

~ We're Snowed In, Oh No ~

by Red Hope

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Sex/Type: Women in-love, look out! But there is no sex, this is humorous not pwp.
<laugh>

Violence: There will hardly be any violence.

Time: Sixth season Xena and Gabrielle. Lucy and Renee at the same time *but were never married*.

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Series: Other

Chapter One-The Walk On the Mountain

"Renee!" called Lucy. "Are you crazy?"

The Texan stopped and turned around. She faced her costar and glared. "No!"

Lucy shook her head and stomped up the slope in the deep white snow. "Yes you are," she yelled over the windy, snowy day. "I can't believe this."

Renee sighed inwardly. *Why did I invite this New Zealander again? Oh right, she's my best friend.* She chuckled inside. "Lucy, we're fine... there ain't notten to worry about."

The taller woman's face fell into surprise. "You are kidding me right, mate?" She shook her head and pointed up. "We won't make it up there!"

Renee glanced up to the top of the mountain. "Yes we will." She grinned back at her friend. "Just have confidence, will ya?"

"It's not the confidence, it's the weather, mate." Lucy crossed her arms. She tried to keep herself warm against the cold air. "Explain to me again why we have to climb this mountain?"

"Because I like climbing," stated Renee. "Keep going." She turned and took steps in the thigh deep snow. She tugged her hat down farther on her head since she had short hair. She adjusted the pack on her back, lifted her walking pole, and continued her trek up the side of the mountain.

Lucy shook her head. "She's crazy that Texassin." She laughed deeply. "Then again, I must be too for being here with her." She sighed and followed her friend.

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Gabrielle shivered deeply and tugged her cloak against her body. "G-g-g-gods its cold." Her teeth started chattering but she kept going down the side of the mountain. "Xena, you think we'll make it?"

The warrior peered over at her lover. "Yes, we will."

"I'm not too sure, myself." The warrior-bard walked closer to her partner. "It'll be dark soon."

"Have confidence, Gabrielle."

The small warrior huffed and mock glared at her soulmate. "Its not that Xena, it's the weather." Her short hair whipped up from the gust of frozen wind. "That weather," she mumbled.

Xena sighed and glanced back to see Ephiny, Amarice, and Solari just staying with them. "How are you three back there?"

"Wonderful," called Ephiny sarcastically. "How about yourself?"

"We're doing even better," Gabrielle cynically responded. "Isn't this the funnest thing ever, Eph?"

"Hades yeah," retorted the regent. "Wanna do it at night sometime?"

"Trying to quit," answered the Amazon Queen.

The Warrior Princess huffed. "Alright, alright stop with the jokes." She stopped and looked west. She was barely able to see through all the flying snow. But the sun was going to set in a candlemark. *Gabrielle is right, we won't make it to the bottom by sunset.*

"I'm right... aren't I?" whispered Gabrielle.

Xena sighed. "Let's just keep moving huh?" She glanced west one last time then shifted the pack on her back.

The warrior-bard felt a little fear, it made her reach out and take her lover's hand.

The warrior squeezed Gabrielle's hand in reassurance. She kept walking with her soul mate.

The Amazons trailed behind, shaking, and sniffing.

Chapter Two- Bad Weather, what bad weather?

"Renee!" yelled Lucy. "This is getting suicidal, mate." She stopped her friend by the arm.

The smaller woman sighed and faced her friend. "We're almost there, Lucy. I ain't stopping now."

"Yes we are," said the actress in an ordering tone. "I am not going up there to get myself killed."

Renee sighed and asked, "Why?"

The taller woman's eyes bugged out. "Are you joking?" She held her free hand out to the world around. "It is snowing up the wazoo and its windy like dere is no tomorrow."

The costar opened her mouth for another protest but was cut off.

"Wait." Lucy Lawless held her hand up. "Let's at least find a shelter and wait to see if the weather will slow. Agreed?"

The Texan considered.

"Please, Renee," begged the older woman. "Me bloomin toes are gonna freeze off, mate."

Renee O' Connor chuckled and nodded. "Alright... we'll break." She pointed a gloved finger. "But that doesn't mean we give up." She paused and grinned. "Right?"

"Whatever you say, mate... let's go." Lucy gazed around, looking for a hide out.

The smaller woman squinted through the windy snow and tried finding one too.

The wind suddenly gusted more and blew up a ton of snow.

Renee was smacked in the face by the snow and she turned away, almost stumbling into Lucy.

The actress pulled the smaller woman in and turned around. She placed her back to the wind and snow. She lowered her head onto Renee's. "Is this what you had in mind, buddy?"

The costar dug her head into Lucy's chest. She shook from the cold wind trying to grab her. "Not really."

Lucy looked up, shook her head and squinted. She spotted a black opening in the side of the mountain. "There is a cave not too far away."

The Texan looked up and followed her friend's gaze. She spotted the cave and nodded in agreement. "Let's go."

"Right behind ya." Lucy trekked along side her friend towards the cave. "I wonder if it's heated."

Renee glared at the peanut gallery beside her. "That's real rich."

"Hey, one can dream." The New Zealander grinned and gazed up at the cave. "Not much further." She came closer to the cave.

Renee came up a small slope and slipped on some ice. "Hell." She had begun to fall.

Lucy moved instantly and grabbed her friend. "You don't want to do that." She hauled Renee up onto her feet and on level ground of the cave.

"Thanks."

"No problem, mate." The taller woman released the other woman's hands and pointed at the cave. "Come on."

The Texan couldn't help but agree now. The wind was picking up and the snowfall was stronger. "Hurry up," she teased.

Lucy laughed and made her way down the ledge and scooted into the cave.

The smaller woman came in next and shivered once inside. She heard the wind howl at the entrance of the cave.

"We should go deeper into the cave," suggested Lucy, "then we won't have to deal with the wind." She signaled her partner to follow.

Renee nodded and walked farther into the cave with the older woman. She folded her arms against her chest and watched her breath materialize in the air. "I think I'm regretting this adventure," she muttered.

"Come on, mate." Lucy smiled warmly. "We'll make it fine." She took her pack off, sat down on the ground and leaned against the wall. "I'm going to break."

Renee took her pack off as well and sat down beside her friend. "This was a bad idea huh?"

"Ah, nah... could be worse ay?" The New Zealander patted the small woman's leg. "Its just a wee storm."

"A wee storm?" The Texan rolled her eyes. "Try a hubangus storm."

The older actress chuckled deeply and dropped her head against the cold wall. "Maybe," she teased before having closed her eyes.

The younger woman pulled up her legs and wrapped her arms around. She was shivering; she felt the cold rippling up and down her spine. "Sorry about this, Lucy," she whispered and dropped her head on her knees.

"We're okay," reassured the tall woman. "Once the storm settles we'll make it up to the top," promised Lucy.

Renee didn't respond. She was tired, cold, and angry with herself.

The New Zealander opened her eyes and looked at her friend. "Renee?" she whispered.

"Yeah?" The younger woman looked up with eyes that matched the cold wind.

Lucy saw the anger and she sighed. "It isn't your fault, Renee." She rubbed her friend's back and smiled warmly. "You're just damn aggressive against mountains."

"Stubborn," muttered the small woman.

"Well that too," teased Lucy.

The Texan huffed and dropped her head back down.

"Renee, you can't control the weather." She paused. "You believe me ay?" pleaded the older woman.

Renee chuckled and glanced up. "Yeah," she whispered.

"Good." Lucy then noticed her friend's lips were turning slightly blue. "And you're getting cold," she stated.

"I'm fine."

"Let's not get stubborn," warned the older actress. "Come here."

Renee corked an eyebrow. "You mean..."

"Yes, sit in my lap, it'll be warmer... for us both."

The Texan sighed and moved over.

Lucy pulled the small woman in and held her tight. "Lay back will ya," she ordered.

"Hey, that's what you get for this idea," taunted Renee. She sat back and dropped her head against her partner's shoulder. She gazed down at the entrance.

The snow whipped by and wind yelled at them for getting away.

"The weather ain't that bad," stated Renee.

"Oh no." Lucy tilted her head. "We'd just be buried in the snow right now... that's all."

The small woman chuckled and sighed. She closed her eyes. "Tell me when the storm is gone."

"I was gonna say the same thing."

The women laughed together.

Chapter Three- The Snow is Your Friend

"Xena?" yelled Gabrielle. She covered her face with her cloak in hopes to keep the blowing snow off. Her lover had gone ahead of her. She stopped moving because she had no idea where Xena had gone.

The Amazons came up from behind.

"Where's Xena?" asked Ephiny loudly as she could.

"I don't know," yelled back Gabrielle. "She went ahead of me to scout ahead." She shook her head. She couldn't see a hand length in front of herself from the snow.

Solari, Amarice, and Ephiny huddled around their Queen.

"She'll be back," stated Solari optimistically.

"I hope so," whispered the warrior-bard. She was worried now. "Xena?" she yelled at the top of her lungs.

Suddenly, a tall, dark woman materialized out of the white day. "We're not going to make this storm."

"No kidding," yelled Ephiny. "We need to find shelter."

The Warrior Princess nodded in agreement. "I found a cave not too far below." She reached over and took her soul mate's hand. "Follow me." She led the way, followed by Gabrielle then the Amazons.

Slowly, the sound of crunching filtered down the mountain to the group. It was a low crunching then it had become a little louder.

"What is that?" hollered Amarice.

"Who cares?" asked Solari. "Let's just keep going to the cave."

The crunching sound grew and seemed to be nearing them. The crunch went into a low rumble.

Amarice stopped and looked up the mountain, not seeing anything.

The other two Amazons slammed into the young Amazon.

"Keep moving," ordered the regent.

"No... wait!" yelled Amarice. "Xena, Gabrielle!"

The soul mates noticed their feathery friends not with them. They came back up and joined them.

"What is it?" asked the Queen.

"Don't you hear that?" questioned the young Amazon.

Everybody went silent and had tried listening.

The low rumbled was no longer a rumble but was growing into a roar.

Xena narrowed her eyes and listening more carefully with a tilt of her head.

The quiet roar became suddenly loud, fast, and flying down the mountainside.

"Avalanche!" yelled the Warrior Princess. "Run!"

The five women sprinted down the mountain.

"Centaur shit!" screamed Amarice. "What are we going to do?" She frantically sprinted through the ankle deep snow.

"Stay together," hollered Xena, "follow me!"

The avalanche came roaring down the mountains after the women. The snow came screaming down with high intent to bury them for life.

"We're not going to make it!" screamed Solari. "Artemis, please save us!" She could barely breathe.

"We're going to make it!" yelled their Queen her heart pounded loudly as the avalanche.

"This way!" ordered Xena loudly. "Move, move!"

The avalanche was catching up and closing in with the loudest roar ever.

