leather belt at her waist.

Xena sighed. "Great." She carried her armor over to a closet to her left. She reached into the open closet and placed her armor inside then took off her armor from her right arm.

"Xena, it could be worse."

"How's that?"

The small warrior grinned. "Merlin could be against us."

The knight grumbled as she threw the armor in. "I know." She reached in to pull out the same white cotton knit shirt like Gabrielle's and slipped it on. "You know how I feel about magic."

The small warrior chuckled quietly. "Don't I." She stood up from the bed and padded over to Xena. "Neither of us like magic." She came up behind Xena.

The Warrior Princess turned around. "At least you try to talk to him."

Gabrielle smirked. "I try to see past the magic." She went serious. "If it wasn't for him Arthur wouldn't be king. All of England needs a king like Arthur."

Xena nodded. "True." She sighed. "But Arthur has lost his edge since Lancelot."

"Mmm, you mean Lancelot and Guinevere." Gabrielle shook her head. "We should have never gone on those crusades. Those crusades destroyed everything."

"We would have no matter what Gabrielle."

"Yeah I know." The small woman gazed up. "Arthur always believed in God and the Holy Grail."

The warrior nodded. "Bunch of crap if you ask me."

Gabrielle snickered. "You're bad."

"I know." The warrior lifted her hands to her Soulmate's sides.

Gabrielle smiled. "I'll tell you what's crap Xena. It's this separate room thing."

Xena sighed unhappily. "Yeah, I agree." She leaned down to kiss her partner gently. She pulled back. "But we both know what will happen if anybody finds out about us."

The small warrior laughed sarcastically. "I am surprised we haven't been arrested for just being knights and dressing in men's attire."

The taller woman sighed. "They won't, Arthur needs us and he knows it."

"True." Gabrielle gazed up with sad eyes. "I can't wait to sleep in each others arms every night again."

"Me too." Xena lowered her head and kissed her Soulmate lightly on the forehead. "Till then we'll have to make do." She pulled her partner into her arms.

Gabrielle wrapped her arms around her Soulmate and held her tightly. "I hate this Christian religion."

The warrior snickered. "You're getting bad as me."

"Mmm, remember I am you."

"Always." Xena lowered her head down onto her partner's head. "When's that meeting?"

The smaller knight closed her eyes. "Sometime or another."

"Gabrielle."

Gabrielle quietly laughed. "Soon."

"Gabrielle." Second warning.

The smaller woman sighed. "In ten minutes or so."

"Mmm okay." Xena lifted her head. "I need to get my armor off my legs."

Gabrielle tightened her hold. "Later."

The warrior grinned and lowered her head again on top of Gabrielle's.

The Soulmates didn't move or shift, both holding each other. They rarely were able to do that these days. The Greek gods had faded away into time as the prophecy for told and now a new religion had sprung. Christianity. And both Soulmates hated the religion. They would normally tell each other it was because of the discrimination towards same sex relationships. Yet they both knew it was more than that, it was mainly because they could see the growing strength in the religion. Especially since the crusades. If a religion is powerful enough to start wars then it was powerful enough to control people and corrupt eventually. They both disliked such a thing.

Xena placed a kiss to her partner's head. "We better go."

Gabrielle raised her head and opened her eyes. "Yeah, don't need to be late." She released her friend and shifted over to the door.

The knight turned to her closet again and pulled out her sword with its belt. She strapped it on her waist and glanced over to Gabrielle. "You like me in this leg armor."

Gabrielle's lips shaped into an evil grin. "Yes. I like that metallic armor on you. It's you."

"What happened to the love for the brass armor." Xena ambled up to her partner.

"I miss it." The small warrior opened the door. "I miss my leathers too."

Xena sighed and walked out of the room and closed the door behind. A small bang echoed down the long stone hallway. "Same here."

"I know what you really miss using is that chakram."

The warrior evilly laughed. "Gods yes." She started walking down the hall beside Gabrielle.

"It's God Xena."

"Whatever." The tall woman grinned. "Either way, it's same thing."

The smaller female quietly laughed and shook her head. She came to the stairs and started going down them with Xena. She listened to the sound of Xena's armor clanking. As soon as they came to the main part of the castle they saw Sir Williams come up by them.

"Afternoon Xena and Gabrielle."

The two women smiled.

"I heard your plan worked. I commend you."

Xena nodded as she walked down the long hall towards the meeting room. "Thanks Williams. I am glad it worked."

"It seemed to." The knight took a deep breath and looked at Gabrielle. "I heard you were the bait."

Gabrielle gave a grin. "Yup. Worked like a charm."

Sir Williams nodded. "Quite." He gazed ahead. "Do we know what this meeting is about? I assume about Manson?"

"More then likely it is." Xena then shifted her right hand to her sword hilt to rest there.

"Do we know who's doing the interrogation yet?" Williams glanced over at Xena.

The warrior shook her head. "No."

Williams nodded. "Does Manson know the plans?"

Gabrielle took that question. "We think so but we're not sure yet."

Sir Williams reached forward and opened up the door to the meeting room. He held it open as he let to the two women walk in. Following in, he closed the door behind.

Xena and Gabrielle quietly walked down the three marble steps into the round room. There in the center of the room was a massive round white marble table with twelve

seats around it.

Arthur sat in his seat already and there were seven other knights already sitting down. Two other knights were missing.

King Arthur lifted his eyes to the two warriors that entered in with Sir Williams. "Xena, Gabrielle I want to thank you." He slowly stood up.

Xena smiled warmly and bowed her head. "Thank you King Arthur for trusting Gabrielle and I's judgement." She raised her head again.

Arthur smiled. "I always do." He was an older man these days. His hair had turned white and gray along with his beard and wore his black shirt and pants with basic silver armor over his chest, legs, wrists, and sword at his side.

Gabrielle smiled now. "Thank you Arthur."

The king smiled to Gabrielle and nodded.

Sir Williams moved his seat to sit down calmly. He'd taken Lancelot's position.

Gabrielle and Xena both shifted to sit down in their seats beside each other.

Arthur sat again and leaned back in his seat. "We're still waiting for two others." He sighed. "I visited Manson in the dungeon. He doesn't seem quite happy." A grin took his lips.

Xena grinned. "Not at all." She rested back in her seat.

Gabrielle glanced back to see the doors open and two other knights came in then came Merlin.

Merlin walked over to stand beside Arthur.

The Warrior Princess tried so hard not to narrow her eyes at the magician but couldn't help but let them narrow faintly.

Arthur stood quickly. "Everybody is equal here in this room."

All the other knights followed his action and stood.

The king drew his sword and held it in front of his body.

The eleven other knights drew their swords together and placed them down on the table before each other as Arthur did. The room was filled with a small cling of the swords meeting the marble table. Together everybody sat once more.

Arthur took a deep breath. "I called this meeting because of our new guest, namely Manson."

Everybody in the room quietly laughed.

"First we must figure out if Manson knows Mordred's plans or not." The king shifted his attention directly to Xena. "Do you believe Manson knows the plans?"

Xena sat back in her seat and considered the question. "I am not quite sure."

The other knights with the exception of Gabrielle all began to mumble to each other.

King Arthur took a deep breath. "Silence." The room went quiet and he spoke to Xena again. "You're not sure?"

The warrior shifted in her seat a little. "I can't be till I... talk to him."

Arthur leaned towards the table. "Xena this is not the time to be questioning your intuition whether you think Manson knows the plans or not."

The knight was about to give a sharp response but her chance was taken away.

"Arthur, I believe Xena is saying she can't be sure till... she gets Manson to talk." Merlin stared at Xena for a second then lowered his eyes to the king. "I can understand that. Manson may be setting us up."

Arthur sat back in his seat considering that. "It's possible." He thoughtfully stared at Xena and her partner, almost trying to read them but it wasn't happening.

"Arthur I believe the best thing now is for you to select somebody to question Manson."

Arthur turned his head to the person that spoke, Sir Galahad. "You're right Galahad." He took a deep breath while resting back in his large chair. "And who should that be?" The king watched to see half the knights' eyes fall on Xena and the other on Merlin. "Well... this will not be simple."

"It is your final decision my Lord."

The king's eyes fell on Sir Gawain. "No, it's our decision in this room."

"True my Lord but it is your final decision considering you have yet to decide."

Arthur nodded at Gawain's further explanation. He peered up at Merlin. "How would you get Manson to speak?"

Merlin grinned faintly. "Arthur, you know how I would go about it."

Arthur quietly laughed. "Very true." He glanced over to Xena who sat stoic. He also knew how Xena would go about getting the information from Manson. It was not a question of how he wanted the information. It was a question of if he wanted Manson dead or alive after the questioning. "Merlin?" He lifted his eyes to the magician. "Question Manson and report to me what you find out."

Merlin bowed his head. "As you wish."

Arthur gave his attention back to all his knights. "After Merlin finds out the information we are to convene here for a follow up meeting. Is that suitable for all of you?"

All eleven knights nodded.

"Wonderful." The king stood.

The eleven knights rapidly stood and grabbed their swords, all lifting them and

holding them towards Arthur.

King Arthur lifted his sword to hold it up for a second then sheath it.

The other knights sheathed their swords and shifted from their seats. Some of the knights gathered around to start talking. Others left together talking.

Xena power walked out of the room with her best friend following right behind. The warrior marched down the long hall at a fast pace with anger in her stride.

Gabrielle took a deep breath and jogged to catch up with her fast moving Soulmate. "Xena?"

The knight slowed down and took a deep breath. "Sorry."

The smaller warrior placed her right hand on her partner's arm. "It's okay. Let's go to the courtyard?"

"Yeah." The older woman walked again but at a much slower pace.

The smaller female had her head low thinking. She had to be careful with her words. One thing she learned over the centuries was to be careful with her words when it came to her Soulmate's pride being hurt. Lifting her head she saw they were coming to the large courtyard with the massive garden in the center. "Arthur can be stupid at times."

Xena quickly turned her head to gaze at her Soulmate. "You're serious?"

Gabrielle gazed at Xena. "You know I am being serious." She took a long breath. "But I understand why he chose Merlin over you." She stopped walking in the garden and grasped Xena's arm again. "We both know why he chose Merlin."

The warrior nodded as she stared at a tree in the garden. "He's always been peaceful." Her eyes lowered to Gabrielle. "Have to admire that."

Gabrielle smiled warmly. "Yeah." She took a deep breath. "He doesn't want this war as much as the rest of Camelot doesn't."

The older woman nodded and felt her friend release her arm. "Merlin won't get anything out of Manson though."

"How you figure?" Gabrielle studied her partner with a confused expression.

"Merlin's hocus pocus won't work on Manson." Xena gave a grin. "Manson is to stupid for the magic to work on him."

The smaller warrior laughed low. "You're bad."

The warrior shrugged her shoulders. "Just telling it how it is."

The smaller woman laughed and shook her head. "Xena, god." She took a deep breath. "How's that pride?" She gave a small grin to Xena but her eyes held concern.

Xena took a very deep breath. "Never better." She grinned down at her Soulmate.

"Uh huh." The small knight crossed her arms against her chest.

The warrior suddenly went serious. "Thanks Gabrielle." She now cross her arms over her chest.

Gabrielle smiled lovingly. "Hey, you know I am always around." She brought her right hand to Xena's closes arm. "I am only immortal."

Xena quietly laughed. "That makes two of us." She smiled. "Let's go back inside."

The younger woman nodded and released Xena. She took a quick glimpse to her right at the sundial. "Mmm about half an hour before dinner."

The warrior looked to the sundial. "Good." Her eyes shifted to Gabrielle. "You've always loved those sundials."

"Oh yeah." Gabrielle smirked up to her partner. "They're great. Better then saying candlemarks."

Xena chuckled. "Agreed." She started walking with her partner beside her. "I was baking in my armor today."

The smaller warrior raised her eyes towards Xena. "I was fine today."

"That's because you were in the shade of the forest."

"Xena, I was being chased. You're telling me you were baking just sitting on Argo... waiting?"

"Pretty much."

Gabrielle gave an odd look to her partner. She bumped Xena hard and quickly walked ahead.

The older woman narrowed her eyes at Gabrielle's back with a grin. She quickly came up behind Gabrielle and grabbed Gabrielle's shoulders stopping her from walking. Lowered her lips close to the smaller woman's right ear, she whispered to her. "I'll take care of you tonight."

"Ooooh, is that a threat warrior?"

Xena growled low in her partner's ear. "Yes." She paused. "And it's knight."

The smaller woman chuckled. "Whatever Xena, you're still a warrior. You still think like a warrior."

The warrior grinned. "And what's the difference between a knight and warrior?"

"Mmm, the egos." Gabrielle snickered and started walking away heading to the stairs to the bedchambers.

Xena crossed her arms against her chest and watched her Soulmate walking. She ran her tongue across the back of her molars. "Oh yeah, definitely egos." She followed behind.

~*~*~*~

Xena sat back in her large wood chair once she finished eating her dinner. Gazing across the table she made eye contact with her partner.

Gabrielle winked and went back to eating.

The warrior grinned for two seconds then lost it before anybody caught it. Sitting beside her was Sir Galahad and Sir Malory. The dinner was in the main dinning hall on a long stretched wood table. And once Xena sat back finished with her meal a servant came up to collect the plate. "Thanks."

The young female servant bowed her head at Xena then disappeared.

Sir Galahad lifted his eyes to Xena. "I could never understand you Xena."

The warrior grinned at the man. "Good."

Galahad chuckled and finished his meal and rest back in his chair. "It is ashame Arthur selected Merlin over you."

Xena grasped her goblet. "Maybe... maybe not. You have to admire Arthur for selecting Merlin over me." She drank some of the rich wine.

"Really?"

The warrior nodded as she swallowed the wine, she carefully placed the silver goblet down on the red cloth covered table. "Yesss. Arthur dares to select the most peaceful route. Most kings would have had the prisoner's life beaten out of him for the information."

Galahad nodded a few times and gazed across the table. "Very true." He took a long breath. "Interesting perspective you have Xena."

The Warrior Princess grinned. "It's not mine."

Sir Galahad quickly turned his attention back to Xena. "Not yours? Who's then?"

Xena grinned at the other knight and shifted her eyes over to Gabrielle. "Hers."

The knight followed Xena's eyes and saw Gabrielle sitting back eating. "Gabrielle's?"

"Yes."

Galahad nodded a few times. "Very interesting."

Gabrielle lifted her eyes to see Galahad and her Soulmate staring at her. She furrowed her eyebrows. "Am I all that interesting?"

Sir Galahad and Xena both quietly laughed.

The warrior mouthed a yes.

But it was Galahad that said it. "Yes you are Gabrielle." He took a deep breath. "Xena and I were discussing your perspective."

Gabrielle's eyes shifted to her Soulmate first then to Galahad. "And what perspective was that?"

The knight smiled warmly. "You're perspective on... well let's say peaceful methods over physical ones."

The small warrior raised an eyebrow as she considered those words then it struck her. "Ah that perspective."

Sir Galahad quietly laughed. "I've come to notice you have interesting ideas Gabrielle."

The young woman nodded and sat back in her seat finished with her dinner. "So I've been told."

A small female servant took Gabrielle's plate.

"Thank you."

The servant nodded with a shy smile. "You're welcome." It was just a whisper.

The small warrior gave a smile back to the servant and watched her go for a second but gazed back to Galahad and her Soulmate. Her expression was a little more serious now. "I've become very proud of my morals and ideas over time."

The knight nodded his idea. "And you should. They will make a person strong."

Gabrielle laughed lightly. "I suppose so." She took a deep breath and stood. "But I think I am going to retire for the night. It's been a long day."

Sir Galahad nodded. "Of course after your... activity today."

The small warrior grinned as she stood behind her chair with her hands on the top. "Definitely." She shifted her eyes over to Xena.

The Warrior Princess gave a small grin and her eyes picked up a twinkle.

Gabrielle only let her eyes take on a warmth for a moment but they went normal as she gazed back to Galahad. "Have a good evening Sir Galahad."

"You too Gabrielle."

The small knight shifted her emerald eyes to Xena. "Goodnight Xena."

The warrior lowered her head for a second and glimpsed back up. "Goodnight Gabrielle."

Gabrielle nodded and strolled out of the dining room and into the main hall.

Galahad watched her go but sighed. "Very interesting woman."

Xena quietly laughed. "You have no idea."

The knight turned his attention to the warrior. "So how long have you and Gabrielle been partners?"

The female knight took a long breath as she thought. "A long time." She smiled. "It's been interesting working with her."

"I bet." Sir Galahad smiled. "I know Arthur has always been appreciative of you both arriving in his court and I myself have."

Xena nodded with a smile. "We're glad we came. Traveling was getting old."

"I would think so." Galahad crossed his arms over his chest. "The rumor was you both came from Greece."

The warrior nodded. "The roomer is true. We came over about five years ago."

The knight nodded. "And why was that? Tired of Greece?"

"No never." Xena chuckled. "We had to get away. To many... memories."

"Ah." Sir Galahad nodded. "That's understandable. Change of scenery."

The warrior laughed light heartily. "Definitely." She sighed a little. "Well I think I might head to my room myself."

Sir Galahad nodded. "May I accompany you?"

"Of course." Xena stood up as the other knight did.

The two knights quietly exited out of the main dining hall and into the long main hall.

Sir Galahad placed his hands behind his back. "So why did you and Gabrielle decide to become fighters?"

Xena stared at the stone floor for a second in the torch lit hall. "A number of reasons." She lifted her eyes to gaze down the hall. "I did because my past. Gabrielle on the other hand... well she's a different story."

Galahad nodded a few times. "You both are amazing fighters."

Xena quietly laughed. "Yes well we've both had plenty of time to practice."

"Quite." Sir Galahad took a deep breath.

"So what brought you here Galahad?" Xena glanced over at the blond haired knight.

"Dreams." Galahad smiled. "Child's dreams mainly." He quietly laughed and continued on. "I was very young and always wanted to become a knight. So from birth I trained myself mentally and physically to be one. Looks like I got lucky with Arthur's court."

"Mmm, Arthur's court got lucky with you I believe is the right words." Xena smiled warmly to the other knight.

Sir Galahad laughed. "Thank you." He glanced ahead to see the stairs going up to the rooms. He turned to them and began to climb them beside Xena.

The warrior listened to the sound of her boots and Galahad's tapping up the steps. "I

believe tomorrow we'll find out if Manson knows the plans."

"Hopefully." Galahad sighed. "I don't believe Merlin can get them out of Manson."

Xena glanced over to Galahad. "Oh?"

The knight grinned slightly. "Like you Xena, I don't believe too much in all of that hocus pocus." He let out his breath. "But I've heard he has the power. I'd like to see it."

"So would I." The warrior began to stroll down the hall of the bedchambers.

"Wouldn't we all." Sir Galahad paused. "But we must learn to trust Merlin. Arthur does."

"Mmm, I'll let Arthur trust him. Merlin hasn't earned my trust."

Galahad grinned up to the woman. "You're a chary woman Xena."

The warrior smirked. "I've been called many things but not... quite that Galahad." She stopped walking as she came to the door to her room.

"Well you may place that into your self descriptions." Galahad grinned. "Free of copyright."

The Warrior Princess quietly laughed. "I will."

The knight nodded. "Goodnight Xena."

"Goodnight Galahad. Sleep well tonight."

"Of course." The man continued his trek down the hall to his room farther down. "Have a lovely evening."

"Always." Xena flashed down a smile to Galahad and opened the door. "See you tomorrow." She stepped into her room and silently closed the door behind.

~*~*~*~

Gabrielle was leaning against the wall staring across Camelot on her balcony, her arms over her chest. She watched the flickering of the torches across the large city. It always reminded her of a city of gold. She called it the city of gold. She wrote it as the city of gold. Yes, Gabrielle was a warrior bard again. One thing she couldn't pass up was the chance to write the world's history in her scrolls along with her own accounts. It was a chance in a lifetime. A chance in immortality.

And as she stood there she considered her account. All the things her and Xena had been through. So far everything in those images from her dream with Xena and Zeus had come true. The Gods had faded away, the Roman Empire grew strong and fell apart. Another religion came into existence because of one man named Jesus. Yes those images from the dream were all coming true and Gabrielle couldn't help but wonder if her and Xena were really changing man's destiny. Were they? Could they ever? Only time will tell.

Soon the young woman's thoughts took her to Greece. She missed Greece so much.

She missed the lands and light rolling hills. Granted England had them too but not quite like Greece. She missed the mountains in Greece, they were all so glorious. And Gabrielle missed traveling alone with her Soulmate. For a time she became sick of it and that's when they both decided to go to England and get away from Greece. Get away from their past with Greece. As soon as they settled down in Camelot they both wanted to pack their bags and go back to Greece.

Yet the Soulmates knew they had to let go of Greece and their past. That life was over. Their friends were gone, their family, and the Amazon Nation was gone. These people only lived on inside of Gabrielle and Xena's memories. If they ever whispered such names as Cyrene, Ephiny, or Solari nobody would understand. They could only whisper these names between each other and only if they wanted to become sad together. So they rarely did whisper the names for what emotions, desires, and memories it brought upon.

Gabrielle turned her head to the right as she felt a warmth take her over, she smiled. "Hey."

