

# ~ Wishes, Kisses, and Dishes ~

by Red Hope

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## Disclaimer

Copyright: The characters are owned by RenPics and the plot is my idea.

Subtext: Yes, but it's the main topic of story here.

Violence: None.

Setting: Just after Fins, Femmes, and Gems.

**Summary:** This story takes place just after the episode *Fins, Femmes, and Gems* and goes into the continued conversation between Xena and Gabrielle. A few confessions are made between the friends and Joxer makes sure to drop in.

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"I still think you need to do something about Joxer."

Xena grinned despite the situation. "Tomorrow."

Gabrielle drummed her fingers against her taut stomach. She had a silly grin too as she heard Joxer swinging around far in the woods.

"Xena?"

"Mmmm?" The warrior was already on her side, which meant she was ready to sleep. However she could tell by her partner's curious tone that tonight would be longer than normal.

"You really mean that?"

After a long pause, Xena finally rolled onto her back and turned her head to Gabrielle. "Yes, really." She understood what Gabrielle was referring to, and it wasn't Joxer.

After several heartbeats, Gabrielle turned her head to Xena. "Thank you."

The warrior smiled softly then reached up to brush away a stray lock of Gabrielle's hair. She laced her hands together across her stomach and closed her eyes despite being fully awake.

Gabrielle knew she could still talk to Xena. She softly smiled as she realized how much she'd come to know many of Xena's subtle moves, expressions, and tones over the years. "The fish was really good, by the way."

Xena grinned as she attempted to stifle a laugh. "Even though I cooked it?"

"It was one of the best dishes you've made, Xena."

"I don't plan on making a habit of it."

"Thank the gods too," the bard teased.

"Watch it," the warrior growled.

Gabrielle chuckled. Her thoughts began to wander as she fiddled with her leather belt.

"What you thinking about?" Xena whispered. She knew her partner too well.

"About you and Lyceus."

The Warrior Princess was curious about this admission and train of thought. "Why's that?"

The bard lightly shrugged, her eyes fixed on the fish constellation in the sky. "I guess it makes me think about Lila." She released her belt and rubbed her stomach lightly.

"I'm not saying I regret anything by any means, but I see how you miss Lyceus. Sometimes I think about how much I miss Lila, how much of her life I don't know about."

Xena gently sighed while she considered her friend's words. "We can always head to Potidaea."

Gabrielle mulled it over for several silent moments.

Xena remained still as she listened to the fire crackle below their feet. She automatically knew her partner's response, but she wouldn't deny Gabrielle any chances.

"Sometimes I want to go home," Gabrielle spoke up, "but I don't think I'd be welcomed there exactly."

"Gabrielle-"

"Xena, I'm not the same person that they knew."

The warrior was cut off, and she held her tongue. She couldn't argue at all with Gabrielle on her decision. "Just tell me if you ever want to head home." She twisted her head around. "Okay?"

Gabrielle held her friend's warm eyes that glowed orange in the firelight. "I will... thanks." She looked away again.

The Warrior Princess gazed back up at the stars.

The bard drummed her fingers on her stomach again then asked, "You ever wish you could change things? So that you and Lyceus were together again?"

Suddenly unfamiliar memories from another life washed through Xena like a raging flood. She touched her forehead for a second, and Gabrielle caught the motion.

"You okay, Xena?"

The warrior lowered her hand and murmured, "Yeah." Her mind cleared out before she spoke again. "You remember about a year ago when we went to Ly's tomb?"

"Of course... like every year. We were there earlier this year."

"Well you remember last year how I almost killed that boy by the temple?"

"You let him go though," the worried bard reminded. "Why?" She now rolled onto her side and propped her head up with her hand. "Why bring that up?" She stiffened when chilled blue eyes leveled to her.

"Something actually happened that day that I never told you about."

Gabrielle's looked at her with confusion.

Xena didn't need to hear the question to continue. "I'd actually killed the boy by mistake and regretted it."

"But..." The bard's mouth was slightly open, her words failing her.

Xena nibbled her lower lip then whispered, "I know. The temple was for the Fates."

The bard clearly recalled the temple, and at the mention of the Fates it made her mind spin. "Something happened with them?"

"Yes." The warrior brushed her dark bangs off of her forehead. "I made a pact with them. They gave me a life without violence where Lyceus was alive."

Gabrielle studied her friend's eyes, but she whispered, "What was the catch?"

"The catch... if I shed any blood then I would return to this life."

The bard knew the ultimate outcome, although she didn't understand why Xena had chosen it. She had every reason to believe that such an alternate life was everything Xena ever wished for. "What happened?"