The Warrior Princess came around a bend into a cave and she pulled her soul mate in. Next came the Amazons, she grabbed them by the wrists and whirled them in. "Duck inside!" She peeked up, around the cave and saw the avalanche closing in. "Now!" she screamed the jumped into the cave.

The snow roared towards the cave and flew over the top of the cave, crashed back down on the mountainside. The snow sealed up the cave's mouth, went a little farther down the mountainside and came to a dead... stop.

"Xena, Xena?" said Gabrielle frantically. She could not see anything in the dark cave.

"I'm right here." The warrior felt her way and found her partner.

The small warrior grabbed onto her lover's arm. "Ephiny, Solari, Amarice, are you three okay?"

"I'm fine," answered Amarice.

"Same here," said Solari.

"I'm... not so good," whispered Ephiny.

Somebody fell onto the cave's floor and groaned.

"Ephiny?" screamed Solari. She hastily tried moving to the sound in the pitch, black dark.

"Eph?" yelled Gabrielle.

The soul mates scrambled through the black cave- they tried finding their friend.

Chapter Four- What You Can see in the Dark

Renee opened her eyes and shifted in her friend's arms a little. She glanced out the cave; it was becoming dark outside. "Ya know... we might end up sleeping in here tonight."

"I know," whispered Lucy. "The storm is getting worse."

The smaller actress nodded and dropped her head.

"We'll just have a lot of bonding time," joked the New Zealander.

Renee chuckled and nodded. "To say the least." She looked at the cave's mouth again. "This ain't what I had in mind though."

"Could be worse."

"Like how?" asked the Texan.

"Mmmm, we could be snowed in here."

The small woman was about to respond but a loud roar interrupted her. "What is that?" she whispered.

The older woman tilted her head and listened. "Sounds like snow moving..." The realization had made Lucy widened her eyes.

The roaring was even louder now and was right above them.

"Lucy!" screamed Renee. Her scream echoed out the cave then drowned out right when the snow sealed up the cave and left the women in the dark.

They both were silent in the black cave.

The snow over the cave's entrance crunched down some as it packed in. A bit of it fell in and made a small pile on the floor of the cave.

"Lucy?" whispered Renee.

"Yeah?" asked the New Zealander.

"I hate the dark," uttered the small woman.

The older woman pulled her friend in closer. "We packed flashlights in the bags, right?"

"Yes," said the Texan quietly, "but we don't have spare batteries."

"Wonderful," muttered Lucy. "Let's not use them if we have to, okay mate?"

Renee nodded and tried remaining calm. "I can't believe this."

"Like I said, it could be worse."

"How could it get worse?" asked the younger woman. "Hell, we ain't gotten out of here. There is no way..."

The older actress sighed and said, "We'll get out here," reassuringly. *I hope*, she added mentally.

"Well... one thing is for sure," went on Renee, "somebody at the set is bound to notice us missing."

The New Zealander laughed quietly. "I'd think so, buddy." She sighed and dropped her head against the cave's cold wall. "Considering we're only the stars."

Renee O' Connor chuckled and grinned. "They couldn't finished the sixth season without us."

"They couldn't do the show without us period, mate."

"We're just a minor detail," teased the younger woman.

"Rrrright," responded Lucy.

"Well... Rob will really miss you." Renee grinned.

"And Steve will miss you, mate." Lucy poked her friend. "Explain to me again why you turned him down?"

The small woman shrugged. "I didn't marry him the same reason as to why you didn't marry Rob," joked the actress. She took her wool hat off and ran her fingers through her short hair. "Didn't feel right."

"Amen to that," whispered Lawless. "It was tempting, Rob is a sweetie."

"Yeah he is... so is Steve but..."

"But..." repeated the New Zealander. "But we don't know what."

Renee laughed quietly. "Well, maybe I'll find my tree in the forest after the end of the show."

"Mate, don't start up with the whole tree in the forest." The tall woman shook her head. "I get tired of hearing that in the show."

The small woman snickered and asked, "I am... Gabrielle."

"And I'm really Xena," drew out the New Zealander in her accent.

"You know, we're going to get mobbed in Pasadena this May," mentioned Renee.

Lucy huffed. "At the convention, I know." She grinned. "I wonder how many fans will be there."

"I don't want to think about it," said the Texan sternly.

"Oooh come on, is that a little stage fright I hear?"

The younger actress jabbed her friend in the stomach for the comment. "I've gotten over my fear. I ain't gonna chicken out like I did in Valley Forge."

Lucy chuckled and grinned. "Be glad Ted was there."

Renee sighed dramatically. "I'm still counting my blessings."

"Did you hear something from Sharon Delaney that there's some bard's brunch at the convention?"

"Yeah, I heard that too." The Texan thought for a moment. "I can't recall who told me."

Lucy shaped her lips with an evil grin. "I'll bet those bards will invite you to come."

"What?" Renee glanced sidelong at her friend.

"Oh come on mate, you are the bard on the show." The New Zealander laughed then added, "That whole bard cult thing is your fault."

"And like the entire Xenaverse isn't your fault?" taunted the younger woman. "I was just the tag along in the show."

"But there are the bards, I had nothing to do with the bards," stated Lucy. "All those fanfictions on the Internet."

Renee groaned. "Have you ever read any of those things?"

"Which kind is the better question, mate."

The small actress laughed hard. "That is the better question." She smirked. "Now, that's not my fault those..." she trailed off.

"Intimate fanfictions," suggested the New Zealander.

The blond chuckled plus corrected her friend. "Alternate fanfictions, Lucy." She grinned. "Those are not my fault."

"Alternate fanfictions are the writers' fault with all that bloody subtext they put into the script."

Renee nodded in agreement but went quiet for a second. She then asked, "So have you ever?"

"Have I ever what, mate?"

The Texan grinned before having asked quietly, "You know, read an alternate fanfiction?"

"Maybe... you?"

"What kind of answer was that? Maybe?" The small woman sighed. "Have you or haven't you?"

"In my spare time, I've read a few, sure," answered Lucy finally. "And you?"

"I've read a few." Renee snickered lowly. "I mean, we both had to read a little of Melissa Good's work before hiring her."

"She has guid work," stated Lucy. "And she keeps it clean."

The younger actress nodded. "Its amazing though what that show has done in under six years."

"Not even a full six years," corrected Lucy. "We're both lucky."

Renee nodded. "Yeah... you could still be digging in a mine for gold."

The New Zealander laughed and teased back. "Mate, you could still be makin' those episodes for the Mickey Mouse Club."

"Thanks," deadpanned the smaller woman. "Real big of you."

Lucy grinned. "Hey, I was stating the truth." She sighed and smiled softly. "I wonder where we'll end up after the show."

Renee shrugged. "Not sure." She paused and whispered, "I'll really miss the show though." She shook her head. "I don't think either of us will find an acting job quite

like Xena."

Lawless moved her head in agreement. "It's been a wild ride." She paused then said, "But time to move on."

"I guess so. Six years is good enough for the fans."

"Not to them," joked Lucy.

The Texan chuckled quietly and nodded. "So... any ideas on how we'll get out of here?"

"Nope, mate." The older actress closed her eyes. "We can find a way, if there is one, or wait for somebody to dig us out."

Renee leaned to her right and grabbed a pack. She opened it then removed a flashlight. She stood up, she then turned the flashlight on. After she walked to the cave's mouth, she studied it and realized just how thick the snow blocking the mouth seemed to be. "We're definitely snowed in, Lucy."

The older woman glanced over and sat up. She finally became worried. "This is looking sketchy, mate."

The Texan came back over. She licked her lips; she looked at her friend. "We better hope somebody finds us... and soon."

"Did we pack food?"

"Yes, good for three days." The small woman sat down on the floor of the cave. She crossed her legs and placed the flashlight between her and Lucy. "I'm sorry about this." She peered up with sad green eyes.

"Renee, it's not your fault." Lucy sighed and grabbed her friend's knee. "Like I said, you have no control over the weather. We'll get out of this." She grinned. "Xena and Gabrielle could." She hoped that would lighten the air.

Renee laughed quietly and grinned. "Yeah, I wonder what they would do in this case?"

"Oh bloody Hell, we never did an episode on them getting caved in." Lucy sat back. She still could tell her friend was worried and scared. She needed to lighten things. She came up with an interesting idea. "Alright, you act Gabrielle, I'll act Xena, and let's see what happens."

The Texan did a double-take. "What?" She laughed as well as corked an eyebrow. "You hate acting off the job."

"Yeah well..." The New Zealander shrugged and grinned. "This'll be for fun."

Renee shook her head, still skeptical about this. "Are you serious?"

"Sure, come on," teased Lucy. "It'll be good for a few laughs."

The younger actress grinned with a sigh. "Alright." She set the flash on its bottom so that it shine up to the ceiling. She bounced onto her feet because she loved acting. She

walked over to the other side of the cave and mentally transformed herself into Gabrielle.

The taller woman bit her lower lip from laughing at herself and her friend. She took a steady breath and mentally shifted into Xena. Her expression went serious, her eyes hardened, and a stoic attitude drifted over her.

Renee turned around and put one hand on her hip. "Xena..." She stopped and looked away. She laughed a little.

Lucy took a deep breath- she only grinned faintly. "Concentrate."

"I can't believe we're doing this," muttered Renee. She wiped away the grin. "Xena, how the Hades are we going to get out of this one?" She glanced back at Lucy with a worried look. Her tainted southern accent was gone.

The New Zealander sighed and responded, "Don't worry, we've been in worse." She'd lost her accent.

The younger actress shook her head. "What?" She held her hand out to the snowed in entrance. "Xena, will you look at that?" she said hotly. "We're in a cave, trapped, three days of food, no fire, and..." she waved a hand at the flashlight. "And a friggin' flashlight." She stopped and closed her eyes. "They didn't have flashlights then." She started laughing.

The taller woman laughed. "Alright, alright, mate you're breaking the scene."

Renee went serious and fell back into her role. "So you tell me how in Hades you expect to get us out of this one," she yelled and stomped off in the cave a little.

Lucy sighed and stood up. "Gabrielle, we've been in tighter spots." She neared her friend. "Look, compared to other times... this is rather nice."

"You have to be kidding me?" The smaller actress whirled around and shook her head. "How is this nice?" she whispered.

The older woman grinned and grasped her friend's shoulders. "Because we get to spend time alone," she uttered in a warm voice.

Renee became locked in the moment. She searched those dazzling blue eyes before her.

Lucy disappeared into the moment as well. She studied the mint green eyes that spoke to her. "We'll be fine," she whispered. Her hands slipped down and grasped Renee's sides.

"I hope so," said the Texan quietly. "I'm scared about this one."

The older woman smiled softly and pulled her friend in. "We'll get out of here, I promise."

Renee closed her eyes and fell into the words. Her eyes drifted open again and she smiled.

Lucy lowered her head a little and realized the acting was gone now.