The warrior smiled back warmly. "Hey." She quietly began to walk over to Gabrielle. "I still don't understand how you got the balcony."

The small warrior laughed. "Hey you got the hidden passageway."

The warrior came up to her partner. "And what good does that do me if it doesn't lead me to your room?"

The smaller woman laughed. "Good point."

"Mmm I know." Xena saw her partner lifted herself off the stone wall and step forward. She just grinned and shifted to stand behind Gabrielle and lean against the wall now.

Gabrielle let herself settle back into Xena's body and felt strong arms come around her waist. She carefully rested her head back against Xena's chest.

They were in the darkness. Yes in the darkness, it was safe. The darkness kept them safe.

"What were you thinking about?" Xena nuzzled her left cheek against Gabrielle's.

"Just bad thoughts." She sadly laughed.

The warrior understood and tightened her arms more around her Soulmate. When she was in her room she felt a deep sadness fill her. And she knew exactly why and that led her to Gabrielle's room. "Come here."

The smaller woman turned around and wrapped her arms tightly around the warrior.

Xena kept her arms tightly around her Soulmate.

Gabrielle shut her eyes and rested her head against Xena's chest. She couldn't cry any longer she was beyond that point. And one day she knew she'd be beyond the point of being sad. At least she hoped she would get beyond that point.

The warrior took a deep breath. "I miss it all too."

"I know. Gods I know." The small woman took a shaky breath then felt Xena's head rest on her own. Taking another deep breath she felt herself come back to herself. She lifted her head. "But then there's you."

Xena quietly laughed while peering down into her Soulmate's eyes, she saw them begin to twinkle. "Oh?"

"Oh yeah." Gabrielle brought her right hand behind her partner's head. She carefully kissed Xena.

But the older woman made the kiss go stronger and brought her lips down to her friend's neck. "I owe you."

"Mmm so you do." The small knight stepped back from the warrior's arms. She saw the faint upset in Xena's eyes and she grinned. "You coming?" Slowly she walked back to go inside of her room.

The warrior grinned and watched her go inside, her blue eyes averted to the glowing city. She sighed and ambled off the balcony and into Gabrielle's room. She caught sight of Gabrielle taking her sword off and placing it inside the closet. "You know that's a bad habit."

Gabrielle glanced over to her Soulmate. "Why? Is somebody going to sneak into my room and kill me?"

The knight placed her hands on her hips. "Funny."

The smaller warrior chuckled and noticed her Soulmate still wore her leg armor. "I believe it's later." She came up to Xena and kneeled down. Carefully, small hands worked the armor off Xena's body.

Xena gazed down at her partner removing her armor. "Mmm forgot about that."

"I noticed." Gabrielle removed the armor and was about to move but felt soft fingertips come under her chin. She raised her head up to lock eyes with sapphire ones.

The tall woman gradually gave her Soulmate the physical command to rise up as she kept her fingers under Gabrielle's chin. Soon as Gabrielle was standing Xena brought her head down to seal her lips with Gabrielle's.

Gabrielle held the armor in her right hand but she pressed her left hand into the warrior's strong stomach.

Xena moaned lightly and took the armor from Gabrielle and stepped away to shift to the wood table in the room.

The small warrior narrowed her eyes with a grin. "You're bad."

"I know." Xena leaned against the table. "So what you going to do about it?"

The knight raised an eyebrow. "Do about it?" Her head bobbed up and down a few times as she pondered. Then a smug look came over her. "Nothing." She quickly

moved to the door grabbing the handle. But as soon as she had her fingers wrapping around the handle and opening the door, the door slammed shut by Xena. Gabrielle peered up to her Soulmate with an amused look.

"Play nicely Gabrielle."

The small warrior laughed and wrapped her arms around Xena's waist. Her hands went to the sword's belt buckle. "Alright." She leaned up to kiss the other knight. "Let's play nice." Another kiss started but this one was more powerful.

Xena grabbed her partner's sides and lifted her off the floor at the end of the kiss. She swung herself and Gabrielle around towards the bed that was right behind them. She lowered Gabrielle onto it and crawled onto the bed over the smaller woman. Her left knee came to press up between Gabrielle's center.

"Oh God." The small warrior closed her eyes as demanding lips took hers.

~*Part 2*~

Gabrielle bounced back and grinned, she twirled her sword in her left hand. She then threw the blade in the air to grab it with her right hand. "Hands behind the back."

Xena nodded and placed her left hand behind her back and saw her Soulmate do the same. Her lips shaped into the biggest grin ever.

The smaller knight attacked with her sword.

The dirt field filled with dust as these two knights practice together. They always practice together and every day at around the same time. Once in the morning and once in the afternoon for about an hour.

And now the smaller woman was having a hard time concentrating because she was trying so hard not to laugh at her Soulmate.

Xena was having the same problem, trying to not laugh at her Soulmate either.

This was something they did every now and again. Both the Soulmates one-day had seen two knights fighting with their hands behind their backs. And both the Soulmates had fallen over laughing at the scene. They both had never seen anything like it before in their time. Gabrielle repeatedly said it looked so snobby.

So since then the pair would fight like that to make fun of the fighting style. And every time the two warriors would get the biggest kick out of it. It was just a fighting style warriors of their time would never do.

As they fought in the early afternoon a figure slipped out onto the field to watch them.

Xena glanced over and saw that it was Merlin. She narrowed her eyes but kept fighting against Gabrielle.

The small warrior took a quick glimpse to see the magician as well. "Stop?"

The warrior jumped backed and lowered her sword and left arm.

Gabrielle stopped as well and sheathed her sword. She then lifted her eyes to Xena to

see the warrior sheath her sword.

Xena turned towards Merlin. "Hello Merlin."

Merlin nodded. "Hello Xena." He walked up and averted his eyes to Gabrielle. "Gabrielle."

The small knight nodded faintly. "Merlin."

The magician gave his attention to Xena again. "Arthur asked me here."

The Warrior Princess placed her hands on her hips. "And why? Arthur doesn't have his magician visiting people for the fun of it."

"True." Merlin crossed his arms against his chest. "He asked me to tell you and Gabrielle that you both have his permission to interrogate Manson."

Gabrielle's own hands went to her hips. "And why is that?"

Merlin's green eyes shifted to Gabrielle. "Because I could not get anything from Manson."

Xena had a faint amused look on her face as she crossed her arms over her chest. "Really?"

The magician sighed and replied to the warrior. "Yes, sometimes magic works and sometimes it doesn't Xena." He grinned a little smugly. "Now you may have your way with him. Good luck." Merlin spun around on his heels with his cape black cape flowing, he stalked off into the castle.

Gabrielle smirked up to her Soulmate. "Trouble."

"Me?" Xena batted her eyes down at Gabrielle. "Never."

The smaller woman shook her head. "Right. Come on tiger." She put her left hand to Xena's back.

The pair walked into the castle together and into the main hall.

"Dungeons Xena?"

The knight nodded. "Let's have some fun." Xena grinned and her pace of walk went fast.

"Let's keep him alive though. I think Arthur would like that."

"Yeah yeah." Xena chuckled. She came to the entrance to the dungeon and went down the steps with Gabrielle beside her. The sides of the wall were lined with lit torches.

This dungeon was one of the cleanest Xena had ever seen and lacking torture tools. That was one way to always figure out what kind of king was ruling. Check their dungeons.

They came to the bottom floor that was lined with cells and guards here and there.

One of the guards stepped up to the Soulmates. "Can I help you both?"

Xena smiled evilly. "Yes, where's Manson's cell?"

The guard grinned back. "This way." He stepped ahead and walked along in the dungeon with the knights following behind.

The group came up to the cell and Manson was sitting on a wood bench and he lifted his head to see the people. He narrowed his eyes. "They sent the women now." He snickered.

Xena held out her hand to the guard with a serious face, her eyes pinned on Manson. "Key?"

The guard pulled out a ring with a single key and handed it to Xena.

Gabrielle turned her head to the guard. "We can handle this."

The guard nodded. "Just give me the key when you're done." He ambled off back to the entrance.

Xena inserted the key and turned it to hear the lock come undone. She swung the gate open and walked in.

Gabrielle on the other hand stood in the open entrance with her hand on her sword's hilt.

The warrior grinned down at Manson, he was shackled and chained at the legs and arms. "We can do this the hard way or the easy way."

Manson gazed up with narrow eyes. "I'd prefer hard."

"Me too." Xena's fingers instantly came down to pressure points at Manson's shoulders.

Manson shut his eyes at the pain in his arms, he couldn't move them.

"Stand up." Xena's voice was in a growl.

Gabrielle sighed as she watched Manson stand up slowly. *They always choose the hard way.* She stepped back twice still holding her sword's hilt.

Manson came out while gritting his teeth.

The small warrior glanced over him to Xena.

The warrior nodded and received one back from Gabrielle.

The smaller knight stepped in front of Manson and started walking down the dungeon's hall.

Manson walked behind Gabrielle and Xena behind him.

Gabrielle led them to the end of the hall and she took a right into another hall that was prison cells just more fortified. She came to a cell that was open and she pulled the metal handle opening the heavy door.

Manson was shoved in by Xena and he went stumbling to the ground on his knees.

Xena came in and handed her partner the key.

The smaller female took the key and tucked it away. She shifted to close the large door in the stoned cell. She then leaned against the door as it locked and she still kept her hand on the sword's handle.

Inside of the walled cell there was only one bar window up high filtering in the sun's light and right on Xena.

The warrior reached down with her right hand to the back of Manson's neck. She lifted him up and turned him around. "You know what I want to know Manson."

The man laughed. "As I said before Xena. Hell if I'll tell you." He grinned up at the warrior.

The tall woman nodded. "We'll see." She suddenly jammed her right knee into his stomach and stepped back as Manson fell to the floor.

Xena walked around him in a circle. "I won't try any hocus pocus on you Manson like Merlin did."

"Oh goody." Manson got up to his feet. "Because you'll need a lot for me Xena."

The warrior stood behind Manson and she shot a grin to Gabrielle.

The smaller knight bit back her grin and just let her eyes sparkle.

The Warrior Princess came around to the front of Manson. Her fingers quickly moved to those same pressure point as she undid them.

Manson shut his eyes and sucked in a deep breath.

"I am being nice. So why don't you try too Manson." The warrior crossed her arms against her chest. "Don't ruin my good mood."

The man narrowed his eyes. "To Hell with you."

Xena's right hand shot up around his neck beginning to squeeze hard. "Manson, tell me what I want to know."

Manson shut his eyes. "You can't kill me Xena. Not without the information I know." He felt the air start to leave his lungs.

The knight jerked her hand away.

Manson stumbled back and reached up to rub his neck.

"You're right Manson." The tall woman grinned. "But it doesn't mean I can't beat it out of you."

Manson narrowed his eyes and he quickly lifted both his arms and the chain fell behind Xena's head. He crossed his arms and tried to choke Xena.

The warrior closed her eyes and pretended to be choking by placing her hands to the

chains.

Gabrielle grinned and lifted herself off the door. Strolling up she lifted her right hand and punched Manson hard in the face. "Don't." She heard Xena remove the chains from around her head. Gabrielle placed her hands on Mansons shoulders and rammed her knee into his stomach.

The dark knight fell to the cell's floor with his arms over his stomach.

The small knight grinned down at Manson. "I suggest you tell us what we want to know Manson." She kicked him hard in the stomach again and glanced up to Xena.

The warrior raised an eyebrow at her partner.

Gabrielle shrugged her shoulders and strolled off to lean against the door again.

Xena glimpsed back to see her calm Soulmate, she lowered her eyes to Manson again. "We'll finish this now." She leaned down and did pressure points to Manson's neck. "Thirty seconds Manson. That's all you have."

Manson clamped his eyes shut and struggled to breath.. "Alright alright. I'll tell you anything." He felt the blood trickling down his upper lip. "Just undo... this."

Xena's fingers quickly moved to undo the pressure point.

Manson sucked in a deep breath as he saw Xena kneel down in front of him. His eyes narrowed at the warrior while he breathed. "What you want to know?"

The warrior grinned. "Everything."

~*~*~*~

The small knight slammed the cell door closed then turned the key to lock it. Her emerald eyes stayed pin on Manson in the cell for a moment. She almost laughed then but held back as she pulled the key out. Turning to Xena she grinned.

The warrior knew what her friend was thinking and held herself back from laughing also.

The pair started walking down the hallway and came to the two guards. Gabrielle handed the one his key back and thanked him. The two Soulmates then climbed the stairs again.

Once they were halfway up them Gabrielle broke down and started laughing hard. "That was the funniest thing Xena!"

The warrior was laughing right along. She stopped walking up the steps and leaned against the wall. "I couldn't believe it."

The smaller woman leaned against the wall and took a deep breath to calm. "Man he took 'everything' literally Xena."

The warrior reached up to wipe away the tears from her cheeks. "Really. He babbled about everything in his childhood."

"Yes." Gabrielle chuckled. "Even about the time he peed in his bed when he was

five." Gabrielle doubled over and started to laugh again.

The older woman laughed hard a few times. She sucked in a deep breath. "Come on. We better report to Arthur."

The small warrior nodded and straightened up. "So what we tell Arthur? That Manson peed in his bed at age five?"

"Nnno!" Xena snickered. "Bad enough the man is captured. We don't need to make fun of him."

Gabrielle nodded as she climbed the last step to come into the main hall. "You're getting soft in your old age Xena."

The older woman slowly gazed down at her partner as they walked down the hall. "Ohhh really?"

The smaller woman snickered. "Definitely."

"Mmm." Xena gazed ahead with a large grin. "We'll put that to the test."

Gabrielle quickly looked up to her Soulmate. "Don't even."

"Oooh but you started this Gabrielle."

The small bard stopped and gazed up to her partner. "I know what you're planning... warrior."

The warrior's eyes twinkled. "Now you'll just have to wait." She started walking again.

Gabrielle raised her eyebrow at her Soulmate's back. "Hades." She power walked to catch up with Xena.

The two women made their way to Arthur's office where he sat behind a desk writing something.

Xena came in first and stood in front of the king.

Gabrielle came in second and stood beside her partner. Her hands went behind her back.

Arthur lifted his eyes and warmly smiled. "I believe you both had success."

The warrior grinned. "To say the least." She took a deep breath. "Manson told us Mordred's plans. But I still have some... concerns."

The king nodded. "And what concerns may that be?"

Xena crossed her arms against her chest. "Well... Manson broke down so to say before Gabrielle and I." A pause as she glanced at Gabrielle then back to the king. "Excuse my French, but Manson is a pussy foot. He's rather weak."

Arthur studied the two knights. "And this leads you to believe what?"

"That Manson really doesn't know the plans my Lord." Gabrielle took a deep breath

and brought her hands forward. "Xena and I's theory is that Manson is not even really Mordred's second in command. That Manson is a setup." She paused. "Even if Manson is the second in command he doesn't know the plans. It isn't Mordred's style to tell his men his plans, he's secretive."

Arthur nodded a few times and sat back in his seat. He lifted his right hand to let his elbow rest on the chair's arm and his chin in his palm. "And how can you be so sure? Mordred calls him his second in command."

Xena nodded. "True but we've never heard Mordred himself call Manson his second in command."

King Arthur nodded. "Well I see your perspective but yet neither of you hold real proof."

Gabrielle glimpsed up to her Soulmate then back to the king. "Give us two days to get you proof my Lord." She paused. "I think we can come up with something."

The king took a deep breath and considered the request. "I'll give you both a day to come up with a plan to finding out if Manson is his second in command or not. If you can not then we'll have to go with what we know."

Xena smiled a little. "Thank you." She turned towards the door and started to make her exit.

Gabrielle followed along.

Arthur kept his eyes pinned on the pair watching them leave. Once the door closed his eyes went back to his papers on the desk.

~*~*~*~

The bard sat on the foot of her bed with a sigh. "Xena, we need a plan."

The warrior paced back and forth in front of her Soulmate. "I know I know." She brought her right hand to her forehead.

Gabrielle dropped back onto her bed and tried to come up with a plan. She closed her eyes listening to the rhythmic pacing of her Soulmate. Her eyes flew open. "Let's give him back." She shot up from the bed.

Xena stopped pacing and gazed at her Soulmate. "What?"

"Well not quite give him back. But ransom him back to Mordred." A grin took the small woman's lips. "Think about it Xena."

The tall woman studied her partner as she thought about the idea. A small grin spread across her lips. "Perfect Gabrielle." She shook her head with a grin. "If Manson is important to Mordred he'll buy him back. And if he isn't-

Gabrielle grinned. "Mordred will leave Manson here to rot with us." She chuckled lightly.

Xena suddenly turned to the smaller woman. Her hands tightly grasped Gabrielle's thighs. She bent forward to eye level with her smaller partner. "Soft huh?"

"Oh Hell." Gabrielle felt the warrior take her lips in a powerful demanding kiss. She closed her eyes and moaned slightly. Then she found herself on her back and warm hands slipping up her shirt closer to her breasts. The warrior's lips moved to come down to her neck and the small warrior moaned as Xena's fingertips grazed across the bottom of her breasts.

Xena raised her head to Gabrielle's right ear. Her lips grazed across the small woman's soft ear. "I'll see *all of you*... tonight." She quickly stood, slipping her hands out from under Gabrielle's shirt. She moved with speed to the door and left.

"Damn that warrior." The small knight took a deep breath and let it out shaky. Her hands came up over her face as she felt her body cool down. "Damn me for what I said." She quietly laughed. Taking another long breath Gabrielle sat up and ran her hand through her short hair. Standing up, she made her way out of the room. Her legs carried her directly to King Arthur's office again.

~*~*~*~

"Come in." Arthur smiled as he saw Gabrielle enter in. "Welcome Gabrielle." He held his hand out to his chair to the left. "Sit down and join us."

The small knight walked through the office and found her Soulmate sitting in the chair to the right.

Xena didn't look up to her partner and held back the largest grin. She'd barely held herself back in Gabrielle's room. And Xena knew Gabrielle knew this and would play off it.

Gabrielle sat down quietly and sat back comfortable. "So what is the topic of discussion."

The warrior turned her head to gaze at her best friend.. "Your idea." Her eyes twinkled.

The bard averted her attention to Xena. *Which idea is that Xena?* Her ivy eyes took on a sparkle towards Xena. "Ah yes, my wondrous idea." She looked to Arthur. "Did Xena tell you?"

"No." Arthur sat back in his chair. "Xena was just getting to that when you came in." He smiled warmly. "But since you're here, why don't you explain your idea."

Gabrielle nodded. "Right." She crossed her legs at the ankles. "I figure since Manson is technically Mordred's second in command he would be valuable. What we could do is ransom Manson back to Mordred. If Mordred agrees to the ransom then we know Manson is important if not..." Gabrielle shrugged her shoulders. "Then Manson is just a decoy and we're wasting time."

Arthur nodded. "Do you agree to this Xena?"

The warrior nodded. "I do, it's a beautiful idea." She paused. "Nor do we have any other options."

The king sighed as he weighed the idea. He took a deep breath. "And if this plan

doesn't work. What then?"

Xena closed her eyes for a second. "Then we can't trust Manson's words." Her eyes opened again. "And by then my guess is Mordred will attack."

"I can't have any screw ups Xena and Gabrielle." Arthur laced his hands together. "Too many have happened in the past years." He studied both the women. "If Mordred succeeds in taking over my kingdom then there will be turmoil in all of England. England has been through too much this past century. Too many wounds to heal."

"Xena and I both realize that Arthur." Gabrielle took a deep breath. "We're both considering all of this. But when it comes right down to it with or without Manson. Mordred will attack and we need to be prepared."

The king shifted in his chair. "True. But none of us can be prepared unless we know what is going on."

"Not true." Xena sat up in her seat. "Gabrielle is right. Whether we find out if Manson knows the plans or not it will not matter." She paused for a second. "We are better off preparing the men and attack Mordred then rather sitting like ducks." She shook her head. "I do not see the point in waiting for Mordred to attack us."

Arthur leaned forward. "You know my system Xena." His eyes shifted to Gabrielle. "The both of you." His attention was on both women. "We can not attack without good cause."

"How much cause do you need Arthur?" Gabrielle was now leaning forward with burning eyes. "Everybody knows Mordred is threatening peace for all of England. Is that not cause enough? Or must he attack us first and kill a certain number of people for us to act? Why have more people die then need be?"

The king's head bobbed up and down a few times. "I understand both of your concerns. But there are always different ways to go about this."

Xena quickly stood and leaned over the king's desk. "If you're looking for a peaceful one Arthur. You will never find it with Mordred." She spun around on her heels and stalked out of the office.

Gabrielle sighed when she heard the door shut.

The king gazed at the small woman. "Is that the same for you Gabrielle?"

The small knight considered for a moment. "There was a time I would say no my Lord." She shook her head. "But knowing Mordred as I do, I do believe war is the only way." She let her breath out in a sigh. "Sometimes the only way to find the answer is at the tip of a sword and there maybe no avoiding it." She leaned forward. "I do not however look down on your methods Arthur, I never have. I admire them and try to follow them myself." She paused. "But there are certain lines you must cross to protect the ones you love and the morals you believe in." She stood herself. "But I need to catch up with my partner. Excuse me." Gabrielle started walking towards the door.