Xena remained silent for awhile as her mind wandered back to those memories of another life. She let out a long breath then answered the question. "Lyceus, Toris, and I were alive... Cortese still struck Amphipolis as he did when I was young. Instead of Ly and me taking arms to stop him we ran away but... mother was killed."

"Gods," the bard breathed out in shock.

Xena didn't meet Gabrielle's gaze. "Somebody had to die, I suppose." She toyed with the small, detailed piece of brass near her waist line. "Eventually another warlord came to Amphipolis and I tried... I tried not to fight."

"You can't stop destiny, Xena," the bard gently reminded.

"I know that now." The warrior met her friend's gaze. "I even met you in that world."

The bard swallowed a lump in her throat. She could sense that her counterpart must have not been all too well by the way of Xena's expression and eyes. "I wasn't anything like this."

"You were a slave."

Gabrielle sucked in a breath and held it for a heartbeat. "The reason I'm not today was because of you... you stopped Draco."

Xena twisted her head away. "I use to think that my darkest days as a warlord were nothing but destruction." She huffed and quietly stated, "It's funny to think that those days actually stopped other warlords... reshaped so many events... so many people."

"Everything happens for a reason," the bard reminded.

"It does." Xena sadly smiled at Gabrielle and grasped her arm at the wrist.

Gabrielle's eyes were distant with thoughts about that day so long ago in front of the Fate's temple. She recalled how Xena seemed off after telling that boy to give up the sword. She also remembered asking her if she was okay, and Xena's simple reply was that she never felt more herself.

"What is it?" Xena squeezed the small wrist to get Gabrielle's attention.

Gabrielle was jarred from her memories, and her eyes focused back on the warrior. "I'm glad you came back." She softly smiled. "I wouldn't wish our lives any other way."

Xena subconsciously was rubbing her thumb across Gabrielle's wrist. Her thoughts ran wild then settled to one idea. "I wouldn't... I wouldn't wish it changed either, Gabrielle." Her voice was low but definite. "Even my darkest days if it means we end up sharing these days together."

Gabrielle's eyes burned from her emotions bubbling up. She leaned her head down closer to Xena's then warmly whispered, "Let me tell you a secret, Xena."

The warrior's eyes twinkled, and her dark eyebrow arched up perfectly.

"It doesn't matter what world, life, or route we take... we're fated."

Xena was held in place by Gabrielle's crisp eyes and sincere words. She knew they were pure wisdom, and they held true just as that alternate world had shown.

The bard freed her hand from Xena's touch and brought it to Xena's sculpted features. Her eyes searched Xena's for some time, and she sensed the shift between them into something beautiful. She lowered head down then when her eyes closed, a warm hand tangled into her blond hair.

Xena softly moaned when Gabrielle's lips touched hers very lightly. The contact became more determined, and Xena guided the kiss.

Gabrielle's heart was wild against her chest, her body trembled but she urged herself forward. She whimpered just as her tongue was met by Xena's in her mouth. She danced within the kiss and tasted the warrior in the most delicious way.

When they slowly ended the kiss, Gabrielle found herself breathing heavy.

Xena held her eyes closed but then a random thought came to mind. She chuckled, opened her eyes, and teased, "Was it as good as kissing your reflection?"

The bard's head lifted, and she broke out laughing. She settled down then her eyes met rich blue ones again. She leaned in close again and murmured, "Far better." Just as she leaned in for another kiss, an unexpected guest dropped in.

Joxer was on all fours in his beautiful nightie and yelled, "Eee Eee! Great White Monkey Xena has taken Attus's Princess Gaia!"

Gabrielle suddenly became enraged, and she prepared to spring up onto her feet. She began shouting, "And I swear I'm fated to kill Joxer!"

"Wait." Xena held Gabrielle down by her waist then with her other hand she grabbed her chakram.

The chakram went whistling at a tree, bounced off, came at the front of Joxer just at his knees and went towards another tree. The weapon reflected off of that tree next and went behind Joxer at knee level too. Then it returned to its owner.

There was a quiet ripping noise then Joxer lost the bottom half of his nightie to reveal some things.

"If you don't leave us alone, Monkey Boy then you'll be losing something else real soon here," the annoyed warrior warned.

Joxer stared down at his predicament, and he squealed before he yanked on the vine to take off. He called out, "Damn you, White Monkey!"

The Warrior Princess put her chakram back down to her right side. "I think I figured out his problem."

"What's that?" Gabrielle whispered as her attention returned.

"Me," the warrior simply answered.

"Hmmm." Gabrielle considered it for a heartbeat or two, however she wasn't too

worried about that right now. Instead she was suddenly shaken by Xena lifting her then lowering her onto her leather clad body.