The small woman knew what was about to happen, she felt her breathing become heavy.

Lucy's heart pounded but this felt so right. She closed her eyes and finished the distance.

Renee felt the soft lips touch hers carefully. She slipped her arms around her friend's waist and urged the kiss.

The kiss grew stronger and tongues were passing through mouths, tasting and pleasing the other mouth. Simultaneously, moans escaped. Passion's heat came to life inside of the women and made them press their bodies together more. Slowly, they pulled apart and stared into each other's eyes before realization washed over them.

The younger actress blinked. "Did we just... kiss?"

"Yes," answered Lucy.

"Oh." Renee blinked again and shook her head. "Why did that happen?"

"I'm not sure," answered the New Zealander.

"Right," whispered the small woman. "You were just trying to..."

"Comfort you," finished the older woman.

The Texan grinned and said, "Comfort me again." She reached up and pulled her friend's head back down.

They fell into a warm yet powerful kiss that derived from someplace they'd never explored.

Chapter Five- Warming Up

"You've got it?" asked the warrior softly.

"Yeah, go ahead," responded Gabrielle.

Xena nodded and stood up in the dark.

The warrior-bard continued pressing the poultice against Ephiny's side wound. She was thanking whomever that they'd brought their medical kits along in the packs.

"How are you doing, Solar?"

The second in command sighed and shifted her lover's head in her lap a little. "Okay," she whispered.

"Ephiny will be fine," reassured the Queen.

The Warrior Princess was scouring the cave for wood, she knew there was some, considering Ephiny had gotten a sharp stick in her side. She knelt down in the dark cave, she felt around on the floor. Her hands touched dried wood.

"Xena, are you okay?" asked the short warrior.

"Yup, I just found our wood supply."

Amarice had been silent for the most part. She was against the wall, on the ground, huddled in a ball because she was frightened.

The warrior reached down in between her breasts and extracted two flint stones. She grinned and picked up a large stick. The stones cracked together, and Xena managed to catch the sparkles on the wood.

The cavern lit up faintly from the torchlight.

Xena rose up with the torch in hand. She walked over to a stack of rocks. She rammed the torch in between the rocks. She returned to the stack of wood.

Gabrielle looked up and saw Amarice huddled in a corner. Her eyes flickered over to Solari. "Take this," she whispered.

Solari took the poultice and held it against her regent's side. She peered down at her lover, she noticed how quietly Ephiny slept.

The warrior-bard stood up and neared Amarice.

The older warrior was busy building a fire near the cave's entrance.

The Queen knelt down beside the young Amazon. "Hey, how are you?"

"Really scared," whispered Amarice. "This is crazy."

"Yeah, it is, isn't it?" Gabrielle grinned faintly. "But, crazier things have happened when you've traveled with Xena and I."

Amarice chuckled but lowered her chin onto her knees. "Are we going to get out of here?" she asked quietly.

"Definitely." The small warrior smiled warmly. "It's just a matter of how." She grinned again. "As long as Xena is around, we'll be fine."

Another chuckle escaped Amarice. "True."

"Come here." The Queen leaned in.

The young Amazon lowered her legs and pulled her friend in for a hug. "Thanks," she uttered.

"No problem." Gabrielle gave a hard squeeze then released her Amazon. She stood up and walked over to her soul mate. "How's it going?" She knelt down beside her lover.

Xena finished arranging the wood and took her flint stones. She cracked them together.

Sparks flew and landed on the wood. Instantly, a fire had begun.

"Not bad now," finally answered the warrior. She glanced at her partner. "How are you doing?" she whispered.

"I'm okay." Gabrielle nodded and folded her arms. "It's cold in here."

"The fire will help." Xena considered for a moment. "We have enough food for three days."

"Not enough furs for everybody," whispered the warrior-bard.

The dark woman shook her head. "We'll be fine. There's one for Amarice, you and I, and Eph and Solari." She glimpsed at the regent. "Ephiny will be fine."

"Thankfully she didn't take that stick too far in." Gabrielle huffed. "I can't believe that." She sighed and said, "I'll cook a soup, we're going to need something to eat."

"Good idea." Xena leaned over and kissed her soul mate softly.

"What we going to do about getting out of here?" asked the Queen at the end of the kiss.

"I don't know... yet." The warrior peered down at the rest of the dark cave. "Tomorrow we'll explore down there." She looked back at her partner. "Right now, we'll stay together, eat something, and get some sleep."

Gabrielle nodded and stood up. She went to her pack. After she came to the fire, she started preparing soup.

Xena checked on Ephiny again and decided the regent would be fine. Afterwards, she collected the furs and bedrolls. "Amarice, come by the fire," she insisted.

The young Amazon nodded. She came over, took a bedroll, and sat down on it.

The Warrior Princess covered her with a fur.

"Thanks, Xena."

The tall woman flashed a smile then took another bedroll. She placed it between the fire and the cavern wall. She joined Ephiny and Solari. She bent down with her eyes locking on Solari. "I want to put Ephiny in the bedroll, okay?"

Solari nodded and let the warrior pick up her lover.

Xena carefully carried the regent to the bedroll. Having knelt down, she placed the Amazon into the bedroll.

Solari came over, sat against the cavern wall, then she pulled Ephiny's head into her lap.

The warrior covered Ephiny with a fur before she had joined her partner.

Gabrielle was working on making the soup. She sat down on the floor near the fire and shivered. She tugged her cloak closer.

Xena grinned and moved behind her partner.

The smaller warrior took the signal after having chuckled. She scooted back into her lover's body. Her lover's arms encircled her and kept her protected.

The older woman lowered her chin on Gabrielle's shoulder. "Sorry about this," she whispered.

"Not your fault," responded Gabrielle. "Hades, I provoked you to come over this mountain for a short cut."

Xena chuckled. "Didn't turn out so short huh?"

The Amazon Queen chuckled. "Not at all." She sighed. "Turning into an adventure."

"Everything we do turns into an adventure."

Gabrielle huffed in agreement. "This one isn't so bad," she stated.

"Oh no, could be worse."

"And how is that?" asked the small warrior.

Xena shrugged. "You couldn't have me here," she teased.

The small woman's eyes widened, "Isn't that the truth."

Chapter Six- Sleeping Arrangements

"How's that taste?" inquired Renee.

"A greasy bloomin onion would taste better than this, mate," answered Lucy. She finished chewing on the dried food.

The Texan sighed and muttered, "Sorry."

The older actress looked up instantly and regretted her words. "I'm sorry," she whispered. "I was trying to be funny... guess the joke wasn't all that funny." She grinned.

The smaller woman grinned back a little. "I'm getting sensitive all of sudden."

"Alright." Lucy went serious, pushed the packs between them out of the way but kept the lit flashlight between them. "We need to talk."

Renee sighed and nodded. "Boy do we ever." She breathed deeply and prepared for this talk. "First... why did you kiss me?"

The older woman breathed steadily and answered, "Because it felt right." She paused. "And you?"

"Same reason." The small woman laughed uneasily and said, "There's another... bigger reason, I think."

The New Zealander corked an eyebrow. "Was it...?"

"Love," said the women together.

Renee laughed and dropped her head.

Lucy grinned. "We've been doing too many subtext episodes," she mumbled.

The Texan chuckled but went serious. "Is that really it?"

The older actress lifted her eyes quickly. "No." She reached out and took her friend's small, chilled hands. "It's a bit... different but..." she paused trying to form her words right. "Something is definitely growing inside."

Renee nodded. "Same here." She grinned. "I get that tingle feeling around you." She laced their hands together.

Lucy chuckled plus gave an evil grin. "Just tingle?"

The small woman groaned. "Oh no." She narrowed her eyes with a smug look. "Don't you tingle?"

"I don't tingle... I shutter."

Renee laughed at her friend's words. She shook her head yet she sighed a bit sadly.

"What?" whispered the tall woman with worry.

"What are we going to do?"

"Personally... I'd like to find out more," stated Lucy. "I've never quite felt this."

"Me neither," whispered Renee. She peered up. "I'm glad I waited."

The New Zealander became confused but quickly figured out her friend's words. "How long?"

"I think since I stepped on the set and saw you." The small woman shrugged. "I don't remember why I decided to come try out for Gabrielle's role but something told me too."

Lucy nodded and said, "Something told me not to get close to Rob." She grinned. "Amazing what a few whispers can do, ay?"

"Really." The younger actress squeezed her friend's hands. "So what's this make us? Still coworkers?" She grinned.

Lucy grinned back momentarily, however she went serious. "Girlfriends?" she asked quietly.

Leap number one, thought Renee. "Okay..." she stopped and breathed calmly. "Girlfriends... new term."

"I know, for us both... I think."

The Texan nodded her answer. "Slow, right?" She peered up.

"At whatever speed that feels right," answered Lucy. She smiled and tightened her grasp on her friend's hands. "I'm scared too," she admitted.

Renee nodded and relaxed herself. "Its okay to be scared."

"Exactly."

The small woman peered up. "Let's do it." She smiled and her eyes warmed.

Lucy smiled and felt something lift from her shoulders. "We're just going to have to keep this on the low, low."

"No joke," stated Renee. "God only knows what would happen if the public found out."

The older woman chuckled deeply.

"Just think about all the fans," whispered the small actress in horror. "That's a terrifying thought."

Lucy sighed dramatically. "Let's not go there, mate." She reached left and grabbed a pack. "Do we have sleeping bags?"

"Yeah, in one of the packs." Renee studied the pack her partner was looking in. "I think it's in that one."

"Yup." The older actress pulled out the sleeping bag.

"Um, Lucy... that's the only sleeping bag," said the small woman sheepishly.

The New Zealander peeked up and grinned evilly. "Looks like we're about to find out more about personal space... girlfriend."

Renee hit her friend on her side. "Smartass." She shook her head before she had stood up. She took her thick coat off. "I know ya are gonna take your coat off."

"Yeah." Lucy stood up as well then removed her coat. She bent down and untied her boots.

The small woman did the same thing and put her boots aside.

"Alright." The tall actress unzipped the sleeping bag then got in.

The Texan now crawled into the large sleeping bag. "Oh this'll be warm."

Lucy Lawless chuckled and reached over. She zipped up the sleeping bag.

Renee turned, she grabbed her coat and placed it under their heads. "That'll do." She turned off the flashlight.

Everything went pitch black.

"That's so creepy," whispered younger woman.

"Just means I can get away with certain things," whispered Lucy in a deep voice.

"I don't think so." Renee grabbed her friend's hands inside of the sleeping bag. "Don't you think about it."

"I wouldn't dare." Lucy grinned in the dark. "I just do it." She leaned in and captured her friend's lips in a gentle kiss.

The younger woman moaned softly and released her partner's hands. She felt Lucy's

arms snake around her waist. She smiled at the ending of the kiss. "This is just too weird."