"Gabrielle?"

The young woman gazed back. "Yes my Lord?"

"Do you believe there is an end to all good things?"

Gabrielle's eyes fell to the floor. "Yes." Her eyes lifted. "But one good thing will create another, and that one another, that one another and so on. One good thing may die out but others will spur from the first and touch so many lives." She looked eyes with Arthur. "And sometimes one good thing must end for something more magnificent to begin and reshape the world and the people. Everything has a purpose. Why do you ask?"

The king sadly smiled to the bard. "I have a feeling that it's Camelot's end."

The young woman sadly smile. "No it would be Camelot's greatest feat. To end and only begin as a form of hope to mankind." She turned around and opened the door to quietly leave.

~*~*~*~

Gabrielle came up to Xena's door and was about to knock, about to. She stopped and placed her hand on the door handle and held it for a moment. Her eyes narrowed faintly and she quickly released the handle. She power walked to her room and came in quickly but silently closed the door. Once inside she walked out onto her balcony to find her Soulmate there.

Xena turned her head towards her Soulmate. "How'd you know?"

The small knight shrugged her shoulders. "I just know you." She came up to her friend's side. "I am you."

The warrior smiled for a second but averted her eyes to Camelot. Her arms were over her chest.

Gabrielle quietly stepped up to stand beside her Soulmate. "You know, you can't blame Arthur. He has his own style Xena."

The warrior sighed. "I know." She shook her head. "And I have my own style."

"And it's killing you not to be able to do what you want."

The tall woman grinned. "Yes." The grin was gone. "Not being in command is rough."

The younger woman laughed lightly. "You have no idea Xena."

Xena furrowed her eyebrows at Gabrielle. "What's that suppose to mean?"

"Come on Xena." Gabrielle looked up to her partner. "That first year or so we first started traveling. I couldn't say or do anything without you approving of it first."

"That's not true."

"You know it is." The small warrior bard peered up. "Come on. Remember the time with the Titans? Or the time with Pandora's box? Or how about the time we first met the Amazons? Or-

"Okay okay..." Xena grinned. "You made your point. Just don't pin on me the time you left for the Academy."

Gabrielle quietly laughed. "No that was all my idea."

The warrior grinned. "I can still remember how happy I was when you came running up behind me, ready to travel." A small laugh.

"I noticed." The young woman grinned. "That Academy wasn't for me." A small sigh.

"No." Xena gave a smirk. "You belonged with me."

"Oooh." Gabrielle placed her hands on her hips. "Is that a little ownership I detest? Maybe even jealousy?"

The warrior snickered. "Over you, yes."

The young woman chuckled and dropped her hands from her hips. She looked at the scene of Camelot again.

"Was I really that hard to get along with?"

"God! Xena, I can't believe you're asking me that."

Xena started to laugh. "I can't remember, it was a llooong time ago."

Gabrielle devilishly grinned up to her partner. "Let's put it this way. Traveling with you the first year was like traveling with a mule." She walked off the balcony and into the room.

The warrior blink. "A mule?" She ambled over to the doorway to the balcony and saw her partner by her closet. "You're relating me to an ass?" She stood in the doorway.

"Pretty much." Gabrielle turned her head to Xena. "You were stubborn as an ass and about as talkative as one."

Xena raised an eyebrow. "Now?"

The young woman grinned and strolled up to the other woman. "Now?" Her hands came to Xena's side. "Now after whipping you into shape. Well maybe you're like... well like Tubius was."

The warrior's jaw dropped. "Tubius."

"Yeah, he was so cute and sweet once we understood each other." Gabrielle grinned.

Xena nodded a few times. "Right." She crossed her arms against her chest. "And you know what you reminded me of the first year?"

"Oh god. What is that?"

"One of those annoying song birds early in the morning that you wish would just shut up because it sung too much and too loud."

The small knight's mouth hung open. "Well at least my tweeting sounded better than

your heehawing."

Both Soulmates regarded each other for a moment but suddenly they both broke out laughing together.

Xena took a step back and leaned against the wall as she slowly stopped laughing.

Gabrielle had her arms against her stomach. "Oh god my... stomach... hurts." She took a deep breath and felt the laughter leave her. Reaching up she wiped away the few tears from her eyes. "Okay that makes sense, I am immortal and my stomach hurts." She shook her head.

Xena grinned. "Makes perfect sense." She chuckled and rested her arms on her stomach.

The young woman smiled and stepped up to her partner.

The warrior pulled her Soulmate in and held her tight.

Gabrielle wrapped her arms around her Soulmate and rested her head against Xena.

The older woman kissed her partner's head and sighed. "A mule huh?"

"Welll..." Gabrielle grinned and lifted her head to grin at her friend. "Maybe more like a black panther." She carefully caressed Xena's right cheek. "Sleek, soft, dangerous, jet black coat, beautiful..." She saw Xena's eyes shut and her lean into Gabrielle's touch. Gabrielle continued with her analogy in a light voice. "Powerful, yet gentle like a kitten, cunning, graceful, with a protective instinct for what it owns, and very deep piercing blue eyes."

Xena took Gabrielle's hand and moved her lips to place gentle kisses to Gabrielle's soft hand. Slowly her sapphire eyes drifted open and locked with Gabrielle's eyes.

Gabrielle smiled warmly and laced her hand together with Xena's hand.

The warrior smiled back warmly and lowered her head to take Gabrielle's lips in a protective kiss.

Section 2

~*Part 3*~

The early eastern sun's light beamed through the large glass window to filter over the king of Camelot. Arthur raised his head as one of his soldiers entered into his office. "Welcome."

The soldier bowed his head to the king and raised it back up. "Morning my Lord."

"Have you news of Mordred?"

"Yes my Lord." The soldier paused as he tried to report his information with ease. "My Lord, Mordred's army is taking on arms."

Arthur abruptly stood with his wood chair's legs scraping across the marble floor.

~*~*~*~

Gabrielle carefully nuzzled her Soulmate's soft neck. Her eyes stayed shut.

Xena smiled and began to run her fingertips up and down Gabrielle's smooth back. Her eyes were closed as well. "How'd you sleep?"

"Really well." The small knight reached up to pull the lightweight bed sheet over her and Xena's shoulders.

It was rare they slept together in bed. But when those nights came they were the most pleasant thing ever and they only wished to sleep in each other's arms forever. Immortality never brought that for them.

Gabrielle closed in the distance and kissed her Soulmate soundlessly.

Xena moaned in the kiss and lifted her right hand to the back of her partner's head to force the kiss on.

The smaller warrior grinned and ran her right hand down the other woman's perfectly shaped stomach.

The warrior pulled back from the kiss, pushed the covers out of the way, and rolled on top of her Soulmate straddling her at the hips.

The smaller woman placed her hands on Xena's hips. Her hands started there and slowly she let her hands glide up the warrior's body over her stomach and right between her breasts.

Xena shut her eyes. "Trouble."

"Me, you started this."

"You kissed first."

Gabrielle quietly laughed while her hands came down Xena's sides. "Because you wanted me too."

"Mmm very true." Xena grasped her friend's hands and spread them out as she leaned down to take Gabrielle into a passionate kiss.

The Soulmates were about to fall into each other but a loud pounding came at the door.

Xena quickly stopped and sat up. "You're kidding me?"

The bard was silent and turned her head to the right at the door.

Another pounding knock at the large wood door.

"Hades." Xena leaned down to kiss her partner quickly and she hopped off the bed. In the nude she strolled over to the door and stood to the far left of it near the hinges. She nodded at Gabrielle.

The smaller knight rolled out of bed as another knock came. "Hold on!" She moved

quickly to her closet and pulled on a long white cotton shirt and came to the door and gazed at Xena.

The warrior winked.

Gabrielle chuckled and reached forward to open the door wide. "Hey."

Xena shifted a little to lean against the cold stone of the bedchamber's wall. She stared at the back of the wood door. Shifting her eyes to the right she saw Gabrielle gazing out of the doorway with her left hand on the handle still and heard a response from a man.

"Good morning Gabrielle." It was Sir Galahad. "I was ordered by Arthur to let all the Knights of the Round Table know we have an urgent meeting."

The small knight furrowed her eyebrows. "What's going on?"

"I am not quite sure. But Arthur called the meeting to begin in a ten minutes."

Gabrielle nodded. "Thank you. I'll be there soon as I can."

"Great." Galahad was about to move but stopped. "Um, have you seen Xena this morning? I was just by her bedchamber but she wasn't there."

"Um." Gabrielle's hand fiddled with the door handle out of reaction.

Xena reached up with her right hand to touch her Soulmate's hand with a calming sensation.

The small warrior smiled. "I actually just woke up Galahad. My guess is she might have gotten up and had breakfast or something. She's an early riser."

The knight nodded. "Very well then. Well if you see her please let her know."

Gabrielle smiled with a nod. "Of course. I am sure I'll see her soon."

"Quite, you two are... partners." Galahad smiled and he winked to Gabrielle. "I'll see you at the meeting."

The bard blinked for a moment and faintly shook her head. "Yes, goodbye."

"Bye now." Galahad continued walking down the hall of bedchambers.

The small woman shut the door and with her right hand and stared blankly at the door.

Xena squeezed her partner's hand and shifted to stand in front of her best friend.

"Gabrielle?"

"He knows Xena." Gabrielle's eyes averted to Xena. "He's knows about us."

The warrior furrowed his eyebrows. "How could he Gabrielle? We don't show it."

Gabrielle raised an eyebrow. "Yes... you and I always hide are beaming wild fire of love so easily." She had a frustrated look on her face. "Xena he knows."

"He knows so what?" Xena took her other partner's hand. "He's not going to do

anything that's obvious. Even if he does what can he do to us? We're the immortal ones."

"I know." The young woman's eyes were sad. "I just don't want to be hunted or persecuted for it."

"And we won't." The taller woman stepped up closer to let her warm body press against Gabrielle's body.

Gabrielle sighed and dropped her head against her partner's chest and she felt Xena bring their hands behind her own back.

Xena kissed the top of Gabrielle's head. "He won't do anything. He's a good man and I heard his tone of voice. It wasn't accusing."

The bard grinned. "No, he just smiled at me... and winked."

"He winked?" Xena peered down to her friend. "He winked at you?"

Gabrielle laughed. "Yes."

The warrior's eyes narrowed. "Mmm I might have some problems with him now."

The smaller warrior laughed again and released Xena. "Whatever warrior." She pushed Xena at the stomach lightly. "You like him." She strolled off to collect her clothes.

"How can you be sure?" Xena crossed her arms against her breasts.

"Because I heard you two walking up to the bedchambers the other night." Gabrielle spun around holding her pants. "He's a nice guy and you know it."

The older woman smirked. "Maybe unless he's hitting on my girl."

The small knight started laughing hard. "Uh huh." She sat down on the bed to put her pants on. "Are you getting dressed?"

Xena grinned. "Was considering it." She began to move and put her clothes on.

Within five minutes the pair were dressed in their normal attire and Xena was hooking her sword around her waist.

Gabrielle stepped up to her Soulmate. "Ready?"

"Almost." Xena hook the belt around her waist and took the tail of the belt in her hands.

The small woman reached forward to take the tail of the belt from her partner's hands. "Here." She began to tuck the tail through the belt to have it hanging down. "There."

"I could have done it." The warrior grinned.

"I know." Gabrielle showed her own grin as she peered up to her friend. "But I wanted to."

"Mmm thank you." Xena leaned down to kiss her partner lightly. "Let's go."

The small knight sighed. "Right on." She opened the door and headed out. She powered walked down the hall with Xena behind her. Reaching the stairs she moved down the long steep steps quickly. "This will be a real bad meeting."

"Why?" The knight was moving down the steps at a rapid pace as well and on an angle.

Gabrielle stopped walking and had one foot on one step and the other on the step below. She gazed up to her partner with a grin. "Because I haven't had breakfast."

Xena stood on three steps above her as she gazed down. "War will break out on this morning in the meeting room." A huge smirk.

"Hades yes." Gabrielle growled with a wink and turned around to continue her decent down the stairs.

The tall woman laughed and kept going down the stairs. "It's Hell."

The smaller warrior laughed. "Whatever, same thing."

Xena grinned. "Agreed." She saw Gabrielle stopped moving as she reached the main hall. She came to the last step and stood on it while placing her hands on her smaller partner's shoulders.

Gabrielle's right hand came up to squeeze one of Xena's hands quickly. Her hand fell back to her side as she saw a knight coming.

"Morning ladies."

The warrior smiled. "Good morning Sir Gawain."

Gabrielle took on the same smile. "Morning Gawain."

Xena's hands fell to her side. "I presume you heard about the meeting."

"I have." Gawain was a serious knight. "Headed there now. Care to join me?"

The small warrior's smile went warm. "We would love to." She moved to stand beside Gawain. She started walking beside the knight and Xena at her left side.

As they walked down the hall there were people ducking in and out of the main hall heading every which way in the castle.

They passed one hallway's entrance and Sir Galahad came from that direction to come to Xena's side. "Ah there you are Xena."

The warrior smiled. "Good morning Galahad."

"Good morning." He joined the group on heading down to the meeting room. "I assume Gabrielle told you?"

"Yes of course." Xena smiled. "And by the way." Her eyes narrowed with a twinkle and her voice came out in a whisper for only the man to hear. "I heard you winked at my... partner."

Galahad quickly looked up with a shocked expression. "I... did."

The warrior kept her eyes narrowed. "Watch where you walk." A grin shaped on her lips

The knight smiled. "Of course Xena." He grinned faintly. "May I escort you to the meeting room in apology?" He held his right arm up.

"Definitely." The warrior took the man's arm with her own. "Shall we walk a little faster?"

Galahad nodded. "Yes of course." He picked up his pace with the taller woman and they came to walk a little ways ahead of Gabrielle and Sir Gawain.

Gawain stared at the pair ahead. "They must be having some words."

Gabrielle chuckled. "Nah, making up." She grinned at the surprised look on Gawain's face.

"I did not know Xena and Galahad disliked one another."

"Oh they don't." The small warrior smiled to the knight. "They're just coming to an... understanding with each other." *And I wouldn't mind knowing how Xena is establishing this* Gabrielle kept her eyes pinned on her Soulmate ahead talking to Galahad, she could slightly read her partner's lips.

Sir Gawain nodded. "That is rather good, I believe."

"It is." Gabrielle smiled warmly.

"Well then." Gawain turned his head to Gabrielle and held up his left arm. "May I escort *you* to the meeting room?"

"Would love that." Gabrielle took the other knight's arm.

"I can not leave a lady feeling left out." Gawain gazed ahead to see the meeting room's marble doors far ahead. "It is not proper."

The bard smiled to herself, a proper man then.

Xena and Galahad came to the door first and Xena broke away from the other knight to open the door. She held it open as Galahad went in first. Next went through Sir Gawain and Gabrielle came up to her partner.

"Nice talk?"

The warrior grinned. "Yes."

Gabrielle gave her own grin as she peered up at the warrior. "Understanding?"

"Definitely."

The smaller knight quietly laughed and walked into the meeting room with her friend following behind.

Xena and Gabrielle silently walked down the steps to go to their seats and quietly sit.

There was one knight who had yet to arrive, Sir Williams.

The room was silent with everybody in their own thoughts.

Arthur peered at the door and did not see it open with Sir Williams coming in. He sighed at this and quickly rose up. "We will begin without Sir Williams."

As soon as the king said that, Sir Williams came bursting into the meeting room with heavy breathing. "I apologize for being so late." He came down the steps after closing the doors. "I only heard about the meeting a few moments ago." Shifting he went to stand in front of his seat.

Arthur nodded and smiled a little to the knight. "I am glad you could make it." He gazed around at all his knights.

The other ten knights rose up with their hands on their swords' hilts.

Arthur unsheathed his sword. "As always, everybody is equal here." He carefully placed his sword down on the table.

The room filled with the clings of the swords resting on the marble table. Everybody at once sat down in their white wood chairs.

Arthur took a deep breath. "We have a problem." He scanned his knights. "Mordred's army has taken up arms and are beginning to come towards us." He shifted in his seat a little. "Our spies report that the army is heading south towards us at a slow pace and will probably take two days to reach Camelot."

"Then it looks as if Manson may have been a distraction for us."

A number of knights nodded in agreement with Sir Malory.

The king nodded. "I wonder myself. Either way Manson serves little purpose." He paused. "Right now we all must decide on a plan on how to stop Mordred." Yet another pause. "It needs to be something that will save us from war. England can not handle yet another civil war."

Galahad sat up in his seat. "With all due respects Arthur but I do believe there is no peaceful way to stopping Mordred. Not Mordred. We all here know what he is like, he will never settle for peace. He only will settle for having Camelot in his hands and the old ways brought back. Mab sides with him."

All the male knights around the table nodded in agreement.

Arthur sat up in his seat. "And the Lady of the Lake has always sided with us. How does this matter in the end?" He paused as some of his anger disappeared. "God sides with us and Mordred will not succeed."

"Then let's show it." Sir Gawain looked around then gazed back to Arthur. "We have no other choice Arthur, we must fight Mordred."

Gabrielle peaked up to her Soulmate to see her staring directly at Arthur. Gabrielle then knew Xena was not going to say one thing in this meeting. So she debated with herself whether remain silent as well. Could she ever? Has she ever? Somethings,

some things just never change over the centuries.

"We can not sit around here like this Arthur." Galahad shook his head. "I will not let the people of Camelot be unprotected from the evil of Mordred."

"I agree with Sir Galahad." Everybody's eyes fell on Gabrielle as she continued on. "If I remember correctly from when I took the oath to become part of the Round Table, I recall promising to protect Camelot with my life." She paused as her next words were in conviction. "The Knights of the Round Table were created to protect Camelot and goodness... the light. If we are to protect these things we must attack Mordred which threatens the very thing we stand for." And that's exactly where the line was drawn.

"Yes Gabrielle is right." Galahad stood up. "To war to protect the light."

Five other knights stood as well. "To war to protect the light."

Slowly three other knights stood and claimed their proclamation. "To arms to protect the light."

The only people still sitting were Xena, Gabrielle, and Arthur.

Gabrielle pushed her seat back and gradually rose up with strength behind her. Her eyes were flashing. "To war to protect and serve the light as I always promised."

All the knights' eyes rested on Xena whom still sat staring at Arthur.

The warrior's large hands came up to grasp the edge of the marble table. Confidence in her, she stood with hooded eyes locking with Arthur. The room was so still and Xena's hard voice broke through it all with a crash. "To war to destroy the darkness in the name of the light." She kept her eyes pinned on Arthur.

The king of Camelot took a deep breath and closed his eyes. "There is no way around it." He ever so sadly stood with remorse in his eyes. He reached down to his sword, Excalibur the sword was called. He lifted it and felt an anger rip through him over Mordred. Raising the sword in front of his body he spoke aloud in a boom. "To war to wipe out the darkness in protection of the light."

~*~*~*~

"Then this meeting is over."

All the knights stood up from their seats and sheathed their swords at the same time.

Arthur saw the knights starting to leave. "Xena and Gabrielle, I wish to speak to you both."

Xena and Gabrielle turned around as they stood on the steps.

"As you wish my Lord." Gabrielle then stepped down to amble over to the table.

The warrior sighed and moved to her seat again and sat with Gabrielle beside her again.

Arthur gazed up to see the marble doors silently shut behind and it was just these three people now.

Arthur's eyes moved to the pair now. "I noticed you both were rather silent in the plans for the attack. Why?"

The warrior grinned. "We were not asked to hand out our opinion."

The king grinned and propped his left arm on the chair's arm. "That has never stopped either of you before."

Gabrielle quickly jumped in. "I believe the truth of the matter is Arthur is we feel a little angry."

"Oh." The king nodded and smiled warmly. "Mind explaining to me what it is?" He shifted in his seat. "I do not like it if my knights begin to not agree with me. It causes distrust and lack of loyalty. We're all family here."

The bard smiled. "Very true." She then gazed up to Xena with a small plea to speak.

The taller woman looked down at her partner and smiled warmly.

Gabrielle knew that everything was fine now so she smiled back.

The warrior gazed over to Arthur. "I have little issues when I am not listened to."

The king quietly laughed. "I've come to notice this." Arthur sighed sadly. "And I apologize for not listening to you Xena and Gabrielle. But you both know I do not care for war after all these years." He paused finding his right words. "I do believe it is a waste but yet I've come to realize that some times it may be the only way to solve things." His eyes shifted to Gabrielle. "And your speech today helped me realize this... remember this."

The small female nodded. "I am glad." She sighed a little unhappily. "I am sorry it's come to this Arthur."

"Little can be done." Arthur relaxed back in his seat. "But I would like for us to speak about the plan of attack against Mordred." He grinned now. "I do believe Xena you would have a rather intriguing idea of attack against Mordred."

Xena devilishly grinned. "Of course my Lord."

~*~*~*~

The knight slowly walked over to her open window in her room. She rested her arms on the windowsill while moving her legs back to lean against the sill. Her eyes stayed pinned to the large open fields of Whales.

Gabrielle quietly walked up behind her Soulmate and slipped her arms around the warrior's waist. "What you thinking about?"

Xena took a long breath. "The battle."