"See?"

"Hmmm?" Xena grinned when the bard got comfortable on top of her.

"I knew you couldn't live without me."

The warrior quietly chuckled. "I thought I knew what living was about." Xena wrapped her arms around Gabrielle's bare back. "Until I met you."

Gabrielle's teasing expression was lost by her emotions. She smiled at the sentiment. "And you." Gabrielle demonstrated by poking the warrior's cute nose. "You are the only one that let me be myself."

"Yeah, what was I thinking," Xena joked, and she was playfully slapped on the side for the remark.

"Smartass." Gabrielle left it on that last word as she went in for another kiss.

Xena sensed the urgency in Gabrielle's kiss. She thoroughly enjoyed the sensations growing in her. Sensations that she'd had time and time again around Gabrielle, but she'd never relished until now. At the end of the long kiss, she whispered, "I don't exactly think we should do anything tonight, Gabrielle."

The bard picked up on the implications, and she let out a huge sigh.

"Not unless you want to put on a show for Attus."

"He's likely to join in," the irritated bard commented.

The warrior huffed. "No."

The bard grinned at her partner's instant remark. "Where is he?"

"Off to your left in the tree about ten paces from the clearing."

Gabrielle had a confused look at how Xena knew exactly where he lurked. She shook her head and grinned. Chalk it up to another one of Xena's many skills. She would have thought after almost three years she wouldn't be surprised by anything Xena did. She decided to rest her head down on Xena's very comfortable chest.

Xena reached over and grabbed Gabrielle's lonely bedroll and used it as a blanket for them.

Gabrielle put on an audacious look then snobbishly stated, "By the way, I wish you wouldn't chap my lips."

The Warrior Princess rolled her eyes dramatically. "Pardon me, Lady Gabrielle."

"Gabrielle of the Nile."

The warrior chimed in, "Gabrielle of Olympus."

"Gabrielle and the four seasons," the bard sang then laughed. "Gods I was full of it."

"I don't know... I think you had something going with that song." The warrior began humming it to herself.

"Xena?"

The warrior paused. "Mmmm?"

"Stop it."

Xena bit her lower lip then she couldn't help it anymore. "Welllll listen to m' story 'bout Gabrielle. Cute little gal that's lookin' pretty swell. Perfect hair, such a lovely lass, nice round breasts and a firm young-"

"Xena!" Gabrielle lightly hit Xena's side to get her to stop. "I swear if you sing that again I'll sleep by myself on the other side of the fire."

The warrior quickly went silent at that threat. She had her eyes closed, yet her lips were devilishly curled. Now she started to hum the tune again.

"Xena, I swear to the gods...." Gabrielle heard the humming stop, but Xena's body shook from silent laughs.

Xena licked her lips and quietly sang, "...such a lovely lass, nice round-"

"Xena," the bard growled, "if you don't stop I can promise you're not getting any of this firm young ass later."

The Warrior Princess froze. "You wouldn't," she breathed.

Gabrielle narrowed her eyes then gruffly challenged, "Try me." She finally sensed Xena was done so she closed her eyes, and her thoughts turned to what tomorrow night would be like when they would be alone.

The warrior was still singing the song but in her head. She unknowingly started wiggling her hips to the tune.

Gabrielle's eyes popped open, and she lifted her head when there was the humming again.

Xena had been caught, she immediately stopped, and dared not to open her eyes.

The bard glared at the smirking expression on Xena's face, however she let it go. She lowered her head back down and settled in again.

The warrior smiled to herself and lifted her right hand up to rest on Gabrielle's

shoulder blade. She lifted her head so she could place a tender kiss on Gabrielle's head. Then a wicked grin came over her face. "Furious zug, zug tomorrow night." She heard a deep, throaty growl of pure warning coming from the bard.

"Go to sleep, Xena."

"I can't," the warrior complained. "My juices are going."

Gabrielle let out the biggest sigh. "Then go make another dish with them."

Xena now laughed, and she tried to settle down for the night. "I'll behave."

"And go to sleep," the worn out bard added.

The Warrior Princess let out her own sigh. "Sweetest dreams, my bard." She felt the smile against Gabrielle's lips take shape.

"Sweeter dreams than yesterday, Xena." The bard ran her hand rhythmically up and down the warrior's arm.

Very slowly Xena was soothed to sleep, and Gabrielle followed in her wake. Watching over the couple was a pair of very sad eyes, but even Joxer found some comfort in his dreamscape. He had plenty of wishes for future zug zug with another beautiful princess someday. There were just some things that were fated, no matter what or who happened.

**The End.**