The New Zealander chuckled then asked, "Us or the brand new relationship?"

"I think both," teased Renee.

"You have no idea, mate." The older actress pulled her partner in.

The small woman tucked her head under her friend's chin and closed her eyes. "You're pretty comfortable."

"You're not bad yourself." The tall woman patted the Texan's muscular stomach.

"Mmm, its going to be odd when we're back on the set."

"It will." She shifted and pulled Renee in closer.

The Texan crinkled up her nose. "The subtext on the show will be so much worse."

Lucy snickered lowly as she closed her eyes. "Not our fault, mate."

"How ya figure?" Renee tucked her head back under her girlfriend's chin. "I mean we're the ones dating...?" Her voice came out questioningly.

"Yes," replied the older actress in a strong voice. "And it still isn't our fault since the writers are so intent in having the subtext."

Renee laughed softly and countered, "If it wasn't for that subtext, we wouldn't be acting."

The New Zealander chuckled. "You have a point."

"Uh huh." The younger actress sighed and muttered, "I wonder if we'll get out of this cave." She stopped speaking but added quietly, "We're pretty snowed in."

"We'll get out of here," promised Lucy yet even she felt a little unsure about that.

"Well mate, if we get cold we could have sex to keep us warm," she joked casually.

The Texan laughed deeply and shook her head. "That's better than a campfire," she teased.

Lucy groaned. "My joke was bad enough, mate, you didn't have to add to it."

"Alright official peanut gallery, go to sleep," grumbled the smaller woman.

"I will," stated Lucy.

"Good," mocked Renee.

The two girlfriends chuckled but quickly slipped into their dreams.

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Xena pulled her lover in close against her body.

Gabrielle adjusted the fur over top of her and her soul mate. She tucked her head

under the warrior's chin- her eyes pinned on the small fire. She focused her attention on Amarice on the other side of the fire.

Amarice hadn't budged from her position all evening. She just kept her legs pressed against her body and hugged herself. The fur was still on her, which kept her warm at least.

Solari and Ephiny were both awake and silent, just relaxing in each other's arms with their own thoughts. Ephiny, for the most, was in better health since earlier today. She'd awoken right after Gabrielle made dinner and actually tried eating.

Overall, everything felt rather dismal in the cave between the friends.

The warrior tucked her head into the back of her lover's neck. "Tell them a story," she whispered.

"To see if it'll lighten things?" questioned the warrior-bard in a small voice.

"Yes." Xena kissed Gabrielle's shoulder and tightened her arms around her soul mate's waist.

"Hey, Amazons." Gabrielle grinned at her friends. "How about a story?"

Amarice lifted her eyes up and a tiny smile tugged at her lips.

Solari nodded and sat up straight against the cave wall. She pulled her lover in closer.

Ephiny straightened up and smiled warmly at her Queen. "Please, Gabrielle. It'd be something nice right about now."

"Alright." The Queen thought of which adventure to share and smiled brightly when it came. She brushed back her hair, settled the side of her head contently on her lover's shoulder, and took a deep breath. "Okay, this adventure was several years ago. Xena and I were swimming in a near by lake when suddenly a boy named Icus, rushed by." She paused as her memories filled her mind. "Icus was being chased by a number of men and naturally, Xena and I got out of the water and proceeded to protect Icus. After the fight..." Gabrielle continued weaving her tale to her friends for a good candlemark.

Amarice laughed and shook her head at the end of the story. "I could just imagine our Queen high on henbane."

Ephiny chuckled quietly and grinned at Gabrielle. "Did the rocks really sing back to you."

The Queen blushed but nodded. "They did at the time."

"Yes, the henbane has quite the effect on Gabrielle," joked the Warrior Princess.

All the Amazons laughed.

"We'll have to slip some in Gabrielle's next nutbread at the Nation," muttered the second in command.

"I heard that," growled the short warrior.

Solari laughed deeply and said, "I, personally, would just love to see you high on henbane."

"Good luck controlling her," informed Xena, "because you can't."

Gabrielle jammed her elbow back into her partner's ribs. "Be quiet," she ordered in a sweet voice.

The warrior chuckled and nuzzled her soul mate's soft neck.

"How many years ago was that?" inquired the regent.

"Oh gods..." The warrior-bard calculated the years mentally. "Five years ago, Xena?"

"Yes, about five years ago," confirmed the older warrior.

Ephiny shook her head. "Those days when she was chatty."

The Amazon Queen glared.

Xena chuckled and decided to add more to the joke. "BC... Babbling Child years."

"No BC was Before Chatting when you didn't like to talk," stated Gabrielle to her lover.

Amarice sighed, rolled her eyes, and announced, "BC is Before Coolness when I wasn't around."

Everybody groaned but laughed quietly too.

"Alright, enough of the lame jokes," stated the regent. "I think we better get some sleep."

"Yeah, you're right," agreed the Amazon Queen. "Try to get some rest, feathers. We'll see about getting out of here tomorrow."

The women nodded in agreement, tightened their furs around their bodies, and soon drifted off to sleep.

Gabrielle turned in her soul mate's arms. "Hey," she whispered.

"Get some sleep huh?" The warrior kissed the tip of her lover's nose. "I'm gonna need your help tomorrow."

The warrior-bard crinkled up her nose. "Don't you always?"

Xena laughed softly and pressed her lips against Gabrielle's forehead. "Always," she whispered, pulled back, and drew her friend in firmly.

"I love you," whispered Gabrielle.

"I love you too." The Warrior Princess kissed her lover softly before she uttered, "Go to sleep."

The Queen grinned, closed her eyes, and tucked her head under her lover's chin.

Chapter Seven- Mirror, Mirror

Xena stretched her legs a little before she neared the dying fire. She threw in a little more wood but not too much. There was only so much wood.

Gabrielle knelt down beside Ephiny and Solari. "How you feel?" asked the Queen.

Ephiny pushed herself up. "A lot better." She pulled back the fur, which covered her and Solari and revealed her wound.

The warrior-bard tilted her head while she gently touched the wound for inspection. "Looks a lot better."

"Yeah." Ephiny pulled the fur back over once her friend was done. "I can't believe that happened. Some tough Amazon I am." She huffed.

"It was a crazy moment," justified Solari.

"Solari is right," agreed the Queen. "I'd rather you have a stick wound than be buried in the snow right now."

"If you hadn't forgotten." The regent smirked and pointed at the entrance. "We are buried in the snow."

"No." Gabrielle smirked. "We're trapped in a cave." She patted her Amazon's leg, stood up, and joined her lover.

Amarice watched the two warriors quietly whispering in front of the fire. "What are you two doing?"

"Talkin'," joked the Warrior Princess.

Amarice huffed and rolled her eyes. "Really?" she taunted. "No really, what are you two doing or going to do?"

Gabrielle sighed and tugged her cloak closer. "Xena and I are going to go check the back of the cave out." Her eyes flickered over to her regent and second in command. "You three stay here." She cocked an eyebrow at Amarice. "Got me?"

"Yes, my Queen," teased the young Amazon as she pulled her fur closer to her body.

"Alright, we'll be right back." Gabrielle grasped her lover's arm and turned to the dark cave.

Xena grabbed the torch, from yesterday, out of the two rocks, relit it in the fire, then she joined her soul mate.

Together, the pair walked down- deeper into the cave.

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"Mornin'," whispered Renee.

Lucy sighed. "Morning." She slowly opened her eyes and gazed into soft forest eyes. "Sleep well?"

"Amazingly, yes," replied the Texan. "You?"

"Hmmm, not bad." The older actress stretched in the sleeping bag then realized something. "Its not dark in here... well not as dark."

Renee suddenly had a confused look as she lifted her head and studied the inside of the cave. "That is weird," she murmured.

"That would be the reason why, mate." Lucy pointed up to the ceiling.

Up in the top of the cavern ceiling was a tiny hole that let light stream through.

"If there's light coming through, the snow must not be there," concluded the Texan.

"Wouldn't matter." Lawless shrugged. "I know you're small but not that small, mate."

Renee jabbed her elbow into her girlfriend's side. "I know that... jus' sayin' its nice to have some light in here."

"I second that, mate."

The small woman sighed, flopped back down, and tucked her head under Lucy's chin. "Mind as well jus' go back to sleep," she muttered, "Ain't nottin' to do."

"Renee, we should go inspect the end of this cave," whispered the older actress.

Renee lifted her head and glimpsed down the dark cavern. "Think there's anything worth finding?" She shifted her focus to her friend.

"Only one way to find out." Lucy kissed her girlfriend on the forehead. "We should go check it out."

"Alright."

The pair quickly got out of the sleeping bag, put their boots on, then their heavy coats.

Renee picked up the flashlight from the floor, turned it on, and shined it down the cave. "Ready?"

"Ay." Lucy started walking deeper into the cave.

The Texan quickly hurried up and strolled along side her friend. She grasped the other woman's hand.

The tall actress smiled and squeezed the small hand as she continued exploring.

Renee suddenly stopped in her tracks- she brought Lucy to a dead stop. "What is that?" She shined her flashlight directly ahead.

Lucy squinted for a moment, shook her head and whispered, "I don't know," in an awed tone.

"Let's check it out." The small woman led her friend up towards the mysterious, foreign object in their mists and once closed enough; they recognized it.

Enclosing the cave ahead was a thick sheet of clear ice but the image beyond the wall

of ice was wavering and flickering. It was hard to see anything through the ice wall.

Renee released her girlfriend's hand and touched the cold ice. She shook her head- she was baffled. "How could this develop here like this?"

Lucy was memorized by the yellow glow behind the ice. "Renee... turn off your flashlight," she uttered.

The Texan clicked the light off and watched the yellow glow.

Slowly, the yellow glow begun to flicker and move towards them. As the flickering yellow neared; two forms developed behind the ice.

"What is that?" Renee stepped back in horror.

"Its okay," reassured the older actress.

"Did you see that?" whispered the warrior-bard.

Xena nodded as she made her pace a little faster so that she was ahead of her lover. "Stay behind me," she ordered.

The smaller warrior huffed at her soul mate's old habit of protection. "I wonder why that white light went out?" she uttered.

"I'm sure we'll find out." The Warrior Princess came up to the thick sheet of clear ice. "Odd."

"Xena..." Gabrielle shook her head and pointed. "There are two people behind the ice."

Xena grinned, handed her lover the torch. "So there is, let's meet them." She grasped her chakram.

"You sure..."

The older warrior chuckled. "Don't worry." She held onto the handle of the chakram, raised it, and smashed it into the ice wall.

The cracks screamed through the ice wall creating a spider web like effect. There was silence for a brief moment then, without warning, the ice shattered loudly.

Xena quickly turned and stood in front of her soul mate.

The ice flew all over the place and pounded into the Warrior Princess's back. It settled down and there was only heavy breathing.