The smaller woman's warm hands slipped up Xena's shirt to rest on warm skin. "Already? That's a few days ahead."

The older woman grinned. "True but we will be doing that surprise attack."

"That's true too." Gabrielle silently laughed as she felt Xena straight up in her arms. So she pulled the warrior in closer and rested her head against Xena's upper back. "We'll stop Mordred."

"I know." Xena's large hands covered Gabrielle's at the waist.

"Xena?"

"Mmm?"

"Do you suspect a leak in the system?"

The older woman thought for a moment while she rubbed Gabrielle's hands. "I am beginning to wonder."

"I am too." Gabrielle took a deep breath. "It just seems like Mordred always knows what's happening."

"Well we'll have to keep our eyes on everybody."

"And ears open." The bard chuckled. "We need to catch up with Galahad and Williams about the plans for the surprise attack."

"Definitely." The warrior took a long breath. She slowly closed her eyes and let herself become lost in Gabrielle's arms. Xena always loved her Soulmate's protection.

The smaller warrior shut her eyes as well while resting her right cheek against Xena's back. She began to think about Arthur and Mordred.

This seem to be the same for Xena, she too thinking about Arthur and Mordred. And as she thought an idea occurred. "Gabrielle?"

"Yeah?"

"Arthur... he's going to die."

The younger woman's eyes instantly opened. "W-what?"

"He's going to die." Xena turned around in her partner's arms to face Gabrielle. "Think about it Gabrielle. Mordred is evil and Arthur is good."

Gabrielle turned her head to look at Xena on an angle. She considered it. "You mean like... cancel each other out?"

"Yes." The warrior sighed and shook her head. "It sounds weird but I can't help wonder if they're suppose to kill each other."

Gabrielle began to shake her head. "Xena no we can't let Arthur die. We can't. Camelot... England needs him."

The taller woman sighed and brought her hands to her Soulmate's shoulders. "I agree too Gabrielle. But... the reality of it is they're suppose to destroy each other. Arthur and Camelot have served their duty to the light... to good."

"Do you believe there is an end to all good things?"

Gabrielle's eyes fell to the floor. "Yes." Her eyes lifted. "But one good thing will create another, and that one another, that one another and so on. One good thing may die out but others will spur from the first and touch so many lives." She locked eyes with Arthur. "And sometimes one good thing must end for something more magnificent to begin and reshape the world and the people. Everything has a purpose. Why do you ask?"

The king sadly smiled to the bard. "I have a feeling that it's Camelot's end."

The young woman sadly smile. "No it would be Camelot's greatest feat. To end and only begin as a form of hope to mankind." Gabrielle shut her eyes at the memory. She rested her eyes against her Soulmate's chest and hugged her tightly.

Xena pulled her Soulmate in and kept her safe from the reality of things.

Slowly the young woman opened her sadden eyes again. "We have to make sure they kill each other."

"They will Gabrielle." The warrior held her partner safely. "We can not be there."

"Why?" Gabrielle gazed up to her partner. "We..."

The warrior peered down. "We can not be there Gabrielle." She paused. "We can not be remembered."

The warrior bard took a deep breath. "And we will be if we are at the battle of light and dark." She shook her head. "Gods I hate this part."

"The both of us." Xena sighed and looked away then back to Gabrielle. "If we fight in that battle we'll be remembered in history, we can't let that happen."

"I know." Gabrielle nodded with a long breath. "This will not be easy Xena."

"No, I don't like walking away either." She paused. "But we'll do the surprise attack at least."

"Good." The smaller knight rested her head on Xena's chest again. "Xena?"

"Mmm?"

"I love you."

Xena smiled so warmly and pressed her lips against Gabrielle's forehead for a moment. She rested her head down on Gabrielle's. "I love you Gabrielle."

Now that warm smile appeared on Gabrielle's lips. "Beyond forever." She shut her eyes. "So what we doing now?"

"Holding each other is all."

The smaller woman chuckled. "Xena, we do have a number of soldiers to get in order for the surprise attack as well as brief Williams and Galahad about the plans for the surprise attack."

The warrior grinned while closing her eyes. "Later." She smiled with love. "Just you

and I right now."

"Us right now." Gabrielle sighed contently and escaped in her Soulmate's love for an extent of time.

Xena disappeared into Gabrielle's love.

The Soulmates met together in love.

~*~*~*~

Xena gradually sat beside her Soulmate at the wood round table. She stared across to the other two knights, Galahad and Williams. "We have a... secret attack happening in about two days."

Galahad did a double take. "What? Since when?" He glanced between Xena and Gabrielle. "This wasn't talked about in the meeting room."

Gabrielle grinned. "That's why it's a secret attack."

Sir Galahad quietly laughed. "How correct. My apologies."

Williams sat back in his seat with a calm expression. "So... what's the plans?"

The warrior's eyes shifted over to Williams, he was a set mind knight. "Gabrielle, myself, and you two along with a hundred knights will race ahead to surprise attack Mordred's army."

"That's crazy." Galahad shook his head. "What will this possible achieve? Xena those hundred knights will not stand a chance against Mordred's army."

"Galahad, the plan is to scare Mordred not get our men killed." Gabrielle took a deep breath and continued. "We'll only do a hit and run attack. Just to scare Mordred and lower the force's number. Nothing more."

Xena nodded in agreement. "While we are doing this Arthur and the rest of the knights will be trekking north to meet Mordred's army halfway." She paused and smiled evilly. "After our attack we will race back south to meet up with the main force." Her eyes fell to the table. "But there may be some minor details." Her eyes lifted to the two male knights. "Arthur wants the battle far from Camelot to protect her. So if the main army is moving slowly our force is going to have to try and slow Mordred down."

Sir Williams spoke up now. "That's risky. We could lose a lot of men like that."

The Warrior Princess evilly grinned. "We will if we do things the stupid way. Leave all of that to me."

Galahad grinned devilishly. "So I take it you're going to be mainly in command?"

Xena quietly laughed. "All four of us technically."

Gabrielle gave an amused look to Galahad and Sir Williams. "So yes, Xena is in charge."

Sir Galahad, Williams, and Gabrielle all laughed.

The warrior on the other hand sat back with her smug look. "I am glad you all realize this." A narrowing of the eyes and grin. "I don't want to have to put either three of you in your places."

Gabrielle's head fell back with a laugh. "Xena." She lifted her head and quietly laughed. "The difference between a warrior and a knight." She'd whispered it up to the warrior.

Xena's eyes twinkled down to the smaller woman. "Egos definitely." She winked after the low reply. She turned her head back to the other two yet baffled knights.

Not Galahad nor Sir Williams understood the conversation between the two female knights.

Gabrielle grinned but wiped it away when she glanced back to the men. "Okay, Arthur ordered a hundred soldiers to be ready. We're planning to leave tomorrow late morning and get far north as we can." A pause from Gabrielle.

Galahad sat back with a questioning face. "May we inspect the troops today?"

Xena nodded. "Gabrielle and I are planing to do that, you may join us."

"Love to." Galahad smiled and ran his right hand through his dirty-blond curly hair. He then turned his attention to Williams. "Care to join us?"

"Um." Williams turned his head to Galahad. "I am afraid I can not. I have other... affairs to attend to. However I will trust your three's judgement in the force." His eyes shifted towards Xena and Gabrielle. "The three of you have better judgement on men then what I do."

Everybody in the group nodded.

Williams smiled and shifted his eyes to Xena. "Do we know yet what the exact plans of attack are against Mordred?"

The warrior didn't reply at once, she felt a warning go off inside of herself so her eyes picked up a touch of coldness. "No." She laced her hands together in her lap. "I have yet to consider them but I'll be working something out tonight." She smiled with fakeness. "Do you have any suggestions?"

Sir Williams shook his head. "Not at all. I am poor in fighting tactics."

Xena nodded. "Very well then." She quickly stood up. "Is there anything else?"

"Nope." Galahad stood. "But I would like to check the men out."

Gabrielle stood as well. "Lets do that now."

Sir Williams stood. "Enjoy. I need to head off." He smiled. "Thank you Xena and Gabrielle for the briefing."

"Of course." Xena smiled and watched Williams nod and quickly walk away. Her eyes stayed pinned on the knight for seconds but tore away to rest on Galahad. "The troops

you ask?"

Galahad grinned. "Yes."

The warrior stepped around her seat and waited for her partner to join her side.

Gabrielle came up to her Soulmate's side and peered over at Galahad. Her eyebrows furrowed as she noticed something about Galahad she had not before.

Galahad, yes well he had the rich curly-blond hair that was long and reached almost to his shoulders. He was a bit small for a man he was however taller than Gabrielle. But what she couldn't help notice was Galahad's beautiful amber eyes. How those amber eyes so reminded her of Ephiny. She finally stopped staring knowing she'd be caught soon for her staring.

Xena smiled to the male knight. "I know the men have been selected."

"Great." Galahad crossed his arms against his chest. "Then we may check them out."

"Of course." The warrior began walking as Galahad did. Although she walked behind Galahad and had Gabrielle beside her.

The bard took a deep breath and walked close to her Soulmate and whispered, "Does Galahad remind you of somebody Xena?"

The warrior stared at the back of Galahad and considered the question. Did that knight's body and attitude remind her of somebody? Slowly she straightened her back out. "Ephiny."

"That's what I thought too." Gabrielle glanced away and to Galahad. "He seems so much like her. It's almost creepy."

Xena chuckled lowly. "Maybe you should ask."

"Smartass warrior."

The taller woman quietly laughed. "Welll lets see what we can find out." She grinned and loudly called up to Galahad. "Galahad?"

The knight slowed his pace of walk to come to Xena's side. "Yes?"

"Gabrielle and I were wondering, do you come from Greece?"

Sir Galahad quietly laughed. "Not at all I am pure English." He took a deep breath. "However my Grandmother came from Greece."

"Really?" Gabrielle smiled to the knight. "Do you know where from in Greece?"

The man closed his eyes for a second thinking. "Um I believe in the eastern portion." His eyes opened again. "Why do you ask?"

The bard sighed faintly. "You remind me of an old friend from Greece."

"Ah." Galahad nodded faintly. "My apologies if I bring about sad memories."

Xena shook her head and smiled. "None are sad. Our friend was a great one."

The knight nodded his head. "That is good." He took a deep breath. "There was a legend in my family though that one of my great grandmothers was an Amazon." He quietly laughed. "But then again the Amazons were a legend as well." He smiled to both Xena and Gabrielle. "I sort of always wished it was true. Would be neat to have an honor of an Amazon in my blood line."

Gabrielle took a deep breath. "Don't always think legends are false Galahad. You'd be surprised."

Galahad raised an eyebrow at the bard. "Should I be worried?"

"Very." Xena devilishly grinned.

Both Galahad and Gabrielle quietly laughed while turning to the left out into a field area outside. There they would go through stables and enter into a large open area in the castle to see the troops milling about. And that's where Galahad, Xena, and Gabrielle looked over the men and counted them along with the weapons and calvary.

~*~*~*~

Galahad was walking beside Gabrielle and Xena was beside Gabrielle. "I do have to admit." He smiled up to the two women. "I feel like I've met you both."

Both Xena and Gabrielle gazed at each other with hidden grins.

Gabrielle glanced back to Galahad. "Maybe in a dream huh?" She grinned.

Galahad quietly laughed. "Could be, they say that happens." He took a deep breath as they came through the stables after looking over the force. "Well the men seem well prepared."

"Definitely." Xena crossed her arms over her chest. "I am satisfied."

"Then that means it's a good force Sir Galahad."

The knight laughed at Gabrielle and smiled. "I believe you're right if the Warrior Princess is satisfied." He quickly furrowed his eyebrows.

Xena and Gabrielle did double takes at the man.

Galahad stopped walking and shook his head. "Warrior Princess? Where did that come from?" He brought his right hand forward to run through his curly hair. "Sorry about that." He gazed up to Xena. "I am not sure where that came from." He chuckled. "Although it seems a bit fitting for you."

The warrior smiled warmly. "I've been called many things and that is one of them."

The man gave a confused look. "Really? Wonder why?"

Gabrielle shrugged her shoulders and started walking with everybody. "I think I've come to notice it's Xena's attitude with life and fighting." A smirk covered her lips. "Xena fights like an old warrior and acts like a princess at times."

"Hey!" Xena narrowed her eyes at her partner.

Galahad started chuckling. "It seems you two both get along quite well." He noticed the huge grin Gabrielle was giving her partner. "Very well."

Xena broke her eye contact and turned her eyes to Galahad. "I thought we came to an understanding."

"Yes of course." The man nodded but peered over to Gabrielle. "I do not have one with her however."

The warrior grinned to her the other knight. "Let's put it this way Sir Galahad, you have an understanding with me then you have one with Gabrielle." Xena crossed a line.

Galahad nodded and placed his hands behind his back again. He steered his way into the main hall again with the two women. "I will remember that for now on." He sighed with a warm smile. "May I speak freely to you both?"

Gabrielle felt a spot of nervousness fill her, but she smiled back to Galahad. "Yes."

The knight took a deep breath and he spoke in a quiet voice for only them to hear. "Of course as you both know, I know who you are... to each other." He smiled at the two women. "I was brought up as a rather strict Catholic and taught about that sort of thing." He paused as the smile disappeared. "I never understood why it was forbidden or thought those sort of people would be damn." He shrugged his shoulders. "Love is love no matter what form it comes in." A deep breath with thinking. "Besides, I can see you both belong together. You two glow with love." He smiled warmly to both the women. "I say don't let these times discourage either of you."

The warrior bard smiled warmly to the man. "Thank you Galahad." She took a deep breath. "As you can guess, Xena and I... have never told anybody."

Galahad laughed quietly. "No need to tell it's visible if you're study long enough." He grinned. "I don't think anybody in Camelot however wants to study otherwise they would see it then would have to confront it. They never want to confront their two best knights."

Xena's lips took on a grin. "That's what we figured." Her grin changed into a warm smile. "Thank you Galahad for understanding."

The knight nodded his head and saw the stairs leading to the bedchambers come. Turning to right the group climbed them slowly. "Did you both leave Greece... because of problems there with your love?"

Gabrielle shook her head. "Not at all." She sighed unhappily. "Just old memories kept haunting us."

Galahad nodded sadly. "Ashame." He gazed up to see the torchlight to the chamber hall flowing down the stairwell. "I do believe dinner will be rather soon."

Xena nodded. "I am rather hungry."

The smaller female growled with a grin. "I haven't eaten since yesterday."

"Mmm." The warrior decided on a jest for a response. "You'd think you'd be in a bad

mood then."

"Funny." Gabrielle came to the hall of the bedchambers. "I've learn to cope."

Xena grinned.

Galahad gazed over to the smallest knight. "You big into food huh?"

"Very." The bard gave a grin. "I use to get in bad moods if I didn't eat."

The man grimaced. "I'd hate to see that."

The Warrior Princess let herself laugh at that.

Gabrielle sighed and elbowed her Soulmate lightly.

Xena smiled lovingly to her partner and looked up in time to see the door to her room. She stopped there and gave her attention to Galahad again. "Thanks again Galahad."

The knight smiled warmly. "Of course. I am glad you both trust me." He took a deep breath.

"You've earned it Galahad." Gabrielle smiled and stepped forward to pull the man in for a hug.

Sir Galahad was taken aback by this but simply hugged back hard.

The bard pulled back with her warm smile. That definitely had felt like an Ephiny hug, she'd miss that. "We'll see you at dinner Galahad."

The knight smiled with a nod. "Of course." He turned around and continued his stroll down the hall to his room.

Xena studied the man for a moment and huffed. She opened the door and went inside, she closed it once Gabrielle came in. "That was interesting."

"Very." The younger woman leaned against the wood door. "God, I keep thinking he's Ephiny."

"I am beginning to think so myself." Xena walked over to her closet and pulled out clean attire.

"You really thing so Xena?"

The warrior sat down on the foot of the bed and untied her boots while bending forward. "It's possible. We both went through that karma experience in India."

"Yeah." Gabrielle crossed her arms over her chest and her right leg over her left at the ankles. "I bet it is Ephiny's karma. Wild enough idea huh?"

Xena grinned up to her partner with her eyes up. "It would make sense."

"True." The small female sighed. "Or maybe I am just trying to convince myself." She shook her head.

"Nope." Xena stood up and pulled her shirt off and put her clean one on. "That is

Ephiny's soul inside of Galahad." The sword was off first then the pants.

Gabrielle nodded a few times. "I'll just go with it." She grinned.

The warrior chuckled and put the clean pants on and began to put her boots on again. "We need to be a little careful with him though."

"Yeah." Gabrielle gazed over to her best friend. "We can tell him we're immortal. That'll just freak him out."

Xena quietly laughed. "Or the fact he might hold his great grandmother's soul in him." She stood up with her sword and sheath and began to put it on again. After she did she came up to her friend.

"Won't go over well." Gabrielle's hands came to Xena's waist, she peered up at her Soulmate.

The Warrior Princess smiled down at her warrior. "How you feel?"

"Besides desiring food, great." The small woman smiled at her partner. "How about you?"

"About the same." The tall woman's lips formed into a grin now. "Although I could go for..." She leaned down and kissed her Soulmate deeply. "You."

"Mmm, agreed." Gabrielle grabbed her Soulmate by the belt and pulled her in closer. "Come here." A low growl.

Xena grinned and leaned down to kiss her passionately. She lifted her head again and placed her right hand on the door above Gabrielle's head while her other hand went to Gabrielle's waist. Leaning back down she took Gabrielle away with her.

~*~*~*~

Galahad reached forward to open his door and when he did there was Gabrielle.

The small knight leaned against the doorway with a huge grin. "Coming to dinner?"

The man laughed and smiled. "In a moment. I need to get my sword. Come in."

Gabrielle smiled and came inside the room. She looked to her right to see a balcony. "Ah you have a balcony too."

Galahad chuckled. "And a passageway."

The bard quickly looked over to the man. "Now how'd you manage that?" Her hands came to her hips.

The knight smiled at his friend and tied his belt around his waist. "Just lucky." He walked over to Gabrielle and gazed over at the balcony. "I think it's 'cause I've been with Arthur for so long."

The young woman nodded. "How long have you been with Arthur?"

Galahad sighed and thought. "Forever it seems." He took a long breath. "I was a squire first to one of the older Knights of the Round Table." He smiled a little. "He was like

a father after a time and one night he died in his sleep." Galahad had lost his smile. "He'd ask me before he died to take his place in the Knight Hood of Camelot and I promised I would. I was around seventeen then." Galahad crossed his arms against his chest. "After his death his will was read naming me to his position and I took it."

Gabrielle sadly smiled. "I am sorry."

Galahad shook his head. "Don't be, he was a great knight and he's honored." He took a deep breath with a warm smile. "Sso how long have you and Xena been together?"

The bard shifted to her weight to her other foot in slight nervousness. "Awhile."

Galahad furrowed his eyebrows. "You don't... have to talk about if you... don't want to." A shrug of the shoulders. "Understandable." He paused with a bit of a smile. "Thought maybe you would like to since you probably haven't spoke to anybody in ages I bet."

The woman smiled and looked away. "You're right. It's been a long time since I spoke about Xena and I."

"Well..." Galahad shrugged his shoulders. "I am all ears if you feel like ever talking about it. I am interested... for some reason or another." He grinned a little and reached up to brush back some of his curly hair behind his ear. "I still think I've met you both."

"Maybe." Gabrielle sighed a little unhappily. "But we better go before Xena busts in here."

"And that she would do." Sir Galahad walked to the door and opened it, once he did he found a dark warrior standing there. He sheepishly smiled up to Xena. "We were just... talking about you."

"Really?" Xena placed her hands on her hips and gazed back at Gabrielle. She arched an eyebrow at her Soulmate.

The small warrior grinned. "Yup." She stepped pass Galahad and put her hand on the warrior's right arm. "Dinner?"

Xena lowered her hands from her hips but her right hand took Gabrielle's hand. "Yeah." She squeezed the smaller hand and released Gabrielle's hand. "Let's go."

"Right beside you." The smaller knight started walking beside her partner.

Galahad walked beside Xena's other side after he'd closed his door. "Well I hope this is a good dinner since I'll be our last here for a while."

Gabrielle lost her smile and she looked down to the stone floor. "Yeah definitely." She had a bad feeling this would be the last time Camelot held all it's Knights of the Round Table ever again. One thing was for sure, Gabrielle may let Arthur die but she would not let Galahad die. No, she'd formed a deep bond with Ephiny so long ago and here was Ephiny again as a knight in a man's body. She would not let Ephiny leave this body quickly without living a happy life. Ephiny was too much of a priceless friend of hers, a sister.

Xena sensed what her partner's thoughts were and placed her right hand up on Gabrielle's shoulder and squeezed tightly.

The younger woman peered up with a warm smile.

The warrior smiled back and winked in understanding. Her hand fell back down and she turned her attention to Galahad. "Are you ready for the battle soon?"

Sir Galahad smiled up to Xena. "Always ready for action." He grinned. "Nothing like a good war for entertainment."

Xena quietly laughed as they begun going down the stairs. "I agree but only if we win."

"Naturally." Galahad nodded and placed his right hand on his sword's hilt.

The three friends all made their way to the dinning hall. And there they ate heartily knowing tomorrow night's meal on the road will not taste quite as good. Wars and food never mixed together.

~*~*~*~

Xena silently closed the door behind to Gabrielle's room. She watched her partner move to sit on her own bed. Looking a little ahead, the warrior saw the full moon's light streaming into the room. Moving about the Warrior Princess easily lit a number of candles in the room to see. When she glanced over to Gabrielle, she saw the younger woman sitting on the bed thinking. Slowly the warrior came over and sat on the side of the bed near her partner. "We need to talk."

The smaller warrior took a deep breath and lifted her eyes to Xena. "Yeah." She reached out to take Xena's closes hand. "How are we going to work this?"

The older woman gazed down at the laced hands and she gradually looked up to Gabrielle. "We'll have to leave after the surprise attack."

"What about the army Xena?" Gabrielle shook her head. "If we disappear from there it won't look good."

"True." The warrior thought for an instant and considered a plan. "The thing to do would be to leave right when the main force attacks Mordred's army."

The bard nodded. "What about Galahad? I don't want to leave him in that battle to get hurt or even killed."

Xena nodded a few moments but her face was sad. "I don't think we can do anything Gabrielle."

"Xena." The small woman shook her head. "I won't let anything happen to him." Her eyes narrowed faintly. "That is Ephiny's soul in him."

"I know." Xena tore her eyes away. "But we can not stop Galahad from fighting when he wants to." Her eyes came back to Gabrielle. "We both know how Ephiny is, she would not back out of anything she committed herself too. Galahad is the same way, he won't back away from the battle."

The warrior bard released Xena's hand and hopped off the bed walking over to the other side of the room. She whirled around. "No Xena. Ephiny deserves a happy life as a knight."

The tall woman sighed. "I agree Gabrielle." She stood and slowly made her way over to Gabrielle. "But Ephiny's soul has a destiny Gabrielle."

Gabrielle shook her head and wrapped her arms over her stomach. "So we're here to help her with that destiny."

"No we are not Gabrielle and you know that." The warrior grasped her partner's shoulder. "We're not suppose to be here Gabrielle, we never were. We're not suppose to be immortal and not suppose to be toying with personal lives, only history. Whatever is suppose to happen to Ephiny's karma is not suppose to because of what we do."

The younger woman looked up with burning eyes. "Toying with history, history is everybody of time and we are toying with every one's personal lives. Why can't we help Galahad survive in this battle?"

"Because Galahad will die none the less. Either in this battle or later on."

"How you figure Xena?"

The warrior kept her eyes pinned as she spoke quietly. "Because it is Galahad's destiny, it is the path Ephiny's karma follows." She paused and squeezed Gabrielle's shoulders. "If we toy with a karma's path then we will possible destroy it Gabrielle. Is that what you really want to do to Ephiny's soul just so she may be happy in one lifetime?"

The bard shut her eyes as she remembered the day she fought against Alti. That was so long ago yet it was so fresh in her mind. How she learned so much about her soul and Xena's own soul. They were destined to be together and Alti had threatened that. If Alti had won their own karmas would have forever been destroyed. Slowly Gabrielle's head bobbed up and down. "Alright." Her eyes open and were rich with sadness. "We won't do anything to help Galahad."

Xena sighed sadly and pulled her Soulmate in tightly. She hated the idea much as Gabrielle did. The warrior herself had come to find out how much she cared for that Amazon regent so long ago. Xena had realized through the days Ephiny aged that she held a sister relationship with the Amazon. Yet the warrior never took the chance to tell Ephiny how much she cared or loved her because she thought she had all the time in the world. She did have all the time in the world but Ephiny never did.

So that left Xena standing in front of Ephiny's funeral pyre so long ago. Gabrielle wrapped in her arms and tears streaking down her cheeks. The warrior finally telling Ephiny how much she meant to her in her thoughts. To go back, if only to go back and tell.

Gabrielle opened her eyes and lifted her head to kiss her Soulmate lightly. "She knows Xena."

"I know." The warrior sighed sadly and gave a sad smile. "I was rather stupid."

The bard shook her head. "I never told her either."

"But she knew that you considered her a sister."

Gabrielle sighed unhappily. "I had to wonder during those days." She smiled rather sadly. "But she knows none the less."

Xena nodded. "She does." She leaned down to kiss Gabrielle on the forehead. Bring up her right hand she brush back her partner's short hair. "How you feel?"

The small woman grinned a little. "A bit mentally tired."

The Warrior Princess chuckled. "Agreed." She looked over to her right at the chairs. "Let's go sit outside."

Gabrielle took a glimpse back to the chairs. "Sounds good to me." She walked over to the chairs to grab one.

Xena was about to follow her partner's idea but a knock came. She turned her head towards the door then back to Gabrielle.

The smaller warrior lowered the chair's legs to the stone floor. "Who is it?"

"Galahad."

The warrior walked over to the door and opened it and there stood Galahad with a smile. "Come in. Gabrielle and I were going to just sit outside."

"Ahh." Galahad walked in with his smile. "May I join?"

"Definitely." Gabrielle smiled across the room.

Galahad flashed a smile and walked up to Gabrielle's side, he lifted a chair.

Xena shut the door and come up to grab a chair.

The three friends strolled out onto the balcony and sat around each other. They all had a view of Camelot at night and a view of each other.

"Xena?"

"Mmm?"

The warrior bard grinned. "Galahad has a balcony and passageway."

Xena quickly turned her head to the man. "Really?"

Sir Galahad laughed quietly. "Yes."

The warrior narrowed her eyes. "I am jealous."

Gabrielle started to chuckle and rested her arms in her lap. "We could trade rooms Xena."

The tall woman glanced over to her partner. "Nope." She grinned. "I'll just come over here more often."

Galahad blushed at hearing the comment. He coughed and crossed his legs at the ankle. "Right on ladies."

Both Xena and Gabrielle fell apart laughing together.

The knight ran his right hand through his curly hair. "Sure is a lovely night huh?"

Both Soulmates calmed down to chuckles and took deep breaths.

Gabrielle glanced over to the man. "Very lovely evening."

Sir Galahad grinned and took a deep breath. "Well... since you two are so inclined to talk about each other and rooms. How did you both meet if you don't mind my asking?"

The bard gazed over at her partner and saw Xena just faintly nod. Gabrielle shifted her eyes to the knight again. "In a grove outside my village."

Galahad furrowed his eyebrows. "That's a bit of an... odd spot to meet somebody."

Xena grinned. "Very odd." She rested back in her seat. "Gabrielle's village at the time were trying to be enslaved, at least the women."

"Really?" Galahad nodded. "I didn't think that sort of thing still happened these days."

Gabrielle quickly jumped in. "Well not really. It's a rare thing to happen but it does every now and again in Greece."

Galahad considered that. "Well you two would know better then I would. I am hardly worldly." He gazed over at Xena. "So I assume you were the one saving Gabrielle."

"All the time."

"Hey!" Gabrielle straightened up in her seat. "Remember who was the one that saved you from getting pelted by rocks warrior?"

The warrior devilshly grinned. "I can't quite recall... was so long ago Gabrielle."

"Pfft. Right Xena." Gabrielle sat back in her seat with a smug look. "Or the time I brought you back with Autolycus. Or the time you blacked out from that dart Callisto shot at you. Or when I hit you with the stick when you almost took over that village. Or-"

The warrior cut her off. "Or the time I saved you from the slavers. The time we fell down the well or perhaps the time you almost got killed in your dreamscape. Or rather the time you became a blood sucker. And I remember that time you, Joxer, and Autolycus all tried to stop Jett and the plan wasn't working. Then there was always-"

"Okay okay okay..." Gabrielle huffed and sat back in her seat with a small glare.

"You've made your point."

Galahad was sitting back in his seat with an amused look. He'd never seen anything like it. "I'd say you both have been through quite a lot."

Xena sat back in her seat with a smug look. "Oh yeah."

The smaller warrior gazed over at Galahad. "To many things." She grinned a little. "We could tell you stories Galahad you'd never believe."

The knight laughed and he smiled. "I'd be quite interested." He sighed. "But I imagine I don't have quite that much time."

The taller woman smiled over to the man. "Tell us a little about your past Galahad."

The man sadly smiled over to Xena. "I am afraid there's not much to tell." He shrugged his shoulders.

"You mean being a squire at a young age didn't bring... adventures?" Gabrielle grinned over to Galahad.

Sir Galahad quietly laughed. "It did bring adventures." He took a deep breath. "Well... like I told you both I've lived in England all my life." He paused and stared down to his hands. "My parents were both killed in the several civil wars in England." His eyes lifted back up to the two women. "I left home and headed up north towards Whales where I heard about Arthur." He shrugged his shoulders. "Arthur was young then himself and I was filled with rage." A long breath as Galahad recalled his past. "I came to Whales in hopes to escape my past of course you never can do such a thing. And I also heard about Arthur and his battles against the old ways with Mab. I wanted to join but I couldn't because I was rather young. So I ended up becoming a squire to Sir Henry when I was around... fourteen or so." Galahad stared down at his feet. "That was right around the time Camelot first began and peace was beginning again." He lifted his head with a sad smile. "It's amazing what can happen over time."

"It is." Gabrielle's head bobbed up and down in agreement. "Any siblings?"

Galahad shook his head. "None. Only child."

The bard nodded. "I know all of that feeling."

The knight quickly gave a confused look. "You're an only child?"

Gabrielle dropped her eye contact. "No... my family was killed a long time ago."

"I'm sorry. What happened?"

The small knight gazed over to Galahad. "My town caught on fire some how and everybody was killed. I had a sister and then my mother and father."

Galahad moved his head in understanding. "It's not easy." He sadly smiled. "But always find people to help you feel that lost love again."

Gabrielle nodded. "Luckily I have."

The man smiled and looked over the warrior. "You have any sad tales to tell?" A sad grin.

Xena quietly laughed. "I am afraid I can join the pity party." She chuckled with everybody else.

The man crossed his arms in his lap. "What happen in your past?"

"A lot." The Warrior Princess crossed her legs. "But it began when I was rather young. Somebody attack my village and at the time I was destined to stop the attack. Sso I took up arms with my village and stopped the attack." She shrugged her shoulders. "For the following twelve years or so I fell into a lot of darkness."

"Really?" Galahad shook his head. "You don't strike me to be the one to... well be dark."

"Mmm." Xena grinned faintly. "And you never strike me to be the one to have lost family."

The knight chuckled quietly. "Very true." He smiled warmly. "But it's obvious you got off that path."

"I did." Xena smiled warmly and her eyes shifted to Gabrielle.

Galahad then knew the exact depth of things between these women. "Very interesting." He gazed over at Gabrielle who had her eyes locked with Xena. Her eyes were sparkling deeply. The knight grinned a little. "Well I do hope I find my other half like you both have." He sighed and stood up. "And I best be leaving to leave you both alone."

The bard suddenly flushed at the words. "Hell." She lifted her head to Galahad. "You don't have to leave."

The man smiled. "Actually, I really should. Tomorrow we leave early and we'll all need the rest." He took a deep breath. "And I believe it's best to let you both have the night together."

The bard reached out to take the knight's hand. "Thanks Galahad."

"You're welcome." Sir Galahad squeezed his friend's hand for a second and released the small hand. Gazing over to Xena he smiled. "Goodnight Xena."

The warrior smiled very warmly. "Goodnight Galahad. Sleep well tonight."

"I will." He lifted his chair. Ambling over to the balcony's doorway he peered back. "And I am sure I do not have to tell you both to have a goodnight." He turned around with his own grin. "Goodnight to you ladies."

Gabrielle chuckled. "Goodnight Galahad."

"Goodbye Galahad." Xena listen to hear the chair settle down inside Gabrielle's room. Next she heard the front door open and close.

The younger woman stood up from her chair and came up to her Soulmate. "He's a smart knight."

Gabrielle sat in Xena's lap. "Ephiny was a smart Amazon."

Xena grinned. "Very true." She brought her right hand behind her partner's head and pulled her head down. "And you're a beautiful woman."

The bard's lips swept into a grin as her eyes went a shade deeper. "Mmm but you're a

lot sexier than me." She finished the small distance to take Xena's lips.

The warrior moaned in the kiss and felt her friend's hands slip up her shirt. When they pulled back from the kiss, Xena brushed her lips carefully against Gabrielle's neck. "Don't be so sure about that." A response to earlier.

Gabrielle shut her eyes and let her head fall back. "Xena." A whisper of plea.

The warrior grinned and wrapped her arms tightly around her partner. She stood while lifting her Soulmate.

The darkness around hid them.

Xena carried her partner into the bedchamber and settled her onto the bed.

The small warrior quickly reached up to grab Xena by her sword's belt and pulled her down. Gabrielle took her Soulmate's lips into a dangerous kiss.

The tall woman held herself over Gabrielle with her arms and crawled over the small woman's body. "You before me Gabrielle." Her lips shifted to the bard's neck and chest.

Gabrielle grinned and moved her hands to go up the warrior's shirt and directly to her warm breasts. "Don't be so sure about that."

Xena closed her eyes and lost the battle.

Just the Soulmates of Time. It would always just be the Soulmates of Time in history. This pair of immortals believed to hold the power against time and it's destiny it would bring against mankind. Do they really hold such power? Have they ever? As we say, time would tell. Time would tell, time would only tell.

And the next coming days time would tell what would happen to Arthur and his dream. The Soulmates would see the destiny of light end and a new begin. That was the way it must be.

Section 3

~*Part 4*~

The sun beat high over the small army of knights. They all either bobbed up and down on their horses or on foot. Their armor all clanked in unison as they headed north to meet their fate. At the head of this army were four particular knights. In the lead of the four was an internally dark knight with brisk blue eyes. Her partner beside her was her Soulmate that didn't know distance. And well off to the two female knight's sides were two male knights, Sir Galahad and Sir Williams. Xena and Gabrielle were prepared to lead this army to its destiny.

This was the second day since they left Camelot and they expected to be running into Mordred's army today. Well not quite run into Mordred's army more surprise him and his army.

Xena turned her head left and right scanning the forest around in the rolling hills of

Whales.

Gabrielle narrowed her eyes as she saw flashing metal coming towards her. "Xena?"

The warrior gazed ahead to see that flashing metal and a metallic knight appeared on the road coming fast on horseback. Xena's lips spread into a grin. "Good timing."

The bard nodded. "To say the least." She pulled back her stallion's reins and looked back to the army. "Halt!" She watched to see the entire army of one hundred knights came to a sudden stop at their commander's order. Gabrielle turned around back in her saddle as she saw the onward riding knight come up to them. "Greetings!"

The knight slowed his horse so that he came right up to Xena and Gabrielle. He bowed his head a little. "Commanders."

Williams shifted his horse closer to the new comer's horse.

Xena gave her stern attention to the new comer. "What's the report?"

The new comer was a scout from the surprise attack. "Mordred's army is about a half an hours ride ahead." His horse shifted but he continued on. "They're well armed and walking in four columns of about seventy-five knights deep. It's a good size army."

Gabrielle thought for a moment. "Three hundred?"

The scout nodded. "Correct." He sighed.

"How fast are they moving?"

The spy turned his attention to Xena again. "A decent speed, moderate."

Galahad shifted the reins in his hands. "Was Mordred there?"

"Yes, Mordred was at the head of the army leading." The spy then glanced back to Xena. "Anything else?"

Xena shook her head. "No. Now is the time to carry the plan out. Join the rest of the force."

The spy nodded his head. "Of course."

The Warrior Princess smiled. "Thank you."

"Anytime." The scout smiled back and kicked his horse to join in with the forces.

Gabrielle glanced up to her Soulmate. "What's the plan?"

Xena's lips shaped into a deep grin. "Alright, the plan is plain and simple." She gazed around between her partner, Galahad, and Sir Williams. "Gabrielle, you are taking twenty-five men and you will come down this main road on attack against Mordred's army." She then gazed over at Williams. "Williams you will be taking the rest of the army and going to the hills on the left side in the forest. Do you understand?"

Williams nodded his head. "Of course."

The warrior nodded. "Good. Now then Galahad and I will be on the right side hills

watching Gabrielle battle Mordred. I will give the signal Williams when you are to attack and come bursting over the hill to attack Mordred. Is that clear?"

Williams briskly nodded. "What will the signal be?"

Xena grinned. "A bird call. Listen carefully." Shifting her attention to Gabrielle she spoke. "Gabrielle, after you charge Mordred's army, make it a good brawl then pretend to retreat."

Gabrielle nodded. "Alright. Then join back up once Williams attacks correct?"

The warrior moved her head in agreement. "Yes." She took a deep breath. "We'll fight Mordred till either they're shook up or we get down to fifty men. This is not a slaughter for our men." She gazed over at Galahad. "I need you to remain on the right hillside to watch and sound the real retreat. Can you handle that?"

Galahad didn't like the duty but he would not go against Xena's judgement. "I can do that."

The warrior nodded and looked down the dirt road. "Let's split up now." She kicked Argo off to the right and up the hillside darting through the trees.

Galahad kicked his horse and followed Xena quickly up the hillside and to the top.

Gabrielle gazed back to the army. "Twenty-five men follow me!" She signaled Torqueo to go forward down the road and twenty-five men formed up behind Gabrielle.

Williams glanced back to the remaining seventy-five men. "Follow me!" He steered his horse up the left hillside in the shaded forest. His horse went over the hillside and to the other side. Glimpsing back Williams saw the remaining army following behind him, over the hillside and out of sight.

The bard kept her horse going at a fast walk along the dirt road. She listened to her heart faintly pound in excitement. Lifting her head up to the right she saw Xena riding Argo along the hill's ridge.

Xena gazed down to her partner and flashed a smile.

Gabrielle smiled back but began to hear the low sound of pounding coming towards her. Turning her head to the road she saw dark flashing armor coming at her, she narrowed her eyes. Looking up to the right ridge she saw Xena nodded and disappear over the hillside as if she was never there. The young woman turned her attention back to the approaching army. Reaching behind she lifted her helmet, put it on with ease, and finally she reached to her side to extract her gleaming sword. She held it high in the air. "Attack!" Kicking Torqueo hard she went flying down the road with her sword low and aimed at Mordred's army. Her head pounded with anticipation along with the thunder of her twenty-five men behind charging.

Xena hopped off Argo. "Stay here girl."

Galahad came up to Xena's side. "Crawl?"

"Yes." The Warrior Princess walked a little ways up the hillside and when she came

close to the ridge she lowered herself to her belly and crawled up to the ridge's tip. Gazing down she saw metallic knights racing towards black knights.

Galahad crawled up with his elbows next to Xena. "Here they go." A whisper.

Xena nodded and narrowed her eyes as she saw her Soulmate crash into Mordred's army. Gradually the warrior turned her head to the right to start estimating the number of Mordred's knights down there.

Gabrielle kicked one man at her right. She then flipped off Torqueo to land on her feet. One thing all the sparring with Xena had done was increase her strength which only gave her better mobility with her armor. And now she began to fight a dark knight with ease. But something was wrong, she could feel it. *Where's Mordred?* The bard began to frantically look around for the man in the fight but couldn't find him. Her eyes widen as her heart raced. "Shit!" She stabbed her enemy in the stomach and spun around to seek out Mordred and a fear washed over her. *Mordred's not here. This isn't the main force.* Grasping her helmet she tore it off. "Shit!" *This isn't the main force. Xena this isn't the main force!*

Xena's eyes quickly widen. "That isn't the main force." She jumped to her feet. "Shit!"

Galahad was up on his feet. "Where's the main force then?"

The warrior shook her head as she tried to clearly think. "They knew the plan..." Her eyes narrowed and her anger took wild control. She quietly growled out, "Williams. The bastard." Lifting her right hand she whistled to see Argo come galloping up. "Galahad get down there and get to Gabrielle. Help her and start a retreat now." She mounted Argo in a flash.

Galahad unsheathed his sword. "Where you going Xena?"

"To get Williams." She spurred Argo and went racing down the hillside past the fight and up the other hillside. When she came over the ridge, below she saw her seventy-five men swamped by a mass of dark knights. Xena's small force was completely surrounded. Unsheathing her sword she went crashing down the hillside with her battle cry and to find Williams. Retreating was the only solution now.

Gabrielle spun around to see Galahad. "What going on Galahad?"

The man fought two dark knights. "Somehow the Mordred found out our plan and attacked Williams." He killed one of his enemies and fought his second one. "We need to retreat Gabrielle! It's going to be a slaughter!"

The small warrior fisted up her right hand and punched one man hard in his face. She spun her sword as another dark knight took her on. She took a deep breath. "Alright, let's get out of here."

Galahad heard the order and stabbed his enemy. Taking a deep breath he yelled out. "Retreat! Retreat!" He saw another knight coming to him and he took him on.

The bard whistled loudly to see her stallion come pushing through and she easily mounted him. "Retreat!" She went barging through the fight killing as many knights as she could. "Retreat!"

~*~*~*~

"There you are, you bastard!" Xena reached down with her right hand to grab Williams by the neck. "I'll kill you." She sheathed her sword with her left hand.

Williams's eyes widen. "How'd you...!" He tried to bring his sword at Xena.