The warrior hooked her chakram into place before she turned around.

Gabrielle jaw went slack and she almost dropped the torch.

Lucy peered down at girlfriend. "We just entered the Twilight Zone, mate."

The Texan could only stare at her mirror image holding the torch.

The Warrior Princess folded her arms and arched an eyebrow up slowly.

The two actresses smiled sheepishly.

"Gee, you must be Xena and Gabrielle," uttered Renee.

Gabrielle finally found her voice. "And you two... are?" She shifted closer to her lover.

"Uhhh..." Renee rubbed the back of her neck, peered up at her coworker.

Lucy shrugged to her friend and smile impishly.

"Thanks for the help," muttered the Texan and she gazed back at the other two women. "Ya wouldn't believe me if I told ya."

Xena folded her arms and raised an eyebrow. "Try us," she stated.

Renee laughed impishly and dropped her hand from behind her neck. "We're actresses and well... we act you both."

Gabrielle instantly had another confused expression as she peered up at her lover then back at the other two women. "You act us?" She tilted her head. "As in Xena and I?"

"You got it, mate," replied Lucy as she grinned profoundly. "You two are characters we act on the telly."

The warrior-bard shook her head- she was getting more confused.

"Okay..." Renee laughed nervously. "This is really freaky." She pointed at the two warriors. "Technically you two ain't really... you're characters, not real so... I don't know how you... can be real."

The Warrior Princess unfolded her arms. "Well we're real." Her hands shifted to her hips. "Names?"

"The name is Lucy," replied the New Zealander. "And this is Renee." She grasped her girlfriend's shoulder.

The Amazon Queen sighed in hopes to relax herself, she peered up at her lover. "Xena, what's the plan?"

"Well..." Xena's eyes focused far behind the mirror images. "We're not leaving this cave that way." She noted the snow piled over the mouth of the cave. She looked at the other two women. "You two can come stay with us. We have a fire burning."

Renee peered up at her friend. "Lucy?" she whispered.

The tall actress squeezed her friend's shoulder, which she still held. "We're going to go get our stuff, mates." She released Renee. "If you don't mind?"

"We'll be here," stated Gabrielle as she watched Lucy and Renee turn and head down the cave. She moved closer to her partner. "Xena..." she shook her head.

Xena chuckled and grinned at her companion. "I know."

"Just too weird." The Queen chuckled and stared down at two figures that continued

to recede. "They look exactly like us," she whispered.

"Hmmm, don't talk or act like us," muttered the warrior.

Gabrielle laughed quietly but sighed. "What are we gonna do?"

"Not... sure." The Warrior Princess smiled warmly. "We'll figure something out."

Renee picked up her pack. "Lucy, I am serious," she said lowly. "This is just too freaky."

The New Zealander sighed while she slung her pack around. "We don't have much choice, Renee." She folded her arms. "We have a better chance of getting out of here with their help than we do sitting here."

The Texan sighed and grasped one of her girlfriend's hands. "You're right, it's just really weird."

The older actress grinned. "What? The fact that we've met ourselves as our characters?" She laughed softly. "Not a wee bit odd at all."

"Oh yeah." Renee rolled her eyes. "This is a daily occurrence."

Lucy winked. "Come on." She moved and started towards the warriors.

The small woman chuckled and followed along side. "Hmmm, we should remember this adventure for an episode," she joked.

The taller woman groaned and unclasped her girlfriend's hand. "Don't give the writers any ideas, mate."

The short actress snickered evilly. "They have plenty as it is," she muttered.

"And will you stop talking about work, mate," warned the tall actress.

Renee laughed quietly because she knew how much her coworker disliked talking about the show since it was her job. "Alright, alright."

"Bad enough we're gonna have to look at our jobs," grumbled Lucy when she spotted Xena and Gabrielle ahead.

"Ready?" asked Gabrielle when the pair came up.

"Yup, lead the way," replied Lucy.

Xena turned around and signaled her lover to go first.

The Amazon Queen nodded and headed through the cave, leading with the torch.

The group was dead silent and only the sound of their footfall echoed through the cavern.

"Hey Gabrielle, find a way out?" asked Amarice.

"Afraid not... but we found something else." Gabrielle walked over to those two same rocks from earlier and pushed the torch back into it.

The three Amazons understood now what that something else was when Xena shifted out of the way.

Ephiny and Solari shook their heads and gawked.

Amarice entire expression was a mix of awe and confusion. "Who... what... how...?"

Lucy and Renee exchanged worried glances. Could this get any worse?

"Danielle... Jodie?" asked Renee as she stared at Ephiny and Solari.

The regent shook her head. "I'm Ephiny."

The Texan shivered and looked up at her girlfriend. "I don't know if I can handle much more of this."

"Who are you two?" asked Amarice.

Lucy glanced over at the young Amazon who looked just like Jennifer Sky. "I'm Lucy and this is Renee."

"How come you two look like Xena and Gabrielle?"

Gabrielle grinned at her Amazon. "That's the question we're all wondering."

"Its complicated, trust me... Amarice," whispered the small actress.

"Alright, make yourselves at home," ordered the Warrior Princess to the two newcomers.

"Right," whispered the New Zealander and she grasped her partner's pack. "Come on, mate."

"She's got a funny accent," muttered Amarice.

Lucy arched an eyebrow at the young Amazons. "Mate, you have no idea." She took her and Renee's packs and placed them over by the leather packs of the soul mates.

Amarice laughed at the accent. "The both of you."

"Now my accent ain't all dat bad." Renee huffed and folded her arms.

"It's a wee bit worse than mine ay?" teased Lucy as she strolled back over.

Xena shifted to the fire and threw a few more pieces of wood in. She took a quick inventory of the wood and knew there was enough for a day or so.

"We're getting low huh?" whispered the warrior-bard as she knelt down beside her lover.

"Yeah," murmured the warrior. "We need to find a way out... and soon."

Gabrielle sighed and stared into the fire. "There has to be another way out of here."

"There is," stated Xena, "and we'll find it." She sighed and peered at her lover. "Let's sit down for a few. I need to think."

Gabrielle nodded and stood up.

Lucy and Renee had already sat down near the fire, trying to warm up.

The soul mates sat down on their bedroll together but Gabrielle rested in her lover's arms.

The Amazon Queen glanced over at the mirror images. "So, you both act?"

The actresses peered across the fire with grins.

Chapter Eight- Acting

"Okay, okay." Renee turned around, took her heavy jacket off and glanced back at her girlfriend.

Gabrielle glanced sidelong at her lover with an amused look. "This will be funny."

The warrior grinned and glanced over at the Amazons.

The Amazons were watching Renee and the New Zealander with awe.

"Let's do a scene from an episode," stated Lucy as she stood near the fire.

"Alright." The Texan folded her arms. "Which episode?"

The warrior-bard grinned at watching the pair of actresses preparing to act out her and Xena.

"Did you guys ever do an episode called, Altered State?" inquired Amarice.

Renee laughed and nodded. "We did, Amarice. That's one of my all time favorites."

"Amarice," growled Gabrielle.

"Act that one," said Solari with a smirk.

The Queen groaned and sunk down in her lover's arms.

The regent chuckled and explained to the newcomers. "Our Queen just told us a story last night about it."

"Oooh, I see." Lucy grinned at the embarrassed warrior-bard. "No worries, mate." She winked and gazed back at her coworker. "Ready?"

"Which scene are we doing?" asked the Texan.

"Do the part when Xena first finds Gabrielle drugged," suggested Amarice.

Renee looked back at Lucy. She raised an eyebrow.

Lucy chuckled and shrugged. "Sounds guid to me."

"Okay." The smaller actress thought for a moment. "Okay, I think I recall my lines." She slowly got down on the floor and pretended to be dead.

Lucy moved away and put her hands on her hips. "Ready, Renee?"

"Yup, go."

The tall actress took a deep breath, closed her eyes, and mental switched roles.

"Alright, here we go." Her accent was gone and she opened her eyes.

"Action," joked Renee as she laid still.

Lucy jogged closer to her friend then stopped in her tracks. Her expression went into shock. "Gabrielle?" she uttered and instantly knelt down beside her friend's side. She grabbed Renee and pulled her into her lap. "Gabrielle?" She touched the small woman's cheeks.

Renee groaned. "Xena?" she uttered.

"You alright?"

"I'm great. I can't see, but I'm good." The small actress nodded while she stayed draped in Lucy's lap.

"Try using both eyes," suggested the New Zealander in a deep voice.

"Oh, yeah..." Renee opened her eyes gradually. "Yeah, that's better."

Lucy held back from laughing but she asked, "Think you can stand?"

The Texan furrowed her eyebrows. "You mean I'm not?"

The older actress sighed. "C'mon..." She stood up and picked up her friend with her. "There ya go."

Renee widened her eyes and stumbled back. "By the gods..." she gasped and fell down on her butt.

"What?" asked the older actress.

"You are beautiful." Renee's head bobbed back and forth with her awed look.

Amarice laughed hysterically.

Gabrielle groaned and shook her head. "I was drugged," she declared.

Lucy grinned momentarily but wiped it away when she held up her hand. She pretended to be holding up an object. "And you are drugged..." She pretended to study the invisible item. "With henbane if I'm not mistaken, so the effects should be temporary. But, we've got to get you... walking... "

Renee had gotten up and was stumbling around- she muttered incoherent words.

"Come back here... Gabrielle..." She grabbed her partner's shoulders. "I need you to concentrate."

"Okay, yeah, but I think this is a big waste of time because I have been walking since I was one," declared Renee.

The New Zealander narrowed her eyes and said harshly, "This is not about walking, Gabrielle, it's about Icus. You do remember Icus, don't you?"

The smaller actress rolled her eyes. "Of course I remember Icus."

Lucy breathed calmly and said, "Good. Do you know where he is?" She gave one of her famous raised eyebrows.

Renee pressed her lips together and asked, "Where?"

"No, I'm asking you," growled the older woman.

The Texan gasped and grabbed her friend's arms. "I lost Icus... oooh no," she whined. She moved out of her friend's embrace and fell down on the friend. "I lost Icus!" she whaled and dropped her head into her hands.

Xena chuckled behind her lover while she kept watching.

Lucy knelt down beside her coworker after she sighed. "You didn't lose Icus."

"Yes I did," whined Renee and looked up. "I'm a bad person."

The New Zealander stood up and considered. "He would have gone to his mothers," she whispered.

Suddenly Renee popped up in front of her friend. "What are we waiting for? Let's go! The rest of you follow me." She gave a wave to whatever that was behind Lucy.

The older actress glimpsed around but quickly ordered, "Hold it."

"At ease!" Renee whirled around and faced her friend "Yeah?"

Ephiny started laughing quietly at this entire scene.

"I've got a better idea." Lawless closed in the distance and grasped her the smaller woman's shoulders. "I'll go and get Icus while you and the... others try to... um..."