The warrior simply caught the blade in her left hand and ripped it from the man's hands. She threw it into the mass of fighting knights. "Don't bother." Bring her left hand down she punch him unconscious. Then Sir Williams was easily swung over Argo's rump. Xena then scanned the fight and knew there was no way in hell her army would win. "Retreat!" Racing Argo through the fight of metallic knights against black ones she continued to scream, "Retreat!" As she did this, Xena tried to take out as much dark knights as she could.

"This was a surprise attack on a surprise attack." Mordred crossed his arms against his chest as he laughed. "So stupid." He shook his head while he continued to watch the battle of Arthur's knights against his own.

"My Lord, what about Williams?"

Mordred turned his head to the right at his real second in command. "He's served his purpose." An evil grin took his lips. "Williams is on his own."

The second in command laughed. "He won't live long with Xena."

"I know." Mordred devilishly grinned while he turned his black eyes back to the battle at the bottom of the hill. "Success is so sweet."

~*~*~*~

Arthur lifted his head up as a knight entered his tent. He smiled at his knight faintly. "Good news I hope Sir Gawain?"

Gawain's eyes fell. "I am afraid not my Lord."

Arthur shut his eyes as he sat back in his wood chair. "What happened?"

Gawain's armor reflected the candle's light inside of the tent. "It seems Mordred knew our plans. The surprise was a failure." He paused. "Sixty men lost and eleven badly injured. I am sorry my Lord."

The king rubbed his right hand against his forehead. "It's okay Gawain." His eyes sadly opened. "What of our Commanders?"

The knight straightened up a little. "Fortunately Xena, Galahad, and Gabrielle are perfectly fine."

Arthur instantly lifted his eyes to the other man. "What of Sir Williams?"

"I am afraid Sir Williams will not be living long my Lord." He took a long breath as he tried to put it in the best way. "It seems there was a leak in the system. Sir Williams was a traitor and is currently in Xena's hands."

The king's head bobbed up and down a few times. "Good, I pray his death is a quick

one."

"My Lord?" Gawain had concerned eyes. "I do not believe Williams should be left to Xena's judgement. That is not our way. He should be tried for his treason in Camelot under the law."

Arthur sat back as he considered. "He will so as long as he lives under Xena's control." He shook his head. "Otherwise he is little of my concern at this moment." His eyes went to Gawain once more. "Once we meet up with the smaller army and Williams is still alive then we will take him to be tried in Camelot. Leave it at that."

Sir Gawain nodded sadly. "As you wish Arthur." He took a deep breath. "What of our plans?"

"They remain the same." The king sadly smiled. "We will meet up with Galahad, Xena, and Gabrielle tomorrow by midday then the following morning we will commence the attack on Mordred." He turned his head away. "Finally finish this maddening chaos."

The knight nodded his head. "As you wish my king." He took a deep breath. "Try to have pleasant evening."

Arthur nodded. "I will try. Thank you Gawain."

"You're welcome Arthur." The man turned around and left the king's tent to head to his own.

Arthur gradually stood from his wood chair and shifted to his tent flap. He stepped out and stood in the moon's reflecting light. He stared up to the stars in the fire lit camp. "Let us survive this trial."

~*~*~*~

Gabrielle kicked Sir Williams hard in the back of his knees. She watched him fall to his knees in a grimace. Lifting her eyes to three soldiers she nodded to them. "Shackle him up."

The three soldiers quickly moved with rattling chains and began to chain up Sir Williams around his wrists and ankles.

The small warrior saw Williams shackled and called out her next order. "Strip him of his armor. He has dishonored the light." She watched the scene and to her left Galahad came up.

"He's going to die." Galahad fisted up his right hand.

The bard took a deep breath. "No Galahad." She shook her head. "That's for the people of Camelot to decide." Gradually with hooded eyes in the fire lit camp, Gabrielle turned her head to the right. There she saw Xena reappear out of the shadows. Gabrielle knew then that Williams had a small price to pay now. For she knew nobody made a fool of her Soulmate.

The Warrior Princess walked up with a strong gait towards Sir Williams. Her arm and chest armor was gone and only her leg and thigh armor was still on. Her sword

dangled from her right side. She came directly up to the kneeling Williams. "You're lucky Williams."

The man slowly lifted his brown eyes to Xena. "Why?"

Xena squatted down with a mean looking grin. "Because you're a citizen of Camelot." Her eyes narrowed. "If you were in my army, you would be dead already."

Williams gave a shit grin. "Ashame."

The warrior laughed lowly. "How true... but..." She gave her smirk with twinkling navy eyes. "You're mine till we meet up with Arthur. Get ready to go on display." She slowly rose up to her full height with her eyes pinned down on the traitor. Without warning she kicked Williams in the stomach and walked away.

Galahad took a deep breath. "I owe him something too. Excuse me."

The warrior bard watched her friend come up to Williams.

"Williams, you're a lying sack of shit." Galahad gave his own kick to William's stomach hard. "That's for Camelot." He whirled around to stalk off to his tent.

Gabrielle took a deep breath now. She studied Sir Williams with cold eyes. How she owed something to Williams as well. With strength in her gate she came up in front of Williams. Doing as Xena did, Gabrielle squatted down to be eye level with the heavy breathing Williams. "Look at me Williams." Her voice was light.

The knight lifted his head up as he still tried to stop the pain in his stomach. "Are you going to kick me as well?"

Gabrielle gave an evil smile. "No." She reached out with her right hand to carefully touch the man's chin. "Explain why? I'd like to know why you chose Mordred over Arthur."

Williams laughed in sarcasm. "It's because Camelot is fake Gabrielle." He shook his head. "I despise Camelot and Arthur's dreams. They never could be, it's all crock."

"Mmm." Gabrielle gradually lowered her hand again. "You see though Williams, the only reason such dreams are... crock are because people like you make them out to be crock." She still had that evil smile on her lips. "I still have yet to understand why."

"Then you never will Gabrielle because you're living in a fantasy if you think something like Arthur's dream should be for the world." He shook his head. "Not everybody will ever agree."

The bard nodded a few times. "Very true." A deep breath. "First Lancelot then you Williams." A pause. "It must be something about that seat in the Round Table." Her smile was gone now as her eyes took on a sparkle. "But do you know what you did do today other then betray Arthur?"

"Nnno. Enlighten me Gabrielle." Williams gave a snicker.

Gabrielle laughed back at the man with her evil smile again. "You fucked with my Soulmate." She pulled back her right hand and made an armored fist. With speed her

fist slammed hard into Williams's face.

Williams's head snapped at the hard blow as blood flew in the air. "Bitch!"

The bard quietly laughed and stood up again to see the bloody nose Williams glare up. "Well I said I wouldn't kick you." She strolled away and saw the three knights still standing. "Lock him up for the night and stand guard."

The three knights quickly nodded and briskly stepped forward to take the bleeding Sir Williams away.

~*~*~*~

Xena lifted her head when she saw her Soulmate duck into her tent. She rapidly stood up from her bed with warm eyes.

Gabrielle smiled to her partner as she stood in her full armor. "I'm sorry Xena."

The warrior shook her head. "Not your fault. Neither of us had any idea."

"Yeah." The warrior bard sadly nodded and crossed her arms against her tightly fit breastplate. "What about Williams?"

"He'll be having a llong walk tomorrow." The tall woman sighed unhappily. "I should have known." A shake of the head and Xena lifted her eyes to Gabrielle. "I think I am getting to old for this job."

The bard raised an eyebrow. "I highly doubt that." She uncrossed her arms to hold her hands up. "It caught you off guard Xena."

"It shouldn't have." Xena growled in frustration and ran her right hand through her hair.

The young woman stepped up to her partner. "Xena, you're not perfect." Gabrielle slowly took her metal gloves off her hands to throw them on the bed behind Xena.

"It does not matter Gabrielle. We all could have been killed today." The warrior pointed her left hand towards the tent flap. "They depend on my judgement Gabrielle. If I screw up then these men are screwed."

Gabrielle quickly reached up with both hands to her Soulmate's shoulders. "Xena... it's not your fault." She squeezed her knight's shoulders. "It is much as mine as it would be anybody else's. Besides... it's over with you can't do anything about it now. Be thankful it wasn't worse."

The Warrior Princess took a long breath while keeping her eyes closed.

"Bad luck Xena for once, Arthur hasn't lost the war."

Xena let her breath out in contentment and her eyes opened to show warmth in them again.

Gabrielle smiled to her partner. "I love you."

The older woman brought her right hand behind her Soulmate's head and leaned in to

take her lips.

The smaller warrior disappeared into the kiss as she wrapped her arms around Xena's waist.

Xena brought her lips down to Gabrielle's neck. "Sorry I wasn't there for you."

Gabrielle's head fell into her warrior's neck as she moaned from the warm lips. "Nnno, you're... always with me." She shut her eyes. "Xena, if you don't stop... there's no going back."

The tall woman lifted her head up to kiss her Soulmate gently on the lips to calm Gabrielle down.

Gabrielle took a deep breath to let her passion settle down.

Xena pressed her lips to the top of Gabrielle's forehead in love. She knew they needed to talk. "Sit down."

The small knight nodded as she reluctantly moved out of her Soulmate's arms and sat on the bed with a sigh.

The older woman grabbed a wood chair spun it around so the back faced Gabrielle. She sat down in it with a flop and propped her arms up on the top of the chair. Leaning forward, Xena rested her chin on her arms.

"So what's the plan now for the army?"

The warrior took a deep breath. "Get them to Arthur. That's all we can do." She let out a sigh. "Mordred hurt us bad."

Gabrielle nodded with sadness. "Yeah, I am sure Arthur knows what's happen."

"Yes, as soon as we retreated I sent a messenger to Arthur."

The small warrior moved her head in understanding. "Good." Lifting her eyes to Xena she asked her next question in a whisper. "What about us?"

Xena straightened up and went very serious. "We're leaving when the battle begins."

"When will the battle begin?"

"In two days I believe at sunrise."

Gabrielle reached over to grab her gloves and place them into her lap. "Are we going to watch the battle at least?"

Xena was about to respond but she saw Sir Galahad step in with burning eyes and angry look.

"What's going on?" Sir Galahad quickly reached to his sword's hilt getting ready to draw it.

The warrior was about to react but she wasn't as fast as Gabrielle.

For the bard was in front of Galahad with her hand falling to his right hand which held

the sword. "Don't Galahad."

Xena was standing tense and her eyes pinned on Galahad.

Sir Galahad stared into Gabrielle's rich emerald eyes. "I heard what you two said. You're not fighting in the battle. I can't believe you two are traitors to Camelot as well."

"We're not Galahad." Gabrielle squeezed the man's hand gently. "Please believe me Galahad." She took a deep breath. "Xena and I will try to explain as best as possible but it's not what you think. Please trust me." She kept her eyes locked with Galahad's flashing amber eyes.

Sir Galahad breathed deeply and studied his friend's eyes and saw a plea for trust in them. He also saw a love in them that was deeply hidden. Very slowly his right hand slipped free of the sword's hilt and he felt Gabrielle squeeze his hand again.

"Thank you." The small warrior smiled to the knight.

Galahad nodded sternly and dropped his hand to his side. "Start explaining." His eyes went to Xena. "The both of you."

"Alright we will." Gabrielle backed away and sat down on Xena's bed. "Sit down Galahad."

The knight shook his head. "I prefer to stand for this one." His arms went against his chest.

Xena sighed and sat back down in her chair.

The younger woman took a deep breath and gazed up to her friend. "Galahad, it's complicated about why Xena and I can't fight in the battle."

The knight shrugged his shoulders. "I have all night."

Gabrielle sighed and dropped her head in frustration.

The Warrior Princess quickly took over. "Look Galahad, Gabrielle and myself would love to tell you why but we can not. As Gabrielle said, it's complicated."

"And why is it so complicated?" Galahad looked between the two women.

"It just is Galahad." The smaller woman's head whipped up with burning eyes. "Don't you think I want to fight in this battle Galahad? I love Camelot and Arthur as much as you do. So does Xena. We would not be here if we did not." She shook her head.

"You just have to trust us on this. We can not fight in the battle because it will mess a lot of things up."

Galahad shook his head with narrow eyes. "You both are cheap for friends then." He lifted his right hand to point at Gabrielle. "You're asking me to trust you? How can I trust you when you won't even trust me to tell me what's going on?" He narrowed his eyes. "I am not here to play games with people like you."

"Fine." Gabrielle jumped to her feet and unsheathed her sword. She spun it. "This is why." Her sword came towards her stomach.

Xena quickly stood up with her hands on the chair's head.

"No Gabrielle!" Galahad jumped forward but was too late as his hands wrapped around Gabrielle's hands.

The sword went cutting through Gabrielle's stomach and out her back, she never flinched.

Galahad's eyes widen. "Gabrielle?" He frantically pulled the sword back out. "No... no."

Gabrielle helped Galahad and pushed the sword out of her stomach and right between the chain mail. Once the blade came out she held it up and straightened her back out.

The knight's eyes were pinned directly on Gabrielle's blade. "Oh my god." He was now quite beyond baffled as he stared at the bloodless sword. "But... but." His eyes fell to Gabrielle's stomach and with a shake hand he touched where the sword had entered. He felt no blood. "How... how..." He glanced back at Xena then back to Gabrielle.

The warrior faintly grinned to her Soulmate. "You get to explain this on your own Gabrielle."

The bard gave a smirk. "No problem."

The tall woman inwardly chuckled and sat back down with an amused look.

The small knight's eyes went back to Galahad. "So wanna sit down now?"

Galahad blinked and peeped out, "Yeah."

Xena quietly laughed and reached to her left to grab a chair and she swung it towards Galahad.

The man took a stepped away and took the chair, he set it down and fell into the chair. "Who are you both?"

Gabrielle took a deep breath and sheathed her sword easily. She then sat back down. "That's the really interesting part."

"I am starting to think so." Galahad slightly grinned as he began to get over his shock. "I was ready to have you fall dead in my arms. Thank god you didn't."

The small knight smiled a little at that but went serious. "You see Galahad, Xena and I are not quite... well from this time period." She stopped as she furrowed her eyebrows. "Well we are but we're not... Awe Hades."

Galahad arched an eyebrow. "Well you're definitely Greek if you're saying Hades but I know Greece is into Catholic religion and not Greek mythology."

"It's not mythology Galahad." Xena's lips creased into a large grin. "It was real and was forgotten."

Sir Galahad crossed his arms in his lap and sat back in his chair. "And how would either of you know this?" He looked between Gabrielle and Xena. "And why did that

sword not kill her?"

Gabrielle sighed knowing it was over due for the truth. "Galahad, Xena and I are immortal."

Silence.

Sir Galahad's head then began to very slowly bob up and down as he came to an understanding. "Right on." He laughed out of shock and ran his right hand through his curly hair. "Well that would explain a lot of things." His hand fell to his lap.

Gabrielle closed her eyes and whispered out, "Sorry." She opened her eyes. "We wanted to tell you Galahad but there are risks in telling people."

The man nodded a few times. "It's okay. I wouldn't tell anybody either if I could live forever." He furrowed his eyebrows. "So why not fight against Mordred? You'd be such a great asset."

"Because we can not... fiddle with history to much Galahad." Xena sighed unhappily. "We're immortal and we can not let people catch on by history."

The knight gave a small grin. "But... history is never on key."

"True." Gabrielle shook her head. "But we can not take the risk. Xena and I could be hunted for being immortal."

Sir Galahad sighed unhappily. "That's true. People would either become scared of such a thing or so amazed they'd like to poke and probe you till they understood." Now Galahad began to understand something himself. "That's why you both left Greece. Because everybody you knew was passing away while you still were alive."

Xena turned her head to Galahad. "That is mainly why we left."

The knight shook his head at that idea. "I am sorry. I am sure it's hard." He gave a smile of apology to Gabrielle and Xena. "Thank you for trusting me... even though I sort of forced it on."

The bard quietly laughed at her friend. "It's alright." She took a deep breath. "Now that it's in the open between us Galahad I assume you know to keep it to yourself."

"Of course." Galahad smiled very warmly. "It is not in my nature to tell secrets." He chuckled. "Secrets are fun between certain people." But he lost his smile. "So where do you both plan to go?"

"We don't know yet." Xena stretched her legs out.

The man crossed his legs at the ankle. "You both can't stay in England, that's for sure."

"No." Gabrielle shook her head. "We'll probably go back to Europe."

Galahad lifted his eyes to the small knight. "To Greece?"

"Not for a long time Galahad." Xena had her eyes locked with Galahad's. "Who knows where we'll go."

Sir Galahad let his breath out. "Well... they say Spain is a beautiful country."

"Maybe we'll find out." Gabrielle gave a small grin but let it slip as she thought about leaving. For the first time she really didn't want to leave England and that only was because of Galahad.

The knight nodded a few times and he sighed sadly. "Well wherever you both go... I know it won't be easy on my part."

"Nor ours." Xena flashed a sad smile to her friend. "This is never the fun part."

"I can imagine." The man switched his crossed legs. "I still feel like I've known you both for a real long time." He quietly laughed.

Gabrielle and Xena both joined in the laugh. If only Galahad knew, if only.

Gabrielle gradually stood up. "Well... either way Galahad. I've loved these past days with you. Good memories... despite the small Mordred problem."

Galahad's lips shaped into a grin. "Agreed." He stood up with his grin going into a smile.

The bard pulled her friend in for a strong hug and she buried her head into Galahad's shoulder.

The knight held the small woman tightly for he felt like this was not just a friend but a person he held a sisterly bond with forever.

Gabrielle carefully pulled back with her warm smile and her eyes stung but she held back easily. "I better head back to my tent."

Galahad nodded. "I need to as well." He turned to the warrior. "Xena?"

With a smile, Xena stood up and held her right hand out. "Galahad."

The knight laughed and took the other knight's hand briskly. He shook hard. "Always enjoyed your fighting skills."

"Thanks." The tall woman grinned but gave a hard pulled to bring Galahad in. She wrapped her free arm around the man and hugged him strongly.

Galahad chuckled and hugged back as he felt his arm locked between bodies. Slowly he pulled back. "Don't change Xena."

"Nah." Xena released the man and crossed her arms against her chest.

Sir Galahad turned to Gabrielle. "I'll walk you to your tent."

"Thanks." The small warrior tucked her gloves under her arm and turned her attention to Xena. "I'll be back."

The warrior devilishly grinned. "I know."

"Right on ladies." Galahad quickly turned to head out of the tent flap.

Gabrielle laughed while Xena snickered. The warrior winked to her Soulmate and

Gabrielle smiled back as she ducked out of the tent.

~*~*~*~

The smaller knight buried her head more under Xena's chin and closed her eyes.

The warrior smiled as she let her fingertips glide up and down her Soulmate's smooth back. She had her bare body tightly pressed against Gabrielle's own nude body. They'd been amazingly quiet. "You were rather dramatic earlier."

The younger woman snickered. "With the sword?"

"Uh huh." Xena shut her eyes with ease. "You could have just cut your hand."

"You know me Xen. I had to get the point across."

"More like the point through." Xena followed that with a low laugh.

"Hardy har har warrior." Gabrielle squeezed her Soulmate's waist tightly and loosened her hold again. "I need to go back to my own tent."

"Mmm." The tall woman's long fingers still went up and down the bard's back. "In minute."

Gabrielle grinned against her partner's skin. "Sounds good." Taking a long breath she let it out slowly. "We're suppose to meet up with Arthur tomorrow?"

"Yesss... around the afternoon or so." Xena brought her hand all the way up Gabrielle's back to her short hair and began to massage Gabrielle's head.

The small warrior moaned faintly in reaction to the massage. "Where... where you think we should go?"

"I don't know yet." Xena nuzzled her Soulmate. "Any thoughts?"

"What about that new country uh... France."

The warrior considered the idea and the country. "That was Gaul."

"Yeah." Gabrielle lifted her head. "If we go there you know what that means?"

Xena rolled her eyes. "Another language to learn."

The small knight snickered and lowered her head down to peer into blue eyes. "French... I heard it's suppose to be romantic."

The tall woman slowly arched an eyebrow. "Romantic... how is that?"

Gabrielle shrugged her shoulders. "Beats me." She quietly laughed. "Far as I am concerned Greek is just fine." Then her eyebrows furrowed. "Why you complaining anyway Xena?" A small grin now. "You're the one that likes languages and learns them faster."

Xena gave her own grin. "True. Buttt in my vast knowledge of languages I have little space for yet another language."

The bard laughed and let her lips go into a smile. "You'll live."

"Understatement love."

"I know." Gabrielle leaned in to take her Soulmate's lips. "Just immortal."

The warrior didn't waste time and let her hands slip down to Gabrielle's stomach and pressed hard against the muscular stomach.

Gabrielle pulled back from the kiss and shut her eyes and let the sensation of Xena's hands slide up her stomach to her breasts take her over. "Oh gods."

Xena grinned. "God."

The smaller woman's eyes flew open with a sparkle. "Whatever." She quickly rolled to find herself on top of Xena. Her hips straddled directly over Xena's hips. "When's sunrise?"

The older woman's lips went into a cat grin. "Five hours." Her large hands came up to grasp Gabrielle's upper thighs and let her thumbs rub against the smaller woman's lower abdomen.