"Work on our song?" finished Renee. "Hmmm yeah." She leaned towards her friend.

"Just between you and me, the altos are slightly flat."

The older actress nodded. "Right. Perfect." She patted the small woman's shoulders before she released them. "Gabrielle, don't let anyone leave the cave, understand? Stay here and wait for me to get back. Have I made myself clear?" She gave a stern look.

Renee tilted her head and gave a skeptic look. "Nnmno. You're a little fuzzy around the edges, so you keep trying, you'll get there." She smiled profoundly and brushed past her partner.

Lucy widened her eyes, gave a quick glance at her friend, then strolled off.

All the Amazons started applauding with loud claps.

"Encore, encore," demanded Amarice with a laugh.

Renee and Lucy both laughed together, stood beside each other, held hands, and they bowed.

Xena grinned and whispered, "Just like us huh?"

"Not quite as perfect but close enough," joked Gabrielle.

Renee heard the comment and glanced over at the small warrior. "Trust me, Gabrielle, Lucy and I are you and Xena after six years."

Lucy chuckled and nodded. "Seems like it," she complained.

"Okay." Gabrielle nodded, stood up and neared Renee. "You must have had to act Hope."

The Texan folded her arms and nodded. "Yes." She watched as a grin creased the warrior-bard's lips. "Uh oh," she whispered.

The Amazon Queen now crossed her arms. "I've done a little acting in my day. So, you can play Hope and..."

"No, no," cut off Renee. "I'll act you and you can act Hope," she stated. "I'd say it's pretty easy to act yourself."

Gabrielle laughed softly but nodded. "Alright, you have a point."

Xena rose up and neared her lover. "Hey, I'll be right back."

The short warrior peered up at her soul mate. "Want me to come?" she whispered.

"No, have some fun. I won't be long."

"Alright." The blond warrior watched the Warrior Princess take the torch and her eyes followed Xena until she disappeared deep in the cave.

Renee glimpsed at her girlfriend.

The New Zealander grinned and walked off the imaginary stage they'd mentally created. She sat by the fire; facing the two blonds. "It's all you, mates."

The short actress faced the short warrior. "Alright, pick a scene." She laughed softly. "I mean..."

"I know what you meant," uttered the Amazon Queen. She grinned and said, "How about in the forest?"

"You mean Sacrifice Two?" Renee turned and strolled across the imaginary stage. "The part where Gabrielle and Hope talk alone," she said aloud but just to herself. She turned around with a worried look and asked softly, "You sure?" She knew how emotional that stage was for Gabrielle- it was emotional enough for Renee when they filmed those episodes.

"Yes, don't worry," replied the Amazon Queen.

The Texan nodded sadly. "Ready?"

The short warrior grinned. "Yup." She stepped back a few times then nodded.

Renee flashed a grin back but suddenly lost it, her face coming harder and she nodded.

Gabrielle neared her mirror image. "I'm not going to hurt you..."

The small Texan tilted her head in confusion but said nothing.

The warrior-bard touched her own mid section before she said, "It's growing ... inside me, Gabrielle ... the child... the way that I grew inside of you." She suddenly was having a new perspective by role playing her dead daughter.

Renee narrowed her eyes and whispered, "What do you want, Hope?"

Gabrielle grinned faintly and replied in her course voice, "I want to give you one last chance. Don't make me do this alone. Come, be my mother. If I say so, father will welcome you. Please... please, Mother." A look of desperation crossed her features.

The short actress reached up- she caressed Gabrielle's left cheek. "Hope... when I gave you that poison-"

"I forgive you," cut off Gabrielle in a softer voice, which she could still hear come from Hope even today.

Renee shook her head and whispered, "I'm so sorry it didn't finish you."

"Okay, okay." Gabrielle laughed quietly as the small hand left her cheek. "That was too real," she whispered.

The Texan crinkled up her nose. "Isn't it?"

The warrior-bard nodded and laughed softly. "You're not so bad acting me out," she taunted.

Renee smirked for a second, shifted her weight to her other foot, and fell into her acting. "You're not so bad acting me out," she taunted.

The Amazon Queen arched an eyebrow. "Are you mimicking me?" She grinned.

Renee O' Connor arched an eyebrow. "Are you mimicking me?" She grinned.

Gabrielle laughed softly and said, "Peat and repeat."

The Texan laughed softly and said, "Peat and repeated."

Amarice over in the corner laughed hard and snickered.

"Gabrielle, she's liable to take your caste next," joked Solari.

The warrior-bard huffed. "There's only one Queen."

"And that would be me," taunted Renee.

Gabrielle faced the other small woman. "And that would be me."

The Texan narrowed her eyes. "Don't copy my joke."

Gabrielle narrowed her eyes. "Don't copy my joke."

The small actress smirked and said, "I'm a dork."

The Amazon Queen smirked and said, "You're a dork."

Renee along with everybody else chuckled. She calmed down and said, "Xena is

sexy."

Gabrielle suddenly blushed, coughed and thought of a retort. "Lucy is sexy."

Now it was Renee's turn to blush and walked off while she laughed.

"Okay, okay enough of that, mate," ordered Lucy as she stood up. "Reputations are at stake here."

"I agree," rumbled a deeper voice as Xena reappeared out of the darkness.

Everybody's attention went on the Warrior Princess.

The warrior glimpsed to her lover. "I need your help with something."

The warrior-bard nodded. "Yeah, sure." She strolled over to her lover.

"We'll be back in a second," stated Xena as she turned and headed deeper into the cave with her partner along side her.

"Hey, can you two do some more acting?" inquired the young Amazon.

Renee glanced over at Amarice. "Um... well..." She peered up at her girlfriend. "If ya can convince my partner here." She grinned.

Lawless sighed dramatically but was grinning.

^^*^*^*

"What did you find?" asked Gabrielle when she spotted the torch around the bend.

"There's a small opening off to the left up here," Xena revealed, "but I can't get through."

"Too small?" asked the short warrior.

"Not for you," stated the Warrior Princess. "There are several large rocks blocking the hole. If you can squeeze through, I think you can push the rocks out."

The Queen nodded. "Gotcha." She peered up. "Do you think it leads anywhere?"

The warrior grinned as they came up the small, blocked opening. "I'm positive... you can hear water dripping in the background."

Gabrielle grinned and turned to the small hole. "Oh yeah..." She shivered. "I'm gonna have to even suck it in." She sighed sadly. "Okay, let's hope I can get through."

"Take your time and don't push it." Xena knelt down and watched as her lover started wedging her body through the tiny opening.

The warrior-bard easily poked her head through, next she squeezed her upper body through, she sucked her stomach in and got her torso through, and last and pulled her legs through. "That was a slim fit." She laughed and straightened up and looked around at the new surroundings. "Xena?"

"Yeah?"

"There's a river following through here."

"Good," stated the warrior, "that's our ticket out of here. Think you can get these small boulders out?"

"Worth a shot." Gabrielle turned around and pressed her hands against a cold rock at the top. "Are you going to pull them?"

"If I can get a grip, hold on." The warrior grappled a large boulder. "Go."

Together, the soul mates pushed and pulled and soon came the sound of rock grinding against rock. Next there was a loud boom as the small boulder hit the cave floor.

Gabrielle grinned through the hole at her partner. "Hey, sexy."

Xena shot a grin back. "Come on, let's get the rest of these out."

The warrior-bard nodded and quickly started removing the rocks with Xena's help. Within a few minutes the couple had moved all the rocks out of the way.

The Warrior Princess came through the much larger hole and straightened up in the new part of the cavern. She studied at the inside of the little cove area.

There was a fairly wide stream that flowed directly through and went into a sort of tunnel far ahead. Once beside the stream, Xena checked the temperature and found her suspicions correct.

"Melted mountain snow?" inquired the short warrior.

"Yup." The warrior stood up and folded her arms. "Not cold enough to freeze us," she whispered.

Gabrielle peered up at her lover with a surprised look. "You're thinkin' of having us swimming that?"

Xena grinned down at her partner. "Its our only way out, love."

The Amazon Queen looked down at the clear, fast moving water. She knelt down and dipped her fingertips in. She felt how chilled the water was but not icy cold. "It'll wake us up," she muttered.

"I think we'll be fine," stated Xena.

The warrior-bard stayed kneeling as she stared towards the dark tunnel that the stream followed into. "What about Lucy and Renee?" she whispered and peeked up.

The older woman sighed and placed all her weight onto her left foot. "We'll worry about that later. First we all need to get out of this cave."

Gabrielle nodded. "Right," she agreed before she stood back up. "I hope we can get them back to their... world." She chuckled and crossed her arms.

"Things will work out," promised the warrior as she unfolded her arms.

The blond warrior saw the opening and moved quickly. She pulled her lover in for a

strong hug.

The Warrior Princess smiled softly and drew her soul mate in closely. "Ready to get out of here?"

"Oh yeah."

"Me too," agreed the tall warrior and she kissed her warrior's temple.

"Lucy and Renee are pretty... interesting huh?"

Xena chuckled and rocked her body with her partner's. "The entire crossover of worlds is interesting."

"Hmmm to think in their world we're just... what they called it?" The Queen lifted her head. "A television show?"

The older woman grinned. "And all the fans they have."

Gabrielle laughed and smirked. "Oh yeah, Xenites," she taunted.

"Hey, they said there are bards named after you."

The warrior-bard narrowed her eyes. "Oh wow. I have a cult of bards when you have the entire Xenaverse thingy." She smirked.

Xena laughed quietly and shook her head. "From the sounds of things, I'd say its our cult."

"You mean, Lucy and Renee's cult," joked the Amazon Queen. "Remember, we're just fictional."

"Not here," stated Xena.

"Hmmm, thank the gods." The short warrior pulled her lover's head down and tenderly kissed her. When they parted, she whispered, "I love you, Xena."

"I love you too," uttered the Warrior Princess before she went in for another warm kiss.

Gabrielle laughed softly at the end of the kiss and mentioned, "We better head back."

The dark warrior sighed and grinned as she tugged her lover's cloak together. "Let's go."

The smaller warrior laughed and took her lover's hand. "Come on." She sighed with a smile and migrated to the opening. She slipped through followed by Xena.

When they made it back to the group, they found Lucy and Renee explaining their alternate universe. The Amazons were sitting and carefully listening in a bit of awe.

"I was killed?" interrupted Ephiny. "Why was that?"

"Well..." Renee shrugged. "The person who acts you, Danielle, decided to leave the set. She wanted to do some other acting jobs."

Ephiny huffed. "So they killed me off so she could go act," she grumbled.

"Hey they killed me too," interjected Amarice. "And I am the coolest Amazon around."

"Was," corrected Solari. "And sounds like..." She averts her attention to the two actresses. "You guys killed off the best Amazon... namely me."