"Good." Gabrielle bent forward feeling Xena's hands slide along her stomach. Her body turned into a blaze of fire. "Plenty of time." Her lips quickly took Xena's into a wild fire kiss.

The warrior moaned deeply and slid her hands to Gabrielle's ass and began to push the bard.

~*Part 5*~

Gabrielle lifted her helmet and attached it to her saddle. She then patted Torqueo on the rump.

Torqueo turned his head and whined to his owner. He seemed to smile.

The bard smiled right back. "How are you boy?"

The stallion's head bobbed up and down with a nicker.

"Good." The bard strolled up to her horse's front and carefully grasped his head. Leaning forward she placed a soft kiss to the center of Torqueo's face. Raising her head up again, she patted Torqueo. "Love you boy." After that she heard a small tinning on her shoulders, metal hitting metal.

"What about me?"

Gabrielle closed her eyes at hearing her Soulmate's voice. "Oh, that's just another area in itself." She opened her eyes, turned around, and she felt her partner's hand leave her shoulders.

Xena smiled warmly. "Sleep well last night?"

The smaller warrior quietly laughed. "After I left? Yes... one hour was great."

"Agreed." The tall woman lifted her gaze to scan the camp seeing everybody almost ready to go. "Let's step out of the camp for a moment." Her eyes came down to Gabrielle again.

The smaller woman nodded and started walking beside her partner out of the camp. "What's up?"

The warrior gazed forward as she felt warm inside of her armor.

Gabrielle peered up to her Soulmate knowing she wasn't going to get a response. And that's how she knew her warrior was in need of her physically. It only made her grin while she gazed forward again. The physical was hardly spoken between them only shown.

Xena took a long breath once she felt safe out of the camp. Turning her head to Gabrielle she stopped walking. "Williams is to walk." Her right hand came up to her hilt to rest there. "I'll be in charge of him."

The small warrior nodded and crossed her arms against her armored chest. "Anything else?"

"Yes." The tall woman quickly closed in to take Gabrielle into a fury kiss.

The younger woman disappeared into the kiss as she stepped back once and leaned against a tree.

Xena broke the kiss and leaned her head against her partner's forehead. "Oh God."

Gabrielle smiled warmly. "After affects of last night?"

The warrior quietly laughed. "Yesss." She brought her lips down again to steal Gabrielle into passion. And when she pulled back her head leaned against her Soulmate's neck.

The small knight brought her hands to her friend's waist. "Ssssh." She gently kissed her warrior's forehead. "You're driving me crazy too."

Xena chuckled deeply and pressed her lips against her friend's neck lightly. Lifting her head again she kissed Gabrielle lovingly this time. This kiss wasn't just loving but also long and sensual.

The Soulmates became lost into their kiss that they didn't hear the quiet movement from behind at first.

But then both warriors knew that somebody was coming towards them. Quickly they pulled away from each other.

The Warrior Princess quickly turned around in a fluent motion with her sword coming out.

Gabrielle stepped up to her partner's side with her sword coming out.

"Wahooooo!"

Xena now had a huge grin.

Gabrielle though broke down laughing while lowering her sword. "Oh god... sorry Galahad."

Galahad lowered his hands. "Sorry myself."

The warrior sheathed her sword. "It's alright."

The warrior bard shook her head and stopped laughing. Her sword's tip dug into the ground and she leaned against it. "So, why did you came looking for us?"

Galahad raised an eyebrow. "You're kidding right?" His mouth had a grin. "The army is ready to go."

Gabrielle gazed up to her partner. "Oops."

Xena chuckled and placed her hand on the bard's closes shoulder. "Got a little carried away."

The man's eyes widen. "Don't tell me." He sighed with a shake of his head. "Ludicrous."

The tall woman raised an eyebrow, she turned her head to Gabrielle. "Ludicrous."

Gabrielle nodded and sheathed her sword. "Ludicrous huh?" She turned to Xena with her left arm going around her Soulmate's shoulder

"Yessss." Xena was grasping Gabrielle at her waist.

"I doubt that." Gabrielle grinned and waited for Xena to take the rest.

The warrior leaned down to kiss her partner gently on the lips.

Galahad closed his eyes as a warm blush took over. His eyes open again to see the Soulmate slowly pull back with their eyes locked. "Right on ladies." He turned his back on them and started walking with a grin. "Time to go... Soulmates."

The Soulmates laughed together at their friend's reaction. They finally decided to head back to the army after releasing each other. And once Xena entered into the camp her smile fell and her eyes went cold. She went straight to Williams with her evil grin.

~*~*~*~

"Gabrielle?" The warrior sat high in her saddle as she walked at the head of the army. She'd called in a yell for her Soulmate.

The small warrior kicked Torqueo to come cantering from the back of the army to the front. She came up to Xena's right side. On the left side walked Sir Williams with his hands tied tightly. "Yes?"

The Warrior Princess never looked away from the road. "Ride ahead and meet up with Arthur. Find out where he wants to camp then come back."

Gabrielle nodded. "Right away." She was about to spur Torqueo but stopped from her partner's movement and words.

"And Gabrielle..." Xena turned her head to her Soulmate with a serious look. "Be careful." She gave a warm smile.

The bard wink. "Definitely." After her words she mouthed, 'I love you.'

The tall woman's smile went from warm to loving. "I know." Now she mouth, 'I love you too.'

The small knight took a deep breath with her smile. "Be back." She kicked Torqueo and went racing down the road.

Xena kept her eyes pinned on her Soulmate down the road in the woods. She took a very deep breath.

Galahad came up to Xena's side now. "She headed to Arthur?"

"Yess." The Warrior Princess turned her head to the knight. "How you feel?"

"After this morning... not to bad."

Xena quietly laughed but went very serious. "You're not angry about it?"

"No no." Galahad quietly laughed with a smile. "Not at all. It's all the same." He chuckled.

"Good." The tall woman smiled and looked forward again.

The man gazed across to Sir Williams. "How you doing back there Williams?" His voice was cold.

Sir Williams slowly lifted his hooded eyes to Galahad, he glared.

Xena glimpsed back to the traitor with a cat smile. "He's fine." She reached to her saddle horn and jerked hard the rope to Williams.

The traitor almost went stumbling to his face but just kept his footfall.

The warrior deeply laughed and turned her attention to Galahad again. "I am being to nice to him."

"Really?" Galahad wasn't sarcastic but his voice filled with wonderment.

"Yes." Xena took a long breath and swayed in her saddle. "I use to kill people for less."

The man dropped his eyes and lifted them back to the woman. "Were you always a fighter for the light?"

"No." The tall knight took a long breath as she remember her far past. "A long time ago I was a warlord."

"Warlord?" Galahad furrowed his eyebrows. "You mean like a commander of an army?"

"Something like that." Xena sighed. "Except the only thing warlords do is create war

and bloodshed, never peace."

The knight's head moved up and down. "How... how do you ended up becoming a warlord?"

The warrior's sad eyes moved to Galahad. "Because I wanted to protect my village. But... eventually I left home and fell into darkness." Her head bobbed up and down as she talked now out of thought. "But that's far in the past."

Galahad sighed and shifted in his saddle. "True." He gave a very sad smile. "But I know the past can still come back to haunt."

"It can." Xena now gave a grin. "Yet after a few centuries it can get a little hard."

The knight quietly laughed. "I can imagine." He paused while he thought of another question. "How did you get out of the darkness?"

"Wasn't easy." The Warrior Princess's eyes went to the road ahead. "I didn't ask to leave it but it sort of just happened." She paused figuring the right words. "An old friend of mine made me look through a different perspective but there was no way I could have made the perspective mine or even believe it."

"Then... Gabrielle must have had something to do with it."

The tall woman nodded. "She had a lot of something to do with it. I met her directly after leaving my army and we slowly became friends. She always..." Xena paused trying to find the perfect words. "Gabrielle... she has a rare ability to take everything bad or evil and make it good." She smiled warmly to Galahad. "She's filled with a lot of love and never ending hope."

The man smiled. "I can feel that." He sad smiled a little. "But she's changed since the first days huh?"

"Yes." Xena looked away. "She has over time." She turned her head to Galahad again with a smile. "Although Gabrielle always manages to retain her core deep inside safely. Its never been tapped to be infected by darkness."

The knight had his own smile. "She seems very amazing."

"She is." Xena gave a warm smile and gazed ahead again.

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Sir Williams felt his feet come out from under him and he went to his knees. Lifting his brown eyes, he gazed up at an older man.

"I'm glad you didn't kill him."

Xena gave her cat grin. "He's lucky." She crossed her arms against her armor-clad chest as she stood behind Williams.

Arthur nodded and lowered his eyes to Williams again. "Williams, I would have never imagined."

The traitor shot a grin. "You've been getting surprised a lot lately Arthur. I hope that

scares you." Suddenly he felt a deep pain to the back of his neck that shot down his back. He sucked in a breath.

The warrior bent forward close the man's right ear. "And we both know your death will be soon. I hope that scares you."

Williams closed his eyes.

Xena slowly rose back up and gazed at the king. "My Lord?"

Arthur nodded to his knight.

The Warrior Princess quickly shot her hands down to unlock the pressure points. Reaching down with both hands she hauled Williams's to his feet. "Guards."

The three guards that had been watching over Williams last night came up quickly.

"Take him away."

One knight nodded and grabbed Williams giving him a push towards the center of the camp. The traitor and his guards disappeared.

Arthur took a long breath. "He'll be tried in Camelot."

Xena moved her head in understanding. "I know." She took a long breath. "How are the men doing?"

The king nodded his head to his tent. "Come inside." He turned towards his tent in went inside.

The warrior followed in behind. "I take it not good."

The king took a long breath and sighed it out. "No, they're shaken up I am afraid Xena."

"Because of the failure of the surprise attack I assume?"

"Yes." Arthur took a step back and sat in his wood chair. "They believe tomorrow will be a failure and hundreds will be slaughtered."

The tall woman's head moved up and down. "It won't." She sadly smiled to Arthur. "Just worry about keeping them in order. Once they're in the heat of the battle they'll give everything they have."

"I hope so Xena." Arthur's arms went against his chest. "But, I am glad you, Gabrielle, and Galahad made it here safely."

"Yes." The warrior nodded. "We are as well."

"Good." Arthur stood up. "Right now, I believe it is a good idea to check on the men."

"Yes of course." Xena smiled. "I believe I will find my partner."

"I saw her earlier with her horse."

The tall female nodded. "Figures."

The king quietly laughed. "I take it she has a bond with the horse."

"Oh yes." Xena grinned and moved to the tent flap. She ducked outside.

Arthur came up beside the woman.

The warrior took a deep breath and gazed seriously to the king of Camelot. "I'm sorry Arthur."

The king looked up quickly. "Xena, you had no idea about Williams." He shook his head. "I should be the one apologizing for embracing Williams with open arms and not testing him first."

Xena's lips formed into a sad smile. "Few can embrace with open arms Arthur. That's one reason why Gabrielle and I came to Camelot."

Arthur had his own sad smile. "Thank you." He shook his head faintly. "Well I'll leave you off to search out your friend."

"Thank you." The warrior smiled and walked off in the dusk sunlight. Soon she found herself on the opposite of the camp where they horses were held. She quickly found her Soulmate finishing with a grooming with Torqueo. Xena grinned and came up beside Gabrielle. "Not even Argo gets this much love from me."

Gabrielle quietly laughed and turned her head to Xena. "No? Poor Argo."

The older woman smirked. "She'll live."

"Right." The small warrior grinned and gazed back to Torqueo. "I'll only have so long to spoil him."

Xena sighed unhappily and reached forward to pet the stallion. "True."

A small silence hung in the air for a small time.

But Gabrielle was the one to break that silence. "How was Arthur?"

"Worried." The warrior's attention went to Gabrielle now. "The men are scared."

The small knight shook her head. "Damn." She ran her right hand through her hair. "Think there's anything we can do?"

"No." Xena gazed back to Torqueo. "That's... the way it needs to be Gabrielle."

"I know." The bard looked away and petted her horse's face. She began to notice how hot she was getting in her armor now. "Tomorrow won't be easy."

"It won't." The older woman's voice was in a whisper. Only a whisper because if it were any louder it would shatter her love for Arthur and Camelot. Shatter her love she held for Galahad. Not just her love but also her Soulmate's. So this could only be ushered in low whispers.

So there was a whispered response from Gabrielle. "I... don't know if I'll be able to... watch tomorrow Xena." The warrior bard gazed up with guilt in her eyes. "It'll be to hard."

"I know." Xena shut her eyes and took a deep breath. Opening her eyes again she retorted back with an usher. "We can't get involved and that's all there is to it."

"Yeah." Gabrielle gave a small unassured nod. Slowly her eyes rest back on Xena. "Let's go?"

Xena nodded and turned away from the horse.

The bard leaned forward and gave her horse a kiss on the forehead and shifted to walk beside Xena.

The Soulmates went directly into the camp again. They kept going until they were in the bard's tent and way from the world.

Once inside, the bard began to take her armor off.

Xena for a moment let a grin slip across her lips. With an amused sigh she shifted to stand behind Gabrielle. She began to help remove the armor.

"Thanks." Gabrielle grasped the armor on her arms and began to remove it.

"Anytime." The warrior continued unhooking the metallic armor.

"So Williams is going to be tried in Camelot... right?"

The chest armor fell off and Xena caught it. "Yes." She removed the armor from Gabrielle's body and threw it to the bed. Her large hands then went to the other woman's right arm to unhook the armor there. "Should be interesting to see what happens to him."

"Yeah." Gabrielle threw her armor from her right arm to her bed. It slightly hit the chest armor and clanked. "I hope he gets stuck in a cell for life."

"I'd rather see him die." Xena pulled off the armor and tossed it to the bed as well.

The small warrior turned around to face her Soulmate. "That's being to nice then."

The taller woman arched an eyebrow. "How?"

"Easy way out." The younger woman gave a small grin. "Being stuck in a cell for life can get rather boring."

Xena quietly laughed. "How true." She leaned down to kiss her partner lightly.

"Mmm." Gabrielle's hands went to her friend's armored waist. "Get this armor off."

The warrior laughed in the kiss and pulled back with a warm smile. She reached down to begin to take her armor apart.

The smaller knight soon joined in, helping remove the armor quickly.

After most of the armor was gone, Gabrielle soon found herself in her Soulmate's arms.

Xena nuzzled her partner's head and sighed. "What you think?"

"I think I am really angry." The bard let out a sigh of frustration.

"Same here." The warrior tightened her arms around her Soulmate's warm body. "But we can't do anything."

"You really think people would remember?" Gabrielle lifted her head to lock eyes with Xena.

For a time Xena considered it. Whether people today would remember who they were and what they did. Would they ever? If they did would they ever figure out she and Gabrielle were immortal? But do the answers to these questions even really matter? The answers hardly matter what did matter was the fact there was questions. Questions meant risks and Xena was not prepared to risk her immortal life let alone Gabrielle's. Xena did not want Gabrielle and herself to spend eternity being hunted or persecuted for their immortality. Because she knew it would happen, man's aches and misunderstandings. Nor shall they tamper with man's destiny so that the bad things are averted so much as is the good things. "They will Gabrielle."

The bard lowered her head down against the other female's shoulder and shut her eyes slowly. "If I'd know this would be so hard I would have never agreed with Zeus."

The warrior's right hand came up to carefully run through Gabrielle's short hair. "There's good things and bad things to this."

The smaller woman chuckled. "True." She rolled her head to let her lips press against Xena's shoulder. After that she rested the side of her head against the shoulder again. "I like watching how things change through time."

Xena grinned and responded. "Things don't change, people change which makes things change."

Gabrielle lifted her head and shook her head. "I thought I was the bard?"

The warrior laughed and leaned forward to place a kiss on Gabrielle's head. "You are, I just give a little... Xena-ism once in a few."

The younger woman broke out laughing and leaned against her knight. "Xena-ism? Gods, I gotta remember that one."

"Well..." Xena slipped her hands up Gabrielle's light shirt. "It's never good as your Gabrielle-ism."

"Right." Gabrielle lifted her head again with a smug look. "Is that something like bard-ism and warrior-ism."

"If I recall right Gabrielle, you are a warrior too."

The small warrior's expression became filled with selfish pride and a smirk to add. "I know, I have many skills."

"So I've noticed." The Warrior Princess leaned in to take her Soulmate's lips strongly. Her hands under Gabrielle's shirt began to move again.

Gabrielle dropped her head back and closed her eyes. Slowly her hands moved to

Xena's and held hers. Lifted her head while opening her eyes she gave an evil grin. "Let me show you one now Xena." Her eyes sparkled as she leaned towards Xena and kissed her passionately.

Xena gave the same force into her returning kiss. "I love this skill." She continued to fall into Gabrielle.

And Gabrielle easily took Xena.

~*~*~*~

The small warrior reached down to the ground as she sat on it. She could feel the heat from the campfire in front of her. Her small fingers lifted a little pebble. Her eyes came up to see Galahad sitting on the other side of the fire. Turning her head to the right, she studied her Soulmate.

Xena sat on the ground cross-legged with a content look. She was listening to something Galahad was saying with nods here and there.

Gabrielle moved the small rock between her fingers and grinned at the armor still on Xena's legs. Switching the pebble to her right hand, she looked up to Galahad.

Sir Galahad continued talking to Xena with a huge grin.

The warrior bard grinned herself at seeing that familiar grin on Galahad's lips. She also noticed the deep gleam to Galahad's eyes. All she wanted for Galahad was happiness and all she could do was hope for happiness. With a sigh Gabrielle turned her head to Xena again. Biting her lower lip, the bard tossed the small pebble at the warrior to hit her armor.

Galahad stopped talking at hearing the small ping of metal. His eyes shifted over to Gabrielle with a raised eyebrow.

Xena ran her tongue across her back molars and turned her head to Gabrielle. She found her small Soulmate looking everywhere but at her. With a grin, Xena picked up the same pebble and tossed it at Gabrielle.

As soon as the small rock hit the bard's armor, she broke out laughing. Gabrielle laughed for a few more seconds and turned her head to Xena with a grin. "Sorry, it sort of... flew from my fingers on its own."

"Right." The warrior's eyes twinkled. "Same thing happened to me. Damn pebbles."

Sir Galahad laughed at the two women and smiled warmly. "Was I that boring Gabrielle?"

"Nope." The bard smiled to her friend. "You never are Galahad." She took a long breath and lowered her eyes to the ground. "Will you stay with Arthur Galahad?"

The knight moved his head up and down. "Yes." He warmly smiled. "That's where I belong."

Gabrielle sadly nodded in answer.

Xena studied her partner with worried eyes. But slowly she shifted her attention to

Galahad. "Is that where you want to be Galahad?"

"Of definitely." Sir Galahad warmly smiled to Xena. "I don't think I'd be happier anywhere else."

The small warrior lifted her attention to the man. "Good." Her own lips went into a smile. "That's important."

Galahad nodded and shifted a little as he sat on the log. "What about you both?" He narrowed his eyes. "You can't tell me constantly moving is a good thing." He shook his head. "I don't understand why you don't stay in Camelot."

"Believe me, we would love to Galahad." Gabrielle shook her head and lowered her voice. "But people will notice the fact Xena and I do not age. And the fact will stand true that we won't fight tomorrow and we can not return to Camelot as cowards."

"But we know that's not true." Galahad fisted up his right hand. "You just can't pick up and go."

"We have to Galahad." Xena gazed over to her Soulmate but back to the knight. "We may know it's not true but nobody else here does." Xena placed her hands to her knees. "I wish we could stay but it is to risky for us."

The man sadly nodded and ran his right hand through his curly locks. "If there was only some way around it."

"There isn't." Gabrielle sighed unhappily. "I wish there was." The frustration came to life inside of her again and it made her lower her head and shut her eyes.

The warrior felt the frustration as well but held it down. "That's the way it is Galahad. We have to do it even though we don't like it."

The knight lowered his amber eyes to the fire and said nothing more.

Xena carefully reached over in the darkness of the night to Gabrielle and grasped her hand, squeezing.

Gabrielle lifted her eyes to Xena with sadness.

The warrior smiled reassuringly.

The bard only gave a sad smile and squeezed back for dear life.

Xena released her friend's hand and gazed back to Galahad. "Have you ever thought of a family Galahad?"

The man smiled at the question. "Oh yes." He looked away in shyness. "I just have trouble find that person I want to create a family with."

Gabrielle's lips took on a grin. "You will in time. It'll be worth the wait."

"I know." The knight took a long breath. "I would love to have a son." He gave a small grin. "Teach him honor and how to be a knight."

The warrior quietly chuckled with her sympathetic smile. "You'd be a perfect father."

"Thank you." Galahad lowered his eyes to the ground. "Will... you both return to England some time?" His eyes came back up.

Gabrielle turned her head to her Soulmate as Xena did the same. The pair studied each other's eyes in communication. It was decided. So Gabrielle looked back to Galahad. "Some day." Some day... a long day away.

"I hope so." The knight had a smile. "I would love to see you both again."

"Definitely." Gabrielle smiled but inside she was hurting. She knew the truth, always has. "Well..." She gave her attention to her partner. "I think we better head to our tents." Her eyes shifted to Galahad.

The man nodded his head in agreement. "Yeah, it's getting late. It'll be a hard day tomorrow."

How right Sir Galahad is with such words.

"It will be." Xena gradually stood with her right hand resting on her sword's hilt.

Gabrielle also stood up with her arms against her chest.

Galahad sat up and walked around the fire to his friends. "You both sleep well."

"Of course." The warrior faintly nodded.

The man took a deep breath. "Please make sure you both see me before you leave."

A smile took Gabrielle. "We will, promise." She took a step forward to hug her friend.

When they pulled back, Galahad's eyes were stinging. "Goodnight Gabrielle." His eyes went to Xena. "Goodnight Xena."

"Goodnight Galahad." Xena warmly smiled.

Gabrielle wrapped her arms over her stomach. "Sleep well Galahad."

"I will, thank you." Galahad gave one last smile and lowered his head to go to his tent.

The small warrior turned to her best friend. "Time to hit the old hay."

Xena quietly laughed in response. "Come on."

The Soulmates left the campfire and walked through the dark camp towards the tents. They came first to the warrior's tent.

The tall woman stood by the tent flap and turned her head to Gabrielle. "Sleep well huh?"

A quiet response. "Yeah." The younger woman still had her arms over her stomach.

The Warrior Princess straightened up and turned to her Soulmate. Bending forward she placed a gentle kiss to Gabrielle's forehead. "Come on." She went inside and heard Gabrielle follow in behind. She walked glanced up to Gabrielle while her hands went to her sword's belt. "Sit down on the bed."

Gabrielle nodded and walked over to the bed, she still had her sword on and her leg armor.

Xena placed her sword on the small desk and walked over to Gabrielle. Bending down to one knee she reached forward to unhook the sword's belt. Xena had her own leg armor still on. After she took the sword off she placed it on the ground by the bed. Next with ease, she climbed onto the bed behind her Soulmate to lay. "Come here."

Gabrielle turned on the bed and laid down into her Soulmate's arms. She felt strong protective arms enclose her.

The warrior tangled her legs up with Gabrielle's and it created a small clank from the armor. It made Xena chuckle.

The warrior bard laughed lightly and dug her head under Xena's chin. "Thanks Xena."

"Sshhh." She pulled Gabrielle in closer. "Try to go to sleep."

"Xena-" Gabrielle was cut off from her protest.

"Don't worry." Xena brushed back some of her partner's hair. "I want to sleep with you tonight."

The younger woman smiled against her best friend's neck. "Same here."

"I know." The tall female kissed the top of her Soulmate's head. "Go to sleep."

"Yeah." Gabrielle closed her eyes and kissed her warrior's neck gently. "I love you."

"I love you Gabrielle." Xena shut her eyes with a small smile and let sleep take her and Gabrielle away.

~*Part 6*~

Xena petted Argo along the neck. "Not a nice morning girl."

Argo threw her head up and down in agreement. She stamped her right hoof.

"Yeah I agree." The warrior sighed and lifted the reins over her mare's head. "Well it could be worse huh?"

The warhorse nickered.

The tall woman then heard the clip clop of a horse's hooves coming up from behind. She turned around to see her Soulmate and Torqueo. "Hey."

Gabrielle smiled to her Soulmate. "Hey." She gazed back at Torqueo. "We're ready."

"Argo is almost ready." Xena glanced back to her horse. "Where's Galahad?"

"I'm not sure. I saw him earlier but I don't know where he is now."

"Mmm." The warrior's head bobbed up and down. "Probably getting ready."

"Yeah, that's what I thought."

Xena turned around to completely face her partner. "We're going to have to go back to Camelot before we can leave England."

The small female sighed. "That's what I figured. We need out stuff and money."

"Yes." The older woman's eyes darted away but back to her friend. "We'll have to sneak into the city. It won't be fun."

"But we need to do it." Gabrielle now had a grin. "I am not leaving my leathers or sais in Camelot."

The knight laughed with an amused smile. "And I don't want to leave my chakram in Camelot."

"Oh don't I know."

Xena turned back to her horse and proceeded to mount the mare.

Gabrielle decided to do the same and was up on Torqueo as soon as Xena was on Argo.

"Excited about going on a ship back to Europe?"

The bard rolled her eyes. "Thrilled."

The Warrior Princess laughed and tapped Argo's sides to walk beside Torqueo. "At least you won't get sick."

"No... I'll feel sick but never threw up. Wish I could for once." Gabrielle sighed with a shake of the head.

The taller female laughed a little and stopped as she saw herself coming close to Arthur and his knights.

"Here we go." Gabrielle straightened up and went serious.

"Yup." The warrior did the same.

~*~*~*~

"My lord, they're just on the other side of the open hill." The scout pointed to the hill a few lengths ahead.

Arthur lifted his eyes to the hill. "How large is the army?"

The scout sighed sadly. "Large my Lord, around five hundred."

The king nodded and gazed back to his scout. "Thank you."

The scout smiled. "Welcome." He then ran off to join into the force.

"What you think my Lord?"

Arthur turned his head to Sir Galahad. "It's time to snub Mordred out."

Galahad nodded his head. "Agreed immensely."

The king shifted in his saddle and gazed around at his ten Knights of the Round Table. "Alright, we're going to charge over that hill. Once we do we are to attack in rage." Arthur glanced around at his knights. "Is that clear?" His knights nodded quickly and he continued on. "The battle will not end until Mordred is dead. Is that clear too?" Ten movements from the knights in understanding. "Good." He paused while shifting his attention to the large hill again. "There's no going back." Reaching to his sword, he extracted Excalibur.

The Knights of the Round Table unsheathed their swords and placed the tip in front of Arthur.

The King of Camelot placed the tip of Excalibur down on the collection of swords. "To protect the light!"

"To protect the light!" The knights all yelled in unison. Without no other words or commands the ten knights all split up. Two knights went to the left side of the army, two on the right side of the army. Then two other knights went into the center of the army. Galahad, Gabrielle, and Xena rode to the back of the army.

Then there was Gawain that stayed beside his king. "Ready my Lord?"

"For war? Never." The king raised his sword. "Attack!" He broke his horse out into a gallop for the hills.

Gawain spurred his horse into a gallop right beside the king of Camelot.

The air filled with the din of yells, shouts, and unsheathing of swords. A massive charge began.

~*~*~*~

"Halt!" The second in command saw the large army stopped and he turned to his commander. "My Lord?"

"Sssh." Mordred had an evil grin and his eyes shifted to the hill. "Hear that?"

The second in command shifted his sights to the hill. He listened carefully to hear a low of yells and movement of people. "Arthur?"

"Yesss." Mordred laughed evilly. "Get ready." He reached down to unsheathe his sword while retrieving his dark helmet that was in a design of a dragon's head. "They're coming from the hill."

The second in command nodded and unsheathed his sword. Turning towards the army he called out his orders. "Face the hills men and prepare yourself. Arthur is coming from there."

The only sound heard was the unsheathing of swords and pings of metal as helmet visors were shut. Then things went dead silent as in a dream. The wind seemed to blow but never made a noise from the rustling of the tree leaves or grass.

Mordred kept his eyes pinned on the hills while he steadied his horse. "Come on Arthur." His face became gleeful as he saw at the ridge of the hill a horse appear. The rider waved his white sword and charged down the hill with a yell. Following behind

him was a mass of men that crashed down the hill towards Mordred's army.

Another evil laugh escaped Mordred as he spurred his horse towards Arthur. "Attack!" He kept his grin while galloping ahead. "It's your time... father."

~*~*~*~

Gabrielle punched hard at her enemy and saw him stumble back in reaction. "Come on!"

The dark knight growled and narrowed his eyes, he'd lost his helmet. He tried to attack again but lost his battle. Soon he found himself skewered by the metallic knight's sword.

Xena scanned the edge of the battlefield to find her partner. *Time to go.* She ran through the fight to her Soulmate's side. "Gabrielle?"

The bard whirled around with her sword having not seen Xena through her helmet.

The warrior grinned at her partner's reaction. "Ready?"

Gabrielle sighed. "Not really but..." She turned her eyes to the right and saw her friend. "Galahad?"

The knight instantly killed his enemy and came racing up to his friends. "You have to leave?"

"Yes." The small warrior's eyes then widen and she raced forward with her sword to stop a dark knight from attacking Galahad from behind.

Xena turned her attention to the knight. "Galahad, be careful in this battle."

"I will Xena." The man race forward to take an opening in Gabrielle's enemy. He killed the dark knight. Galahad ripped his helmet off and turned to Gabrielle.

The small knight did the same with her helmet and tossed it to the ground. "Don't get yourself killed Galahad."

"No worries." Galahad gave a small grin.

The Warrior Princess narrowed her eyes and lifted her sword behind herself to stop a blade coming at her. Whirling around she took on her enemy.

Galahad peaked over to Xena then back to the bard. "Gabrielle, you have to come back to England."

"We'll try Galahad." Gabrielle sighed sadly. "But no guarantees."

"Please try." The knight sadly smiled. "I'll miss you."

"I'll miss you too Galahad." Gabrielle went in for a hug in the middle of a battle. She held the man tightly and felt emotions wash over. Pulling back, she placed a kiss to the man's forehead. "Always take care of yourself."

"I will." The knight gave his grin. "Don't forget me."

"Never." Gabrielle smiled lovingly. She turned towards Xena and raced over there. She took on Xena's enemy. "Talk to Galahad."

The warrior nodded, threw off her helmet, and came up to Galahad.

"This is a bit crazy."

Xena laughed at the man. "We are in a middle of a battle."

"True." Sir Galahad gave a grin. "Thank you Xena for trusting me. For some reason I know you don't trust people easily."

"Nope." The Warrior Princess had a smile now. "You're a good man Galahad." She paused. "You'll find your soulmate and you'll know who they are, trust me."

"I do." Galahad stepped forward and hugged his friend. "I'll miss your fighting Xena."

"I'll miss your descriptions Galahad." Xena hugged back tightly and tried to not let her emotions get to her. This is Ephiny, her friend she'd considered her sister she never had. Pulling back she had a sad smile. "Don't get yourself killed, it would be a great loss."

"Thanks." Galahad quietly laughed and saw off to his left a dark knight coming. "Get out of here Xena."

Xena's eyes shifted to the dark knight coming and understood. "Good luck Galahad."

The knight nodded with a wink, he turned to his new enemy to take him on. "Let's dance."

The dark knight yelled and brought his sword at Sir Galahad.

The warrior watched for a moment but raced up to Gabrielle's opponent. She came up by the dark knight in a blur of motion to ram her sword in the dark knight's side.

The enemy coughed blood out and felt the sword jerk in his side. He fell off the blade and then met the ground.

Gabrielle lifted her eyes to Xena. "Thanks."

"No problem." The warrior took a deep breath. "Let's go."

The bard nodded and gazed over to Galahad. "Galahad, don't forget us."

"Never!" Galahad stopped his enemy's sword. He glanced back. "I'll see you both in the future."

Gabrielle smiled lovingly to the knight. "Count on it!"

The knight killed his opponent and turned to his friends. "Go!"

Xena nodded and carefully grabbed her Soulmate's arm. "Come on."

"Yeah." Gabrielle started power walking off the battlefield with Xena. She turned her head back to see Galahad fight another knight.

The warrior glimpsed back as well and studied Galahad for a moment. "It's destiny's job now."

The smaller warrior nodded sadly and turned her head away. She broke off running into the woods.

Xena followed behind as she sheathed her sword.

The Soulmates found their horses tucked away in the near woods. They mounted their horses and kicked them into trots. The pair climbed that same hill and came to the ridge. The Soulmates sat on the horses and watched the battle of light and darkness below as the wind caressed them.

The tall woman scanned the battle to seek out Arthur and quickly found the king. She gazed over at Gabrielle and then back to the battle. "There." She pointed to the king of Camelot in the center of the battlefield fighting Mordred.

The younger woman turned her attention to watch Arthur and Mordred fight each other. She noticed the pair evenly matched. It was a fight that nobody could guess which would come out alive.

"Mordred is evil and Arthur is good."

"You mean like... cancel each other out?"

"Yes... It sounds weird but I can't help wonder if they're suppose to kill each other."

Gabrielle sighed at her past conversation with her Soulmate. But she continued to only hope Arthur would win. She shifted her eyes through the battle and found Galahad fighting two dark knights. She stiffened up.

Xena herself was watching Galahad with bit worried eyes.

Suddenly the small warrior was grasping her saddle's horn as she saw a third dark knight come up behind Galahad. "No."

"Gabrielle don't." Xena held her hand out to Gabrielle. "We can't now."

The bard's eyes were wide as she saw the dark knight closing in. "No... no Xena." She reached down to her sword's hilt.

"It is Ephiny's destiny Gabrielle!" The warrior looked over with a tear-streaked face. "We can not." Her voice was in a whisper.

Gabrielle looked away from Xena to Galahad and saw the dark knight come right up behind Galahad raising his sword. She knew her friend had no clue about the knight behind him. "Please no." She took a shaky breath while tears came down her cheeks as she watched. The sword came down yet it never sliced through Galahad for the dark knight's eyes rolled up into his head. He was dead. Gabrielle held her breath and saw the dark knight fall to the ground and there stood Sir Gawain staring at the dead knight. "Thank the gods." The small bard let out her breath. "Thank you Gawain."

Xena smiled at the scene and felt utter relief Galahad was safe. Now she shifted her attention back to the king of Camelot again. And that's when it all happened in a blur.

Arthur's sword went into Mordred's chest.

Mordred cried out and tore his helmet from his head. His eyes fell to his chest to see the blood seeping out and onto Arthur's blade. He gazed back up to his father.

Arthur stood there with the sword in Mordred's chest. His eyes filled with horror.

Gabrielle sat stunned in her saddle, she couldn't believe it. She saw Arthur step back and extract his sword from Mordred's chest. Mordred still held his sword and felt his strength fading, his legs shaky. Yet he took one last chance and stabbed forward to catch Arthur in the stomach with his dark blade. Mordred grinned at Arthur as blood seeped out of his lips. He laughed and fell to his knees and then onto his face in the green grass. The bard became stunned at seeing the sword in her king's stomach. "Oh my god."

The warrior narrowed her eyes and tried to not react with anger of what has happened. It had to be. She slowly watched Arthur pull the sword from his stomach. He slowly collapsed to his back with Excalibur rolling from his right hand.

Gabrielle shut her eyes, she didn't want to believe. Once she opened her eyes again all she saw was a slowly dying Arthur. Remorse filled her to no depth.

The older female then noticed a small mist appear in the battlefield and Merlin appeared.

The smaller warrior saw this too. "How'd he...?"

"Magic." Xena grinned over to her partner.

For a moment the younger woman chuckled but was lost as she saw Merlin came up to Arthur.

Merlin gazed down at his king for a moment. He said something.

Arthur said something back and closed his eyes with his hands going over his wound.

The magician bent down to his knee and picked up Excalibur and slipped it in his belt around his waist. He then carefully reached forward to pick up the king of light into his arms. Raising back up, he held Arthur close.

Gabrielle furrowed her eyebrows. "What's he doing?"

"Taking Arthur." Xena shifted the reins in her saddle and watched Merlin dropped his head back with closed eyes. He seemed to pray. The warrior turned her head in confusion for it seemed nobody noticed that Arthur and Mordred were dead or that Merlin was there.

The magician lowered his head again to open his eyes at the dying Arthur. He leaned his head forward close to Arthur and whispered something.

The king whispered back and very gradually shut his eyes, his body went limp.

Merlin shut his eyes tightly and a mist appeared around him and he was gone.

Both the Soulmates watched to see that once Merlin with Arthur was gone that all the

knights in the battle went into deep confusion. They all realized Arthur was gone and Mordred was dead. But the battle did rage on between the remains of sparkles of light and dark.

Xena turned her attention to Gabrielle. "It's over."

"Camelot and Arthur are dead." The bard lowered her head and pulled Torqueo's left rein to turn her back on the battlefield.

The warrior signaled Argo to turn around. "Let's go, his legend will leave hope."

"Yeah." The warrior bard sadly smiled and kicked Torqueo into a gallop down the hill.

The older woman sighed and spurred Argo into a gallop behind her Soulmate to catch up.

The Soulmates went directly onto a dirt road and galloped down the winding never ending road.

~*Part 7*~

Gabrielle sat at the end of the dock with her legs propped on a ladder that goes into the water. She stared down into the water in the harbor. She was still in her armor since she left the battlefield the other morning. Now it was following day since the battle and she was preparing to travel on a merchant ship with Xena to France. All she could think about was Galahad and wondering if her friend was alive.

Xena walked along the dock, her boots clanking on the wood boards. She glanced across the harbor to a huge merchant ship docked on the opposite pier. With a sigh her eyes came back to her partner sitting on the dock. She came up beside Gabrielle and sat down beside her, she felt a little warm in her armor.

"Are we set?"

"Yes." The warrior smiled lightly to her friend sitting beside her. "The captain of the merchant ship said it'll take around a week to make it to France since we have to go around the isles."

The bard nodded and lifted her eyes to her Soulmate. "Then we go through the English Channel?"

"Yes." Xena nodded a few times. "Then we'll be in France."

"Good." Gabrielle gazed back to the clear water. "I guess Argo and Torqueo are being loaded on."

"Yeah and our stuff is on already." The older woman's face had a small grin. "Only thing that is missing is us."

The small female quietly laughed and smiled to her partner. "Well, let's go." She stood up with her right hand resting on her sword's hilt. "I'm ready to leave."

The warrior nodded and stood up slowly herself. "One last thing."

"Yeah?" Gabrielle raised an eyebrow.

Xena gave a loving smile and pulled her Soulmate in tightly for a long hug. She whispered, "He's fine."

"I hope so." A whispered retort. Gabrielle held tight to her Soulmate with love.

Slowly the warrior released her partner. "Let's go."

"Yeah." Gabrielle smiled and walked along beside her best friend. "Time for a change."

"Oh yeah." Xena quietly laughed. "Time to learn a new language."

"Ha!" The bard bumped her partner. "You have it easy warrior. At least you know Latin."

The older woman got a laugh out of that. "Well..."

"Yeah yeah. You know how helpful that Latin is." Gabrielle smirked up to her Soulmate.

"Well... let me know if you want to learn." Xena devilishly grinned down to Gabrielle.

"Never!" The bard laughed loudly. "I like challenges." She started power walking down the dock to head to the other one. Her armor's clanking was match by Xena's own.

The Soulmates soon found themselves boarding the merchant ship set for France. The merchant ship set for another tale in history.

~*Part 8*~

The large wood door gradually opened and in stepped a tired and bruised man. He took a long breath and shifted his eyes around in his room. He now hated this place because it held no meaning. The meaning died when Arthur died. Yet his eyes scanned in hopes for new dreams, maybe someday.

Then he noticed it, on the foot of his bed. Slowly he walked to his bed and reached down to lift up the scroll. He untied the string and unrolled the old scroll to read the letter.

Galahad,

I pray that you will be reading this letter someday. I pray that you made it back from the battle and that you're alive. I apologize immensely for not taking on a friendship with you sooner, I will always wish I had. But I will forever remain thankfully that I had days with you at all because those few days of our friendship were grand. Thank you for giving me new memories to hold on dearly to. Memories to survive my days with, to fight time with. These days I have miles to walk on this road, things to do, and I'll never rest. Xena and I will never rest. Knowing we had time with you only makes the fighting a little softer.

Please never forget us, we will not of you. Please find that special person in your life

and create that family you so want. I know you would be so happy to have a family and you'd be smiling forever. Chase that dream and you'll catch it. Always look after yourself because I wish I could be there to watch over you. But as we both know I may not and I apologize. I promise though, Xena and I will see you again... someday. Xena and I will always hold you inside because you are family to us. Keep searching for your own light Galahad.

Love you,

Gabrielle

Sir Galahad lifted his eyes from the scroll and rolled the scroll back up. He carefully tied it as tears rolled down his cheeks. Closing his eyes he lifted the scroll to his lips and pressed his lips to the top of the scroll. He felt the water droplets roll down and down and down while his throat filled with a lump. Yet he felt a deep light fill him.

~*~*~*~

Gabrielle shut her eyes and listened to the sound of the ship crashing into the water. Opening her eyes again she stared up at the stars in the night sky. The scent of the sea air filled her life. Slowly warm arms circled around her waist to pull her in close. The bard dropped her head back against her Soulmate's chest.

Xena held her partner tightly while she swayed with the bobbing of the ship. She knew what her Soulmate was thinking about, she was thinking about the same person as well.

The small warrior held her friend's hands. "He's alive."

"He is." The older woman smiled and continued to study the water that reflected the night sky.

"He's safe too."

Xena smiled in the darkness and responded. "Ephiny is safe."

That smile was caught on Gabrielle now. "She is." She squeezed Xena's hand for a moment and relaxed again. Her thoughts were surrounded around Ephiny and Galahad, around Galahad and Ephiny. Her closes friend she'd ever have, a person she would call her sister or brother. The remaining thought she had was *I love you Ephiny*. She'd see Ephiny again... someday. Someday in the past of the future.

But now, only now in this time the Soulmates had quests to complete. The Soulmates continued their immortal lives as the greatest good to alter destiny. To alter destiny?

The End