The group laughed at the second in command's words.

"I must not have any good Amazons left," stated Gabrielle as she came into everybody's view.

Renee peered up at her mirror image. "In the show, ya do." She grinned. "We just ain't ever killed off the two main characters."

Xena smirked. "Sounds like you've tried."

"Mate, the writers have killed Xena and Gabrielle quite a few times. But are always brought back to life," Lucy joked.

Gabrielle grinned evilly up at her lover. "How many times has that *really* happened to us?"

"I've lost count," muttered the Warrior Princess. She suddenly went into her stoic attitude and said, "Its time to get out of this cave."

"What'd you find?" asked the regent.

"There's a small stream back in the cave," replied Gabrielle, "and it flows out of the cave."

"Let me guess." Solari curved up an eyebrow. "We're going for a swim huh?"

"You got it," answered Xena.

"What about Lucy and Renee?" cut in Amarice.

Xena sighed and studied the two women of topic. "We'll figure something out later." She shifted her eyes to Amarice. "We need to get out of here, that's the most important thing right now."

The young Amazon nodded. "So, what we planning?"

The Warrior Princess faced her soul mate. "Did we bring any wine?"

Gabrielle suddenly became confused but answered, "Yes, a little."

"Wonderful." Xena grinned.

Chapter Nine- A Cold Swim and a Wild Ride

"Are we set?" asked the warrior as she turned to the group.

"Pretty much," replied Ephiny.

Solari corked the empty wineskin after she finished it off. "Oh yeah, I'm prepared."

Gabrielle chuckled. "Don't tell me you got drunk over that little bit, Solar."

The second in command laughed. "Nope, my Queen. It takes a lot more than that to inebriate me."

Everybody chuckled.

"Everybody did drink some wine?" queried the Warrior Princess. The group nodded and she nodded back. "Good, it'll help keep you extra warm." She took her cloak off and glanced at her partner. "Take yours off."

Lucy nudged her girlfriend. "We going to have to take our coats off."

"Right." Renee shrugged out of her jacket and tossed it aside. She helped her girlfriend get hers off and she threw it on top of her own.

Solari took her cloak off and threw it on the pile along with the wineskin.

Ephiny and Amarice removed their cloaks and deposited them.

The two warriors followed suit as well.

Xena inspected all her friends and decided they were free enough to swim properly in the water. "Okay, everybody stay with a buddy." Her eyes flickered between all the women. "Amarice, stay with Solari and Ephiny. Help Ephiny since her side is still healing."

The regent huffed and gave a hurt look. "Yeah." She grinned at the young Amazon. "This is a handicapped regent here."

Amarice laughed at the older Amazon but fell silent.

Xena walked over to a set of rocks and removed a lit torch she'd brought. "Time to get wet and wild," joked Xena as she shifted closer to the stream but handed the torch to Gabrielle. She easily climbed into the water and found it not too deep. "Okay, Gabrielle."

The warrior-bard came over, handed the torch back, and hopped into the stream. The water stopped just at her chest and goosebumps rippled up her arms and neck. "Next." She grinned and shifted out of the way with her lover.

Renee and Lucy lowered themselves into the brisk water then watched the Amazons get in last.

"We're good," called Solari. "Let's blow this joint."

"Alright, stay single file," ordered Xena. She waded down the stream with the group behind her. She ducked when going under the overhang of the tunnel. She found a small drop off and lowered down in the water. "Watch out, there's a drop off."

Gabrielle quickly found it and almost lost her balance. The water rose up to stop just under her chin. "Oh wonderful," she muttered. "I hate being short now."

"I hear you," agreed Renee.

The New Zealander glanced back at her girlfriend- she was worried. "Take my hands," she whispered softly. She held her hands back under the water.

The small actress reached forward and clasped the warm hands under the water. She noted her breathing picking up from the sensation of having the water close.

"How are you doing back there, Amazons?" called the Queen.

"We're fine," replied Ephiny. "How are things looking up ahead?"

Xena kept the torch in front of herself. "Looking like a long journey." She studied the small tunnel and noticed how it was getting smaller. "We may have to swim soon."

Renee shivered at hearing that, she squeezed her friend's hands.

Lucy intertwined their hands together and made her grip stronger to comfort her girlfriend.

"Damn," growled the Warrior Princess and she stopped.

The warrior-bard peered over her lover's shoulder and saw that the tunnel's ceiling sloped down ahead and went under water.

"Take this." Xena turned around and gave her soul mate the torch. "I'll be right back."

"Be careful," whispered the Amazon Queen.

"I will," promised the warrior before she lightly kissed her soul mate. After separating from the kiss, she walked ahead then dove under water.

"You think we're stuck?" called Solari.

"Don't know yet," responded Gabrielle. "But if the ceiling stays under water for too far we won't be able to go any further."

"In another words, we're screwed," stated Amarice.

"No, we'll just find another way out," said the Queen in a stern tone.

Suddenly there was a burst of water and Xena popped up out of the water. She took deep breaths as soon as she reappeared.

Gabrielle smiled at her lover. "What'd you find?"

The warrior pressed one hand against the tunnel's wall. "Alright, there's another small alcove ahead. The ceiling stays under water for a while but we all can make it." Xena paused and further instructed, "Each of you go with your partner, take a few deep breaths before you go under, and just relax. You'll make it fine. Is that clear?"

"Gotcha," replied Solari. "Warrior Princess and Queen first," she teased.

Gabrielle laughed softly. "Thanks, Solari."

"Welcome, my Queen."

The warrior-bard shook her head and glanced at the torch in her hand. "What about this?" she asked.

Xena took the torch and turned to her right. She rammed the torch between two open rocks. She faced her soul mate again. "Alright, steady your breathing."

Gabrielle nodded, and breathed calmly while she relaxed her mind and body. "Stay near me?" she uttered.

The warrior winked. "You know it."

The short warrior smiled and came closer to the low ceiling. "Alright, I'm good."

"Okay, take a deep breath and go," coached Xena.

Gabrielle sucked in a deep breath so that her chest raised high. She instantly disappeared under water.

Xena took a long breath and dove under. She swam behind her lover and carefully watched over her. She swam through the hole of the small tunnel and saw the light above. She spotted her soul mate already heading for the surface, as did she.

The warrior-bard bursted through the top- she rasped for air.

The Warrior Princess surfaced and breathed hard. "You okay?"

The Queen nodded quickly. "I'm good," she whispered.

"Good job." Xena leaned over and kissed her lover gently. "Go down the stream a little way," she whispered, "I'm going to go take care of the others."

Gabrielle nodded. "Be careful," she ordered.

The warrior grinned right before she went under water.

The shorthaired warrior chuckled to herself and turned around. Her expression suddenly dropped. "Oooh... shit," she whispered in fear.

Xena watched Solari come through the small opening under water. After her came the regent and she easily made it. Last out was Amarice, and Xena made sure the young Amazon was careful about coming through. Once all the Amazons were through, she popped back up for air.

"Ready?" asked Lucy.

Renee shook her head. "I can't do this," she whispered.

The New Zealander faced her girlfriend fully. "You can make it, Renee."

"No, I'll run out of air before I make it through." Renee backed up a step and started shaking.

The older actress grasped her friend's shoulders and gave her a comforting smile. "You won't, I promise."

Suddenly there was movement of water from behind Lucy and Xena came up.

"Are you two okay?" asked the warrior.

Renee lowered her eyes and stared at the water.

The Warrior Princess picked up on the problem and she shifted closer to Lucy. Her eyes locked on the small actress. "Renee," she said softly, "if Gabrielle can do it." She grinned faintly. "You can too." She paused before adding, "You can hold your breath a lot longer than you think."

"She's right," agreed Lucy and she squeezed her costar's shoulders. She glanced at Xena.

The warrior arched an eyebrow and she got a nod in response. She nodded back and dove under water; she headed back to the other side.

"You can do this," whispered Lucy, "I promise." She reached up and brushed back her girlfriend's hair. "I won't let anything happen to you."

Renee breathed with a shake but nodded. "You'll stay close?"

"Promise," replied the New Zealander and she drew in the smaller woman.

The Texan returned the strong hug.

When Lucy pulled back, she smiled warmly. She leaned in and gently kissed her girlfriend.

Renee chuckled at the end of the kiss. "Thank you," she whispered.

"You're welcome," The tall actress released her partner. "Come on," she said confidently.

The younger woman shifted past and neared the low ceiling. She steadied her breathing, relaxed her mind, and had a long breath then held it. She submerged and swam quickly towards the small opening.

Lucy sucked in a huge breath before she dove under and followed after her girlfriend.

The two actresses exploded through the surface on the other side and quickly sucked in for air.

"Good to see you both made it," teased Solari.

"Mate, we're part fish," joked Lucy with a smirk.

"Rrrright," taunted the second in command.

"What's that sound?" inquired Renee.

Gabrielle faced the short actress. "That would be the water slide."

The Texan gave her girlfriend a confused look.

"Water slide?" asked Lucy for Renee.

"Go take a look," stated the Amazon Queen.

The two actresses shifted past everybody and came to a bit of a ledge.

"Ooooh... shit," whispered Renee.

"I second that," muttered the warrior-bard.

"Its not that bad," whispered the Warrior Princess.

Gabrielle peered up at her lover. "That depends on your definition of bad," she teased.

"Its just like a water park slide," stated Lucy.

The Texan looked up at her partner. "That ain't no amusement park water slide, Luc. I'd hate to be the one tuh break it to ya."

The tall actress arched an eyebrow and gave a 'Xena' look.

Renee chuckled because she knew what the look was about. "Lucy," she corrected.

The New Zealander grinned and rubbed her friend's mid back. "Luc is fine." She whirled around in the water that was rushing by her. "So, who's ready to go?"

"You can go first," suggested Solari.

"No," cut in Xena. She shifted through everybody. "I'll go first."

"Do I detest jealousy?" teased Lucy.

The warrior huffed but revealed a grin to the other tall woman. "Rrright," she drew out in sarcasm.

Gabrielle came up. "I'm second."

"Right behind ya," declared Renee.

"Oh no, I'm third," countered Lucy. "The star of the show before the costar," she mocked in a rich voice.

Renee stuck her tongue out. "Whatever... one day Gabrielle will be more popular than Xena."

"Amen!" praised the warrior-bard.

"Don't think so," chided Lucy Lawless. "It was the warrior's attitude that got that show rolling, mate. Not Gabrielle and her roll of scrolls."

Gabrielle's jaw dropped. "I'm offended."

"Me too," agreed Renee as she put her hands on her hips. "If I wasn't on that show, it wouldn't be as good," she stated proudly.

Lucy grinned evilly at her girlfriend.

"Well," cut in Xena, "the show sure wasn't called Gabrielle Amazon Queen." She

smirked. "I think that settles it."

"That's it," growled Gabrielle. She suddenly leapt forward and pushed her lover.

"Oh damn!" The Warrior Princess laughed as she went over the edge and landed on her back. She quickly went soaring down the slide of the cave and back into the tunnel.

"Next," taunted Renee and she took a step closer to Lucy.

"Mate, don't even-"

Gabrielle moved rapidly and helped the Texan push Lucy off the ledge and down the natural water slide.

"Wooo!" hollered Lucy as she went gliding into the dark tunnel.

"You can go next," offered the short actress.

"See you at the end." Gabrielle sat down and pushed off. She followed after the two tall, dark, beautiful women.

Renee glanced at the Amazons. "Next?"

"You're next, by all means," suggested Solari.

"Sounds good. See y'all at the end too." The Texan quickly sat down as Gabrielle had and pushed herself off. She went water sliding down the smooth rock tunnel following behind.

"Alright Amarice, go ahead," ordered the regent.

The young Amazon laughed, pushed through the water, jumped and went reeling down the water slide on her stomach. "Wahoooooooo!" she screamed.

Ephiny sighed while she shook her head. "Young feathers," she muttered.

"You know you want to do it too," taunted Solari.

The regent grinned at her lover. "If you do..."

"I will," promised Solari.

Ephiny winked. "See you down there." She quickly dove forward, off the ledge, and went gliding down the slide on her stomach.

"Look out, here I come!" yelled Solari before her laughter. She leaped and went sliding down on her stomach.

Gabrielle shook her head and got the water out of her eyes. She screamed when the huge turn came up and she went flying off the side. "Sweet mother of Zeus!"

"Xena, how are things looking?" yelled Lucy.

The Warrior Princess kept flying down the twisting and turning tunnel slide. "I can't see... a thing, Lucy," she called back.

"We sure are moving downward fast," yelled Gabrielle down the tube.

"Hey, did anybody consider there might be a waterfall?" hollered O'Connor.

The Amazon Queen's eyes widened. "Oh no," she whispered. "Don't say that, Renee!" she yelled.

"Wooo! Everybody lay back ahead!" screamed Xena as she fell back at the last instant when jagged rocks hung from the ceiling came closer.

Everybody laid on their backs except for the Amazons. Once past the collection of stalactites, they sat back up. The tunnel took them around more turns, drops, and bends.

"There's a drop off ahead!" yelled Xena as she flew off a small ledge and landed hard on the smooth rock.

"Wooooo!" screamed Renee as she soared off and crashed back into the water. She groaned slightly.

"You okay?" called Lucy.

"I'm good," replied the Texan.

The Warrior Princess came around a tight bend and quickly figured out the rest of the tunnel was winding downwards like a set of spiral stairs. She held her hands out and brushed her fingertips along the side to steady herself.

The rest of the group was following behind with yells, screams, and laughter of fun.

"Gabrielle, how are you doing?" called Xena up the tunnel.

"I'm fine," yelled back the warrior-bard. "How are things up in the front?"

"Looking good so far," hollered the warrior as the tunnel stopped spiraling down and was just going straight ahead but on a decline.

Ahead, a speck of light began to grow brighter.

"There's light ahead!" yelled Xena at the top of her lungs.

"Are we already at the end?" called Renee. "This is uh huge mountain," she reminded.

"We're at the end of something," answered back Ephiny.

The Warrior Princess bushed back her wet bangs and squinted as she tried making out what was ahead. She tilted her head and picked up a small roaring sound, her eyes instantly widened. "Waterfall!" she screamed up the tunnel.

"We're gonna die!" yelled Amarice.

"You're kidding!" called the Amazon Queen.

"I'm not," hollered the warrior. "Get ready! We're getting closer!"

"What are we suppose to do?" yelled Renee as a shiver of fear rippled up her back.

"Just pray," joked Gabrielle but she wasn't too thrilled about a waterfall.

"Whatever you do, don't land on your stomach!" joked Solari.

Xena chuckled but went serious once she saw the bright opening just ahead. "Just make a dive for the bottom!" she yelled. "Here it comes!"

"Oh my god!" screamed Renee.

"Just think of it as the end of the ride!" teased Lucy yet she wasn't exactly looking forward to this part.

"Right!" deadpanned the Texan.

"Here it is!" yelled Xena as she gave her warcry, came to the end of the water slide, and pushed off with her feet. She exploded from the round opening into the bright day and she soared through the air. She spread her arms and pressed her legs together as she flew high. She took a quick glance of the beautiful view of the snowcapped mountains and setting sun behind before she went diving down towards the huge river below.

"Ooooh my Lord!" screamed Lucy as she tried giving her best flip and spread like an eagle in midair. She aimed for the water far below and prayed to god she'd make it.

"I hate heights!" yelled Gabrielle as she bursted from the tunnel into the light of day and glided through the air. She prepared herself for the impact of cold water below her.

Renee shot out next from the tunnel's mouth and she screamed, "Wahoo!" She then flipped her body around and pretended this was just a dive off a huge diving board.

Amarice kept gliding through the tunnel and she saw the opening ahead. "Here it comes, Eph and Solari!" she warned before she rocketed out of the opening. She screamed once she saw the huge distance downward and the roar of the waterfall pounded in her ears. "Ooooh gods!"

"Sweet Artemis!" hollered the regent and she followed after Amarice. She knew that her lover was far behind in the ride and hoped she'd make it. But right now, Ephiny just dove down towards the clear water.

"Renee, Renee?" yelled Lucy as she swam around in the water.

Renee sprung up out of the water; spitting the water out. "Oh my god," she rasped and tried swimming against the current.

The tall actress swam against the current to her girlfriend. "Are you okay?"

The Texan nodded. "You?"

"Oh yeah, I'm ready to do it again," joked Lawless.

Renee chuckled before she glimpsed up at the waterfall. "Look, there's Solari." She pointed briefly before she focused back on her swimming.

The pair of actress watched as Solari sailed through the air then made a dive for the

water. Solari kept coming downwards with her body just skimming the waterfall. Once she was near the water she suddenly... disappeared.

"W-w-what... where..." The Texan shook her head. "She's gone, " she whispered.

The older woman brushed her wet bangs back and looked around in the water. "Where are the others?" she uttered.

"Maybe they're still under water..." Renee shook her head.

"No," stated Lucy, "I saw Xena make it."

The smaller actress peered up at her friend. "Do ya think we're back... in our world?"

The New Zealander nodded. "That's a safe guess to make. It all happened because of the snow," She joked before she signaled the riverbank. "Come on, let's get out of this cold water."

Renee instantly agreed and swam for the beach with her partner.

Soon the pair was on the shore and letting the water just drain out of their clothes.

"Glad its warm out of the water ay?"

The younger woman grinned at the other woman. "Tell me 'bout it." She glanced around at the familiar lands. "Now, we jus' have to walk back home," she joked.

"Well, mate." Lucy slung an arm around her girlfriend's shoulders. "At least we can have some bonding time ay?" She started walking and jerked the small woman with her.

Renee stumbled and growled, "I'm jus' sssso ecstatic."

Lucy laughed loudly but stopped walking. She released her friend and turned back to the river and waterfall. "That was something else," she uttered.

The Texan's head shifted back and forth and she moved closer to Lucy. "*That* was an adventure." She slipped her arm around the tall woman's waist.

Lucy chuckled and brought her arm back around Renee's shoulders. "Sure was, mate." She leaned over and kissed her girlfriend's temple when she pulled back, she whispered, "If I went through that adventure with anybody, I am sure glad it was you."

Renee smiled up and squeezed the New Zealander's waist. "Me too." Her smile went very soft. "Lucy?"

"Hmmm?"

"I love you," Renee whispered softly.

A sunrise smile gently creased Lucy's lips and she whispered back, "I love you too, Renee."

Renee didn't move as she stayed locked in the moment. Such completeness filled her and warmed her through and through.

Lucy certainly was tingling now and she lowered her head. She encircled her girlfriend's waist and sealed her lips over Renee's.

The younger woman moaned softly and slipped her tongue into her partner's mouth as Lucy explored Renee's mouth. Renee's fingers soon entangled into dark chocolate hair.

Lucy slowly pulled back with her smile and she chuckled.

The Texan smile but a bit shyly. "I reckon, the subtext in the show will sky rocket now," she joked.

The older actress groaned while she rolled her eyes. "Let's not talk about work," she teased. She clasped her hand with Renee's, gave one last glance at the waterfall and river, then she started trekking once more.

Renee casted a glance at the waterfall, sighed, and followed along side her girlfriend. She laced their hands together. "So, ya reckon we should make an episode out of this?"

The older actress laughed. "No." She grinned down at her girlfriend. "Its our memory, just between us ay?" She lifted their locked hands and kissed Renee's hand.

"Yeah." Renee smiled. "This is our memory." She squeezed the larger hand. She sighed contently and said, "I can't wait to get home."

"Hmmm, which home?" Lucy grinned devilishly.

The short actress lifted an eyebrow at her partner. "What you saying...?"

"Basically mate, do you want to move in with me?" she offered in a serious but shy voice.

Renee laughed quietly then quickly nodded. "I'd love to." She paused before she asked, "What about Daisy?"

"We'll talk to her." Lucy nodded and gazed ahead.

"This is getting serious," teased the small actress.

"Just tell me if you want it to slow down," whispered the New Zealander.

"Its just right," reassured Renee. "Well... I have decided after these past two days of being snowed in a cave, meeting Xena and Gabrielle, and going over a waterfall. I reckon I can handle Pasadena in May... bring it on!" She laughed.

"We'll put that to the test," taunted the older woman

"God, I jus' feel the overwhelming support here."

Lucy laughed and pulled her girlfriend in close. "They'll just love ya, mate." She grinned. "Remember, Xena wouldn't be anything without Gabrielle."

"Ain't that the truth!" half-yelled Renee. "Amen to the bard."

The star of the show laughed happily. "We're gonna get mobbed at the convention," she muttered.

"They'll mob you before me," stated Renee with a snicker. "En-joy!"

Lucy laughed hard and smirked. "You're my partner, you're going down with me, mate."

"Jus' as long as its together."

"Always together." Lucy bent over and kissed her girlfriend on the temple. "You and me, love," she whispered.

Renee smiled softly at the affection. "This is going to work," she declared quietly.

"Yes it will," agreed Lucy as she squeezed her girlfriend's hand. "Yes it will."

The couple continued their trek back home together- walking into the beautiful sunset. And somewhere, in an alternate universe another pair of soul mate's have their hands locked and walking into the sunset- headed for home. Two worlds had collided just because of snowy problems and this created a Xenite's biggest fantasy...

...The Ultimate Xenaverse.

The End

Credit Disclaimer: During the scribing of this story, exactly 22 ounces (or 1.37 pounds) of Sour Patch Kids candy was consumed. You can just imagine the hyperness this bard had at the end of this story!